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Mr VicBears Contestant Guide

So, you would like to be the next Mr VicBears?

Firstly, thank you for your interest in participating in the Mr VicBears Competition!

We hold our Mr VicBears competition each year as part of our VicBears BearFEST in January and February. This is an important time of year for us as it forms part of the LGBTI community wide Midsumma Festival.

We warmly welcome your interest and hope that this guide provides you with the information you need to understand what you have to offer at the next Mr VicBears competition and to the Victorian bear community.

If you need any further information or have any questions, we suggest you take some time and check out photos from previous years via our facebook page [facebook.com/vicbearsinc](https://www.facebook.com/vicbearsinc). Alternately you can contact us direct at president@vicbears.org.au with any questions.

Once again, thank you for your interested and good luck!

Am I eligible to enter?

Entering the Mr VicBears Competition is open to any current VicBears member who resides in Victoria.

The title holder is strongly encouraged to represent the VicBears community as part of the Southern HiBearnation Mr Australasia Bear Competition during their title holder year.

If the winner is unable to enter the Mr Australasia Bear Competition due to extenuating circumstances, the VicBears committee may choose to call the first runner up to enter in their place instead.

How do I enter?

To enter the Mr VicBears Contest, you must:

- Email president@vicbears.org.au as soon as possible to ensure we can advertise your participation via our social media accounts.
- Provide your full name and contact phone number
- A high-resolution electronic photo of yourself (head and shoulders). This photo can be taken on your phone so long as it is high enough resolution to be printed.

A webform will also be made available via the VicBears website to capture all the required information - <http://www.vicbears.org.au>



What do I need to know?

The format for the Mr VicBears Contest hasn't changed in the last few years, so hopefully a lot of this is familiar to you. It's also the format we use during our Mr Australasia Bear competition, so consider it good practice! The three rounds and what they involve are described in detail below.

1. Bear Wear (5 mins per Contestant)

Wearing casual clothing you would normally go out in, we will invite you to have a brief chat with the hosts on stage. This is the perfect opportunity for the community to get to know you a little better!

Be prepared to answer questions about yourself, your bear club/community and what it means to you to be part of the community.

2. Bear Minimum (3 mins per contestant)

Think of it as an opportunity to show yourself off and wear as little as you like! Strip down on stage or come out as bare as you dare. Get creative, entertain and show us your minimum!

3. Bear Fantasy or Talent (5 mins per contestant)

Now's your chance to show off your creative side. Get adventurous and impress the crowd with a demonstration of your talents or act out your ultimate fantasy/desires. Get help from friends on stage if you like, use props and entertain, excite and let the crowd see your skills! It's show time!

A competition coordinator will be available to go through your ideas with you. We strongly encourage you discussing your ideas with him early to ensure you have enough time to prepare props, arrange for others to join you on stage and make the most of the time you have in the spotlight.

What things can't I do?

While we always encourage you to be as creative as you like and to go all out to put on a great show during the contest, there are limitations and restrictions we all need to abide by.

We ask that you ensure your time on stage complies with the following:

- No open flames, use of fire, or pyrotechnics anywhere within the venue.
- If liquids are being used, the use and clean-up of these must be discussed and agreed to prior to the competition.
- If you are using your own music, please ensure you provide the tracks to the committee in advance so that we can ensure they are available for you on the night.

Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee being able to make all your fantasies a reality, especially not at short notice. Make sure you give us as much time as possible to help you out.

Will I get a chance to practice?

An opportunity to rehearse your "performances" will be made available to you prior to the event. This will be at a time convenient to our amazing hosts at the Laird and unfortunately cannot be changed once set. We must be mindful that the Laird are quite busy and thankful for any time they provide to the bear community.

If for whatever reason you cannot attend at the time made available by the Laird, you will sadly not be able to get another opportunity to practice before your big night.



How will the results be determined?

A panel of judges, comprising of key people from the bear community and our sponsors will be assembled on the night. They will follow set criteria to determine which of the Mr VicBears Contestants is best suited for the title.

The judges will assess each contestant for how well they embody the ideal of being a bear, as well as specific criteria during each of the rounds on stage:

- **Confidence** - how well the contestant conducts himself.
- **Communication skills** - the extent to which the contestant communicates with the audience
- **Community** - evidence of contestant involvement in the bear community.
- **Creativity** - the “wow” factor
- **Commitment to our “Bear Ideals”** - a compassionate nature, responsibility toward the gay community and spirit of playfulness.

Will there be Audience Voting?

Yes! We let the audience have their say through online voting. A special online voting form will be made available via the VicBears social media and website.

- The link will only be active from **8:00pm AEST** on the night of the competition.
- You can encourage your friends and network to vote for you.
- Contestant bio’s will be available on the VicBears social media and website prior to the competition night, allowing bears from around the world to see parts of the contest and vote.
- We will also be live streaming parts of the evening performance to assist with public voting.
- At The Laird, specially printed posters will be displayed around the venue allowing the audience to simply scan a code with their smart phone and vote.
- The form is set to only permit one vote per person per device/ISP address.

How are the votes tallied?

Judges voting will be collected on the night via an online form with structured questions and criteria to complete. Every judge has the same form to complete online for each contestant, and the scores are calculated electronically.

The audience voting will then be added to the judges scores and will be counted as the equivalent of a single judge to ensure fairness.

It is a condition of entry to the competition that you accept the judges’ decision as final.



What is in it for me?

The contestant who is awarded Mr VicBears will receive:

- The glory of being Mr VicBears!
- A custom-made leather sash, created by Laurie Lane
- Support from the VicBears Committee for the Mr Australasia Bear Contest during their title holder year.
- Sponsor donated prizes as declared before the competition night.

What is in it for my community?

The contestant who is awarded Mr VicBears will be expected to:

- Represent the bear community throughout Australia during their title holding year at various social events or whenever they choose to wear their sash.
- Represent VicBears during events such as Mr Australasian Bear Contest in June and Midsumma Pride March during February of their title holding year.
- Be available at the following Mr VicBears contest at the end of their title holding year to award a sash to the next Mr VicBears holder.

Where do I find out more?

Who will the judges be?

We plan to have between 3-4 local judges, one of which will be the President of VicBears.

Where can I get more information?

The above guide is provided to answer as many of your questions as possible. We know you might need more help in deciding whether you wish to take part in the competition though.

If you have any further questions about participating in the Mr VicBears Contest this year, please contact the VicBears President at president@vicbears.org.au

We encourage you to seek the support and input from Peter, Contestant Coordinator to help you bring your ideas on stage to life.

Our contestant co-ordinator this year will once again be Peter Callaghan. Peter has been an amazingly dedicated supporter of VicBears and our contestants for many years and is an amazing wealthy of knowledge about what does and what does not work in regard to the competition.

Peter can be contacted via:

- **Mobile:** 0433 177 950
- **Email:** teddybearpete@gmail.com