



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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MINISTER JOINS HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS TO SING 'SING'

Arts Minister Peter Garrett joined more than 300,000 school children from across the nation who today performed the same song, at the same time in celebration of *Music. Count Us In*.

"*Music. Count Us In* is a great initiative and it was great to be able to take part and officially count more than 2000 kids into their performance in the forecourt of Parliament House today.

"This event is a great way to remind us of the important part music plays in a complete education, as well as its significant contribution to our community and cultural life."

The song, 'Sing', was written by four Melbourne high school students in collaboration with project ambassador, Mr John Foreman.

"We are delighted to see the Australian Government supporting the project this year because *Music. Count Us In* provides a very real way to remind parents, teachers and policy-makers about the value to kids in learning music while at school," Mr Foreman said.

The Australian Government is providing \$3.54 million from 2007-10 to support school music education initiatives such as *Music. Count Us In*.

Music. Count Us In also involves a professional development component for generalist teachers with little or no musical training.

This funding complements the Government's Artist in Residence program which is providing \$1.3 million per annum over four years to give Australian children and their teachers the opportunity to work with professional artists and musicians in their schools.

"These significant investments expand the opportunities for young people to experience the arts and create new opportunities for the next generation of musicians, composers, choreographers, visual artists, playwrights and performing artists, demonstrating the Rudd Labor Government's commitment to a creative and innovative future for Australia," Mr Garrett said.