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Country music stars to shine in Ekka Showdown

The competition that has helped launch the careers of Queensland's up and coming country artists is back, bigger than ever, with a total prize pool of more than \$20,000 on offer in the Royal Queensland Show's (Ekka) 2019 Country Music Showdown presented by Ringers Western.

Entries open today for the competition, which will see budding musicians battle it out for a share in the richest prize pool in the Showdown's six year history, and more than double last years.

Musicians aged 12 years and over will compete in the ultimate music experience; performing two songs to Ekka crowds backed by Brisbane based live band, Southwest, on stage at the XXXX Stockmen's Bar and Grill on Saturday 17 August.

New this year is the introduction of digital heats, as well as an extra performance opportunity for the Junior category, with the winner to sing the National Anthem in the Main Arena during EkkaNITES to a crowd of more than 20,000 people.

Other top prizes include a Taramalin Sound Recording Package and \$1,500 cash prize for competitors in the Open Category (18 years and older) and an Ekka scholarship to the Tamworth Academy of Country Music 2020 for those in the Junior Category (12 to 17 years).

Also on offer are guaranteed performance opportunities to ensure the spotlight continues to shine after the Showdown, including new music festival Hometown Fest, the iconic Gympie Music Muster and a paid performance at Ekka 2020.

A win in this competition means a boost to an artist's music career, with previous winner Blake O'Connor going on to become Toyota's Star Maker for 2019, recently touring Australia with country music couple Brooke McClymont and Adam Eckersley as well as releasing his debut self-titled EP in June 2018.

RNA Chief Executive Brendan Christou said the Ekka was about celebrating Queensland's best and encouraging talent and development throughout all industries, including the arts.

"The competition has unearthed some brilliant talent and the music industry has once again thrown its support behind the Showdown by offering fantastic prizes for the winners."

Ekka visitors can check out the competition on the last Saturday of show (17 August) between 10.30am and 6pm.

Think you've got what it takes to get your name in the Nashville lights? Then submit your video applications now at <https://www.ekka.com.au/competitions/entertainment/country-music-showdown>

Don't forget to follow us on social media #ekka



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