



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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NEW FUNDING FOR ELITE CLASSICAL MUSICAL TRAINING

Arts Minister Peter Garrett today announced funding of up to \$2.5 million for a new flexible approach to training Australia's elite classical musicians.

Mr Garrett said a new independent organisation, the Australian Institute of Music Performance, will operate in conjunction with the University of Melbourne's Faculty of the VCA and Music to deliver the new elite training program.

"The Rudd Labor Government is committed to supporting our most talented classical musicians to bridge the gap between their tertiary studies and professional performance," he said.

"This new training program will provide a flexible approach to training, be tailored for individual students' needs and allow students access to accredited degree courses, as well as shorter professional performance modules."

Through a visiting teachers program, outstanding students will be given access to world class musicians. Opportunities will also be provided for ensemble performance training and real experiences of orchestral roles, including concert master, principal and soloist.

"Students will have the advantage of undertaking training in the environment of a major new Conservatorium of Music with an international profile and within a community with a strong tradition of artistic and academic excellence," Mr Garrett said.

The Government recently announced that its funding for the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) would cease at the end of 2008. Funding for the new training program replaces previous Australian Government support for ANAM and, importantly, provides continuity for existing ANAM students.

"The new training program will commence in July 2009. In the meantime, arrangements will be made by the University of Melbourne for those students being considered for ANAM in 2009, which take into account their individual training needs," Mr Garrett said.

The Minister said that direct funding of the training program will ensure a more effective use of Australian Government funds, with a focus on international standard teaching and fewer resources devoted to administration.

"This will be a truly national program, supported by national auditions and access to bursaries and scholarships to students outside the Melbourne region. It will more effectively meet the Government's objectives for elite classical music training.

"Developed from the recommendations of two independent reviews of ANAM, these objectives include the need for flexible tailored training, development of professional skills that are responsive to industry needs, and international-class training."