

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS CONTINUES SUPPORT FOR MELT CELEBRATION OF QUEER ARTS AND CULTURE

25 January 2017 | Australia

Following a hugely successful partnership in 2016, Herbert Smith Freehills has continued its support of Brisbane's MELT Festival, a celebration of queer arts and culture presented by the Brisbane Powerhouse.

Beginning today, the 2017 MELT Festival will run until Sunday February 5 and feature a range of theatre events, comedy shows, art exhibitions, live music and dance forums.

Herbert Smith Freehills partner and Brisbane LGBTI champion Peter Smith said the firm was thrilled to again partner with the Festival.

"Last year's partnership saw us become the first corporate Diversity Partner and it was such a success that we decided to continue our sponsorship and become a Festival Partner for 2017. We are delighted to support this fantastic festival which celebrates the diverse LGBTI community and entertains the people of Brisbane," Mr Smith said.

Herbert Smith Freehills has a longstanding commitment to diversity and a proud history of sponsoring the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras and the Melbourne Queer Film Festival.

In December a new name was launched for the firm's global LGBTI Network, the IRIS Network. IRIS stands for Inclusion, Respecting Identity and Sexuality and is a nod to the Greek goddess of the rainbow, Iris, along with the firm's logo, also an iris. The network aims to support LGBTI inclusion across Herbert Smith Freehills' international offices and is open to all partners and staff, including people who identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans-gender or intersex and their allies.

“LGBTI inclusion is one of our key global diversity and inclusion priorities. As a firm we aim to create a high-performing, diverse and inclusive workplace where people can bring their whole selves to work and thrive,” Mr Smith said.

Herbert Smith Freehills remains the MELT Festival’s only corporate partner and there are renewed calls for more corporates to support the event.

“We received extremely positive feedback from our staff and clients after sponsoring the Festival last year and I’d urge other businesses to get on board and support Brisbane’s talented and diverse LGBTI community,” Mr Smith said.

As part of the partnership, Herbert Smith Freehills will treat clients to a private viewing next week of circus cabaret show Quiver by Brisbane’s Vulcana Women’s Circus.