

# MUSIC: COUNT US IN BACK FOR 2019

Australia's largest school music participation program, **Music: Count Us In** (MCUI), is back for another year. Growing steadily since 2007 the program sees students from all around the country take part, for free, all learning the same song in the lead up to Celebration Day which sees students all around the country sing the **same song**, on the **same day**, at the **same time**.

The MCUI song itself is arrived at through a national songwriting competition and workshop. This year's winning student songwriters are **Roan Nair** from **Donvale**, Victoria, **Amber Farnan** from **Kamerunga**, Queensland, **Brady Cavanagh** from **Muswellbrook**, New South Wales and **Sawab Mlaih** from **Bankstown**, New South Wales. Recently the 2019 songwriters came together with musician, songwriter and festival curator **Jack River** who is the 2019 MCUI music mentor.

On being this year's mentor, Holly Rankin AKA Jack River says: *"I'm so excited to work with young songwriters on this extremely important and ridiculously fun project. Music heals, inspires and pushes mental boundaries - to be a part of spreading its importance on a national and educational level is really exciting."*

Holly recently joined the four extremely talented student songwriters at Church St Studios in Sydney along with award winning MCUI Program ambassador **John Foreman OAM** to write this year's song titled '**We Are**'.

John Foreman had this to say about the 2019 track: *"Each year, a new group of students comes together to write a song for Music Count Us In and, as a result, each song is unique - of course each song has its own melody, lyrics and chords, but it also has its own style, its own energy. Often, the songs reflect the style of the music that is popular in that particular year. This year, at the recording session, I wanted to encourage the student musicians and their mentors to take the song in a slightly more contemporary direction in terms of its production. We still have all of the usual elements - a great drummer, bass player, guitarist and keyboard player, as well as two fantastic vocalists - and there's just a touch more electronic production this year. I hope you enjoy the song!"*

'We Are' was recorded at Sony Studios, Sydney by talented instrumentalists from The Arts Unit and male & female lead vocalists from the Talent Development Project. John Foreman led the day in collaboration with leading professional musicians Gordon Rytmeister (drum mentor), Mark Costa (bass mentor), Rex Goh (guitar) and Vigna Sanzone (vocal mentor). Participating schools can access a range of free resources as well as lesson plans and Professional Development sessions to help learn the song, all available from the MCUI website.

The MCUI program, delivered by Music Australia, in 2018 saw more than **3,400** schools and over **745,000** students take part in the program, providing students and teachers with the opportunity to develop their music skills and simultaneously perform with schools around the country in a celebration of music.

With support from The Surfers Paradise Alliance, this year's flagship Celebration Day event will take place across two stunning locations in Surfers Paradise including a beach front site and the iconic SkyPoint Observation Deck atop Q1. While others schools around the country are encouraged to plan their own event at school or join together with other neighbouring schools within their local communities.

Register now, for **free** and mark **Thursday 7 November** in your diary for Celebration Day and join over half a million students around the country in song.

Head to the website now to register your school and learn this year's song 'We Are' [www.musiccountusin.org.au](http://www.musiccountusin.org.au)

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