

March 14, 2017

Calling Queensland designers to Ekka 2017 New initiative celebrates regional talent

Designers from throughout Queensland are invited to put their best foot forward for a chance to show in the state's largest fashion parade at this year's Royal Queensland Show (Ekka).

As one of a host of new initiatives for the Ekka's iconic natural fibres fashion parades, regional Queensland designers anywhere from Coolangatta to Cairns and beyond will be showcased in a dedicated segment of the parade, which shows three times daily throughout Ekka, from August 11-20.

The parades celebrate Queensland-grown wool and cotton alongside fashion favourites leather, bamboo and silk, and this year's Back to Nature theme further enhances the message of the versatility of natural fibres in ready-to-wear fashion.

Up to 12 designers from areas outside of Brisbane will be included in the parade this year, alongside a contingent of Brisbane designers and Brisbane tertiary student's designs.

Designers interested in being showcased in the parades are required to submit their ideas for womens or mens ready to wear fashion by email. The garments should be commercially appropriate and made from natural fibre fabric, be it cotton, wool, silk, leather, bamboo or linen.

Fashion Event Director Laura Churchill said broadening the Ekka parade's focus to include regional designers this year would highlight talent from all over Queensland.

"I'm sure this search will unearth some incredible talent and show our audience that Queensland has so much to offer to the fashion industry," Ms Churchill said.

"I'm very proud to be able to provide such a fantastic platform for designers – one that will see their collections viewed by thousands of people across the ten days of Ekka."

Designers are invited to submit expressions of interest, including photos and/or sketches of their proposed designs, to laura@laurachurchill.com.au. Submissions will be open until April 30, with successful applicants notified by May 12, 2017.

Additional new initiatives for this year's Natural Fibres Parades include:

- **Fibre to Fashion conversation series** - on four peak days of Ekka, the fashion stage will play host to a panel discussion of industry experts canvassing Queensland's natural fibre and fabric production, sustainability issues, how designers work with natural fibres and the design process
- **The Makers Market** - located next to the fashion stage, this new initiative will enable Ekka visitors to shop a host of Queensland designer natural fibre fashion and accessories

- **Double runway** - in an Ekka first, the fashion stage will feature dual runways, offering more opportunity for those coveted front row seats
- **Student design display of natural fibre fashion** - a display will feature winning entries from a natural fibre design competition among students from Brisbane fashion design tertiary institutions including QUT, MSIT, Billy Blue and AICD

This year marks the 26th year of Ekka presenting its Natural Fibres Fashion Parades which is Ekka's most glamorous event.

For further information about Ekka visit www.ekka.com.au

ENDS

For further Ekka Fashion parade information, images, interviews and photo shoot requests, please contact fashion event director Laura Churchill on 0405 155 002 or email laura@laurachurchill.com.au

For general Ekka media enquiries contact Media Manager Veronica Carew on vcarew@rna.org.au

Media opportunities

A range of exciting opportunities exist for media including:

- Model casting June 29
- Student design competition judging July 11
- Ekka media launch event July 11

Don't forget to follow us on social media #ekka2017 and Instagram @ekkafashion

