

Arts Nation

An Overview of Australian Arts

Arts Nation is a new report which provides evidence as a catalyst for informed discussion about the arts.

March 2015

WHAT IS ARTS NATION?

The Australia Council for the Arts is committed to providing evidence as a catalyst for informed discussion about arts and culture in Australia.

Arts Nation: An Overview of Australian Arts will be an evolving report which fills a critical gap by creating and interpreting a set of national indicators to increase our understanding of the Australian arts industry.

THE ANALYSIS


With input from key stakeholders, a set of *Arts Nation* indicators was created that cover the breadth of the arts sector. While data indicators cannot represent a comprehensive picture, they act as signposts to help us understand the current situation and how the sector may be changing. The indicator framework was based on a value chain model of inputs, outputs, outcomes and financial support and sector leaders helped to select priority indicators relating to each area.

The *Arts Nation* indicators include substantive data from existing publications by the Australia Council, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Live Performance Australia and many others. We have also created new measures for key indicators such as diversity of artists (the proportion of females nominated for arts awards). Contextual data is also presented throughout the report to enrich the report findings.

Arts Nation is a snapshot in time and where possible 2013–14 financial year data has been used. Where current or annual data were not available, the most recent information was used.

REPORT STRUCTURE

The report is structured using a thematic framework that maps broadly to the Australia Council's Strategic Plan goals:

-  Australians Experiencing the Arts
-  Artists and the Arts
-  Australian Arts Internationally
-  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts
-  The Cultural Economy

Eight leaders from across the arts sector shared their personal experiences and insights for *Talking Points* articles on diversity and international.

The report also includes analysis on the arts and subjective wellbeing to measure the impact of the arts on personal satisfaction levels and more broadly on society. This wellbeing valuation approach, already well established in the UK and Europe, is not yet widely used in Australia.

FEEDBACK

The first *Arts Nation* report is intended as a catalyst for discussion. It aims to promote sector feedback about national data gaps and the expansion of indicators for the next edition of the report to ensure it becomes more relevant over time.

KEY FINDINGS

Australians Experiencing the Arts

Enriching daily life

Australians value the arts and increasingly believe that the arts make for a richer and more meaningful life. Analysis suggests that people who engage with the arts have higher life satisfaction. Nearly all Australians consume at least one form of art and half participate in arts creation each year. Creative participation levels have increased significantly for Australians with disability or who earn low incomes.

Artists and the Arts

Creative and engaged

Artists are among the most highly educated professionals in Australia; however growth in numbers of tertiary students of creative arts has slowed. There are 44,000 practicing professional artists in Australia. Most have portfolio careers with less than one in five working full-time on their creative practice, and for a relatively low income. Gender balance in the overall artist population is relatively even, although female artists are less likely to be nominated for selected major Australian arts awards.

Australian Arts Internationally

Coming for the beach, staying for the art?

Arts tourism has increased by 19% over the last four years to 2.4 million in 2013-14. Visiting a museum or art gallery is the most popular form of arts tourism with more than one in four international tourists undertaking this activity, this is similar to the UK and USA. Australian artists are featured at international arts events and nominated for international arts awards in line with OECD population benchmarks.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts

Cherished at home and abroad






Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts are an expression of culture and are highly regarded in Australia and overseas. The achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists are well represented in major domestic arts awards and international arts events. The Indigenous visual arts sector is a strong contributor to the Australian arts economy, responsible for some of Australia's most valuable works of art. Almost all Australians agree that Indigenous arts are an important part of Australia's culture and audiences for Indigenous arts are growing.

The Cultural Economy

A public private partnership

The cultural sector contributes \$50 billion to Australia's GDP, a similar share of GDP to the USA and Canada, with over \$4.2 billion estimated from the arts. Australian governments spent over \$7 billion on culture in 2012-13, including \$1.3 billion on the core arts. The main source of income to the arts is consumer spending with live performance generating \$1.5 billion in ticket sales in 2013. Private support for the arts continues to grow with philanthropic donations overtaking corporate sponsorship as the dominant source. Australian artists are using crowdfunding as a way to raise smaller sums of money, with a higher than average success rate.

FACT SHEETS ARE AVAILABLE FOR EACH ARTS NATION REPORT THEME:

-  Australians Experiencing the Arts
-  Artists and the Arts
-  Australian Arts Internationally
-  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts
-  The Cultural Economy