

WAKAKIRRI

AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST PERFORMING ARTS EVENT FOR SCHOOLS

20
25



ANNUAL REPORT

WAKAKIRRI ASSOCIATION INC.

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FOUNDATION

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WAKAKIRRI ASSOCIATION INC.



DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

As we reflect on Wakakirri 2025, I'm filled with immense pride and gratitude for another incredible year of storytelling, creativity, and community spirit. This season, schools from across Australia embraced our theme **Mind Over Matter: Tales of Inner Strength**, sharing powerful performances that celebrated resilience, courage, and the power of belief.

From heartfelt contemporary pieces to imaginative, high-energy productions, the 2025 festival once again showcased the talent and passion within Australian schools. It was inspiring to see students channel their emotions and ideas into stories that not only entertained but also uplifted and connected their communities.

This year, we proudly introduced the **National Special Merit Awards**, recognising exceptional off-stage contributions that reflect the values of Wakakirri. These awards aren't about the performance itself, but the impact schools and individuals make within their communities - celebrating creativity, inclusivity, leadership, and positive social change.

We also expanded opportunities for students through the **Work Placement Program**, giving young people hands-on experience in live events, production, and media. Plus students from across Australia **co-hosted our Season Wrap-Up TV Special** - a wonderful example of how Wakakirri continues to empower the next generation of creatives both on and off the stage.

Another exciting initiative was the launch of our **Free Story-Dance Program**, which offered selected schools complimentary access to our Beginners Program. This helped teachers and students new to Wakakirri feel supported and confident as they created and performed their very first story-dance.

The **Wakakirri Inspiration Fund** also reached new heights in 2025, raising over \$14,000 to help schools in disadvantaged communities participate in Wakakirri Live. This generosity reflects the incredible support of the Wakakirri community, alongside our valued partner Kids Helpline and our new supporters Open Parachute, The Sebastian Foundation, and Amplify. Together, these organisations share our commitment to empowering young people through creativity, connection, and storytelling.

I continue to be amazed by the dedication of teachers, the passion of students, and the hard work of the Wakakirri team who bring this festival to life each year. Your enthusiasm reminds us why Wakakirri exists - which is to celebrate the power of stories and the strength we find in sharing them.

Thank you to every school that participated in 2025. Your stories have inspired us, challenged us, and filled us with hope for the future. I can't wait to see what tales of change, courage, and imagination you'll share next.

Adam Loxley

Wakakirri Festival Director



**2025 WAKAKIRRI
NATIONAL AWARDS**
SEASON WRAP-UP TV SPECIAL

2025 SEASON WRAP-UP TV SPECIAL



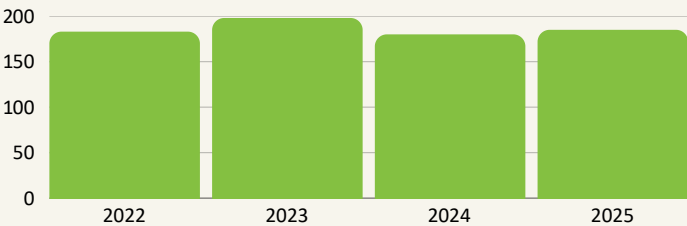
FESTVIAL SUMMARY

STORY-DANCE FESTIVAL

The Wakakirri Story-Dance Festival is a national program for schools that develops student engagement and wellbeing through participation in the performing arts. Schools participate by creating Story-Dances which they perform in live theatres in capital cities and selected regional areas around Australia. Schools in remote and regional areas can participate via Wakakirri Video.

Students x 10896 | Schools x 185

TOTAL SCHOOLS BY YEAR

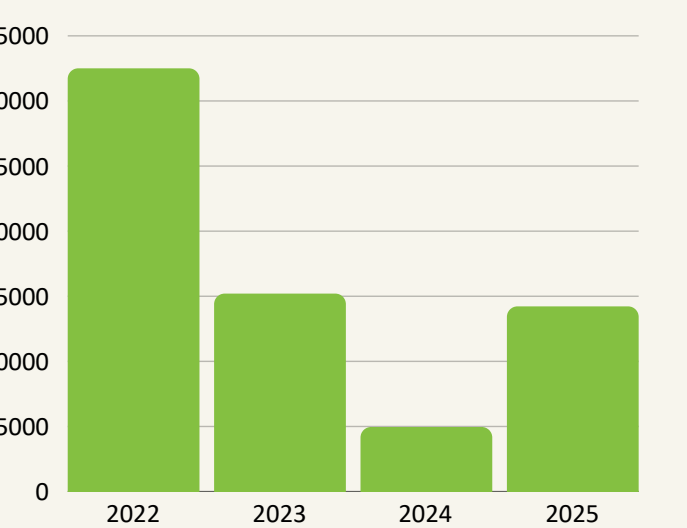


INSPIRATION FUND

The Wakakirri Inspiration Fund raises funds to help schools in disadvantaged communities to participate in Wakakirri. Schools can apply for funding each year which can be spent on subsidising Wakakirri student participation fees. Wakakirri is a registered charity. **All funds raised go directly to participating schools.**

Funded Schools x 13 | Funds Allocated \$10,452

INSPIRATION FUNDS RAISED BY YEAR



NATIONAL AMBASSADORS

Wakakirri is proud to be supported by some of Australia’s leading performing arts professionals who volunteer their time as National Ambassadors.

“Storytelling and dance are precious traditions that are inextricably linked with our human experience. It is wonderful to see students carrying on these art forms through Wakakirri, sharing stories with fellow schools and their families. It’s such a joy every year to see these creations come to life - it makes me want to time-jump back to school and join in!”

DR. EMMA WATKINS

Wakakirri National Ambassador



STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES AND INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

In 2025, Wakakirri expanded its student engagement initiatives, providing valuable industry experience in the performing arts. Through the **Work Placement and Mentor Programs**, students participated in live events across Australia, gaining hands-on experience in stage management, lighting, sound, and digital content creation.

In Victoria, the Youth Committee & Mentor Program offered students tailored guidance and professional insight into the creative process and event production.

Additionally, ten students from across the country co-hosted the **Wakakirri Season Wrap-Up TV Special**, developing on-camera presentation and communication skills.

Work Experience Students x 22

SCHOOL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

In 2025, Wakakirri supported schools through the **Artists in Residence (AIR) Program** and the new **Free Story-Dance Beginners Program**. The AIR Program delivered flexible, in-school workshops tailored to each school’s needs, while the Free Story-Dance Program provided new schools with ready-to-use resources to confidently create their first Story-Dance.

AIR Schools x 10 | Free Story-Dance Program x 17

CASE STUDY

MAYFIELD EAST PRESENTS “PEACE FOR POLINA”

Over the past two years, our students have studied the impact of war on children through compelling texts, and the stories they encountered left a deep impression. When the 2025 Wakakirri theme, “Tales of Inner Strength”, was announced, they chose to explore this urgent theme — but in a way that was real, not imagined. Rather than creating a fabricated version of war, they were determined to share the true story of a child living through it — a child who, despite fear and loss, continues to fight for change.

This led them to Polina, a 10-year-old girl from Ukraine whose world was torn apart by the war. In the face of unimaginable trauma, she continues to dream of becoming a veterinarian and already cares for animals displaced by the conflict. With the help of Newcastle filmmakers Shane and Agnes Burrell, our students connected with Polina’s story, which gave them not only something to dance for, but something to stand for.

In shaping their performance, students also wanted to highlight the universal rights of children everywhere — the right to safety, education, healthcare, and the simple joy of growing up without fear. Their vision was to create a piece that was powerful and moving, one that would evoke empathy in the audience and inspire a call for change. Through dance and drama, students created a story showing two girls, the same age, living parallel lives worlds apart: one wakes to peace in Australia, the other to conflict and fear in Ukraine. Divided by fate, their day unfolds in stark contrast, highlighting the vast differences between their worlds while revealing their shared hopes and dreams.



Being part of Wakakirri for the first time has given our students a meaningful stage to shine, to share their voices, and to feel the deep pride and joy that comes from creating something together that truly matters. Polina’s story touched their hearts. They didn’t just want to tell a story, they wanted to make a real impact. Through their Peace for Polina Day, the whole school community and local businesses came together to raise awareness and funds to support Polina’s education and future.

Their efforts, which received recognition from local radio, newspapers, and the Department of Education, raised nearly \$3,000, which went directly to Polina to help her achieve her dream of becoming a veterinarian. Students were astounded by the positivity, support, and encouragement from the entire school community, and were beyond thrilled to be invited to attend the Wakakirri Award Show at NIDA, where they were recognised with a state award. Wakakirri has shown students that they have the power to create change. Many say it has changed their lives forever, giving them immense gratitude for living in a country free from war and inspiring them to advocate for peace and justice for children like Polina. They have also discovered firsthand that art has the power to connect, challenge, confront, inspire, and create meaningful change.

Jacqueline Kimbell - Teacher
Mayfield East Public School



TEACHER TESTIMONIALS

"What does Wakakirri mean to MPS? Everything! Our students don't want to stop and are already asking about 2026. A quote from one of our year 4 students: *Waka means – A family out of home, a land of dance where all your worries wash away, A land where you can be free.*"

- Maree Fawke, Majura Primary School ACT

"It is an experience that they remember for the rest of their lives. It is what they talk about in their graduation speeches and when applying for leadership positions within year 6."

- Hayley Catlin, St Brigid's Primary Kyogle NSW

"The pride students feel in themselves and each other is beautiful. We saw so many students come out of their shells whilst performing and it was wonderful to see how much they grew into themselves and their characters."

- Jacalyn Phillips, Kingswood Public School NSW

"The transferable skills that students gain from being a part of this event are immense. We have seen very shy students unsure about being on stage, build confidence and self-assurance to the point that they have relished the opportunity to perform under lights! Wakakirri definitely fosters teamwork, creativity, student engagement and a strong sense of community."

- Jodi Foster, Birdwood Primary School SA



"Why should schools participate in Wakakirri? It empowers students to amplify their voice and share stories that are important to them."

- Ellie Clifford, Bethany Lutheran Primary School QLD

"It will be something that your students will talk about for years to come. At a K-12 school, I still have Year 12 students talking to me about their primary experience in Wakakirri".

- Sarah Steward, Toongabbie Christian College NSW

"It's a wonderful experience for the students and builds their mental health as it strengthens their sense of identity and personal strengths. I believe that the experience will live on in their memories."

- Teacher from Mackellar Primary School VIC

"This year's Wakakirri journey was about breaking stereotypes and supporting mental health through dance. In our all-boys school, students challenged the stigma that boys can't express emotion or vulnerability. Our performance shared the message that it's okay to not be okay. Many students were new to dance, yet they embraced movement as a powerful outlet for connection, resilience, and healing. By standing together on stage, they not only broke down barriers around boys in dance but also opened conversations about mental health, showing strength in both expression and seeking support."

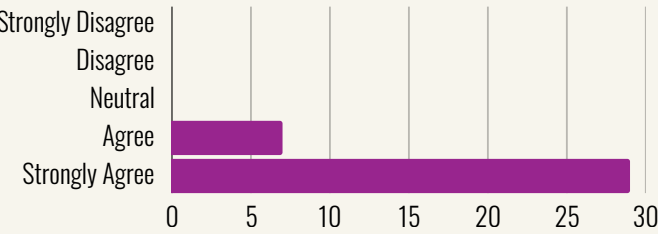
- Paula Nicoletto, Trinity College WA

EVALUATION SURVEY

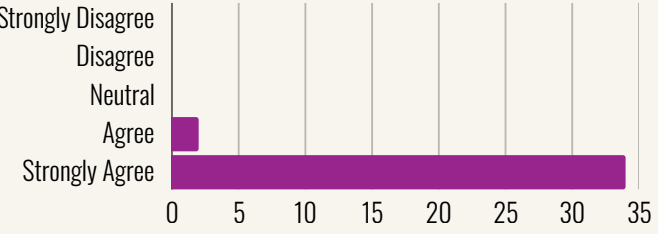
Each year, we invite participating schools (teachers and students) to share their feedback through our evaluation form. The responses from 2025 highlight the impact Wakakirri continues to bring to school communities across Australia.

TEACHERS

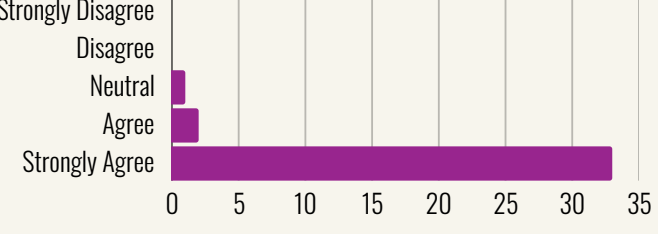
WAKAKIRRI IS INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL STUDENTS



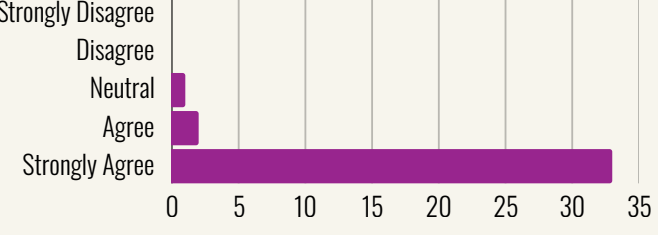
WAKAKIRRI PROMOTES TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION



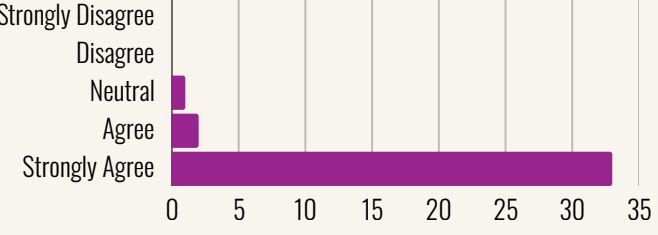
WAKAKIRRI ENCOURAGES POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS



WAKAKIRRI ENHANCES SELF-ESTEEM AND CONFIDENCE

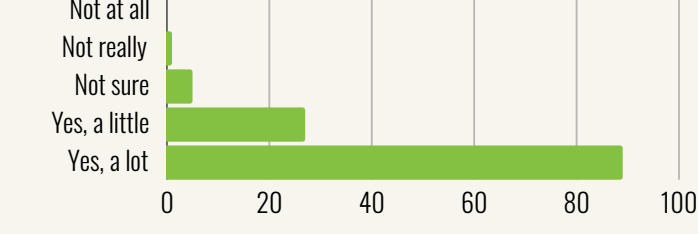


WAKAKIRRI BUILDS A SENSE OF BELONGING

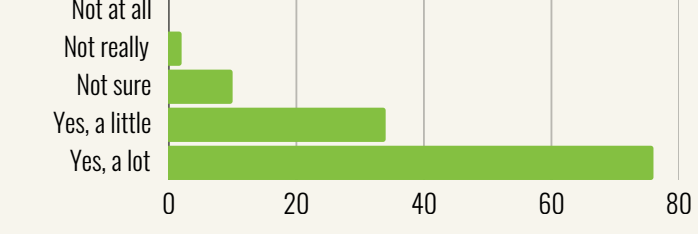


STUDENTS

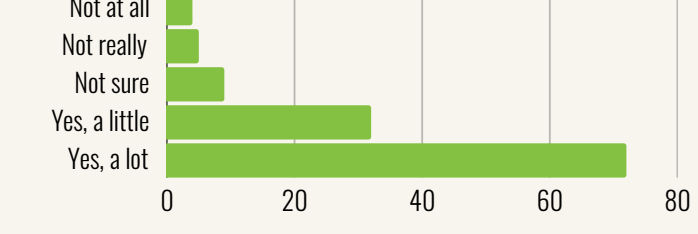
BEING PART OF WAKAKIRRI HELPS ME FEEL MORE INCLUDED AT SCHOOL



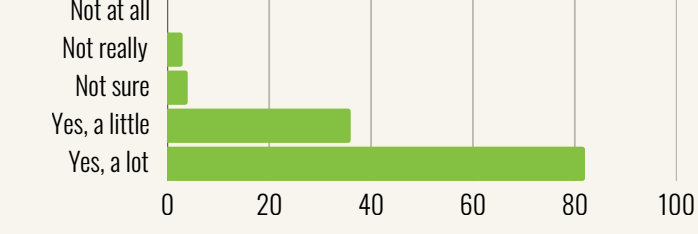
PARTICIPATING IN WAKAKIRRI HELPED ME MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND/OR GROW CLOSER TO OTHERS AT SCHOOL



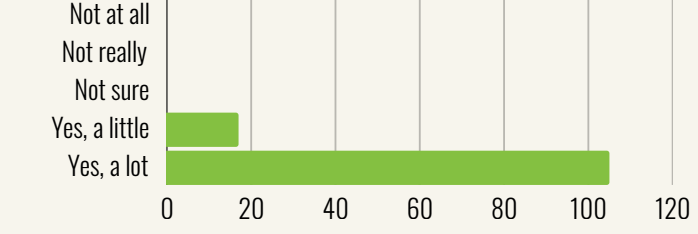
I ENJOY GOING TO SCHOOL MORE WHEN WE HAVE WAKAKIRRI REHEARSALS



WAKAKIRRI HELPED ME BELIEVE I CAN DO SOMETHING CHALLENGING AND LEARN NEW SKILLS.



I FEEL PROUD OF WHAT I ACHIEVED — LEARNING THE DANCE AND PERFORMING ON STAGE

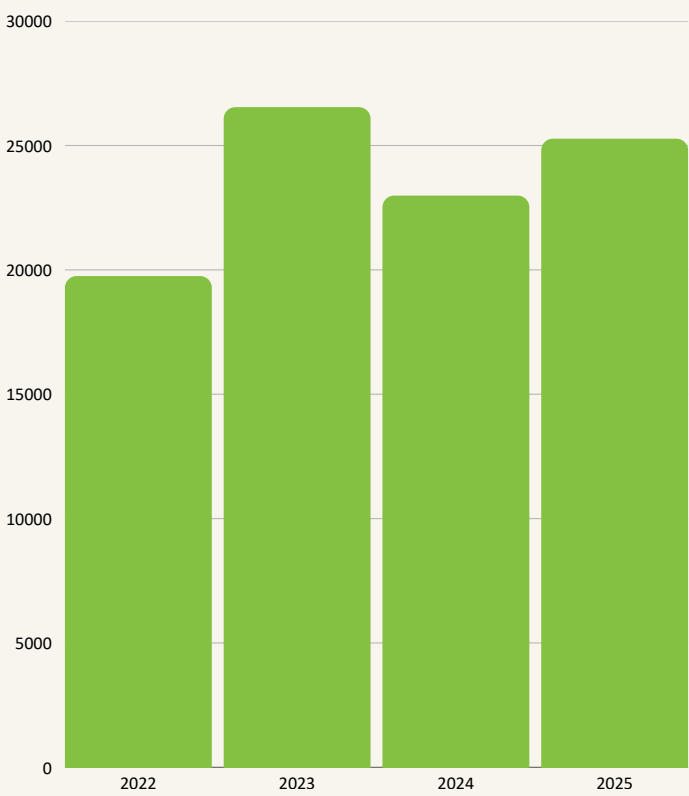


SHOW STATISTICS

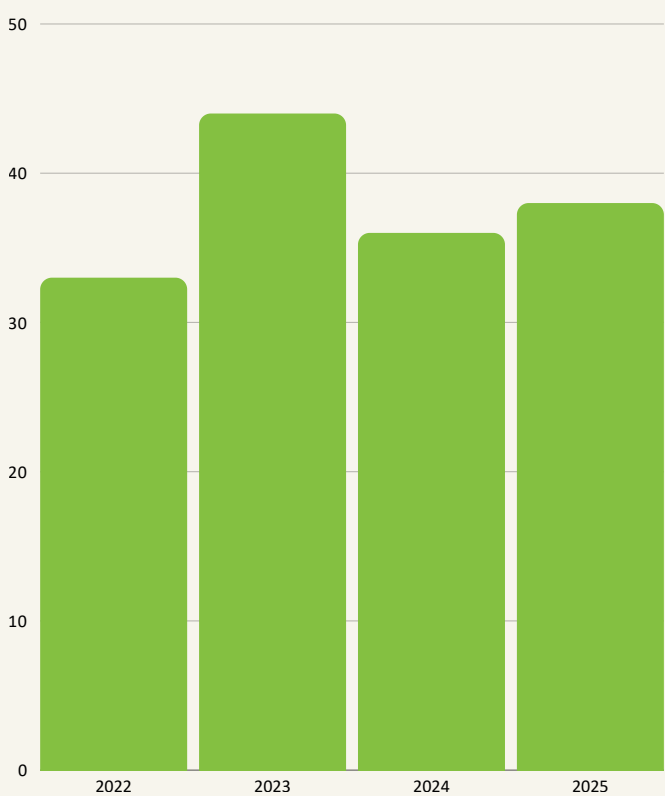
VENUES & DATES

STATE	VENUE	DATES	SHOWS
ACT	Canberra Theatre	4 - 6 August, 18 September	4
NSW	NIDA	6 - 7 August, 15 - 17 September	5
	Riverside Theatres	29 - 31 July	3
	WIN Entertainment Centre	15 August	1
	The NEX	14 August	1
QLD	Logan Entertainment Centre	18 - 21 August, 9 - 10 September	6
	The Events Centre	31 July	1
SA	Norwood Concert Hall	4 - 8 August, 11 - 12 September	7
VIC	Clocktower Centre	22 - 24 July, 11 - 12 September	5
	Frankston Arts Centre	12 - 14 August, 8 September	4
WA	His Majesty's Theatre	19 August	1

AUDIENCE MEMBERS



LIVE SHOWS





2025 WHAT A YEAR!



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARDS

AWARDED FOR AN OUTSTANDING STORY-DANCE ON THE THEME OF MIND OVER MATTER, RAISING AWARENESS, AND EXCELLING IN THE PERFORMING ARTS.



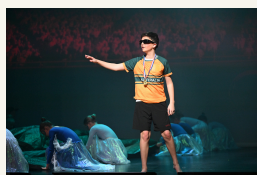
MAJURA PRIMARY SCHOOL
Wakakirri Primary, ACT Region
"Courage, Intelligence, Heart Oh My"



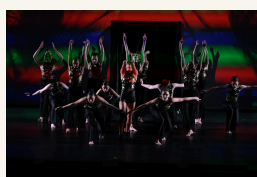
MELBA COPLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL
Wakakirri Secondary, ACT Region
"Winds In The East"



HORNSBY SOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL
Wakakirri Primary, NSW Region
"Unbreakable Steps"



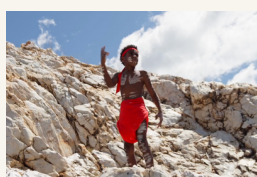
GREEN POINT CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
Wakakirri Primary, NSW Region
"The Light I See"



**TUGGERAH LAKES SECONDARY COLLEGE
TUMBI UMBI CAMPUS**
Wakakirri Secondary, NSW Region
"Mind Over Matter"



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE, CASINO
Wakakirri Video - Secondary Division
"I say, you are beautiful"



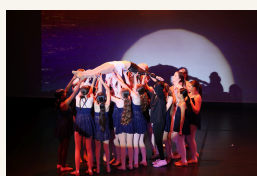
WEIR STATE SCHOOL
Wakakirri Video - Primary Division
"Didgeridoo Dreaming"



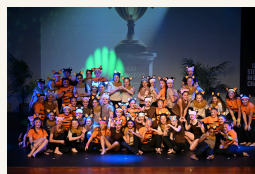
MANGO HILL STATE SCHOOL
Wakakirri Primary, QLD Region
"Respect"



ITHACA CREEK STATE SCHOOL
Wakakirri Primary, QLD Region
"Shine Through The Storm"



VARSITY COLLEGE
Wakakirri Secondary, QLD Region
"True Spirit"



ST FRANCIS SCHOOL, LOCKLEYS
Wakakirri Primary, SA Region
"Courageous Creatures"



MCLAREN VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL
Wakakirri Primary, SA Region
"Echoes of a Sleepless Mind"



ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI COLLEGE
Wakakirri Secondary, SA Region
"Dancing In The Dark"



SALTWATER P-9 COLLEGE
Wakakirri Primary, VIC Region
"Full Circle"



JELLS PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
Wakakirri Primary, VIC Region
"Happily Ever Themselves"



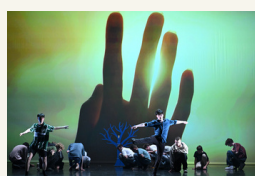
THE SCOTS SCHOOL, ALBURY
Wakakirri Secondary, VIC Region
"I'm With Her"



ELEVATION PERFORMING ARTS
Wakakirri Dance, VIC Region
"Mary Pannell – Woman, Widow, Witch?"



BRABHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL
Wakakirri Primary, WA Region
"Little Wings, Big Fight"



TRINITY COLLEGE, EAST PERTH
Wakakirri Secondary, WA Region
"Echoes Beneath The Surface
- Mind Over Matter"

NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARDS

NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARDS RECOGNISE EXCEPTIONAL OFF-STAGE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT REFLECT THE VALUES OF WAKAKIRRI. THEY'RE NOT ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE ITSELF, BUT ABOUT THE IMPACT SCHOOLS AND INDIVIDUALS MAKE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES.



NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARD
HAMILTON SOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL, NSW

As part of Wellbeing Week, students and staff held a Wakakirri Dress-Up Day, all in costumes starting with “W.” Their creativity raised nearly \$400 for the Wakakirri Inspiration Fund - proof that fun and imagination can make a real impact.



NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARD
THE BASIN PRIMARY SCHOOL, VIC

The Basin Primary School, and Mr. Colin Hartley is celebrating 15 years of participation in Wakakirri! We are truly grateful for teachers like Colin. Thank you for your dedication, passion, and the incredible commitment you've shown to your students and the performing arts.



NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARD
RIVERSIDE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, QLD

Students took a powerful journey to Country, learning from the land and connecting deeply with culture through story and dance. Guided by Elder Uncle Glen, they explored The Legends of Moonie Jarl – Mooging story, ensuring their performance was grounded in truth, respect, and cultural integrity. A beautiful example of listening, learning, and honouring First Nations voices through the arts.



NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARD
MAYFIELD EAST PUBLIC SCHOOL, NSW

Inspired by Polina, an 11-year-old girl in war-torn Kyiv caring for displaced animals, students turned empathy into action with a fundraising day. With the support of their community, they raised an incredible \$4,000—showing the power of compassion, creativity, and collective effort to make a global impact.

ACT AWARDS



"I'm endlessly inspired by the electrifying spirit of Wakakirri. It pulses through every performer and team member - a truly unique experience. As an ambassador, my absolute favourite part is witnessing each piece evolve from early rehearsals to the final performance, watching powerful stories burst to life on stage."

- DANIELLE WHITE, ACT Wakakirri Ambassador



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD

MAJURA PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Courage, Intelligence, Heart Oh My"

If we look within ourselves accepting and using our inner strengths, we will be able to pull out the strength, courage, and intelligence to get through, we just need to believe we can.

"The growth in student collaboration, bonding across year groups, student agency and leadership have made all the effort in coordinating our large group, an extremely worthwhile and valuable experience for all. The obvious joy our students feel when performing whether it is singing, dancing, acting or public speaking is palpable, the growth in their confidence, their self-expression and resilience are all reasons why we choose to and will continue to participate in Wakakirri."

- MAREE FAWKE, Teacher



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD

MELBA COPLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL

"Winds in the East"

Wakakirri is a special tradition for our two-campus school, bringing younger and older students together. It's a unique opportunity for mentoring, leadership, and connection across year levels. Students worked collaboratively, building confidence and friendships while celebrating storytelling through dance.



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE

ROSARY PRIMARY SCHOOL, WATSON

"The Key"

After a cholera outbreak in India, Mary moves to England. There, she discovers the key to a locked garden. With her new friends, she uncovers magic that helps bring the secret garden back to life.



"This year in Canberra, the Wakakirri Spirit was truly on display - schools came together to share resources, and high school students even pitched in to help with the primary schools' hair. It was a real celebration of collaboration and community."

- ANNA JOHNSTONE, ACT Show Day Coordinator

NEW SOUTH WALES AWARDS



"I love Wakakirri because it gives young performers the chance to tell powerful stories through dance and theatre. It's such an inspiring celebration of creativity and community. This season, I most enjoyed witnessing the unique ideas each school brang to life and the incredible energy they lit up the stage with!"

- SAMUEL MCKEOWN II, NSW Wakakirri Ambassador



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD

TUGGERAH LAKES SECONDARY COLLEGE - TUMBI UMBI CAMPUS
"Mind Over Matter"

This year's Wakakirri journey has been a powerful exploration of mindset, led by a passionate team of students committed to sharing a message of resilience and self-belief. Despite facing time pressures and juggling multiple commitments, the group supported each other with positivity and determination. Their collaboration, creativity, and willingness to be vulnerable made rehearsals not only productive but deeply meaningful.

Under the guidance of dedicated teachers, the students created a story that speaks to the importance of mental wellbeing, showing that with belief in ourselves and each other, we can rise above negativity and grow stronger together.

- KERRY BANDY, Teacher



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD

HORNSBY SOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL
"Unbreakable Steps"

Following the story of Nedd Brockmann, the item focuses on overcoming challenges through perseverance, determination and mental resilience.



NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARD
HAMILTON SOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL
Exceptional Fundraising Efforts



NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARD
MAYFIELD EAST PUBLIC SCHOOL
Exceptional Fundraising Efforts

NEW SOUTH WALES - CONTINUED



"I love how Wakakirri empowers students to express their creativity and bring important stories to life. I really enjoyed watching school's take inspiration from this years theme & seeing them shine with tales of strength, determination and resilience."

- CHANELLE FREELAND, NSW Newcastle Ambassador



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
GREEN POINT CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
"The Light I See"

Despite being diagnosed with macular dystrophy at age five and losing 97% of his vision, Matt Formston became a world champion Para-cyclist, record-holding surfer, and elite para-athlete by courageously defying limits and pursuing his dreams.

"GPCC are thrilled to receive a nomination for a National Award. Performing our story-dance at this level has been an incredibly rewarding experience for both students and teachers and is sure to have a lasting impact on our school community."

- REBECCA MCKEOWN, Teacher



"Wakakirri 2025 was so fun and high energy! The Waka spirit was really thriving this year!"

- TALIA NICOLITSIS, NSW Show Day Coordinator



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE
MLC SCHOOL - SECONDARY
"Sam I Am"



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE
BALGOWLAH NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL
"Finding your light within"



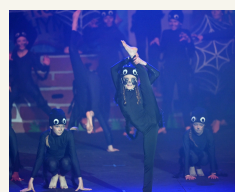
NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE
STRATHFIELD NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL
"Courage of a Lion"



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE
DAPTO PUBLIC SCHOOL
"Dare to Dream"



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE
HAMILTON SOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL
"Fitting In"



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE
ST PIUS X CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Every Crack Makes You Stronger"

QUEENSLAND AWARDS



"I love Wakakirri because it gives every child a chance to shine through storytelling, movement, and imagination. It's a fabulous celebration of student voice, creativity, and connection. I'm a huge advocate for every child having access to performing arts and experiencing its magic."

- NATHALIE COTTE, Wakakirri QLD Ambassador

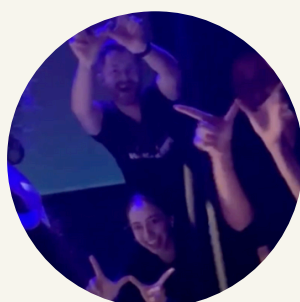


NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
ITHACA CREEK STATE SCHOOL
"Shine Through The Storm"

A young girl battles anxiety, peer pressure, and self-doubt, but learns to trust her inner strength and shine despite the challenges around her.

"We are absolutely thrilled to receive a National Story-Dance Award! It's a wonderful recognition that all the students' hard work, including those early morning rehearsals, truly paid off. As a teacher team participating and leading Wakakirri for the first time, we found so much joy in the process. It's been incredibly rewarding to see our students' dedication, creativity, and love for performing shine through on stage."

- KATE HUMPHRIES, Teacher



"The 2025 Wakakirri QLD season was a vibrant celebration of storytelling through dance. It was inspiring to welcome new schools and see familiar faces return to the stage. A true testament to the creativity and community spirit of Queensland's young performers."

- BRENDAN HODDER, QLD Show Day Coordinator



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
MANGO HILL STATE SCHOOL
"Respect"

A family receives a cat for Christmas but mistreats it, leading to its escape. Struggling, with low self-worth, the cat finds a new family who treats her with respect, restoring her trust and confidence.



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
VARSITY COLLEGE
"True Spirit"

Inspired by Jessica Watson's solo sail around the world, this story dance performance charts her battle through wild storms, media doubt, and loneliness; celebrating her skill, resilience, and the triumphant return that silenced her critics.



NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARD
RIVERSIDE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
Respect, Inclusion & Reconciliation
(First Nations Story)

NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEES

- Camira State School, QLD
- Middle Park State School, QLD
- St Benedict's Primary School, QLD
- MacGregor State High School, QLD

SOUTH AUSTRALIA AWARDS



"It's such a privilege to witness the creativity, passion, and talent of young performers as they take the stage and make it their own. There's something truly special about the way Wakakirri empowers students to tell their stories through performance and I'm blown away again and again each year."

- KATE BURGESS, Wakakirri SA Ambassador



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
ST FRANCIS SCHOOL, LOCKLEYS
"Courageous Creatures"

Our school's patron saint, St Francis of Assisi, was known for his genuine love and care for animals. The theme of our story-dance, Courageous Creatures, highlights that all creatures, even the smallest and most unassuming, deserve dignity and care.

"Students have relished the opportunity to form and strengthen friendships across year levels and class groups while working hard to create, learn and fine-tune our Wakakirri routine in our lunchtime rehearsals. We are proud to know that our passion and determination shone through on stage and are so very thankful to the entire Wakakirri team for their ongoing enthusiasm and support. Chookas!"

- EMMA GILL, Teacher



"What a wonderful season we had. SA schools definitely brought the good vibes and incredible performances. Congratulations to everyone involved."

- SARA CROCKFORD, SA Show Day Coordinator



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
MCLAREN VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Echoes of a Sleepless Mind"

This performance explores how anxiety can turn school into a nightmare—both awake and asleep. But through courage and connection, students begin to face their fears and find their way back to calm.



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI COLLEGE
"Dancing In The Dark"

Inspired by the true story of Alicia Alonso - a prima ballerina diagnosed with vision impairment, but determined to continue sharing her passion for dance with the world.

NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEES

- Morphet Vale Primary School
- Paralowie School

VICTORIA AWARDS



"What a wonderful season filled to the brim with passion, excitement and teamwork! Such an abundance of talent and hard work on and off the stage. Truly moving story-dances and memories to cherish forever! Congratulations to all involved."

- LAUREN JIMMIESON-CRAIG, Wakakirri Victoria Ambassador



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
SALTWATER P-9 COLLEGE
"Full Circle"

Exploring the clash between desire and expectation, revealing how inner strength and belief in ones life journey leads to self-discovery and transformations, ultimately shaping who we become.

"Teamwork, commitment, dedication, patience, focus, and determination, were driving factors that the students embodied. In return this created confidence, self-belief, support and encouragement with a positive attitude and mindset for all students involved. This filtered through the performances out on stage and in all aspects of student's everyday lives. Students learnt that this journey is also about the support network behind them from parents and families, teachers, friends, and all those around them to help make this happen."

- PHILL HADDAD, Teacher



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
JELLS PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Happily Ever Themselves"

This Cinderella reminds us that when we honor who we are inside and follow our own path, we unlock the greatest magic of all: the power to create a life that is truly our own.



NATIONAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARD
THE BASIN PRIMARY SCHOOL
Outstanding Commitment to
Wakakirri



"2025 - Our Victorian performers were amazing, showing exceptional Wakakirri Spirit and stories to inspire others. Congratulations everyone."

- DEBORAH BUBICA, Victoria Show Day Coordinator

VICTORIA AWARDS - CONTINUED



"School-based performing arts programs are the backbone of Australia's creative industries — they're where the artistic leaders of tomorrow take their very first steps. Wakakirri provides an incredible platform for thousands of students nationwide to share their stories on stage."

- EILANNIN HARRIS-BLACK, Wakakirri Victoria Ambassador (Awards Night)



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD

ELEVATION PERFORMING ARTS

"Mary Pannell – Woman, Widow, Witch?"

Our retelling of Mary Pannell's story reminds us not to judge those whose lives are different to ours. Although she was a strong and independent woman, she was accused and blamed for terrible things. Mary was tried as a witch and killed in 1603. Luckily for women and those who choose to live their lives differently to others, times have changed. Or have they?

"Elevation Performing Arts is thrilled to receive a National Award nomination. It's wonderful for us to be recognised for the hard work of all involved - the dancers and storytellers, the creator and choreographer, and all the parents who assisted with costuming and prop organisation. As a dance school, it's such a wonderful opportunity for us to participate, involving students aged 8 - 18, of varying performance experience and abilities, learning from and supporting each other along the way. Thank you for giving us this opportunity! We love Wakakirri!!"

- KATIE DAVIES, Teacher

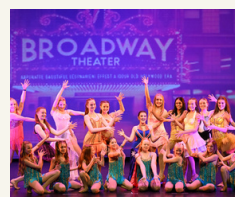


NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD

THE SCOTS SCHOOL, ALBURY

"I'm With Her"

Women's journeys are powerful, and their struggles and triumphs deserve recognition—every girl has the right to grow, lead, and be supported, just like the pioneering women who came before her.



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE

KAREN FELDMAN'S DANCE STUDIO

"Don't Stop Believing"



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE

DROMANA SECONDARY COLLEGE

"Beyond the mask"



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE

NIDDRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Struggling to Survive"

WESTERN AUSTRALIA AWARDS



"Seeing stories come to life on stage is magical and I truly loved experiencing the magic that our young people brought to the stage at this year's Wakakirri!"

- KATHERINE JOHN, Wakakirri WA Ambassador



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
BRABHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Little Wings, Big Fight"

Driven by courage and determination, a group of bees go on a journey to save their hive & protect their world. Along the way, their bravery inspires the Brabham PS Green Team, sparking change & planting hope.

"For Brabham Primary School, this recognition means so much more than just an award. It acknowledges the creativity and teamwork of our students and celebrates the way our school community has embraced Performing Arts as a vital part of who we are. To see our students' voices and ideas recognised on a national stage is something we are incredibly proud of and it inspires us to keep using storytelling through dance to create change and inspire our wider school community. We love Wakakirri!"

- STEPHEN JEFFREY, Teacher



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD
TRINITY COLLEGE, EAST PERTH
"Echoes Beneath The Surface: Mind over Matter"

Exploring the concept of belonging for women highlights the importance of creating inclusive environments where women are valued, respected, and empowered to thrive. We aim to inspire individuals and communities to work towards fostering gender equality, promoting diversity, and building a more equitable society for all.



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE
SINGLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL
"The Peacock's Dream"

Inspired by global issues, we created a performance that gives voice to children trapped in child labour. More than a performance — it's a stand for justice, hope, and the power of young voices.



"2025 was A full-on show with a new venue and close to 500 cast and crew backstage. Despite this we wouldn't have missed the amazing performances, the beaming smiles on the faces of the children and a chance to work WAKA for another year. Wakakirri is not just story dance but talent, joy, opportunity and memories to last a lifetime."

- SONJA PLUMMER, WA Show Day Coordinator

WAKAKIRRI VIDEO AWARDS



"This years Wakakirri Video entries were something truly special. Watching these kids push themselves creatively, discuss important topics and get in touch with their cultures and traditions was inspiring. Everyone should be so proud of what they have achieved. Thank you for letting me be a part of it!"

- DINLEY JONES, Wakakirri Video Ambassador



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD

WIER STATE SCHOOL, QLD

"Didgeridoo Dreaming"

A young Indigenous boy discovers a yidaki, a didgeridoo, an ancient instrument carrying the breath of his people. In his dreams, he sees himself carrying his yidaki and dancing across the Great Southern Land.



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE AWARD

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE, CASINO NSW

"I Say, You Are Beautiful."

"I Say, You Are Beautiful," shows teenagers overcoming body-image struggles, transforming self-doubt into inner strength, confidence, and acceptance, with the message that true beauty comes from within.



NATIONAL STORY-DANCE NOMINEE

NORTHERN PENINSULAR AREA

STATE COLLEGE, QLD

"The Me I'll Be"

In our Community, there are high rates of mental health issues which is translating into suicide and other wellbeing and social issues for our young people here. These people are the loved ones of the students we worked with for Wakakirri this year. Students wanted to share with their peers and other kids that they can overcome whatever challenges come their way. Our 'big kids' wanted to tell our 'little kids' that they can and will make it through their most difficult times, and our big kids will too.

This project has sparked confidence, empathy, and self-acceptance in our school community, proving that passion and resilience can create meaningful art, no matter the size or resources of the school.

"For a small country high school like St Mary's in Casino, this award means so much to us. It shows that it doesn't matter where you come from — with heart, teamwork and belief in one another, amazing things can happen. This recognition reflects the pride and effort of our students, staff and wider community, and we feel incredibly honoured to be acknowledged on a national level."

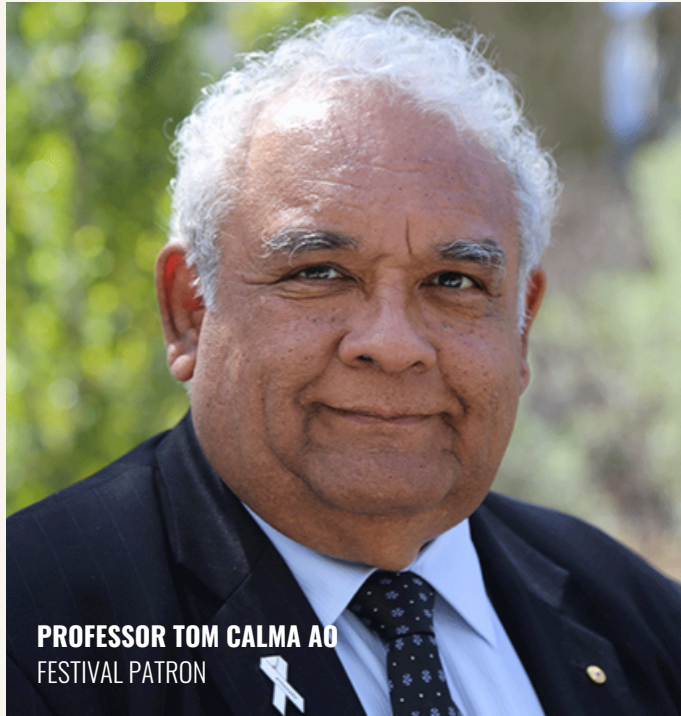
- KEELY MCGUIRE, Teacher

WAKAKIRRI ASSOCIATION INC.

The Wakakirri Story-Dance Association Inc. (WSDAI) is a not-for-profit organisation (since 2004) that uses storytelling, the oldest form of learning, as its focus for providing innovative educational programs to schools in a manner that resonates with contemporary youth culture.

THE WSDAI COMMITTEE

The WSDAI Committee is governed by individuals from business, the arts and education sectors. As an incorporated association, the WSDAI produces an annual report and is publicly accountable.



WAKAKIRRI SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our partners and supporters for helping us inspire creativity and connection through storytelling and dance.

