

Ideas Network RN announces 2017 lineup

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ABC's ideas network RN has announced its content and presenter lineup for 2017, readying it further to meet audiences on the platforms of their choice, at the time of their choice. RN will increase its focus on digital output and strengthen its focus on key specialist talk content.

In 2017 RN will:

- Launch a new weekly religion program with the working title **God Forbid**
- House ABC Radio's new Indigenous content unit
- Commission new digital first productions
- Build its capacity as a 'production house' providing expert content-making and genre expertise for the rest of the ABC

Judith Whelan, ABC Radio's Head of Spoken Content, said "The 2017 line-up demonstrates RN's power as an ideas network that provokes and stretches the thinking of existing and new audiences. By focusing on engaging specialist spoken content and reinforcing its lead in the digital audio space RN will strengthen its position as the thought leader in the national conversation."

A brand new weekly program from ABC Radio's religious unit, with the working title **God Forbid**, will look at issues of the week from a religious and ethical perspective in a contemporary panel format. Presented by respected broadcaster [James Carleton](#), with a panel of semi-regular guests sourced from diverse belief communities, **God Forbid** will bring audiences speakers and stories from around Australia, issues of the week and insights into questions of religion and ethics. **God Forbid** will be a multi-platform offering on radio and online with segments filmed for the RN site.

RN's flagship religious program **The Religion & Ethics Report**, will continue, as will **The Spirit of Things** and **The Minefield**.

Indigenous Unit

ABC Radio will create a new Indigenous Unit, housed within the RN network, but assisting and contributing across all platforms in ABC Radio. This new unit will allow ABC Radio to nurture Indigenous content, staff and audience engagement.

[Lorena Allam](#), a journalist, producer and presenter with the ABC for nearly 20 years and from the Gamilarai-Yawalaraay peoples of north-west NSW, will lead the unit as Editor, Indigenous. She will oversee and empower Indigenous content across ABC Radio with a focus on greater digital output.

RN Music

RN will focus on big ideas and big thinking – and therefore will move away from music programming. RN is the home of big thinking, big ideas, and the national conversation. As a result, the following music shows will not return to RN:

- **The Inside Sleeve**
- **The Live Set**
- **The Daily Planet**
- **The Rhythm Divine**

Jazztrack will move off the RN linear schedule but will remain on DAB+ digital radio station ABC Jazz, online and via the ABC Radio app.

RN's flagship **The Music Show** will remain on RN.

Following RN's reinforced focus on spoken content, Double J will increase its capacity around live music recording and extend its place as the home of contemporary music expertise at ABC Radio.

Double J's revised 2017 music content offering includes a daily **The Beat Eclectic** program, a new live music show, **Fat Planet** and **The Funhouse**.

RN Features

RN will merge its Creative Audio Unit, which focuses on digital audio production, and its Features and Documentaries Unit. By creating a single team with a sustainable and flexible structure, RN will provide a strong commitment to independent content makers and a core unit of in-house producers and expertise, working across different programs and strands.

Savings realised from these changes will be invested back into digital-first programming. New commissions for 2017 will include:

- **What Keeps Me Awake?** a seasonal offer hosted by **Kim Williams** which will focus on high-profile Australians discussing what they believe are the issues, ideas and concerns that are mostly submerged in the daily overflow of episodic news and current affairs
- **The Edge**, a collaborative content initiative led by award-winning journalist, presenter and podcaster [Natasha Mitchell](#), which taps into the rich reserves of Science & Health expertise at RN to explore science's role at the heart of some of today's most provocative issues.
- **Arts Weekly**, a snappy, conversational podcast will offer a digest of the best arts coverage from across the ABC, hosted by well-known journalist and presenter [Cassie McCullagh](#).
- **The Real Thing**, 2016's First Run pilot series will return in 2017 as an ongoing RN podcast for the network, with some content then broadcast on RN's linear schedule.

RN's **Earshot** will transmit as two half-hour weekly episodes in 2017. **Soundproof, Pocketdocs, TV Club, Body Sphere and RN Afternoons** will not return in 2017.

RN Presenter Changes

- [Tom Switzer](#) will present **Sunday Extra** as well as continuing to present **Between the Lines**

- [Amanda Smith](#), currently producer and presenter of **The Body Sphere**, will present **Life Matters**
- [Jonathan Green](#) will present **Blueprint for Living** following Michael Williams' decision to leave the show due to other commitments.

Full line-up releases will be available for all ABC Radio stations at the start of the new program year. For more details, please contact: **Louise Alley, Strategic Communications Manager, ABC Radio on (02) 8333 2621 or 0422 348 652.**

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