

Australian Arts

Strategic directions



Australian arts for all. All for Australian arts.

**The Australia Council for the Arts
is the Australian Government's arts
funding and advisory body.**

**Our vision is to enrich our nation
by supporting the practice and
enjoyment of the arts through:**

- funding and supporting Australian artists and arts organisations to create excellent art
- preserving, maintaining and developing the distinctive features of Australian culture
- ensuring that all Australians have the opportunity to engage with the arts and enjoy a rich cultural life
- shaping a future in which the arts play a meaningful and vital role in the everyday lives of Australians and their communities.

We achieve this by:

- investing in artistic production and the development of artistic practice
- supporting the presentation of distinctive Australian cultural work, nationally and internationally
- promoting understanding, enjoyment, participation and appreciation of the arts
- developing the capacity of Australia's creative arts sector
- providing policy development, research, promotional and advisory services.

**To learn more about our grants,
visit: www.australiacouncil.gov.au/grants
or phone 1800 226 912 (TTY 1800 555 677)
for a copy of our *Arts Funding Guide*.**

The Australia Council respects Indigenous communities and cultures. Readers should be aware that this publication may contain images or references to members of the Indigenous community who have passed away.

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The Australia Council is committed to giving all Australians the opportunity to participate in and enjoy the arts. Across council, we support initiatives that are socially and culturally inclusive through a Cultural Engagement Framework (CEF) which recognises the unique qualities of:

- Indigenous Australians
- people with a disability
- multicultural Australia
- young people
- regional and marginalised communities.

Hannacrobatix circus performers Hannah Cryle and Caroline Walsh on the double trapeze.

Photo: Jo Duck, courtesy Hannacrobatix.

Our organisation

Three Australia Council divisions deliver support for artists and arts organisations.

The **Arts Funding** Division delivers grants and initiatives to support artists and arts organisations in the fields of dance, music, theatre, visual arts, literature, community partnerships and inter-arts. Its current goals are to:

- strengthen the sector through greater diversity and leadership initiatives
- encourage, stimulate and celebrate outstanding and innovative new work
- deliver more funding to individual artists
- increase arts content for the National Broadband Network and awareness of rights and intellectual property issues
- increase national and international exposure of Australian art and artists.

The **Arts Organisations** Division comprises Major Performing Arts (MPA) – which ensures that Australia's 28 major performing arts companies are artistically vibrant, financially viable and broadly accessible – and Key Organisations, which is responsible for managing relationships with approximately 140 triennially-funded arts organisations. Its current goals are to:

- improve cooperation across the sector
- encourage the public to connect with arts organisations
- strengthen arts organisations so they are sustainable
- recognise and promote artistic vibrancy
- improve efficiency and accountability.

The **Arts Development** Division increases the visibility and viability of Australian arts with programs and initiatives that complement the sector plans of the artform boards. It is responsible for:

- connecting Australian art with markets and audiences, nationally and internationally
- building knowledge via research and evaluation
- strategic investment and initiatives to help artists reach their full potential.

Bangarra Dance Theatre
production of *Mathinna*.
Dancers: Elma Kris and
Patrick Thaiday.

Photo: Jeff Busby, courtesy
Bangarra Dance Theatre.





Additionally, the **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts** Division assists Indigenous people to claim, control and enhance their cultural inheritance by funding the development and promotion of traditional and contemporary arts practices and new forms of cultural expression by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in urban, regional and remote areas. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board is the only independent national Indigenous decision-making body supporting the arts. Its current goals are to:

- coordinate and engage a range of partners to increase creative and cultural leadership opportunities for Indigenous artists, artswriters and organisations
- develop and implement collaborative cross council strategies for emerging, mid-career and established Indigenous artists and artswriters
- develop and promote innovative artistic opportunities and projects by engaging with the Indigenous arts sector
- explore and promote the use of digital media to increase the engagement of Indigenous artists and to facilitate their creative works to wider audiences
- identify and promote the participation of Indigenous artists and organisations in programs
- maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of divisional operations.

The **Office of the CEO** is responsible for the Australia Council's government, stakeholder and public relations. It manages the council's secretariat and includes Marketing and Communication, Legal and Compliance and Artsupport Australia, an initiative to grow cultural philanthropy for artists and arts organisations.

The **Corporate Resources** Division is responsible for council's finance, human resources, information technology, property management and information services.

Our strategic plan is reviewed annually and is based on the advice and planning processes of our artform boards or committees. These are made up of peers who are practicing artists, people working in or associated with the arts or community interest representatives.

With input from their sectors and the assistance of our leadership team, the artform boards or committees develop three-year plans to maintain sectors which are artistically vibrant, innovative, diverse and accessible.

These sector plans guide council's strategies, initiatives and grants to artists and arts organisations and influence our decisions about new policy proposals to government. They also help to shape our Strategic Priorities for the year.

The issues, plans and priorities of the 140 plus small to medium-sized arts organisations (managed by Key Organisations) as well as Australia's 28 major performing arts companies (managed by the Major Performing Arts Board) provide further input to our planning process.

Artform sector plans 2010-2012

The full sector plans can be found in *The Arts* section of our website: www.australiacouncil.gov.au

	Theatre	Music	Literature	Visual Arts
	The Theatre Board supports contemporary Australian theatre and other forms of performance-making, including multi-disciplinary works.	The Music Board supports Australian music-making regardless of style or genre and helps more Australians experience the artform.	The Literature Board supports writing in fiction, literary non-fiction, children's and young adult writing, poetry and creative writing for performance or new media. It seeks to broaden the readership of works by Australian authors.	The Visual Arts Board represents visual and media arts, craft and design practitioners and seeks to bring the best quality art to the Australian public.
Goals and priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ support the best artists to realise their work, recognising the value of diversity ■ develop the skills and opportunities of theatre artists and cultural leaders ■ increase national and international markets for high-quality contemporary theatre work ■ increase opportunities for smaller companies and independent artists ■ increase interconnections between all parts of the sector ■ enhance the sustainability of Key Organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ promote collaboration, innovation and excellence in the creation and presentation of music ■ support initiatives and organisations that provide artistic leadership or essential support for musicians and composers ■ enhance the creative and professional skills of the sector ■ increase national and international audiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ support the creation of vibrant new work through grant programs ■ encourage the appreciation of literature for and by young Australians ■ promote Australian literature overseas ■ promote effective professional development for authors and publishers ■ support literature in digital media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ increase support for artists, designers and craftspeople to produce outstanding new work ■ seek new international opportunities for Australian artists, designers and craftspeople ■ support organisations that reflect best practice management and maximise support for Australian visual artists ■ encourage philanthropic partnerships, opportunities for Australian curators and digital projects.

Dance

The Dance Board fosters the development and growth of Australian dance to express the spirit of our country.

- more innovative Australian dance through support for key dance organisations and collaborative projects
- more opportunities to see and participate in Australian dance nationally and internationally
- growth in the range of sustainable careers for dance artists
- maximise resources to boost support for Australian dance via collaborations and partnerships.

Community Partnerships

Community Partnerships connects professional artists and local communities in every imaginable artform to create new bridges of understanding, regeneration and opportunity.

- increase the capacity of diverse communities to strengthen and develop their cultural vibrancy
- increase opportunities for individual community arts and cultural development practitioners to develop and pursue innovative and high-quality practice
- increase cross sector strategic partnerships and alliances, public profile and understanding of the community arts and cultural development sector.

Inter-Arts

The Inter-Arts Office supports interdisciplinary, hybrid and emerging arts practices, supporting works that are new, challenging and push the boundaries of established artforms.

- more artist-led or practice-based interdisciplinary research
- more opportunities for collaboration and innovative interdisciplinary arts
- stretch discipline boundaries and the application of science and technology in the creation of interdisciplinary arts.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts

The Board assists Indigenous people to claim, control and enhance their cultural inheritance and create new forms of cultural expression.

- coordinate partnerships to increase leadership opportunities for Indigenous artists, artworkers and organisations
- develop and implement collaborative cross council strategies for Indigenous artists and artworkers
- develop and promote innovative artistic opportunities and projects with the Indigenous arts sector
- explore and promote the use of digital media opportunities
- promote the participation of Indigenous artists and organisations in programs.

In addition, our Research and Strategic Analysis section conducts an annual research program that informs our strategic planning and identifies further areas of policy development.

Our current research priorities are:

- the public and economic value of the arts
- audience access and participation in the arts
- digital impacts on the arts
- new business models for the arts
- best practice evaluation in the arts.

Visit www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research for more.

Strategic Priorities

Guided by our peers, our committees, our boards, our research and the executive team, we develop an annual plan and Strategic Priorities that focus on gaps and issues common across the sector.

Our current priorities are:

Artist careers

Since 2008, we have increased grants to individual artists and introduced programs to support young and emerging artists. Our focus now is on building programs that support artists through all stages of their careers.

Artistic innovation

This priority encourages artists and arts organisations to innovate, take risks and stretch the boundaries of their arts practice.

Giving to the arts

This priority aims to increase support for the arts from the business and general community through cultural philanthropy, including setting new targets for our Artsupport Australia initiative which has directly facilitated over \$47 million in new partnerships since 2003.

Arts leadership

The strength and sustainability of each artform depends on creative leadership. We seek to explore the characteristics of successful sector leadership and develop programs for future leaders.

Arts content in the digital era

We have an ongoing priority to support the creation, promotion, distribution, enjoyment, access and preservation of Australian arts through digital platforms. This includes exploring new arts practices and content, building new audiences and creating new digital opportunities for artists.





We collaborate with federal, state and territory governments on strategic initiatives to address specific sector needs and opportunities. On behalf of the Australian Government, we currently manage the following initiatives:

- The Creative Communities initiative builds culturally and artistically vibrant communities through the arts. Current projects include music workshops in North Queensland, art exhibitions on Indigenous health in Western Australia, cross artform workshops in public housing estates in South Australia and community dance partnerships throughout Tasmania.
- The Opportunities for Young and Emerging Artists program focuses on skills development, collaborations and mentorships to support artists in the early stages of their careers.
- ArtStart invests in recent arts graduates to help them establish an income-generating professional arts practice.
- The Artists in Residence initiative, in conjunction with state arts and education departments, employs professional artists in schools to introduce young people to a creative arts practice. More than 100 artists have so far been placed in Australian schools and universities.
- The Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy is a tripartite response to Rupert Myer's recommendations from the *2002 Report of the Contemporary Visual Arts and Crafts Inquiry*.

**17th Biennale of Sydney (BoS).
Cockatoo Island installation:
Cai Guo-Qiang's *Inopportune:
Stage One* | 2004.
Collection of Seattle
Art Museum, with
thanks to Shiseido.**

Photo: Ben Symons.
Courtesy BoS.

Outcomes

All Australia Council activities are focused on delivering more to individual artists, arts organisations and audiences.

We deliver over

**\$160
million**

in grants to Australia's artists and arts organisations each year.

We have around 50 grant categories and 40 initiatives that receive more than 4,700 grant and project applications each year.

Each year, we provide around

1,800 grants

to individual arts and arts organisations resulting in the performance, exhibition and publication of up to

9,000 artistic works

including the presentation of work by Australian artists in

58 countries

Each year over

14 million people

attend Australia Council supported events.

**Australian arts for all.
All for Australian arts.**

Australia Council for the Arts

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Arts Australia



Australian Government



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