



18 February 2022

DSACR HOSTS ARTS AND CULTURE DISTRICT FESTIVALS

Despite the daunting challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, there is still light at the end of the tunnel for Free State artists. With the current Financial Year drawing to an end in March, and with the national lockdown restrictions being relaxed, the Department is on course to implement programmes that have been postponed in the past.

The following programmes will be implemented during February and March 2022:

District Arts Festivals will be hosted in all the districts of the province during the course of February and March 2022 as follows:

Lejweleputswa District Arts and Culture Festival

Dates: 18, 19, 20 February 2022

Venue: Ernest Oppenheimer Theatre, Welkom

Time: 10:00

Xhariep District Arts and Culture Festival

Dates: 25, 26 February 2022

Venue: Ikanyegeng School Hall, Jacobsdal

Time: 10:00

Fezile Dabi District Arts and Culture Festival

Dates: 11, 12 March 2022

Venue: To be confirmed, Sasolburg

Time: 10:00

Mangaung Metro Municipality Arts and Culture Festival

Dates: 17, 18, 19 March 2022

Venue: Mmabana Arts and Culture Centre, Thaba Nchu

Time: 10:00

Thabo Mofutsanyana District Arts and Culture Festival

Dates: 25, 26 March 2022

Venue: To be confirmed

Time: 10:00

Free State Artists are encouraged to visit their Arts and Culture Centres to register on a database. Selection of artists to participate in this programme will be done from the database as per a set criterion. This process has already started for Lejweleputswa district.

These District Arts Festivals will culminate in a provincial programme called the **Free State Music Festival** that will be staged in **Kroonstad** towards the end of March 2022.

This calendar in the cultural arena will also include the following two important programmes:

- 1) Unveiling of the life-size 3 metre bronze **statue of Mama Albertina Sisulu** in **Tweeling** on **8 March 2022**.
- 2) Staging of **Mine Dance Festival** in **Welkom** on **20 March 2022**

The objective of the District Arts and Culture Festivals and other cultural affairs programmes is to give opportunities to local artists to showcase their talent and also earn a living from their craft. This objective is particularly important against the backdrop of Covid 19 which made the implementation of programmes difficult.

With these cultural affairs programmes, and building on other programmes that have already been implemented during the current and previous Financial Years, the scene is set for the next Financial Year. On the Library Services front, the official opening of **Soutpan Library** is also scheduled to be opened before the end of the Financial Year.

In reflecting on these programmes the Free State Member of the Executive Council for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, Me. Limakatso Mahasa stated that, “As a Department, we are committed to developing our arts and culture sector working together with all our local artists. We understand the negative effect that COVID-19 restrictions have had on this sector and we sympathize with all our artists who’ve had to bear the brunt of financial loss as a result of this. It is for this reason that we have initiated programmes that will benefit and empower our artists beyond the COVID-19 Relief Fund that we have previously provided to all eligible artists.”

Issued by the Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation (DSACR)

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