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The Strategy and Policy Division manages Council's policy, planning, research program and promotional activities and advocates to all levels of Government and to arts organisations on a diverse range of issues. It also provides secretariat support to Council.

The Division works to enhance the Australian people's participation in, appreciation, enjoyment and celebration of the arts with and through our civic institutions.

It does this by delivering programs focussed on:

- promotion of an understanding, enjoyment and appreciation of the arts by Australian citizens and civic institutions;
- policy analysis and policy advice;
- understanding key issues and challenges facing artists and arts organisations that fundamentally affect the ongoing development of the sector.

Outcome budgeting and identifies Council's four priority areas. The Minister commended the Council on the strategic areas it has selected as a basis for the achievements of its objectives.

Strategy and Policy was responsible for managing the Promoting the Value of

POLICY AND PLANNING

Strategic Planning

In April 1999 a new strategic plan, *Directions 999–2001*, was published. The plan was developed in line with the Commonwealth's Account Output



Issue No. 102,
Autumn 1999 of
Artforce, the
quarterly
newsletter of
the Australia
Council.

The Australia Council's 30th Anniversary celebration was broadcast live from the Sydney Theatre Company, Pier 4, Walsh Bay on Council's web site.



the Arts research, Youth and the Arts and Taxation Reform. These are described in 'Year in Review'.

Council works closely with organisations, such as the Australian Copyright Council and the Arts Law Centre, on areas of mutual concern to the arts. For example, a common submission to the Attorney General's Department on the new moral rights legislation was made this year.

The Division's policy development work also included formal submissions, such as those to:

- Treasury on the proposed Multilateral Agreement on Investment; and
- the Australian Broadcasting Authority on the Australian Content Standard for television.

The Division continually facilitates dialogue with the arts sector about issues fundamentally important to the arts. For instance, the Division held meetings with a widening group of arts service organisations and networks on 25 August 1998, 30 October 1998, 3 May 1999 and 18 June 1999.

Strategy and Policy's role in relation to the Arts for a Multicultural Australia policy is described in 'Year in Review'.

Council's submission to the National Office of Information Economy about its Strategic Framework for the Information Economy was coordinated by the Division. Some achievements of this submission include the recognition of artists as major contributors to the Information Economy; the need for support of artists to be able to push the boundaries of online technologies; the role of government in encouraging the creation and protection of innovative Australian content; and the need for Australian art and culture to be taken to broad audiences overseas via the Internet.

Government Relations

The Division coordinated all Ministerial briefings and liaison and has established an effective relationship with our new Minister, Peter McGauran, who took up the portfolio on 21 October 1998.

The Australia Council places high importance on positive, productive relationships with State and Territory Arts Agencies. The Chair held meetings with agency representatives in October, December and May and individual visits occurred throughout the year. Council participated in meetings of the Cultural Ministers Council Standing Committee and Statistical Working Group in March 1999.

The Division advanced a new partnership with the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) as a key initiative to reach a major civic institution at the heart of local communities across the nation. The ALGA, established in 1947, is a federation of associations in each of Australia's six States and the Northern Territory. Its extensive national reach encompasses some 750 councils covering 6.9 million households across Australia.

The Division facilitated a number of projects in partnership with the ALGA, including a pilot project exploring benchmarking methodologies in local government cultural development contexts; and the Library compiled the bibliography, *Local Government Cultural Policy, Planning and Development*

The Council's fourth priority is building a greater international focus. To stay at the forefront of arts policy development and planning, the Council maintains links with arts agencies around the world. As part of this, the Director attended a British Council Seminar on Arts Funding Policy in Birmingham in late 1998. All staff use the Internet extensively to communicate with our sister organisations around the globe.

The Division prepared submissions to support the renewal in the May 1999 Federal Budget of five programs totalling \$15.95 million over three years, comprising:

- \$5 million over two years for the Regional Arts Fund;
- \$2.5 million over two years for the Young and Emerging Artists Program;
- \$1.5 million over two years for the Major Festivals Fund;
- \$5.45 million over three years for Contemporary Music Initiatives;
- \$1.5 million to stage the LOUDER Youth Festival in January 2000, to build on the success of the Government's first LOUD festival in January 1998.

Reports on the 1998–99 component of these programs are provided in 'Year in Review'.

Research

The Council intends its investment in research work to be strategic, useful and accessible to the arts community. In August, the Division published the 16th edition of *Arts Research in Progress* (ARIP),



The Australia Council video, *Arts for Australians* was launched by the Minister for the Arts and the Centenary of Federation, the Hon. Peter McGauran, MP, at a function in Melbourne.

a national digest of research relevant to the arts industry.

During the year in review the Australian Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy and the Council developed a major proposal to the Australia Research Council to investigate media coverage of the arts and its impact on demand for the arts.

Headbanging or Dancing? Joint Australia Council, Australian Broadcasting Authority and Australian Record Industry Association research report, was released in late 1998.

In July 1998, John Niland, Chairperson of the Australia Vice-Chancellors Committee, launched the report, *Research in the Creative Arts*. The Australian Academy of Humanities, the Australian Research Council and the Australia Council have agreed to work together closely on matters relating to quality research in the creative arts.

An evaluation of the Partnerships and Commissions Grant Categories was completed jointly between the Division and the Arts Funding Division.

The State and Territory Disability Fact Packs jointly produced by the Division, Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts Australia (DADAA), and State and Territory Arts Agencies continued to be launched around the country this year promoting the importance of accessibility in the arts for all people with and without disabilities.

The Division provided funding to DADAA as a contribution to national coordination costs to support the Australia Council Arts and Disability Action Plan over the 1998–99 period.

SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat provides support services to the Council, its Chair and General Manager, and to Council's Audit Committee, and generally acts as a point of contact regarding Council's legislative functions. Its services include scheduling and coordinating all Council meetings and agendas and production of Council minutes. The Secretariat is responsible for Council records and the maintenance and monitoring of the membership of Council, its Funds, Board and Committees.

Other services include liaison between the Department of Communications and the Arts on Ministerial and Senate questions-on-notice, including those from the Senate Estimates Hearings. Responses to 255 Ministerials which includes questions-on-notice and Senate estimates questions were coordinated in 1998–99. The Secretariat also coordinates Council's nominations and responses to the

Honours Secretariat for people involved in the arts.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Council's Public Affairs Section actively promotes Australia Council initiatives to achieve a greater awareness and appreciation of the arts. Information strategies and promotional opportunities are identified, informed and implemented through close working relationships with other parts of Council, Government, media and the arts community. Relevant issues raised in the media are analysed and responded to on a daily basis.

A total of 53 press releases announcing grants rounds and other Council initiatives were distributed during 1998–99 and Public Affairs responded daily to media requests for information and interviews on a range of issues.

The year in review has seen substantial media coverage of a number of issues pertinent to Council. Major issues include possible effects of a GST on the arts; the appointment of Council's then Deputy Chair, Dr Helen Nugent, to head the Major Performing Arts Inquiry; the issue of 'elitism' in the arts; the farewelling of Michael Lynch and the welcoming of Jennifer Bott as Council's General Manager; the Federal election, which saw the appointment of a second Minister for the Arts, the Hon Peter McGauran; and the issue of authenticity in Aboriginal visual arts.

In August 1998, Public Affairs coordinated and oversaw the Council's 30th anniversary celebrations, the highlight of which was a reception in Sydney attended by the Minister for Communications, Information

Technology and the Arts, Senator Richard Alston, Sir John and Lady Gorton, prominent artists and administrators and a considerable media contingent. The event generated widespread positive media coverage; and a live webcast of the event via Council's web site was also a highlight.

Another major achievement in this period was the production and distribution of the Australia Council promotional video, *Arts for Australians* Produced by SBS Television, the five minute video carries testimonials of some of the country's most prominent entertainment, sports and business people who endorse Australian arts and arts funding. It was successfully distributed to organisations, politicians, and educational institutions as a valuable publicity tool.

A total of 36 publications were released during the year, including four editions of Council's newsletter, *Artforce*. The first issue, a retrospective marking Council's 30th anniversary, carried anecdotal histories of the Council from past Chairs, Managers, Councillors, and artists. The redesign of *Artforce*, which included more news-breaking content, attracted considerable positive feedback. The *Artforce* emailing database was also updated and expanded through a mass-mailout of returnable postcard inserts. Current circulation now sits at just under 10,000. For a full list of publications issued in 1998–99, see pages 181–82.

The section expanded its media contacts to include a wider variety of mainstream and specialist media, and was successful in introducing a cost-saving in-house faxstream media release distribution system. Plans for media distribution via email are under consideration.

Public Affairs also manages the information on, design and compilation

of content for Council's web site. The site has information for grant applicants including application forms, the *Support for the Arts Handbook*, Council policies, media releases, publications and links to other arts-related sites. On 27 November, as part of Online Australia Day, Council's web site showcased a range of projects supported by the Council.

Public Affairs coordinated a major reception in Canberra on 23 June 1999 to announce Council's international initiatives for the next three years and to launch a folio publication profiling some major export initiatives, including overseas tours and opportunities to showcase work here to key international industry representatives.

Advertising and Market Research

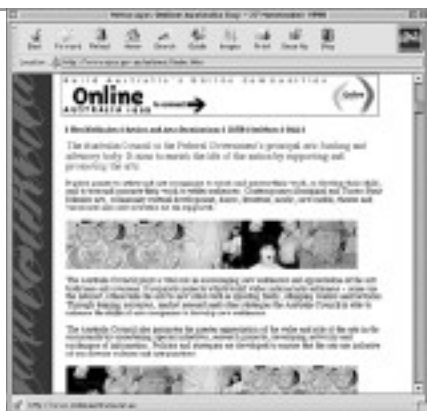
The Council uses print advertising for the notification of closing dates, the introduction of new programs and initiatives to potential applicants to meet with Council/Board/Fund members and staff at forums and briefings.

A new advertising strategy for grants round closing dates aimed particularly at new applicants was approved, to be implemented in the new financial year. During 1998–99, advertisements announcing the 1999 grants closing dates were run in ten major metropolitan newspapers, two Indigenous and ten non-English speaking newspapers. National coverage was given to announce the availability of the 1999 *Support for the Arts Handbook*. Expenditure on such advertising totalled approximately \$109,328 for the year. No creative or campaign advertising was undertaken.

LIBRARY

The role of the Library is to anticipate and meet the research and information needs

As part of Online Australia Day, 27 November, the Australia Council web site showcased a wide range of projects, artists and arts organisations supported by the Council.



of the Australia Council staff and the arts community. This is achieved through identifying, collecting, managing and delivering information in its many forms. The Library coordinates access to a high standard of arts industry and government publications and electronic information. Resources made available include books, reports, journals, videos, CD-ROMs, full-text and bibliographic databases and the Internet. In addition, the Library provides user training in electronic resources including web searching.

The Library engaged in many reference and circulation activities in order to meet the information requirements of Australia Council staff and the arts community: a total of 3131 inquiries (1910 internal; 1221 external) were satisfied directly by the Library and its resources, while a further 170 items were borrowed through the Inter Library Loan (ILL) system for use by Australia Council staff. The Library made its resources available to other institutions throughout Australia by lending 181 items on ILL. Over the last year the Library purchased, catalogued and processed 2357 new titles for inclusion in the collection. The library now subscribes to approximately 300 journals. The Library has 204 readers' ticket holders.

An Intranet prototype for Council was developed by the Library to explore a way to bring together the wide array of

information sources available in and to the Council. The prototype illustrates the incorporation of access to all its databases, as well as the new Information Management System, Council policy documents, other internal documents such as procedures, staff manuals and newsletters.

The Librarian devised and distributed the tender for 'A Study of Arts Organisations' Engagement with New Technologies'. This study will commence in the new year.

