

Dennis ‘Mop’ Conlon Scholarship

The Scholarship is for an Indigenous Australian musician or band.

The annual \$15,000 Dennis ‘Mop’ Conlon Scholarship provides the opportunity for an Indigenous Australian musician or band to develop and record a song or series of songs and utilise the funds to support and develop their ongoing career in the music industry.

Dennis ‘Mop’ Conlon, who is widely regarded as the “King of Murri Country” grew up in Cherbourg and learnt how to play music naturally. His talents were recognised early on in life and Mop dedicated much of his life to music and writing songs.

He started a band under the name *Dennis and the Magpies* which was renamed *Mop and the Dropouts*. The songs *Brisbane Blacks* and *Racial Discrimination* were songs written regarding Social Conscience and the Realities facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their plight.

These songs were quickly embraced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Southeast Queensland and became the Soundtrack of the Social and political struggles gripping the Southeast at the time.

Mop never set out to write a powerful political song but with *Brisbane Blacks* playing over the loudspeakers while the government house gates were being torn down, and with the backdrop of the 12th Commonwealth games protests the song became an Anthem.

Brisbane Blacks is possibly the most recognisable song for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and will continue to be a beacon of power for the community.

This Dennis ‘Mop’ Conlon Scholarship is in recognition of the enormous contribution Uncle Mop made to the so-called Queensland and so-called Australian music industries and will be awarded annually at the Queensland Music Awards.

The Scholarship will be awarded:

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

All applicants must:

- be able to provide a confirmation of Aboriginality to confirm Indigenous identity through:
 - being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
 - identifying as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person
 - being accepted as such by the community in which you live, or formerly lived.
- be at least 18 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
- 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.
- 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.

Commission for managers may be taken from the \$15,000 scholarship.

Assessment Criteria

1. Demonstrated connection to Culture and community

Through your music, how do you demonstrate your connection to Culture and community?

2. Demonstrated commitment to Cultural story telling

How does your music, lyrics and song writing align with culture and identity?

3. Intended Use of Scholarship

An outcome of the scholarship is for the development and recording of a song or group of songs. or could be utilised to pay for any costs associated with the development of the songs (eg. songwriting trips/retreats, cultural education/workshops), recording of the song (eg. An appropriate producer/mixing and mastering engineers/studio fees – if required), and if required an established Indigenous musician/Elder for mentoring opportunities. Please ensure these costs are included in your proposal and budget.

Both written and Video applications will be considered. Past applicants are also welcome to resubmit existing or revised applications from previous years for consideration.

Selection Process

Step 1: QMusic, Arts Queensland and Indigenous representative/s will undertake an eligibility check of all applications.

Step 2: Eligible applications will be considered by an independent all Indigenous selection panel made up of music industry experts.

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

Step 4: Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email.

Step 5: The recipient of the 2026 Dennis 'Mop' Conlon 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.

Partnership:

This award will be presented and sponsored by Triple A Murri Country 98.9FM, who will provide in-kind investment with the following:

- In-kind use of studio for recording song (*if required*).
- Scholarship winner to feature on the bill of Original100 or Brisbane Blacks Live to provide artist an opportunity and platform to perform song.
- Song to feature on Triple A, Murri Country, 98.9FM.