



So, you've got an idea to start up a creative project, you're pretty excited and you think it might just be possible. Where to from here? You might want to jump right in and start organising the thing. Why not? This guide, an initiative of the Youth and the Arts Panel of The Australia Council for the Arts, will help you bring your project to life.

The idea of “managing” a project may seem a little scary when you think about it in the abstract, but it's not brain surgery either—it's more a kind of balancing act. Your early experiences of getting a project or event idea together, developing it, organising it, and completing the follow up work can sometimes be a challenging learning curve.

You will push your boundaries, try out different ways of working and organising, compete for funding and sponsorship, manage marketing/publicity campaigns, create industry networks, negotiate contracts, manage people/employees/volunteers and learn a thing or two about the technical elements involved in your own creative area. This is where the beauty of creative project work lies. You'll get a kick out of tackling multiple tasks and unforeseen problems, and discovering all sorts of talents and skills you might never have thought you possessed. The satisfaction you'll get from watching your project develop from an idea and grow into a fully fledged tangible thing ... well, you'll know about that soon enough. Let's just say that it's all usually worth it.

This guide has been produced by a group of people who have organised their own successful creative performances, products, industries, venues, festivals, workshops, gigs, fundraisers, events, artworks, exhibitions and tours, often from rather humble beginnings and minimal financial resources. We started with just our ideas, but initially didn't really know where to go or what to do with them—many of us didn't even know about funding, or have any “industry contacts” when we first started! Indeed there may not even be an “industry” or “scene” in your area! With this in mind we have included heaps of creative ways to find resources that most other guides out there don't really offer. Fundamentally then our motivations for producing this guide have been to share our hard-



learned knowledge with you, so—hopefully—you don't have to make the same mistakes we did.

Part One of the guide gives a basic introduction to the processes and considerations of visualising and planning an entire project idea from start to finish. More details on these introductory elements can then be found in the rest of the sections. For example, there are common issues that seem to always arise in initiating, sustaining, and managing creative projects, and we've included these in **Part Two** for your consideration. If your project specifically involves managing venues and work spaces, or the organising of an event, or setting yourself up as a project team, organisation or business (or not) check out **Part**

Three for specific advice on these aspects. **Part Four** gives important information on legal aspects that commonly need to be considered in this sort of work, and **Part Five** has a whole heap of contacts of groups, organisations and services across Australia that might be able to help you with advice or resources for your ideas and needs. Finally, informative and helpful 'inside' tips and tales of misadventure can be found in the middle of the book—a series of interviews with various young people who have started up a diverse range of creative initiatives, often from scratch.

Many of the suggestions and tactics outlined in this guide are tried and tested. They aren't necessarily what you must do; in fact, some of the

best projects we've been involved in have cut a lot of corners and ignored some, if not all, of these recommendations. But it is important at least to know what you aren't doing—elements commonly overlooked—and we suggest you might want to bear these in mind. And for those who discover they have a taste for this sort of thing and want to keep going, we also look at the bigger picture: how to build your credibility over several projects so that you can work towards larger projects and achieve more ambitious ideas with more funding, better-quality resources, larger teams and greater responsibilities. So enjoy! And most importantly, enjoy the process!