

Billy Thorpe Scholarship Guidelines 2026

About Billy Thorpe

Billy Thorpe created an exceptional musical legacy during his lifetime. The iconic songs he wrote and performed and his enduring global success over five decades secured his prominent role in Australia's popular music history. His career started in Brisbane when he was discovered singing and playing guitar in the storeroom of his parents' Moorooka shop at the age of ten. He went on to forge his own path through the largely uncharted territory of a successful international career. Throughout, he continued to explore new musical ideas, releasing more than 30 albums and contributing to many more. He was considered a mentor and an inspiration to many musicians who have gone on to have their own successes.

About the Scholarship

The Billy Thorpe Scholarship is funded by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland and is administered by QMusic.

The \$15,000 Scholarship will be awarded to an emerging Queensland-based contemporary musician or band.

The Scholarship will:

- identify a talented, emerging, Queensland-based musician or band who can demonstrate their commitment to a career in music and who will best benefit from the scholarship
- enable the recipient/s to make significant progress creatively and in their music career by providing them with opportunity, tools and networks

The scholarship is made up of a \$15,000 cash grant, as well as:

- A meeting with Chugg Entertainment representatives to be arranged by QMusic.
- Regular monthly check-ins with a QMusic representative (Program Manager or Project Officer) to help develop and implement the recipient's plan, as well as support the artist/s as much as possible.

On completion, the recipient will provide a report to QMusic on the creative and professional outcomes which the scholarship enabled.

Submitting Your Application

QMusic is Queensland's music industry development association and has been contracted to manage the Billy Thorpe Scholarship on behalf of Arts Queensland.

Applicants are required to apply online through QMusic's website (www.qmusic.com.au). All sections of the online application will need to be completed, addressing all selection criteria and attaching all requested support material. Incomplete applications will not be eligible for assessment. Applicants must only submit one application in each round.

Your application must be electronically submitted by the closing date. Late or incomplete applications will not be assessed.

If circumstances prevent you from being able to submit your application, please contact a QMusic Officer prior to the closing date to make alternative arrangements.

Applicants are responsible for notifying QMusic if their contact details change throughout the assessment process.

Please contact QMusic if you have questions about your application:

Tel: 07 3257 0013

Email: info@qmusic.com.au

Eligibility

Please read this information before commencing your application. Applications deemed to be ineligible will not be assessed.

The Scholarship is for an **emerging** musician or band. Though not limited in musical genre, the scholarship is primarily aimed at musicians from the contemporary/popular music sector. The applicant/s must have written a minimum of four original songs.

What is an emerging musician?

An emerging musician is in the development stage of their music career. They may not have yet achieved national/international sales or exposure or a record label deal but can be seen to be working towards these goals. An emerging musician is also someone who can demonstrate that they are committed to developing their instrumental/vocal technique, songwriting and performance skills. There is no cut-off age, but applicants need to clearly demonstrate their early career phase status.

The Scholarship will be awarded:

- annually
- to an individual or band
- once in the life of an individual or band

All applicants must:

- be at least 16 years of age on January 1, 2026
- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- have resided in Queensland for at least two years prior to the due date of applications. You may be asked to provide proof of your Queensland residency status during the eligibility check process.
- have satisfied the reporting requirements of any previous Arts Queensland grants and have an ABN

The Scholarship does **not** support:

- costs associated with a project or program that has already commenced
- the costs of completing degree courses, theses or university, college or projects undertaken to gain formal qualifications
- employees of Arts Queensland and/or QMusic
- former employees of Arts Queensland or QMusic who ceased employment less than six months before the closing date
- staff members of an Arts portfolio statutory authority or the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy unless their application includes a covering letter from their employer that states the person's role and employment details and that their application does not relate to carrying out the duties of their role.
- commission for managers to be taken from the \$15,000 scholarship
- **The use of Artificial intelligence in songwriting and composition. Only original work/songs created by humans are eligible for submission and scholarship consideration. Any work/songs created by AI will be ineligible for consideration. Upon submission, all applicants will be required to acknowledge the following, I/We acknowledge the work submitted in this entry has not been generated by Artificial Intelligence. All work submitted for scholarship consideration has been human created including but not limited to songwriting, vocals, arrangements, melodies.**

Assessment Criteria

Applications for the Billy Thorpe Scholarship will be assessed against the following criteria:

(Please note that the use of 'you' and 'your' on the following pages refers to you as an individual if applying for yourself, or the whole band if you are applying on behalf of a group eg: the manager applying on behalf of the individual or band).

Intended use of this Scholarship.

- Describe the details of your project (proposed recording), the project objectives and how the project relates to where you currently are in your career. Explain how you will make the best use of the cash component of the Scholarship to achieve outcomes for your career.

Outstanding artistic and creative potential of the applicant/s

- Describe the quality of your work and your talent.

Demonstrated commitment to musical and performance skills development

- Describe your track record, practice and recognition in the contemporary music industry.

Potential to contribute to the development of contemporary music in Queensland

- Describe your future aspirations and career plan and any significant contributions to date.

Please refer to any supporting material that will evidence your claims when responding to assessment criteria.

Support Material

The support material is to include the following items:

Curriculum vitae/Artist Biography/Resume

This is to be a maximum of 2 pages and should include details of your songwriting and music career experience and achievements to date.

*A recording of up to **4 original songs (2 songs minimum)**, written by the applicant/s.*

These songs should be those that best reflect your song writing, playing and performing abilities. Song writing credits must be included stating whether you are the sole or primary songwriter or giving collaboration details.

Accompanying printed lyric sheet (1 song per page)

Up to three letters of support from industry professionals

These letters can be from people who have some standing within your community and/or local music scene including: music industry professionals who have knowledge and experience in the music industry, music teachers, music or arts organisations. Letters of support should be from people who know you and who are aware of your musical activities.

Letters should state why they feel you would benefit from the Scholarship, your capacity to make the best use of the Scholarship opportunity and the likely outcomes and opportunities which would arise for you from the Scholarship.

Selection Process

Assessment and funding decisions are based on the information provided in your application, including support material. All eligible applications will be assessed in terms of how well they address the assessment criteria.

Applications for the Billy Thorpe Scholarship will be assessed using the following selection process.

Step 1: QMusic and Arts Queensland will undertake an eligibility check of all applications.

Step 2: Eligible applications will be considered by the selection panel; two Arts Queensland approved music industry experts and a Thorpe Family representative.

Step 3: Up to four finalists will be announced and notified.

Step 4: Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email.

Step 5: The recipient of the 2026 Billy Thorpe Scholarship will be awarded at the Queensland Music Awards; however, scholarship winners and unsuccessful finalists will be notified of their results under embargo prior to the event.

Translating and interpreting services

Applications and support material may be submitted in any language. If you have difficulty understanding this information and would like to talk to staff in your first language:

- telephone the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50 during business hours
- contact Arts Queensland about speaking with an interpreter.

If your application is successful

Letter of offer processes

QMusic will send you a request for your payment details and two copies of the funding agreement.

- sign and date both copies of the funding agreement.
- return both copies with your payment details.

QMusic will return one counter-signed copy of the funding agreement for your records.

Acknowledgements

All successful Scholarship recipients will need to acknowledge Arts Queensland's support in all published material associated with the Scholarship. Further information about the use of the Arts Queensland logo and a standard text of acknowledgement is available from the Arts Queensland website www.arts.qld.gov.au.

Proposal variation

Scholarship funds cannot be used for any activities except those specified in your application and the program's guidelines and letter of offer, unless a variation of the funding agreement is sought and approved in writing by QMusic.

You should advise QMusic in writing immediately if there are changes to:

- timelines
- budget
- location
- anything else that would alter the outcomes of the Scholarship from your original application.

If you anticipate any possible changes, you should contact QMusic. If you fail to obtain written approval for any changes, you may be required to repay the scholarship grant and you will not be eligible for future funding from Arts Queensland.

Tax

Funds received from this Scholarship may be considered as part of your income in a financial year and may therefore be subject to tax. Under the tax system introduced on 1 July 2000,

grants paid to artists and arts organisations may be subject to the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Please note:

QMusic cannot give specialist advice about taxation or legal issues. Further information about the GST and other tax issues is available from the ATO's website at www.ato.gov.au or the Business tax enquiries line 13 28 66 or Personal tax enquiries line 13 28 61.

Scholarship recipients will need to take into consideration the impact of this income on their personal financial situation. Taxation requirements will need to be planned for.

Goods and services tax (GST)

If you are not registered for GST, any grant QMusic pays to you will not be grossed up for a GST component. This is because you will have no liability to remit any part of the grant money to the ATO. QMusic will not issue an invoice on your behalf.

If you are registered for GST, your grant will be grossed up by 10 per cent to cover the GST liability. QMusic will issue Recipient Created Tax Invoices on your behalf with your payment/s.

Please note that if you are registered for GST your funding agreement incorporates the following terms:

- a. You will not issue invoices in respect of the supply
- b. You acknowledge that you are registered for GST when you entered into this agreement and that you will notify QMusic if you cease to be registered for GST
- c. You will provide all necessary information to QMusic to enable QMusic to issue correct Recipient Created Tax Invoices.

A copy of the Recipient Created Tax Invoice for your records and taxation purposes will be provided with your payment/s.

Copyright

Where your project involves the use of copyright material, it is your responsibility to provide all the necessary information regarding copyright clearances and permissions including moral rights. You should also be aware of the copyright and/or moral rights generated through project activities or associated with project deliverables. Additional copyright information can be obtained from the Australian Copyright Council website at www.copyright.org.au.

Reporting on your project outcomes

Scholarship acquittal

Scholarship recipients will be required to provide an appropriate written outcome report and financial acquittal to QMusic on the completion of the Scholarship detailing the impact of the Scholarship on the individual or band's creative development and the skills and/or professional development opportunities that were created as a result of the Scholarship.

Your Outcome Report should be returned to QMusic within four weeks of the agreed completion date of the Scholarship and is to provide information about the Scholarship, the outcomes achieved and how the funds were spent.

All Outcome Reports should include the following:

- a short reflection piece/diary piece about your experience with the Scholarship. (This may be utilised by Arts Queensland and QMusic, for example: in a blog post or in media releases)
- a detailed statement of income and expenditure
- documentation including photographs, videos, recordings, press clippings and/or programs, which should acknowledge Arts Queensland funding as appropriate.

Late outcome reports

If you need advice about preparing your Outcome Report or have concerns about the agreed date, you should contact QMusic. If your Outcome Report is more than one month late, this may affect how your future applications to Arts Queensland and QMusic are considered.

Unsatisfactory outcome reports

If you anticipate any difficulties with your Outcome Report, you should contact QMusic. If your Outcome Report is unsatisfactory, you will be notified by QMusic within four weeks of submitting the report and further information may be required. If you fail to provide the information, you may be required to repay the grant, and you will not be eligible for future funding.

If your Outcome Report is satisfactory, you will be notified by QMusic that the Scholarship has been acquitted.

Contact QMusic

Further information about the program, including copies of the guidelines and application forms can be obtained by:

- downloading from www.qmusic.com.au
- phoning QMusic (07) 3257 0013
- emailing info@qmusic.com.au