

Youth Arts Communiqué 2

28 September 2007



Welcome to the second communiqué in the youth theatre consultation process of the Theatre Board of the Australia Council.

Background

In 2006, the Theatre Board decided to examine new ways in which youth theatre companies could be supported, assessed and monitored through the Youth Arts Program Grants category.

In November 2006 Youth Arts Officer Cat Jones prepared a discussion paper for the field, which was sent for responses to companies currently funded by Youth Arts Program Grants. The responses were compiled and presented to the Theatre Board's March 2007 meeting.

In May 2007 the Board published a first communiqué outlining its current thinking and seeking feedback from the sector. The responses were discussed at its August 2007 meeting.

Resolution

The Theatre Board has decided to change the way in which youth theatre companies are assessed and funded. The changes will be implemented in the *2008 Grants Seeker's Guide*.

Here is a summary of changes.

Purpose of the category

The purpose of the Youth Arts Program Grants category is to enable young people to participate in and develop professional theatre practice.

The Theatre Board supports

- *artform development* through the development and presentation of the voice and stories of young people.
- *professional development pathways* that have the potential to help young people become artists or artswriters.

Applications to the Youth Arts Program Grants category in 2008 will be assessed on this basis and new criteria will be introduced in the *2008 Grants Seeker's Guide*.

Three-year funding

The Board decided that Youth Arts Program Grants will be offered for a period of three years. This will give successful applicants greater flexibility in their planning and it means they will only need to prepare funding applications to the Board every three years. The grant amount for the first year will be determined competitively and

will rise in the subsequent two years at the same rate of indexation provided to the Australia Council (in 2008, this was 1.45%).

The process would work like this:

- The category is open to new and current applicants every third year (beginning in 2008)
- A proposed program and budget for the first year is submitted at application
- The program and budget for subsequent years is submitted at the end of the preceding year
- Each year's activity is acquitted with an interim artistic report and audited accounts by 30 April of the following year

A Single Funding Level

The Board took into consideration the feedback from currently funded companies on the proposal to introduce a single funding level and decided not to proceed.

Promoting Growth

The Board decided not to introduce a managed initiative to promote the artistic growth of companies. The new small-to-medium funding from the Australian Government has meant that the Board could allocate an extra \$100,000 to Youth Arts Program Grants budget. This now allows the Board to support the artistic growth of companies through the main funding category without the need to create a separate budget and competitive application process. Moreover, any such separate funding program would lessen the workload benefits delivered by the move to three-year funding.

Further information

If you would like to ask questions on the changes please do so by sending an email to Antonietta Morgillo at a.morgillo@ozco.gov.au or by phone on 02 9215 9107.

Both this paper and the earlier communiqué are available on the Australia Council website¹.

¹ http://www.ozco.gov.au/news_and_hot_topics/hot_topics/program_youth_consult/