

Media Release



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Queensland Chamber of Arts and Culture

8 November 2017

Advocates Call for a Level Playing Field for Queensland Artists

The **Queensland Chamber of Arts and Culture** has called on all political parties running in the upcoming Queensland State Election to commit to fixing the low level of investment in arts and culture in our State.

Despite significant new investment by the current government in the arts over their three-year term, research released in August 2017 by the Meeting of Cultural Ministers has revealed the level of funding of arts and culture in Queensland per head of population in 2015/16 was the lowest of all States and Territories, and 23% below the national average.

(<https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1761/f/cultural-funding-by-government-data-2015-16.pdf> - Table 6 - Page 8)

Spokesperson for the Chamber's **Show Us Your Arts** Campaign, Michael Lynch, said:

“When you think about artists like Tracey Moffat, bands like Powderfinger and companies like Circa its clear that Queensland punches above its weight in producing some of Australia most successful artists. However, Queensland has long struggled to win its fair share of Federal arts funding and understanding why has been a bit of a mystery. With this new data on the level of investment in Queensland it looks like part of the problem is right here in our own backyard”.

Success rates for Queensland artists in national arts funding programs are well below par. In 2015/16 just 12% of Australia Council funding was awarded to the 20% of taxpayers who live in Queensland. Only 9% of the funds from the now defunct

Catalyst program came to Queensland. That translates to a combined loss of more than \$8m in federal government investment in Queensland artists and communities in 2015/16. Spokesperson Michael Lynch said:

“Arts and culture is a great investment for governments because of the economic multipliers and all the jobs it creates. Nationally the arts and creative industries are a bigger employer than mining so when we miss out on our share of federal investment it costing us in terms of jobs and opportunities in communities right across the State¹.”

“We need a stronger base here locally if we are going to compete nationally.

“We are calling on all political parties to work together to address this problem, regardless of the outcome of the State election. We understand it can’t be fixed overnight, but we need our arts industry leaders, including the Premier and Arts Minister Anastacia Palaszczuk and Shadow Arts Minister Tim Nicholls, to put a plan in place to bring the investment here at least up to parity with other states and territories, and create a level playing field for Queensland artists, arts organisations and the broader community”.

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In addition to parity of investment in arts the **Chamber of Arts and Culture** is also campaigning on a number of specific priorities identified through state-wide consultation with the arts sector including on **Regional Arts, First Peoples Arts and Culture**, and **Young People**:

Regional Arts

With the most decentralised population in the country, regional arts already plays a vital role in the cultural and economic future of Queensland. The arts are a critical part of small and micro business development across Queensland, supporting jobs growth and industry diversity. The Chamber’s arts industry survey found that 98% of respondents see significantly increased investment in regional arts as either essential or very important.

The **Queensland Chamber of Arts and Culture** has taken the lead on regional arts, consulting with the sector over the last 18 months and supporting the development of a new regional arts strategy that ensures regional self-determination. The Chamber’s proposal was instrumental in the announcement of \$6.5m of new investment in the last state budget and whilst welcomed, this represents less than a third of cost of implementing the proposal in full – so there is important work still to do.

¹ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4172.0main+features242014>

The Queensland Chamber of Arts and Culture calls on the next state government to:

- 1. implement this first stage of funding (the \$6.5m over four years) to support a devolved, networked and regionally self-determined model of arts delivery;***
- 2. to implement in full the recommendations of the Chamber's Regional Arts Working Group; and***
- 3. bring arts investment in Queensland regions into line with the investment in urban centres.***

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First Peoples Culture and Arts

The percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Queensland is 50% higher than the national average and numbers have grown by 22% in the five years since the previous census². This gives Queensland culture and arts a unique competitive advantage on the national stage, as well as a unique set of responsibilities.

The Chamber's arts industry survey found that 85% of respondents see increased investment in Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts either essential or very important. In order to be effective, new investment requires a properly consulted plan with decision making authority held and determined by First Nations arts and cultural community leaders.

The Queensland Chamber for Arts and Culture calls on the next state government to address the urgent funding shortfall for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and for all political parties to make First Peoples culture and arts the priority and core of their arts policy platforms.

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Children and Young People

Queensland Chamber for Arts and Culture wants to future-proof the Queensland economy through ensuring adequate investment in youth arts, preparing children and young people for a changing work-force that demands creativity and entrepreneurial skills.

86% of Chamber survey respondents see increased investment in, and strategic support for, youth arts companies and programs in Queensland is either essential or very important. More employers are demanding enterprising skills among young employees, with demand for creativity specifically increasing by 65% over the last three years. Investment in the support for involvement in, and self-determination of, children and young people in the Arts in Queensland means strengthening of workforce of tomorrow.

² <http://www.abs.gov.au/>

The Queensland Chamber for Arts and Culture calls on the next state government to address the urgent shortfall in funding for arts and culture of children and young people and to lead the development of a state-wide youth arts strategy.

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Queensland Chamber of Arts and Culture

Show Us Your Arts Campaign

Arts Sector Policy Survey - June 2017

Respondents from across Queensland, representing a diverse range of artform areas responded to a set of policy priorities developed by the Chamber.

Key Findings:

A shared vision for 2030: State Government commitment to a long term and funded strategic plan for the arts and culture sector.	93% - Essential or very important
Increased investment in Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and culture to acknowledge their unique contribution to the state.	82% - Essential or very important
The development of a long term, funded strategy for regional arts activities which includes significantly increased investment.	96% - Essential or very important
Increased investment in, and strategic support for, youth arts companies and programs in Queensland.	86% - Essential or very important
Increased investment in the small to medium sector, to bring investment per head of population in line with other states.	92% - Essential or very important
Advocacy for an equitable share of federal arts and culture funding.	92% - Essential or very important
Development of a long-term Government plan for investment in new and existing cultural infrastructure.	89% - Essential or very important
State Government encouragement and support for Local Government Authorities to increase support for arts and cultural activity through long term planning and greater investment.	92% - Essential or very important