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COVID-19 FORCES AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN MUSIC AWARDS TO POSTPONE UNTIL 2021

Australian Women in Music Awards (AWMA) will not be held in 2020 due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 physical distancing regulations and restrictions on public gatherings which has created a very difficult and unknown environment for planning.

The AWMA Executive Committee today confirmed the Awards scheduled for 2020 will be postponed until October 2021.

We acknowledge this will be especially disheartening for many musicians and other supporters whose work in the Australian Music Industry we have consistently celebrated, and whose livelihoods have been so seriously affected by COVID-19. Unfortunately, the lead-time required for the nomination and judging process, combined with physical distancing requirements, uncertainty about public gatherings and domestic travel, means planning an event such as AWMA is not currently viable.

AWMA Founding Executive Director Vicki Gordon said: “The decision to postpone the 2020 AWMA ceremony and program has been very difficult, particularly given the important role music plays in healing and recovery.

“While we are extremely disappointed, we need to put the health, safety and wellbeing of our artists and the community first. In the meantime, we will redouble our efforts to acknowledge and celebrate the significant contribution women make in all aspects of the music industry and continue to advocate for greater female representation on all the relevant industry boards, backstage, technical, production, classical areas and festival representation as our industry strives to rebuild itself.

“Since the inaugural AWMA in 2018, we have welcomed significant change with a heightened awareness of gender issues across the industry. Around 90 finalists and award recipients, as well as hundreds more nominees, performers and supporters have been recognised through the increased public profile of AWMA. However, our gains must be maintained and there is still a long way to go to achieve equality.

“It is incredibly encouraging to see the likes of inaugural AWMA Breakthrough Artist award recipient **Amy Shark**, along with AWMA Patrons and supporters including **Tina Arena, Kate Ceberano, Melinda Schneider** and **Deborah Conway** finding new ways to spread their message, forge alliances, community and solidarity for ongoing change.

“Many artists are reaching out through social media and other platforms to ensure women continue to have their rightful place and voice.”

Planning is already underway for the 2021 Australian Women in Music Awards, to be held in Brisbane.

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For further information, visit womeninmusicawards.com.au

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