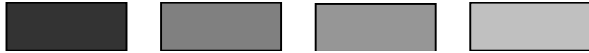




ASSESSMENT REPORT



CULTURAL DIVERSITY CLUSTERS

An Australia Council
Arts in a Multicultural Australia
policy initiative

Closing Date
30 May 2003

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL
372 ELIZABETH STREET SURRY HILLS NSW 2010
PO BOX 788 STRAWBERRY HILLS NSW 2012

Phone (02) 9215 9000
Toll-free (1800) 226 912
Fax (02) 9215 9111
www.ozco.gov.au

THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS EMBARGOED FROM PUBLIC
DISCUSSION UNTIL 30 July 2003

ABOUT THIS REPORT

July 2003

This report provides a context to the assessment of proposals submitted to the Australia Council's **Cultural Diversity Clusters** initiative for the 30 May 2003 closing date. It provides details of the outcome of the assessment and more general comments and feedback that arose from the assessment process.

Cultural Diversity Clusters is a concept developed by the Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee (ACMAC). Clusters are formal networks of artists' groups and organisations interested in exploring and creating artworks which draw on and are informed by a multicultural Australia, to provide a stronger environment for the research and development of art that reflects Australia's cultural diversity.

ATTENDANCE

Ian McRae (Vic) – Meeting Chair - Chair of the Theatre Board and member of Council. Council President of the Victorian College of the Arts and member of the Victorian Government's Council for the Arts

Christine Pulvirenti (Qld) Chair ACMAC and member of Council. Private piano teacher, a Board member and Regional Director (Far Northern Region) of the Queensland Arts Council and a Board member of the Australian Festival of Chamber Music.

Panos Couros (NSW) ex-member ACMAC - Digital sound composer and designer. His range of projects include: *Praeternatural* Michele Barker – Sound design, composition; Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras – South Sydney Council Float – Sound Design; *Son et Lumiere* Project Co-ordinator / Sound designer, Rockhampton.

Lucky Oceans (WA) member of the Music Board – composer, radio programmer and presenter for the ABC Radio National and ABC Television programs *The Planet*, with expertise in contemporary rock, popular, country and world music, and special interests in folk, jazz, country and culturally diverse music.

Sue Rowley (ACT) – Executive Director for the Humanities and Creative Arts – Australian Research Council.

Elizabeth Walsh (Tas) – Executive Producer of *Ten Days on the Island*, Tasmania.

The final assessment of applications took place during a meeting on 4 July 2003 attended by all the peers listed. Prior to this a shortlist of applicants was drawn up during a meeting on 20 June 2003 to which Ian McRae, Christine Pulvirenti and Panos Couros contributed with the support of staff members John Baylis (Manager, Theatre Board) and Cecelia Cmielewski (Senior Policy and Research Officer, Policy Communication Research).

The following Australia Council staff attended the assessment meetings:

Ben Strout
Carin Mistry

Executive Director, Arts Development (30 June)
Policy Projects Co-ordinator, Arts Development (30 June and 4 July)

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Cultural Diversity Clusters is an initiative of the Australia Council's Arts in a Multicultural Australia (AMA) policy to enable networks of artists, groups and organisations to work together providing a strong environment for the research and development of art that reflects Australia's cultural diversity. 'Clusters' refers to groupings of organisations which come together to provide different skills, facilities and contacts.

Cultural Diversity Clusters should involve the research, development and production of cross cultural and interdisciplinary artworks which explore processes that lead to new forms of artistic expression. The objectives of this initiative include:

- To provide a stronger environment for the research and development of art that reflects Australia's cultural diversity;
- To enable a more productive artistic environment for artists engaged with the arts in a multicultural Australia;
- To expand opportunities, and provide the resources, support and stimulation necessary to extend the creative capacity of artists and organisations working with cultural diversity;
- The development of partnerships, which will exist beyond the one-off project and which would lead to fruitful and sustainable relationships providing shared benefits.

The Australia Council commenced a call for tenders to the Cultural Diversity Clusters initiative during January 2003. Advertisements for the Tender were placed in a number of 'ethnic specific' publications and online via the subscriber based **Artshub** and with **realtime**. Articles were included in the Arts section of the Koori Mail on 9 April 2003 and in the Australia Council's *Diversity* publication (February). Information about the initiative was also distributed via a range of extensive internal and external networks.

The Australia Council website hosted a specific Cultural Diversity Clusters section where it was possible to download a detailed tender brief. It was also possible to have an organisation's/group's details posted on the Cultural Diversity Clusters register of interest by simply contacting clusters@ozco.gov.au. Potential applicants were strongly encouraged to contact Australia Council staff prior to submitting their tender proposal.

Ten submissions to tender were received by the closing date. These were assessed in a two-stage process. At a meeting on 30 June 2003 all submissions were considered and a shortlist was drawn up. The final selection was made during a meeting on 4 July 2003 where the panel looked at the proposals, including referee's reports and comments, in relation to the selection criteria:

- The extent to which the proposal establishes that the objectives of the initiative will be met;
- Demonstrated experience in the artistic ability to articulate cultural diversity;
- The relevance of the partnerships which form the Cluster;
- The creative outcomes proposed;
- The demonstrated ability to deliver according to the proposed creative outcomes;
- The way in which the proposal expands the usual set of practices for the arts in a multicultural Australia;
- The demonstrated ability to expand such practices;
- The potential for continuation beyond the stated timeline of the proposal;
- The demonstrated ability to project manage the process proposed;
- Perceived value for funds requested.

The Executive Director, Arts Development of the Australia Council, then formally approved the final selection of the assessment panel.

The successful submission to tender was from the Australian Performance Laboratory at Flinders University, Adelaide. Their proposal will involve a number of established artists who embody a range of alternative cultural frameworks and they will work in a mentoring role with a group of young, emerging artists over a two-year period. A process of research, documentation and evaluation led by Professor Julie Holledge will underpin this laboratory project.

During the meeting on 4 July the panel also discussed a process of communication and review with the successful applicant. This is of particular importance, as the project will take place over two years. The panel also discussed in some detail how to maximise the potential outcomes and impact of this experimental initiative including the publication of research findings, the development of tertiary curriculum materials and the promotion of artwork produced.

FEEDBACK

The assessment panel was impressed with the range of submissions to the Cultural Diversity Clusters Initiative. Most of the submissions represented highly developed partnerships which had potential to fulfil the aims of this project. The Cultural Diversity Clusters concept is both challenging and ambitious. The majority of the submissions met this challenge with proposals that were interesting and exciting and focused on the need to fulfil long term outcomes. The panel noted that the less competitive submissions focused on shorter term projects that would not have the potential to *'provide new opportunities for artists, existing arts networks, arts organisations, local councils, local governments and tertiary institutions to form partnerships which explore creative potential generated by the multicultural terrain of Australia'* as articulated in the Initiative guidelines.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

There are opportunities for artists to apply for assistance through the Australia Council's main grant categories, which can be found on our web-site www.ozco.gov.au.

All the Boards of Council offer assistance for the creation, development and presentation of artistic work. Please refer to individual artform/practice sections of the Australia Councils Support for the Arts Handbook.

Applications are accepted from individuals, groups or legally constituted organisations, but you need to check the specific eligibility criteria for each grant category.

The Australia Council also offers a range of strategic initiatives from time-to-time, so

please also check our web-site for What's New.

Useful web-site addresses

Australia Council
www.ozco.gov.au

Australia Council Audience and Market Development Division – publications and resources
www.ozco.gov.au/audiences/index/htm

Arts in a Multicultural Australia
www.ozco.gov.au/resources/ama

