

MEDIA RELEASE

Investment in First Nations arts and culture through Cherish Fund

Monday 21 December 2020

The Australia Council has invested \$1.4m in 37 organisations through the Cherish Fund, established to invest in First Nations arts and culture during a year of extraordinary disruption.

The fund was established in response to the needs and priorities of the First Nations arts sector, identified through sector consultations, including weekly First Nations Roundtables attended by more than 3000 people.

Executive Director Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Lydia Miller said:

“2020 has been a year of disruption, but it has also been a year of reflection, listening, creative thinking and finding new ways of connecting through our weekly online roundtables. This year has demonstrated the ways in which art and culture continue to connect us, despite the physical distance between us.”

“This investment through Cherish offers hope for 2021 and beyond. It will support our senior First Nations cultural custodians and knowledge holders, continued creation, digital adaptation and sustainability business models for First Nations artists and cultural groups, to ensure the continued flourishing and sustainability of First Nations arts and culture.

The sector consultations identified key priority areas, informing four streams of investment:

Living Libraries acknowledges the vulnerability of communities and the need to support elders to ensure the continuation of intergenerational stories and knowledge. Among the cultural groups to receive support Yamaji Art will receive support towards a two-year program *Wirnan Legacy* empowering Yamaji communities in the greater Geraldton area of Western Australia to revive and maintain Yamaji languages through the delivery of intergenerational art and cultural activities; Julalikari Council were supported for *Ngjinkirri - The act of gift giving*; Tjuma Pulka Aboriginal Corporation will receive support for traditional preservation methods of ancient punu (wood) carvings; Walter Waia for SANAW BARISAL (FOOTSTEPS); and Durmu Arts for a project celebrating intergenerational cultural knowledge.

Creative Workforce grants aim to assist arts workers to transform their work for the digital space. Moogahlin Performing Arts was supported for their digital content strategy: *MOOGAHL LIVE and beyond*; South Australian First Nations Writers for their *Digital*

Innovation project; CAAMA will support the transformation of its music department, assisting its long-term term goal of becoming a sustainable record label, studio and artist service run by and for First Nations artists and art workers; and First Nations Media Association for their digital archiving project of their collections.

Creative Practice highlights the need for artists to be given time for deep thinking and innovation. Artists supported include Jessie Lloyd who will develop a book on historical Aboriginal land Torres Strait Islander music; Katina Olsen with *Preparing Ground* a contemporary dance collaboration; Carol McGregor, who will work towards a major exhibition at Artspace in Sydney; The Jo Ze Sparks Pty Ltd for the GUBAL THAYEMIN PROJECT (The Winds of Change); Richard Bell for the 'EMBASSY' Kochi Biennale and Tate: website and podcast to archive First Nations voices; Mykaela Saunders for Blackfella Futurism: envisioning sovereign First Nations futures; and Bulabunmarra Projects Pty Ltd for the project about Lost Eora objects with the Palais de Tokyo, Malmaison and Artspace.

Creative Entrepreneur grants were designed to support new business models and ensure the long-term sustainability of careers for artists and art workers. One of the groups supported via this stream is Tranby National Indigenous Adult Education & Training, who will develop a business model for a First Nations owned and controlled on-line social enterprise that aggregates, distributes and sells culturally appropriate First Nations Australia literature and educational resources. Naretha Williams is supported for the Groundstar Music Record Label Start Up Proposal, Gaba Musik to establish an Indigenous music publishing company and Ngarrimili to support creative enterprise during the COVID recovery.

The Australia Council received a total of 228 applications across both rounds of the Cherish Fund. Recipients include:

Living Libraries (supporting cultural knowledge and intergenerational collaborations):

- Yamaji Art (WA)
- Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation (NT)
- Tjuma Pulka Aboriginal Corporation (WA)
- Walter Waia (QLD)
- Durrmu Arts Aboriginal Corporation (NT)
- Djambawa Marawili (NT)
- Rachel Perkins (NSW)
- Lola Greeno (TAS)
- Raukkan Community Council (SA)
- Numbulwar Numburindi Arts t/u Numburindi Corporation (NT)
- Genevieve Grieves (VIC)

- Patricia Torres (WA).

Creative Workforce (supporting artworkers in a digital world):

- Moogahlin Performing Arts Inc (NSW)
- Edoardo Crismani (SA)
- Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (NT)
- Indigenous Remote Communications Association (trading as First Nations Media Australia) (NT)
- Indigenous Art Centre Alliance (QLD)
- Maruku Arts (NT)
- Ceduna Aboriginal Corporation- Arts Ceduna (SA).

Creative Practice (supporting artistic creative expression):

- Jessie Lloyd (VIC)
- Katina Olsen (QLD)
- Carol McGregor (QLD)
- The Jo Ze Sparks Pty Ltd (VIC)
- Richard Bell (QLD)
- Mykaela Saunders (NSW)
- Bulabunmarra Projects Pty Ltd (NSW)
- Moondani Balluk Academic Unit Victoria University (VIC)
- Jodie Kell NSW)
- Sonny Townson (NSW)
- Gina McGill (WA)
- Short Black Opera Company Pty Ltd (VIC)
- Ninuku Arts Indigenous Corporation (NT)
- Fiona Foley (QLD).

Creative Entrepreneur (supporting business models to expand the applicant's practice):

- Tranby National Indigenous Adult Education & Training t/u CO-OPERATIVE FOR ABORIGINES LIMITED (NSW)

- Naretha Williams (VIC)
- Gaba Musik Pty Ltd (QLD)
- Ngarrimili (QLD).

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