

8. Funding for dance

8.1 Introduction

National dance funding comprises support from several areas of the Australia Council, from Australian Government through Playing Australia, and from each of the states and territories.

Excluding funding of MPAB companies, Australia Council funding for other dance declined in real terms by \$1.95 million between 1993 and 2002, and funding provided through the Dance Board declined in real terms by \$1.22 million during the same period²⁵.

Over the 10 years to 2002 the average ratio of grants distributed to grants requested for individuals by the Dance Board was 29%, but for five of the 10 years ranged from 20% to 25%.

During the five years to 2002, there was a trend towards Playing Australia funding being allocated increasingly to the MPAB dance companies.

State and territory funding for non-MPAB dance companies and individuals rose from \$5.43 million to \$7.08 million in the five years to 2002. However, since 2000, while total federal and state dance funding rose from \$19.64 million to \$23.68 million, funding for non-MPAB companies (and individuals) increased from \$11.64 million to \$11.82 million, a cash increase of \$180,000, and an inflation-adjusted *decline* of \$1.14 million.²⁶

Recent state and territory arts policy reviews may provide opportunities for enhanced dialogue between them and the Australia Council on shared priorities.

8.2 Australia Council consolidated funding

Australia Council support for dance includes funding from several of the boards:

- Dance (and formerly Performing Arts) Board
- Major Performing Arts Board
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board
- Community Cultural Development Board
- New Media Board

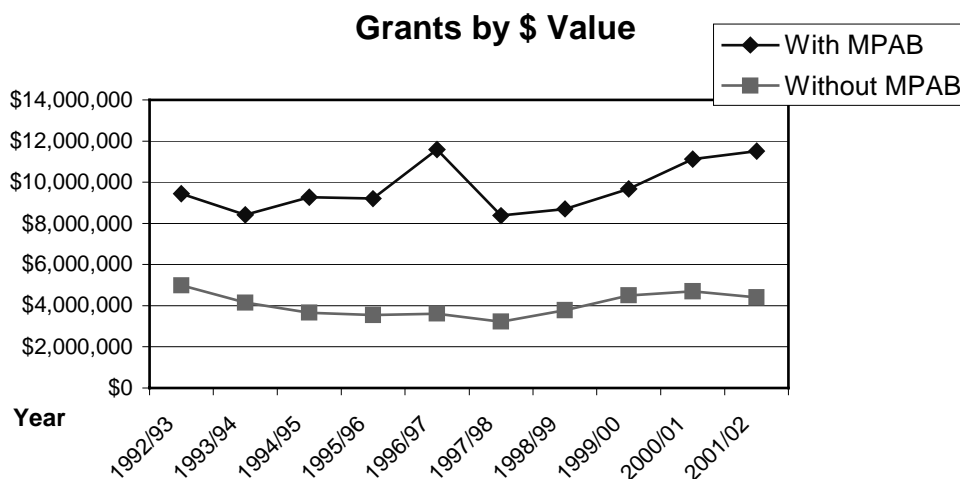
as well as from the Audience and Market Development Division.

²⁵ CPI in December 1992 107.9; CPI in December 2001 135.4. Throughout this report changes in the value of funding have been calculated in relation to prices at the start of the period under consideration. In this instance, if Dance Board funding had increased in line with inflation the Board would have distributed \$1.22 million more in 2002 (at 1993 prices)

²⁶ CPI in December 1999 124.1; CPI in December 2001 135.4

Over the 10 years to 2001/02, the combined funding for dance from all areas of the Council was:

Chart 8.2a Consolidated Australia Council Dance Funding 1992/93—2001/02



In 1992–93 overall funding for dance (including MPAB) stood at \$9.44 million. By 2001–02 this had risen to \$11.52 million. Allowing for inflation, however, this represents a decline in real terms of \$516,000 between 1993 and 2001–02.

Excluding funding of MPAB companies, funding for other dance stood at \$4.98 million in 1992–93, and at \$4.4 million in 2001–02. After adjusting for inflation this represents a decline in real terms of \$1.95 million between 1993 and 2002.

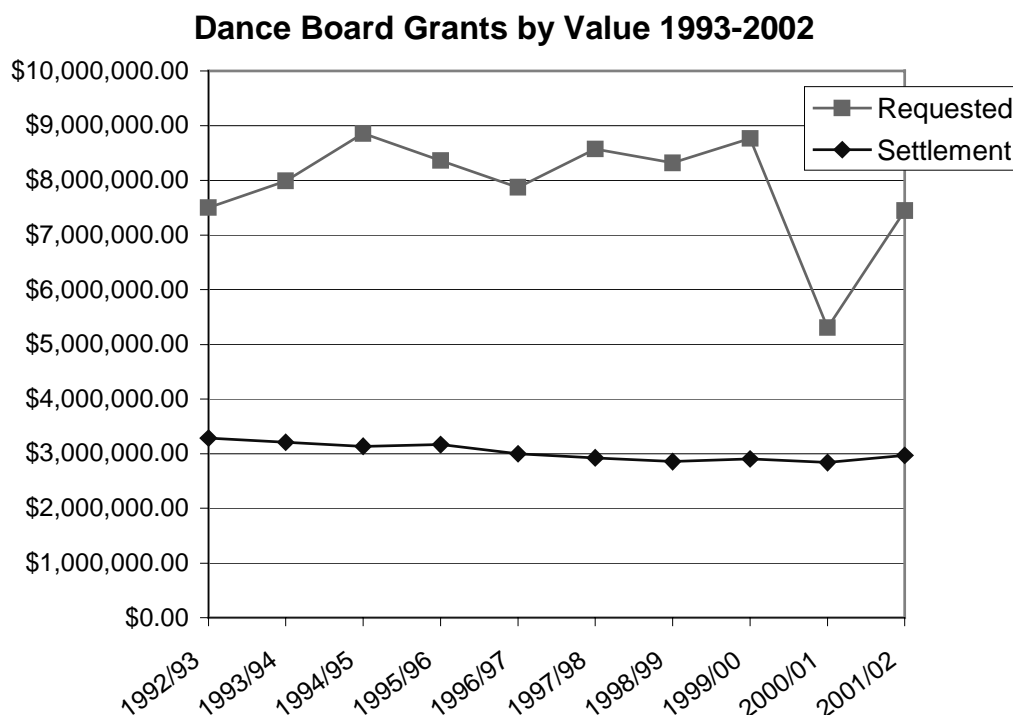
The lion’s share of funding to dance is currently distributed through MPAB, and this has been significantly enhanced by additional funding subsequent to the Major Performing Arts Inquiry. The Dance Board currently distributes approximately one quarter of the Council’s funding to dance.

The spread of dance funding, especially between the Dance, ATSIA and CCD Boards, raises the question of whether more institutionalised and frequent communications might be established between these boards to ensure they are working with common direction, where this is appropriate and advantageous to the sector.

8.3 Dance Board funding

Excluding funding provided to MPAB companies during the early 1990s, for the past 10 years funding available through the Dance Board has ranged from \$3.29 million (1992–93) to \$2.97 million (2001–02). After adjusting for inflation this represents a decline in real terms of \$1.22 million.

Chart 8.3a Dance Board Grants By Value



For nine of the 10 years, the ratio of funds distributed (grants paid) to funds requested by dollar value ranged from 33% to 44%. The increase to a 54% ‘success’ rate in 2001–02 reflected a significant drop in the number of applications, which is understood to have been a reaction by applicants to the very low grants-to-applications ratio in the preceding years.

The number of grants distributed to individuals has ranged from 14 (1995–96) to an exceptional 68 in 1993–94. In most years the number of grants has been between 15 and 30. Over the 10 year period the average ratio of grants distributed to grants requested (for individuals) has been 29%, but for five of the 10 years has ranged from 20% to 25%.

The number of grants distributed to organisations has ranged from 33 (2001–02) to 52 (1992–93). Over the 10 year period the average ratio of grants distributed to grants requested (for organisations) was 46%.

In 1994 there was a reduction in the amount of funding granted to companies via the Dance Board, as major companies’ funding was transferred elsewhere within the Council. For consistency, the preceding analysis excludes major companies’ funding from the beginning of the period.

Thirteen organisations have enjoyed support from the Dance Board throughout the 10 year period, of which four are not producing dance companies; and three organisations have received funding in the last few years only—Chunky Move, Restless Dance Company, and Tracks.

8.3.1 Grant success ratios

Many of the individual practitioners (and project company leaders) interviewed have commented on the time and effort taken to apply for funding; and a significant number indicated that they were now discouraged from applying because of the one-in-five chance of success (more or less borne out by this retrospective analysis). Most of these practitioners do not have access to an administrator, and may be constrained in their ability to spend time

contacting and exploring possibilities with Australia Council officers. They are largely disheartened by the process, even if that process has been established to ensure equitability and prevent resources being monopolised by a small group.

8.3.2 Program strands

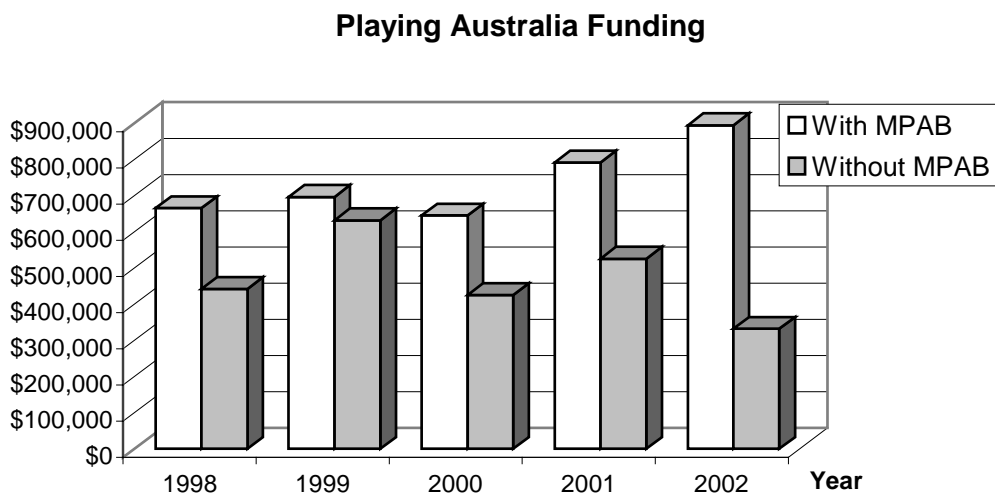
Over the last 10 years, different funding programs have been introduced (or terminated) by the Dance Board, in order to try to respond to the needs of the sector. A description of each of the funding programs and the years to which they applied is included at Appendix 2, along with a full analysis of funding by program.

The success ratio of grants to applications was lowest for New Work (23%) and Development (32%), and highest for triennial funding (94%), annual funding (76%) and special initiatives (74%). In the last five years, the success ratio for New Work has averaged 18%.

8.4 Playing Australia

The Australian Government also supports dance through Playing Australia, to assist with the costs of dance touring across the country. During the last five years, Playing Australia dance funding has ranged from \$643,000 to \$895,000. In the same period (to 2002) there was a trend towards Playing Australia funding being allocated increasingly to the MPAB dance companies, with a decreasing proportion of funding being allocated to other dance companies. The table below is a summary of Playing Australia funding (a full analysis is included at Appendix 3).

Chart 8.4a Playing Australia Funding



8.5 State and territory government funding

Funding data for dance for a five-year period was gathered from each of the state and territory arts departments:

Table 8.5a State and Territory Dance Funding

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
NSW Ministry for the Arts	1,287,000	1,324,000	1,422,070	1,831,784	1,802,107
Arts Victoria	1,483,490	1,965,038	2,010,603	2,377,876	2,068,844
Arts Queensland	2,248,923	2,207,365	2,317,754	2,392,812	2,290,817
Arts SA	1,216,794	1,159,175	1,253,300	1,474,155	1,486,038
Arts WA ²⁷	\$1,300,000	1,443,565	1,510,700	1,792,948	2,643,402
Arts Tasmania	245,038	322,427	325,246	298,071	293,185
Dept of Community Development, Sport & Cultural Affairs (NT)	181,900	166,470	198,615	182,053	193,326
Arts ACT	409,911	282,591	275,000	313,527	487,178
Total	8,573,056	8,870,631	9,313,288	10,663,226	11,264,897

The following table shows state and territory funding data for dance over the same five-year period with MPAB figures removed:

Table 8.5b State and Territory Dance Funding, Excluding MPAB Companies

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
NSW Ministry for the Arts	622,000	609,000	697,070	689,445	710,000
Arts Victoria	1,483,490	1,965,038	2,010,603	2,377,876	2,068,844
Arts Queensland	1,098,445	1,056,887	1,026,494	1,101,552	999,557
Arts SA	1,216,794	1,159,175	1,253,300	1,474,155	1,486,038
Arts Tasmania	245,038	322,427	325,246	298,071	293,185
Arts WA	168,265	343,565	610,700	589,783	837,629
Dept of Community Development, Sport & Cultural Affairs (NT)	181,900	166,470	198,615	182,053	193,326
Arts ACT	409,911	282,591	275,000	313,527	487,178
Total State / Territory Funding	5,425,843	5,905,153	6,397,028	7,026,462	7,075,757

²⁷ 1998 and 1999 Arts WA figures are taken from estimates provided but not confirmed

Combined state and territory funding for non-MPAB dance companies and individuals has risen 30% during this period. After allowing for inflation this represents an increase in real terms of 15%²⁸.

With the exception of NSW, the states and territories do not have artform-specific programs. Dance is supported in the context of policy objectives set across artforms and, in some cases, across broader government priorities than the arts alone.

Recent changes in government in several states and territories have led to policy reviews, not all of which have been completed. This applies in Victoria, Northern Territory, ACT and WA. Detail of the program structures and priorities of states and territories is provided in Appendix 4.

State and territory arts officers made a number of suggestions on possible future actions by the Australia Council or the states and territories to strengthen the sector. These included:

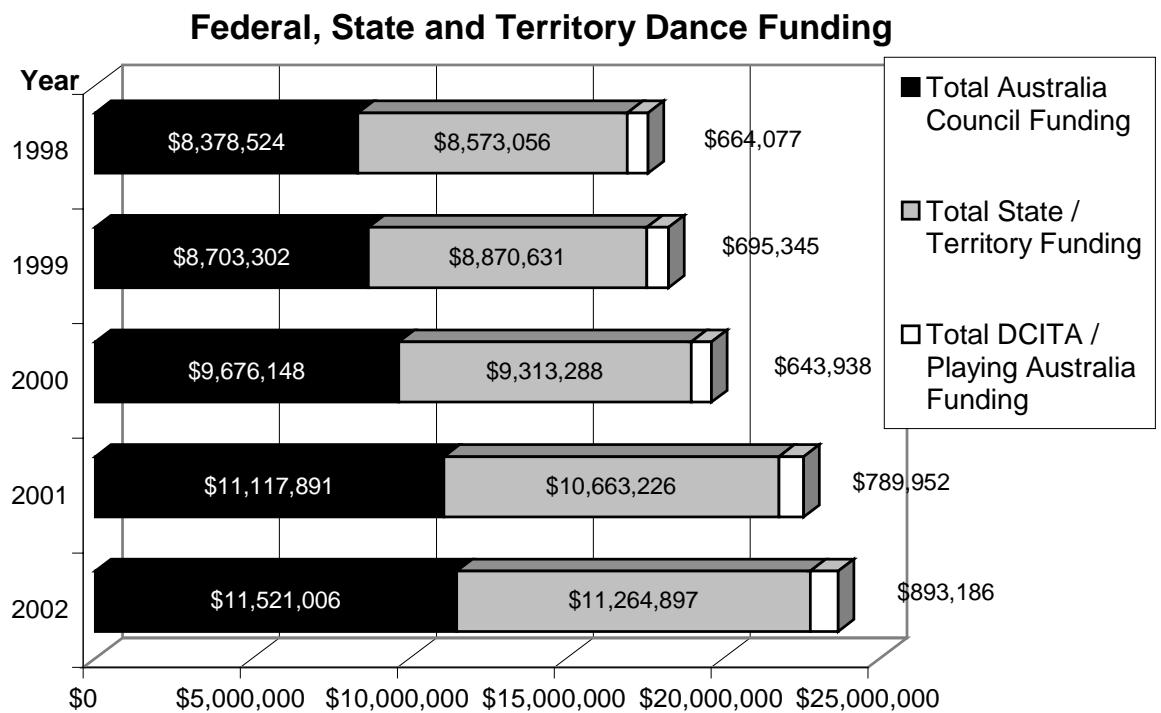
- furthering the common frameworks agreed as a result of the Small and Medium Performing Arts Review, such as common business planning processes, aligned application procedures or timing, and possibly common reporting procedures
- funding fewer companies, but with clear touring obligations in return for a higher level of investment into the remaining companies
- closer consultation between Australia Council and states
- adoption of joint funding agreements for key dance organisations
- adoption of joint/combined programs with individual states
- focusing more strongly on audience development
- establishing a second tier Indigenous company.

²⁸ CPI December 1996 120.3; CPI December 2001 135.4

8.6 Total Australian funding for dance

The combined Australia Council, Playing Australia, and state and territory funding for dance during the five years to 2002 was:

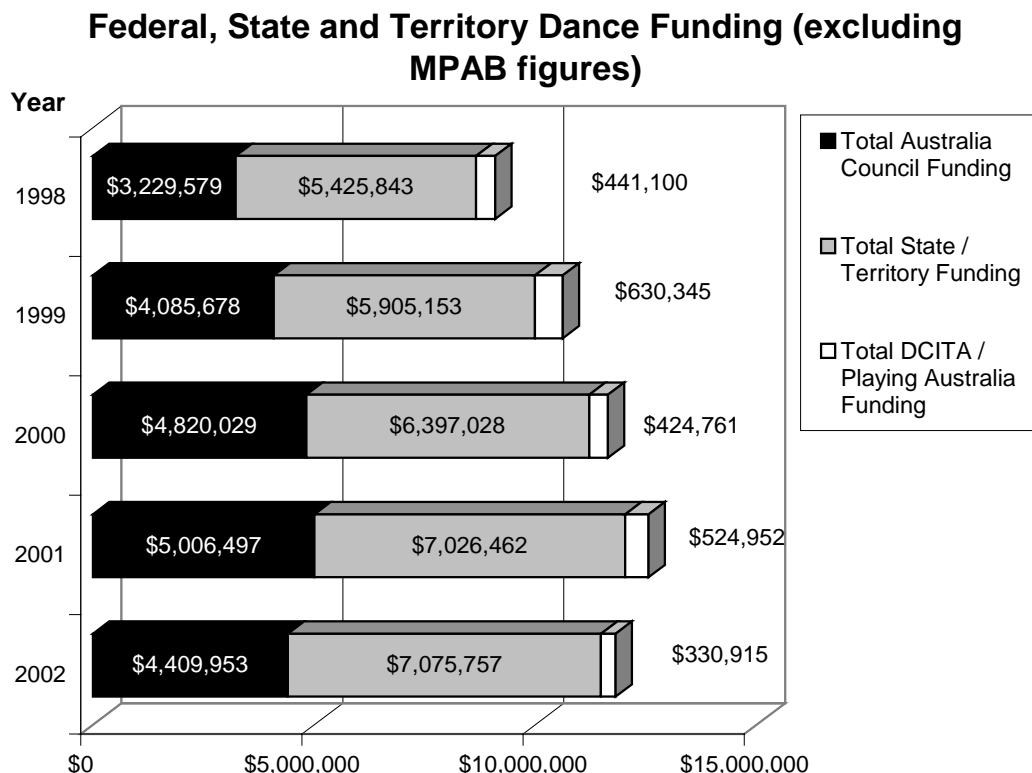
*Chart 8.6a Consolidated Federal, State and Territory Dance Funding
1998 - 2002*



Consolidated dance funding from the Australia Council, states and territories and Playing Australia grew from \$17.61 million to \$23.68 million in the five years to 2002, a cash increase of 34%, and an inflation-adjusted increase of 19.3%.

When funding to MPAB companies is removed, combined dance funding is seen to have risen from \$9.1 million to \$11.4 million, a cash increase of 25%, and inflation-adjusted increase of 10.1% during this five-year period. However, since 2000 while total dance funding rose from \$19.64 million to \$23.68 million, funding for non-MPAB companies (and individuals) increased from \$11.64 million to just \$11.82 million, a cash increase of \$180,000, and an inflation-adjusted *decline* of \$1.14 million²⁹:

**Chart 8.6b Consolidated Federal, State and Territory Dance Funding
1998 - 2002, excluding MPAB Companies**



²⁹ CPI 126.2 in 2000, and 137.6 in 2002