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Music: Count Us In with John Foreman & Jay Laga'aia

By [Spotlight Report](#) on September 2, 2016 in [Social](#) [Social & Celebrities](#)



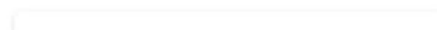
Music: Count Us In is Australia's biggest schools initiative, where students across the country sing the same song, on the same day, at the same time. Encouraging young people to become passionate about music and music education, 2016 marks the 10th year of Music: Count Us In and the invitation is out for all Australian schools to get involved. All you need to do is [register](#) your school for free, learn this year's song and join more than half a million kids for Celebration Day on Thursday November 3rd.



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What is **Music: Count Us In**? Working directly with schools and teachers, **Music: Count Us In** exists to assist teachers in providing quality music education and to address the gap in specialist music education provision in many Australian schools. The program is both a participation program and an advocacy program – raising the profile of music education on the national stage, and providing hundreds of thousands of students with practical music learning.

Spurred on by a 2007 National School Music Review which pointed to glaring inadequacies in music education in schools, the report included a recommendation to raise the status of music in schools. Music: Count Us In was the response. Its purpose – to energise and engage teachers, principals, school communities, and families, and to provide quality music participation opportunities, available to all.

The program has far exceeded expectations, extending into all states and territories, and connecting with schools of every shape and size. It is freely available to every student in the country – and beyond. Commendably it has also been consistently supported by both sides of politics, in a bipartisan show of federal support for school music, which extends through until at least 2018.

Previous mentors for the program have included esteemed artists **Katie Noonan, Josh Pyke, Marcia Hines, Clare Bowditch and Melinda Schneider**; always indefatigably led by Program Ambassador John Foreman OAM. Actor and singer **Jay Laga'aia** of 'Play School' fame joins **Music: Count Us In** 2016 as program mentor, commenting: "I'm really looking forward to seeing how people interpret the song. This is very much a story that you send to different communities and they come back with their versions of the story. To get together on that special Celebration Day and for everyone to sing it – for me, that's going to be very exciting!"

Music: Count Us In 2016 has now launched with a wonderfully positive response from teachers and students across the country. At its heart is the 2016 Program Song – 'Let It Play', written by students Stella Kelly (16, WA), Tom Meadows (11, VIC), Bonnie Staude (14, WA) and Breanna Truscott (14, QLD) – along with our Program Ambassador and Mentor. The song features a variation on 'Canon in D' by Johann Pachelbel.

Looking back the last 10 years have seen much growth through the program, but there is still a lot more to be achieved. Music: Count Us In 2016 is another opportunity to raise awareness, foster music participation and appreciation, and campaign for music education for all.

All Australian schools are invited to become involved in Music: Count Us In 2016. To add your voices to the call for quality music education for every Australian student, encourage your school to register for free now at www.musicaustralia.org.au.

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