

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Former CIAF head joins Cooktown Expo 2020 team**

**February 17, 2020**  
**COOKTOWN**

Former Cairns Indigenous Art Fair dynamo Vanessa Gillen has joined the Cooktown Expo 2020 team, bringing a wealth of festival management experience to the role of Creative Director.

Mrs Gillen has previously worked on the Cooktown Discovery Festival, has an extensive background in television and movie marketing in Australia and overseas, and has for the past five years been the General Manager of the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF). Under her leadership, CIAF has been cemented as one of Australia's premier Indigenous art fairs. Mrs Gillen was appointed after Festival Director Merryn Hughes left Council in January.

"I am excited to bring my experience from managing CIAF to this role and to work with the team in bringing this fabulous event to life as we move into the final logistics and delivery stage," Mrs Gillen said. "I'm also really loving being back in Cooktown, catching up with old friends and the arts and business community to help everyone get the most out of the opportunities we have with Expo 2020."

Expo 2020 runs from July 17 to August 4, and will showcase Cooktown's unique story of 250 years of shared history, stemming from the 1770 arrival of explorer James Cook. The three week regional showcase will put the spotlight on the history, adventure, culture and natural beauty of Cooktown and Cape York. Reconciliation Rocks Festival will also feature country music superstar Troy Cassar-Daley, indie duo Busby Marou and numerous local performers.

Cooktown Expo 2020 is proudly supported by the Queensland Government and Cook Shire Council. For more information on Cooktown Expo 2020 or to volunteer, visit the website at [www.cooktown2020.com](http://www.cooktown2020.com) or contact the Expo team via email at [info@cooktown2020.com](mailto:info@cooktown2020.com) or phone on 4082 0500.

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