

Presidents Report

Folk Alliance Australia

January – December 2024

Presented to AGM Sunday 20 April 2025



Finances

Folk Alliance Australia's financial operations were very similar to 2023. Our books show a loss of \$8500 this being to the expenditure on the Folk Festivals Roundtable Conference. As we received the grant of \$15000 in 2023 and spent it in 2024 this has shown up as a loss

Again FAA has run a very tight financials with income and expenditure being virtually the same as in 2023 otherwise.

Membership & Insurances

Our membership levels have remained the same in 2024. Income from insurance rebates have decreased which signifies a need to increase memberships or other areas of earned income. We have identified the need to run membership campaigns in 2025 to both attract returning memberships as well as develop new memberships.

We have attended a number of consultations and research meetings with Music Australia in regard to the issues of insurance for music festivals. These are ongoing and we have encouraged Australian Folk Festivals to take part in research projects held by Music Australia.

Australian Folk Music Awards (AFMAs)

FAA presented the 4th AFMAs on 23rd October. This project runs from June – October and seeks to engage the folk music industry as widely as possible through, nominations, judging, the awards event, and promotion of the awards. The aim of the AFMAs is to raise the profile of the Folk Music sector. The AFMAs are growing each year in numbers and engagement and are seen as very useful by AFMA winners and finalists in raising the profile of finalist and winning artists to venues/ festivals/ overseas agencies and so on.

Some numbers:-

At the AFMAs we presented 10 awards as well as 2 lifetime awards (12 in total)

Entries : We received 147 entries

Engagement: 53 Panelists took part in the judging process

Public: 5,500 people vote in the People's Choice Award (public voting)

Awards Night: The Awards Night was held in Melbourne and attended by 220 people

With 8 of 10 award winners attending the awards night in person

Folk Festivals Conference

With some funding support from Creative Australia we presented a well attended Australian Folk Festivals Roundtable Conference in September with 45 festivals attending. The Conference was held at the Abbotsford Convent Arts Centre.

A very positive weekend of discussion, presentations, information sharing, performances and networking. Many ideas have come from this important gathering and we are looking at the best ways to collaborate, share, support, cross promote, share resources and so on. FAA has agreed to establish a Folk Festivals Network to follow up many of these ideas with the aim of building a stronger festivals sector.

Newsletters & Media

We have succeeded in issuing fortnightly FAA E-newsletters which go out to around 5,000 people around the country. In 2023 we welcomed Sandy Watkins in Perth WA to the FAA as Newsletter editor and his skills have seen the quality of our newsletters improve markedly such that we now produce a very important fortnightly newsletter.

We endeavour to publish information about festivals, funding, folk related material, Folk Alliance International as well as information about national tours and music/video releases from our members. We

encourage members to send us any information that would be of interest to a national folk audience/network.

FAA Funding from Music Australia

On a most significant note, Folk Alliance Australia has been pleased to be a successful recipient of two year Core Funding from Music Australia for the period April 2025 to April 2027. This is not for new projects but is to support our core activities and we will utilise the funds to bring in people to help build memberships, resources, communication, update the web site as well as develop the Australian Folk Music Awards and the fledgling Folk Festivals Network. This funding offers a great opportunity to grow and develop FAA and we are entering an exciting period for the organisation.

Thanks to judy Turner

We welcome the appointment of three casual (but paid) project coordinators who will be working with FAA for the next two years made available through this funding.

Those three people are highly experienced, recognised, connected and efficient people.

Working with us will be:

FAA Board Members

Thank you to all our FAA Board members in 5 States

who have pushed FAA along this year. I believe that we are more strategic, effective and relevant than ever before due to the commitment, passion and experience of our Board team.

Thanks especially to John McAuslan for his work as Treasurer. John has put into FAA since it's inception.

A special call out to Sandy Watkins in Perth for his work on our Newsletter and Website. We have been fortunate enough to have strong continuity of the FAA board which gives it stability. Last year we did welcome Jo Cresswell to the FAA Board but due to family illness she was unable to continue.

Again thank you to all our team; Cherie Harvey (SA) (Secretary) Erin Heycox (Vic), Louise Coomber (WA), Erin Collins (Tas), Therese Virtue (Vic), Sam De Santi (Qld),

An additional thank you to Roger King for his support at the National with our Forum and AGM documenting and livestreaming these two FAA events.

Advisory committee hope to be established in 2025

We invite members and supporters to work with us on our projects such as coming on board as AFMA panel members or supporting our Conference or newsletter. Your support is much appreciated.

Keith Preston

President - Folk Alliance Australia

April 20th 2025