

## Premier Jay Weatherill

## Minister Geoff Brock

Minister for Regional Development

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### Mount Gambier set to become Australia's jazz capital

The State Government has contributed \$500,000 to a collaboration between the University of South Australia and world-renowned Australian jazz musician James Morrison to establish the newest, most innovative place to undertake jazz studies in Australia.

The James Morrison Academy of Music @ UniSA will open its doors in Mount Gambier's Old Town Hall next year offering a Diploma and Associate Degree in Music.

Premier Jay Weatherill said this exciting new venture strengthens Mount Gambier's reputation for jazz excellence throughout Australia and overseas.

"Under the stewardship of James Morrison, the *Generations in Jazz* festival in Mount Gambier has grown over 25 years into the biggest event of its type in the southern hemisphere attracting over 3000 participants annually," Mr Weatherill said.

"Five years ago James established the Generations in Jazz Academy at Tenison Woods College in Mount Gambier and his involvement with this, as well as the new academy, will continue this proud tradition in the regional city.

"Once established, Mr Morrison is forecasting an annual intake of 70 students building to a potential student body of up to 200 students by 2020.

"I want Mount Gambier to be known internationally as a centre of excellence for up and coming jazz musicians – where the next generation's James Morrison will hone their craft before launching their career on the world stage."

Mr Morrison, who has toured the world and played with the legends of jazz for more than three decades, says he is looking forward to bringing his passion into a focused environment for the first time at his own academy.

"This is performance-based education at its best, where students won't just learn *about* music but where they will learn how to *make* music," Mr Morrison said.

"The Academy will offer a unique experience to aspiring musicians where they can work with some of the finest jazz educators in the world."

Regional Development Minister, Geoff Brock said the initiative was a great example of what could be achieved by the State government, the local council and the university working with private enterprise to drive economic growth and promote artistic vibrancy and excellence in the regions.

"I'm very pleased Mr Morrison has chosen Mount Gambier to establish his academy because it's critical for our regions to have access to the same social and cultural experiences as people living in Adelaide," Mr Brock said.

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“There is considerable potential for flow-on economic benefits for the region from this new Academy through the creation of more local jobs, tourism activity, accommodation and rental markets and a boost in the number of international students coming to South Australia.

“On top of the \$500,000 for this project, I’ve also committed a further \$250,000 from the Regional Development Fund to support regional arts and cultural projects in other regions.” Courses will be delivered through the University of South Australia’s Wireless Road campus, which is co-located with TAFE SA.

Vice Chancellor of the University of South Australia, Professor David Lloyd said students of the academy would be full registered students of UniSA with access to the library, other facilities and support services.

“We are delighted to be forming a partnership with James who will become an Adjunct Professor of the University and a Professorial Fellow,” Mr Lloyd said.

“He will draw on his unrivalled network of top professional musicians worldwide to form the faculty as well as a core of staff based in Mount Gambier.”

There is an intention to offer a Bachelor of Music program from 2016.

Mayor of the City of Mount Gambier Steve Perryman says the social, cultural and economic benefits generated by up to 200 students as well as music specialists, support staff, family and friends, will be invaluable.

“The council’s strong support for the academy is reflected in the work done to ensure it’s established in Mount Gambier,” said Mayor Perryman.

“It is a major coup to have a world class music academy operating out of our city, the opportunities are enormous for marketing and adding value to its presence here.

“Much like Tamworth is the mecca of country music, Mount Gambier will be the mecca of Jazz.”