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AUSLAN SIGNING COMES TO BYRON WRITERS FESTIVAL

This year the Deaf Community will have more access to the Byron Writers Festival, beginning with an Auslan-signed promotional video developed in collaboration with Social Futures' Far North Coast (FNC) Ability Links.

The video has just been released and features FNC Ability Links Co-Manager Sigrid Macdonald introducing the event and explaining the Auslan interpreting services that will be available during the festival, which runs from 2-4 August at Elements of Byron Resort.

"It's great to see Byron Writers Festival in the vanguard of public events realising the need to make themselves more accessible to people with disabilities, including members of the Deaf Community like myself," Sigrid said.

"In the video I explain the services on offer to Deaf festival goers, including how to find out which sessions will be interpreted. In addition to these pre-selected sessions, an on-demand interpreting service will be available, where people can book an Auslan interpreter to accompany them to sessions of their choice.

"This means that Auslan users will be able to access the festival content over the whole weekend."

The festival is Australia's largest regional celebration of storytelling, literature and ideas and each year attracts an audience of approximately 12,000 people, including many from overseas.

Festival Director Edwina Johnson said: "We are always aiming to improve access to Byron Writers Festival and enhance the experience of patrons of all abilities. We are delighted to be partnering with Social Futures this year to ensure increased access to the Festival program for the Deaf Community."

To watch the video and learn more about the festival's accessibility features, go to:

byronwritersfestival.com/festival/key-information/accessibility/

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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land where we live and work and their continuing connection to land, water, sea and community. We pay respects to Australia's First Peoples, to their unique and diverse cultures, and to Elders past, present and future.

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Notes to editors:

1. Social Futures is a social justice organisation based in Northern NSW. We have more than 40 years' experience as a regional leader, advocating with the communities we work in; working in partnership with others; and providing services that promote inclusion, fairness and social justice. Our work encompasses homelessness and housing supports, youth and family services, programs that promote genuine participation for people with disability, community sector support, professional development, and systemic advocacy.
2. Byron Writers Festival is a non-profit member organisation presenting workshops and events year-round, including the annual Festival, which has grown to be Australia's largest regional celebration of storytelling, literature and ideas. We foster the development of new skills in our region's writers, and through our Childrens' Programs, we excite the next generation about literature and literacy.