



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

Mr Sam Walsh AO  
Chair  
Australia Council  
PO Box 788  
STRAWBERRY HILLS NSW 2601

Dear Mr Walsh

*Sam*

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

I am writing to you to outline my expectations for the Australia Council for 2018-19. The portfolio allocation for the Australia Council in 2018-19 is \$208.186 million.

Let me first acknowledge the achievements of the Australia Council in 2017-18, in particular the recent Australia Council and National Indigenous Arts Awards and significant progress towards Australia's representation at the Venice Biennale 2019. I also recognise Australia Council's ongoing work, in cooperation with the Department of Communications and the Arts, to support the Meeting of Cultural Ministers Officials Working Group to identify options to strengthen the *National Framework for Governments' Support of the Major Performing Arts Sector*.

The Australia Council and its Board should continue to foster a strong vision for the Australia Council, as well as develop clear and achievable objectives for its operations in 2018-19 and onwards. This will ensure the Australia Council remains well placed to continue to deliver against its vision of building a vibrant arts ecology by fostering excellence and increasing national and international engagement with Australian art and artists.

I anticipate that during 2018-19 the Australia Council will continue to perform its core functions as the Government's principal arts funding body. I would like to take this opportunity to outline some strategic priorities that I ask the Council to focus on in 2018-19. These are:

- Finalise recruitment for the new Chief Executive Officer of the Australia Council.
- Contribute data on the Australia Council's performance and the sector to national reporting and planning.
- Continue to identify and implement operational efficiencies in line with our expectation that all departments and agencies assist the Government in its effective management of the Budget, including through consideration of the Australian National Audit Office's recommendations as part of the Australia Council's ongoing work to improve the delivery of its grants program.
- Contribute to the Government's diversity and inclusion objectives including Closing the Gap, through programs, processes and Council membership.

- Contribute to the Government's cultural diplomacy outcomes within existing resources, with particular focus on Singapore, India, Indonesia and Germany.
- Seek opportunities to engage with broader Government priorities including the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages and commemorations for the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook's voyage to Australia, and to advise on the sector's contribution to the community and the economy.
- Continue to publish research, analysis and provide advice on the arts sector's contribution to the community and the economy.

I note that many of these areas are already being actively progressed. I encourage the Australia Council to continue to work cooperatively with my Department and other portfolio agencies in contributing to the Government's policy settings. I also appreciate you alerting me to any significant events related to Australia Council activities or functions.

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 anticipate both being public documents. I have written in similar terms to all arts portfolio agencies, and have copied this letter to the Director of the Australia Council, Mr Tony Grybowski.

I wish you and the Australia Council Board and executive team success in meeting outcomes and objectives for 2018-19 and look forward to meeting with you and Mr Grybowski to discuss the Australia Council's current and future work in these areas.

Yours sincerely



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17/9/18