

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE - Fibre Optic Symphonic Orchestra to unlock regional transformation in Wentworth
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Deputy Premier Paul Toole visited the Wentworth region on 31 January to announce the Fibre Optic Symphonic Orchestra (FOSO) light art installation which will form the NSW side of the Light/State project.

This will be a light art installation combining sound and colour to reflect the unique environment and regional culture through an ambient orchestral light exhibition. The artist responsible for the installation is Bruce Munro, the internationally renowned artist known for the Field of Light at Uluru. The FOSO exhibition in Wentworth and the Trail of Lights at Lake Cullulleraine will form the Light/State project.

Wentworth Shire Council partnering with Mildura Regional Development were successful in securing \$4.99 million of funding as part of the Regional Tourism Activation Fund (Round 2), plus an additional \$1.26 million from other contributors, bringing the total project to \$6.25 million. The project is currently in the procurement stage and installation is likely to be completed in July 2024.

The FOSO installation involves 108 light columns made from cylindrical arrays of fibre optic cables, which encircle an iconic rotary clothes line, the Hill's Hoist. Measuring 2 metres high and 5 metres in diameter, these colours will be accentuated and timed to the music, to create a unique melodic experience. The installation will measure approximately 220 metres wide and allow access for visitors of all abilities. Furthermore, 30 local volunteers from the arts and entertainment sector will have the opportunity to work with Bruce Munro and assist in the installation of FOSO.

A combination of elevated vantage points will highlight the exhibition grandeur at scale and walk through trails will unlock an immersive experience, with lights programmed to change in colour and brightness in sync with an accompanying symphonic soundtrack.

The light art installation will be supported by infrastructure such as roads, public transport, parking spaces and 15 glamping sites in addition to enabling amenities and food stalls or trucks to be a permanent fixture. Indigenous music will also be a feature of the FOSO project, with musical scores and traditional instruments being central to the soundtrack.

Wentworth Shire Council Mayor Tim Elstone said "I am looking forward to seeing this project come to fruition, not only for its economic value but to experience the translation of this amazing concept into the community."

"By creating a new exciting attraction for all the world to see it is hoped that this will inspire our creative community and help provide further cultural opportunities into the future," Cr Elstone said.

Mildura Regional Development CEO, Brett Millington added "We're excited to be able to deliver the whole project of Light/State, which we know will add value to our regional economy and build on further cross-border opportunities."

The FOSO project will attract an estimated 178,200 new visitors and encourage regional visitation. Through the construction of this infrastructure, the project will inject over \$53 million into the local economy and support Wentworth's tourism, retail and commercial industries – unlocking regional transformation.

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