



A vibrant future for the arts

The arts, cultural experiences and creative artists are a vital ingredient for a happy, prosperous and fulfilled nation. The arts contribute to the social wellbeing, economy and cultural life of Australia. The Australian Greens are committed to supporting and promoting Australian artists and their work, and particularly encouraging young and emerging artists as they establish their careers.

The Australian Greens believe that a vibrant future for Australia's performing arts will involve both the traditional arts, which enrich us and have provided so much to our culture for centuries, and a newer, more open approach to cultural policy, which brings arts into every aspect of our lives. The Greens' performing arts policies focus on providing support for artists, encouraging innovation in the arts and taking performing arts to the community.

MONA FOMA in Hobart is an excellent example of a music and arts festival taking place in a smaller city but attracting international attention and audiences. MONA is leading the way in cultural tourism and highlights the positive social and economic impacts of innovative projects on communities.

As part of our arts policy, the Australian Greens will:

- **Establish a \$3 million a year Artists Fund to assist in the payment of artists' fees allowing artists to make a living from their art;**
- **Support innovation in the arts through an Arts Research and Development grants program worth \$5 million a year; and**
- **Increase the funding available to assist in performing arts companies to tour around Australia and internationally.**

The Government is promising a National Cultural Policy and has received a Review of the Australia Council but is yet to outline its vision or specific policies for supporting and encouraging the arts in Australia. Artistic enterprises and artists need confidence that the government recognises their value to the community and is prepared to increase funding to key sectors to encourage artistic endeavour into the future. Our proposals would cost around \$10m in 2013-14, an important investment in our cultural future.

Artists' Fund to pay artists' fees

Artists' fees are an important source of income for artists. Many young artists struggle to make a living from their art which limits their ability to produce creative works. An Artists' Fund will assist in ensuring artists are paid for their exhibitions and performances and will be particularly beneficial for young and emerging artists. Artists' fees should cover payment for the creation or installation of art, for labour as well as material and service costs. Artists should also be remunerated for lectures or talks they provide in connection with their art.

Artists' fees should be paid when an artist lends their work for a non-selling exhibition. As the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) submits, such "fees are paid in recognition of the value being provided to the public, and the potential loss of income to practitioners while their work is on loan... and not available for sale."¹ In 2006 NAVA

¹ NAVA, Submission on National Cultural Policy, February 2010.

conducted research into the payment of artists' fees by publicly funded galleries and found that a vast majority of artists did not receive artists' fees and of those that did, the majority received less than \$1000. There already exists a Code of Practice for Artists fees containing minimum payment levels but it is not mandatory and a fund will assist those galleries and other organisations who struggle to pay appropriate fees.

The NAVA report recommended a funding program of \$3 million be established to assist publicly funded galleries to pay artists' fees. The Myer report back in 2001 also recognised the importance of artists' fees and made recommendations with respect to the payment of such fees. Yet there has been no progress from the government on this issue.

The Australian Greens' proposal adopts the recommendation by NAVA for the establishment of a \$3 million Artists Fund. The fund should be established as part of the Australian National Cultural Policy.

Supporting innovation in performing arts

Every sector of our society needs innovation to survive and thrive and the arts sector is no exception. However, whereas in the sciences it is acknowledged that many experiments will fail, there is very little acknowledgement of this in arts funding, despite the role the Australia Council has to play in supporting innovation, experimentation and risk being underscored in its recent Review.

The Greens propose an *Arts Research and Development Fund*, with an initial \$5 million allocation per year, to support new Australian work, risk-taking work and truly innovative social artistic ventures. This is in line with recommendations by the Australian Performing Arts Centres Association, the Australian Major Performing Arts Group and Live Music Australia. The competitive grants program would support ventures as diverse as:

- performing arts in community development, such as Big hArt which is operating in indigenous communities in the Pilbara in Western Australia and disadvantaged communities in north west Tasmania;
- providing access to space, resources and mentoring within Major Performing Arts Groups to small companies for the partnering of specific innovative projects; and
- major innovative production concepts that need support for creative work before being pitched as festival events.

The new fund will incorporate an expanded *Interconnections* program, the successful grants program which brings together major companies with smaller groups to collaborate on new works. *Interconnections* is currently funded at \$120,000 for 2012/13. This will be more than doubled to \$300,000 as part of the *Arts Research and Development Fund*, with a specific focus on innovation and touring successful collaborations.

Touring artists around Australia and the world

The performing arts enrich and stimulate us all and we should ensure that as many Australians have an opportunity to share them as possible. Touring performing arts productions also creates jobs for the longer term – allowing companies to employ cast and crew for many months rather than just a few weeks.

The Greens also believe that our performing artists are as effective ambassadors for Australia as our sporting stars and should be celebrated as such by our leaders. Why do politicians love to be seen farewelling sports teams as they leave for major events but ignore our orchestras and theatre companies when they head overseas to wow audiences in Europe and America?

The Greens wants to see funding for Playing Australia, the body which administers grants for touring performing arts in Australia, increased by \$2 million per year (from \$6.8 million in the 2012-13 Budget) until it reaches a threshold of \$10 million per year where after it should be indexed annually in line with the consumer price index. This should be considered as part of the National Cultural Policy and is in line with suggestions from the Australian Performing Arts Centres Association, the Australian Major Performing Arts Group and Live Music Australia.

The Australian Greens also support Australian touring arts companies being exempt from the “in Australia” rule for Deductable Gift Recipient status. We have indicated our opposition to the Government’s proposal to strengthen the ‘in Australia’ rule as we want performing arts companies to be able to tour internationally and take Australia’s rich cultural heritage to the world without risking their financial viability.