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**Nominations for 2018 ARIA Music Teacher of The Year Award Sponsored by
Telstra are now open**

Presented in partnership with The Song Room



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(Left to Right: Renee McCarthy (2017's ARIA Music Teacher Of The Year recipient), Josh Pyke and Simon Gipson, CEO for the Song Room)

Photo credit: Thuy Vy

ARIA (the Australian Recording Industry Association) and The Song Room, a national arts education organisation, are excited to announce that nominations for the second ARIA Music Teacher of the Year Award Sponsored by Telstra are now open.

This Award is open to any teacher working on a music program in a school, kindergarten, early childhood centre, youth centre or private tuition music school in Australia. Anyone from around the country - from students, school administrators, to friends, neighbours and family - can nominate their music teacher for consideration to win an ARIA.

At last year's ARIA Awards, ARIA Award winner Josh Pyke awarded the inaugural ARIA Music Teacher of the Year Award to Renee McCarthy from Woodcroft College in South Australia. She was one of four finalist music teachers from four different states of Australia who were visited by ARIA Artist Ambassadors Jessica Mauboy, Josh Pyke, Lior and Missy Higgins. These finalists were chosen from more than 1,600 initial nominations submitted from across Australia.

The ARIA Music Teacher of The Year Award was introduced to recognise music teachers for their passion and hard work in providing Australian children with a better education and the chance to play and enjoy music. There is growing recognition worldwide of the value of creativity and the arts to improve education standards and build a better connection for students to their school life in general. The Song Room is helping to close the education equity gap in many communities in regional, remote and metro areas through its arts education programs which are run in partnership with schools.

"Many of the greatest musicians of our time credit their teachers with being a critical factor in their success, but it's much more than that, for many children their music or art teacher has helped them develop a sense of belonging and purpose! Hats off to ARIA and Telstra for helping us to celebrate the enormous contribution made by music teachers." said Simon Gipson, CEO of The Song Room.

"ARIA is thrilled to announce the return of the ARIA Music Teacher of the Year Award as part of the 2018 ARIA Awards. We are also very excited to welcome back Telstra as our major sponsor for the award," said Dan Rosen, Chief Executive ARIA.

"The presentation of this award was a highlight of the 2017 ARIAs, and was able to shine a light on the incredible, inspiring and impactful work being done by thousands of music teachers across Australia. This year we look forward to working with The Song Room and Telstra again to celebrate more amazing teachers and their work exposing students to the joy of music."

Genelle Sharples, General Manager Media and Sponsorships at Telstra, said: *"We are delighted to be partnering with the ARIA Awards again in 2018 to sponsor this year's ARIA Music Teacher Of The Year Award. It was so rewarding to help ARIA recognise all the wonderful Aussie music teachers who inspire our kids and ultimately award Renee the very first ARIA Music Teacher Of The Year Award in 2017. We are thrilled to be part of the journey all over again."*

“Our continued partnership with the ARIAs and the ARIA Music Teacher Of The Year award is important to Telstra and we look forward to recognising more teachers from across the country who use their talents to inspire the next generation of Aussie musicians.”

Entries are now open and a shortlist of nominees will be announced at the ARIA Nominations Event in October. Each shortlisted ARIA nominated teacher will be partnered with one of the Artist Ambassadors who will visit the school, help celebrate their success and tell their story. A public voting process will then be conducted culminating in the presentation of the winner at The 2018 ARIA Awards in November.

To view guidelines and/or to nominate your favourite music educator, visit

www.ariamusicteacheraward.com.au.

About ARIA

ARIA is a national industry association representing major and independent record producers, manufacturers and distributors. It acts as an advocate for the Australian music industry, administers the labeling code of practice, provides a ‘blanket’ non-exclusive licensing function for copyright users and compiles industry information and research. For more information please visit www.aria.com.au

About The Song Room

The Song Room brightens the futures of Australia’s most disadvantaged children with music and arts programs delivered in partnership with schools across the country. We believe that all children should have the opportunity to participate in music and the arts to enhance their education, personal development and community involvement. For more information visit www.songroom.org.au.