



**SENATOR THE HON MITCH FIFIELD**  
**MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS**  
**MINISTER FOR THE ARTS**  
**MANAGER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS IN THE SENATE**

Mr Rupert Myer AO  
Chair  
Australia Council  
PO Box 788  
STRAWBERRY HILLS NSW 2601

## **Australia Council – Statement of Expectations**

Dear Mr Myer 

I am writing to you to outline my expectations for the Australia Council for 2017-18. The allocation for the Council in 2017-18 is \$209.393 million.

During this period I anticipate that the Australia Council will continue to deliver against its functions as the Australian Government's principal arts funding body.

The transfer of \$80.2 million from the Department of Communications and the Arts to the Australia Council over four years announced on 18 March 2017 provides the Council with increased resources to support individual artists and arts organisations in the coming years. I would appreciate updates in particular on the transition of projects funded through the Catalyst program, and early resolution with my Department of any issues that may arise. I also appreciate you alerting me to any significant events related to Council activities or functions.

I acknowledge that the Council has developed a forward plan to deliver against the strategic goals set out in the Council's *Strategic Plan 2014-2019: A Culturally Ambitious Nation*.

To assist Council further shape its work program, the strategic priorities that I expect the Council to focus on in 2017-2018 are as follows:

- Implement relevant elements of the Government's response to the Opera Review.
- Contribute to preparations for the negotiations for the major performing arts company funding agreements.
- Plan a commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the commitment to establish the Australia Council.
- Consider opportunities for the Council and the arts sector to contribute to the Government's innovation agenda.
- Contribute data on the sector and the agency's performance to national reporting and planning, including through the next iterations of the artist survey and the audience participation survey.

- Build on the success of the Venice Biennale to pursue opportunities for new sources for co-investment in Australia Council and arts sector projects, in collaboration with Creative Partnerships Australia.
- Contribute to the Government's diversity and inclusion objectives including Closing the Gap, through its programs, processes and Board membership.
- Continue to identify and implement operational efficiencies in line with our expectation that all departments and agencies assist the Government in achieving budget repair.
- Contribute to the Government's cultural diplomacy outcomes within existing resources and in cooperation with the Department of Communications and the Arts, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Austrade and other relevant partners.

I note that many of these areas are already being actively progressed, and thank you for the considerable work you have already done to implement efficiencies and streamline operations.

I encourage you to continue to work cooperatively with the Department of Communications and the Arts and other portfolio agencies in contributing to the Government's policy settings.

I intend to schedule an annual meeting with you and the Council's Chief Executive Officer to discuss plans for the year. I suggest this could be held in advance of the next iteration of your Corporate Plan. This would provide a formal opportunity to discuss the Council's plans as well as Government priorities.

This Statement of Expectations and your corresponding Statement of Intent form an important component of the Australia Council's governance framework. As such, I would expect both to be public documents. I have written in similar terms to all arts portfolio agencies, and have copied this letter to the CEO of the Australia Council, Mr Tony Grybowski.

Thank you for your ongoing stewardship of the Council and the smooth induction of new board members in 2016-17. I wish you success in meeting your outcomes and objectives for 2017-18.

Yours sincerely



MITCH FIFIELD

27/6/17