



**Sydney WorldPride**

Level 5, 8 Hill Street  
Surry Hills NSW 2011

**[www.sydneyworldpride.com](http://www.sydneyworldpride.com)**

**FOR RELEASE:  
09:00 THURSDAY 16 FEB 2023**

## **17 DAYS OF WORLDPRIDE KICKS OFF TOMORROW**

Sydney WorldPride, the first WorldPride festival ever held in the Southern Hemisphere, kicks off tomorrow (Friday 17 Feb).

The once-in-a-lifetime festival will take place over 17 days, with over 300 free and ticketed events taking place across Sydney with 500,000 participants expected to take part, including an estimated 78,000 visitors.

To mark the opening night of the festival, the sails of the Sydney Opera House will be lit up in the colours of the Progress Pride flag for the evening of 17 February.

With so many events and so much for visitors to see and do, Sydney WorldPride is working closely with organisations including the NSW Government, the NSW Police, the emergency services, as well as NSW Health and ACON to make sure that everyone is able to enjoy the festival safely.

Transport for NSW is reminding locals and visitors alike to be aware of crowds and road closures for key events – such as Pride Villages (24 Feb-5 Mar), Mardi Gras Parade (25 Feb) and the historic Pride March on Sydney Harbour Bridge (5 Mar) – and to plan their travel in advance.

To help keep guests healthy during Sydney WorldPride, NSW Health is also making it possible for interstate and international visitors to get a MPox and/or Covid vaccination and attend a publicly-funded sexual health clinic for free. People can find out where their local MPox vaccination site is by visiting: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mpox>

Sydney WorldPride Chief Executive **Kate Wickett** said: "Sydney WorldPride will be both a glittering celebration for the global LGBTQIA+ community and a huge opportunity for the city.

"In putting on the largest LGBTQIA+ festival that Australia has ever seen, we are extremely grateful for the support we have received from NSW Government, the NSW Police, the emergency services and ACON to make this festival a success. Do it all, see it all, connect with your community and enjoy Sydney!"

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**Albert Kruger**, Chief Executive of Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras said: "As we mark the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mardi Gras, it is important to take stock and look at how far we have come since the original protest march in 1978. We have a lot to celebrate, but also much still to be achieved not only in Australia, but for LGBTQIA+ people around the world, so I'm particularly looking forward to attending the Human Rights Conference."

**Minister for the Arts and Tourism Ben Franklin** said Sydney was ready to stage WorldPride and celebrate our diverse LGBTQIA+ community.

"This journey started in October 2019 when Sydney won the rights to host WorldPride 2023. In 2021 the NSW Liberal and Nationals Government signed on as the first major partner, reinforcing its commitment to grow the state's visitor economy and celebrate its world-renowned LGBTQIA+ community," Mr Franklin said.

"From 17 February, WorldPride 2023 will showcase Sydney's strengths to a global audience with 78,000 visitors set to enjoy our great city and inject \$112 million to the visitor economy.

"Our city will be buzzing with excitement and activity which will turbocharge our 24-hour economy, create jobs and support local businesses across our State.

"We are the first city in the Southern Hemisphere to host WorldPride and we're incredibly excited to welcome revellers and friends from across the globe for the ultimate celebration."

NSW Police have launched a high visibility policing response – Operation WorldPride 2023 – to ensure a safe and secure environment for the 17 days of celebrations.

Operation WorldPride 2023 Commander, **Assistant Commissioner Anthony Cooke**, said police are proud to support our LGBTQIA+ communities on the international stage.

"The NSW Police Force team has put in months of work in conjunction with event organisers and our LGBTQIA+ communities planning and developing our operation to ensure that the events can be enjoyed safely by all," Assistant Commissioner Cooke said.

"Throughout the festival, general duties police officers will be assisted by specialist commands, including the deployment of our LGBTQIA+ Liaison Officers – GLLOs – to

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ensure people are able to enjoy events and experience all that Sydney has to offer safely.

"You'll be able to identify our LGBTIQ+ Liaison Officers by their bright yellow sleeve and rainbow GLLO badge, but if you need assistance at any time, any NSW Police officer will be happy to help you," Assistant Commissioner Cooke said.

"Most of all, for those attending events, we encourage you to enjoy them responsibly and look after your mates. Anyone who attends the festival for the wrong reasons or behaves anti-socially should expect to be engaged by police."

Transport for **NSW Chief Operations Officer Howard Collins** said we want customers to ride with Pride as they move around the city on public transport.

"To celebrate WorldPride coming to Sydney and encourage the use of public transport, rainbows will appear across the transport network. This will include wrapped buses and trains, and rainbow light rail stops at Circular Quay and Central Station from early next week," Mr Collins said.

"The best way to get to and from all Sydney WorldPride events is by public transport. There will be plenty of extra services across trains, light rail and buses during Sydney WorldPride.

"To make it even easier to get to celebrations the weekend 4-5 March, the cost of travel on all modes of public transport is included with your Sydney WorldPride event tickets."

**Acting NSW Chief Health Officer, Dr Jan Fizzell**, said NSW Health wishes everyone an enjoyable and safe time celebrating WorldPride.

"We want everyone to be happy and healthy throughout the celebrations, but if you do need to access health services they will be available and please don't hesitate to seek help," Dr Fizzell said.

"If you are badly injured or seriously unwell, seek medical attention immediately, either at a hospital emergency department or by calling 000 for an ambulance.

"If you require non-urgent medical advice many health services are offering extended service hours or dedicated clinics such as, pharmacies, general practice, public sexual health clinics and dedicated prevention hubs."

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**City of Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore** said; “Sydney WorldPride promises to be a fabulous event, and the City is proud to be providing \$1.7million to support this celebration of diversity.

“I am very excited to welcome international visitors, and tourists from interstate, to our incredible city. We are proudly diverse and inclusive, and as the Lord Mayor I am proud to be the first city in the Southern Hemisphere to host this event.”

The official theme song of Sydney WorldPride – **We the People** by [Electric Fields](#) – will be available to stream and buy on 24 February. [Preview it here.](#)

### MEDIA DROPBOX

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qsohwtm46imzrvy/AACQ68mQJSh4xRk4RTqIMH6Wa?dl=0>

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Road Closures – [click here](#)

Health and Wellbeing – [click here](#)

Local Laws and Getting Help – [click here](#)

Pride Villages (24 Feb – 5 March) opening hours – [click here](#)

Pride March (5 March) waitlist now open – [click here](#)

Rainbow City (45 public artworks) – [click here](#)

Rainbow Champions – [click here](#)

Official Events, WorldPride Arts and WorldPride Sports

<https://sydneyworldpride.com/>

Pride Amplified community events

<https://prideamplified.au/>

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Today's media call has been hosted by The Royal Botanic Gardens.

## **ABOUT ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS**

The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney is Australia's oldest living scientific institution, beginning its life in 1816. The Garden encompasses 30 hectares and is the oldest botanic garden in Australia, home to an outstanding collection of more than 27,000 plants from around the world. Attracting more than five million visits each year, the Garden is one of the top ten most visited destinations in Australia for international visitors and was named New South Wales' Major Tourist Attraction of the Year for the last two years running at the New South Wales Tourism Awards. To see more about what is happening at the Royal Botanic Gardens during Sydney WorldPride, head to <https://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/what-s-on>

## **ABOUT FLEUR DE VILLES**

Fleurs de Villes: PRIDE is a floral celebration of inclusivity presented as part of Sydney WorldPride Pride Amplified.

The world-renowned fresh floral exhibition Fleurs de Villes returns to the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney to present PRIDE, a colourful celebration of joy and inclusivity.

The 10-day Sydney show is presented as part of Sydney WorldPride Pride Amplified and will feature 15 fresh floral mannequins paying homage to inspirational members and allies of the LGBTQIA+ community, all created by Sydney's top floral artists.

Floral artists will present a colourful, flamboyant and inclusive feast for the senses highlighting the stories of some of Australia's most cherished culture icons and trailblazers.

Fleurs de Villes: PRIDE comes hot on the heels of 2022's popular Fleurs de Villes: FEMMES exhibit.

For more info head to <https://prideamplified.au/events/fleurs-de-villes-pride/>

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