



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on our cultural and creative industries

The Australian Government understands the serious impacts that COVID-19 will have on our nation's cultural and creative sector.

“Live performance events were attended by more than 26 million Australians in 2018, generating more than \$2 billion in ticket revenues, part of the \$112 billion arts contribution to the economy each year. More than 80 per cent of Australians attend arts events each year; 40 per cent of international tourists attend arts events; and more than 600,000 Australians are employed in the sector,” Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP said.

“Given the significance of the cultural and creative sector – both economically and culturally - it is important we work together on a constructive approach to preparing for potential impacts and fully understanding the support available.”

Whole of economy measures announced last week in the Government's \$17.6 billion package include cash flow assistance for small and medium businesses to support them continuing to pay employees, up to a maximum of \$25,000. This assistance will be available to eligible small and medium arts businesses.

The Prime Minister and the National Cabinet also recently announced that states and territories will put in place arrangements under state legislation to prevent non-essential static gatherings of more than 500 people. This decision was taken on the advice of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee. The arts sector has been seeking a clear directive from governments to maximise the prospects for organisers of arts and cultural events to claim under their insurance cover for cancelled events. Further information will be provided by state and territory governments.

The Government has also announced the creation of a new Coronavirus Business Liaison Unit in Treasury to build on existing efforts to support confidence, employment and business continuity. The role of the Unit will be to engage with peak business groups on systemic issues relating to Coronavirus to ensure these are being addressed by Government.

On Tuesday 17 March 2020, Minister Fletcher will convene a roundtable by teleconference with peak cultural and creative industry bodies to discuss the impacts of COVID-19 and the applicability to the cultural and creative sector of support arrangements announced by Government to date.

Further health information about the COVID-19 pandemic can be found at www.health.gov.au.

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