



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **FESTPAC HAWAII OFFICIALS POSTPONE INTERNATIONAL EVENT IN LIGHT OF CORONAVIRUS CONCERNS**

**HONOLULU, HI** – Event organizers for the 13th Festival of the Pacific Arts & Culture or FESTPAC announced today it will postpone the international event due to growing global concerns over the COVID-19 outbreak. Hawai'i was to host FESTPAC 2020 for eleven days in June 2020. FESTPAC organizers stressed the priority of health and safety for Hawai'i residents and for all festival participants, and will continue to monitor developments surrounding COVID-19. Currently, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Hawai'i.

In 2016, Guam hosted the 12th FESTPAC, which drew a reported 90,000 visitors. Hawai'i will remain the host for the 13th FESTPAC; however, rescheduled dates will be forthcoming. In the meantime, the FESTPAC Commission will continue its work planning for the historic occasion.

“FESTPAC planning will continue in order to ensure that Hawai'i is prepared to be an outstanding host to our Pacific Island cousins and all who participate in this life-changing event,” said Senator J. Kalani English, FESTPAC Hawai'i Chairman. “We want to thank all of our sponsors, supporters, and all those who have expressed interest in helping with FESTPAC Hawai'i. Their assistance and ongoing support are critically important because even with this postponement, the festival will come sooner than we think.”

FESTPAC is a traveling festival hosted every four years by a different nation in the Pacific. It was started by the Pacific Community as a means to stem erosion of traditional cultural practices by sharing and exchanging culture at each festival. The first South Pacific Arts Festival was held in Fiji in 1972, and the name and participating nations have evolved into the Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture we know today. Only one festival has been postponed since its inception – the 1984 festival slated for New Caledonia was postponed one year and relocated to French Polynesia due to political unrest.

Updates for FESTPAC Hawai'i will be posted at [www.festpachawaii.org](http://www.festpachawaii.org).

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