

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY
Questions on Notice

1. What are the activities and features of a successful night time economy and what is Create NSW doing to develop Sydney's night time economy and its cultural infrastructure?

A successful night time economy (NTE) includes policy and services where the offer is inclusive, diverse and responsive to different demographics. Create NSW works with the arts, screen and cultural sectors who can contribute to the economic, cultural and social needs of the state's growing community and delivers on government priorities. By developing a thriving competitive, safe and well-managed NTE, the state's community – of artists, businesses and audiences - contributes and benefits from participation in night time activities.

Create NSW coordinates the cross-government working group implementing the NTE Project. This is in response to the NTE Announcement, made on 24 January 2019 by Minister Toole and Minister Harwin and represents an investment of \$1.5 million to stimulate the NTE across the State. The project aims to reduce red tape, increase audience engagement and promote night time activity state-wide.

The funding programs outlined in the NTE Announcement contribute to the stimulation of the NTE. There were thirty successful applicants who received funding under the Music Now program, which is a co-investment between Create NSW and Office of Responsible Gambling. This program invests in the presentation of contemporary music across the state. The Activate Sydney @ Night program, funded by the Office of Responsible Gambling, provided 14 projects with funding to activate seven precincts with cultural initiatives after dark. Those funded projects will be completed by December 2020.

Create NSW has also been working closely on NTE initiatives with key stakeholders from four local councils - City of Sydney, City of Parramatta, Inner West Council and Liverpool City Council. These stakeholders have responsibility for the seven identified precincts identified in the NTE Announcement and determined by the Premier's Office. This ongoing collaboration provides opportunities for arts and cultural activity to offer bespoke local solutions to regulatory barriers which have traditionally impacted on arts and cultural activity. This includes pilot programs, led by the arts and cultural sector in partnership with local councils, and in response to local compliance issues. The pilot programs, precinct activations and review of compliance will inform the ongoing development of the NSW NTE Strategy which will outline effective measures to support viable night time experiences such as arts and cultural activities and retail and hospitality offer. Compliance, regulation and policy frameworks will be included to enable diverse and sustainable growth of the NTE across the state.

In March 2019 Create NSW released the Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+ (CIP 2025), which identifies actions to drive best practice for creative precincts, new developments and public space. The Plan will support the sustainability of the cultural sector and enable a dynamic and exciting late-night economy.

As an example, as part of Goal 7 of the CIP 2025 ("increase making space through adaptive reuse, expansion and maintenance of existing infrastructure"), Create NSW has provided funding to the Sydney Fringe Festival to create pop up, temporary theatre spaces in a vacant property in Kings Cross. Investing in the Festival's activation of this building enables audiences to experience unique night time offerings that stimulate the NTE such as theatre, cabaret and music.

2. What are the issues that may currently limit the growth and diversity of Sydney's night time economy?

Create NSW is currently implementing work identified in the NTE Announcement (made on 24 January 2019 by Minister Toole and Minister Harwin under the NTE Project. The Project is a cross-government collaboration aimed at reducing red tape, increasing arts and cultural activation and promoting night time activity.

Consultation with key stakeholders continues as the project progresses to ensure these issues can be responded to and to develop local solutions to deliver benefits to the community and its citizens.

3. Since the lockout laws were introduced, how have non-alcohol centred cultural, retail, dining and entertainment businesses and activities expanded as part of the night time economy?

Funding provided through Create NSW has contributed to a range of ongoing cultural activation in the night time space including key annual events including Sydney Film Festival, Sydney Writers Festival, and Sydney Festival as well as the major performing arts companies. Several cultural institutions and state significant organisations continue to develop and deliver night time activities, offering opportunities for the public to engage with programs beyond usual opening hours.

Examples of successful night time programs include:

- Each Wednesday, the **Art Gallery of NSW** extends its opening hours for Art After Hours. This program offers talks from guest speakers, films and music events as well as inviting visitors to view current exhibitions and galleries.
- Four times a year, the **MCA Australia** offers ARTBAR, an artist-led night of performances and exhibitions. The MCA also offered the Lights on Later program on Wednesday evenings, where the Museum stays open until 9pm, encouraging visitors outside of normal working hours.
- **In addition to regular programming of its exhibition spaces, Carriageworks** hosts summer and winter outdoor Night Markets which bring together some of Australia's best chefs and producers with large audiences. Visitors to Carriageworks are invited to engage with locally sourced dishes, live music, DJs and cooking demonstrations.
- The **Sydney Living Museum's** Night Light Tours offer opportunities for visitors to tour and experience the Museum's historic sites, such as Vacluse House and Rouse Hill House & Farm, at night.
- Each night, the **Sydney Opera House** sails are illuminated with a screening of Badu Gili, a seven-minute projection that celebrates the stories and rich contemporary culture of Australia's First Nations People.

Vivid Sydney, which was established in 2009, successfully showcases Sydney as a global hub for arts, technology and innovation annually. In 2018, over 2.25 million people attended the festival contributing over \$172 million to the NSW economy.

Create NSW has also supported the establishment of the Sydney Fringe Festival Kings Cross Hub, delivered in 2019/2020, to support the development of the Night Time Economy Strategy. The Sydney Fringe Festival Kings Cross Hub provides an evidence base to all levels of government and business, for workable solutions that respond directly to NTE Taskforce recommendations. Activating under-utilized space with arts and cultural activity will inform the NTE Strategy, while testing compliance and regulatory barriers. The Sydney Fringe Festival works towards finding solutions to enable more cultural spaces to open and existing spaces to flourish by creating pop up and temporary theatres spaces that transform the city scape and allow audiences to explore and engage with unique experiences.

In addition, the City of Sydney (a key member of the NTE Taskforce) has recently released the Late-Night Trading Development Control Plan. This plan provides five key policy changes to late-night controls and further supports the development of a night time economy – a 24-hour city centre, increase hours for low impact arts venues with patron capacity of under 100 people, identifying new areas for new communities, extending existing areas and encouraging performance, culture and unlicensed business.

4. Create NSW works with other Government agencies to assist artists, businesses and communities to promote culture and creativity. What support, financial and non-financial, is available to individuals, venues and organisations that wish to provide cultural events and entertainment at night?

Create NSW currently has more than 90 multi-year funding arrangements providing over \$15million to arts organisations state wide, most of which support the NTE with a diverse offering of arts and cultural activity for community benefit. In addition, the Projects Funding round of the Arts and Cultural Funding Program, administered by Create NSW, also offers funding opportunities. This is targeted at artists, arts organisations, business and communities to apply for support for a range of activities, including cultural events that take place at night. The first round for 2019/2020 is now open, closing on 2 September, and there will be another round in February 2020.

As part of the NTE Project, Create NSW has funded Music Now, a program investing in activities events and performances that support NSW musicians to present new work and increase participation in live music events across the state. Under this program, 30 successful applicants were selected to receive funding with a total investment of \$1M (total of 161 applications received, requesting over \$4.8M).

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Liquor and Gaming NSW continue to work together to better coordinate and align planning and licensing approval processes. As part of the work relating to the NTE Announcement this work will inform and provide evidence for the development of the NTE Strategy state-wide.

Create NSW also provides capacity building opportunities for the arts and cultural sector and other organisations to assist in the development and delivery of activities to support and promote a thriving night time offer. Opportunities such as the Arts and Cultural Funding Program information sessions and labs, to assist applicants in readying their applications for submission. Create NSW is co-ordinating additional workshops in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Authority to ensure there is an understanding of sound and noise regulations.

5. Create NSW was part of the government's Sydney Night Time Economy Taskforce to promote the night time economy in Kings Cross and the Sydney CBD. What agencies were part of this taskforce, and what lessons were learned about creating a streamlined and coordinated government approach to promoting Sydney's night time economy?

A collaborative approach is required to ensure maximised community benefit and to increase safety, diversity and economic impact of the NTE. Business, industry and all tiers of government need to develop a consolidated, streamlined approach to address the complex issues surrounding the NTE at a local level. Since January 2019, Create NSW has led cross-government work on stimulating the NTE through a collaborative approach with Local Councils. Create NSW recognises that the key to developing a thriving, vibrant night-time economy for local communities includes arts and cultural expression.

In 2016, the government agencies contributing to the NTE Taskforce included Create NSW, Treasury NSW, Destination NSW, Department of Industry, Department of Justice, Liquor and Gaming NSW, NSW Health, NSW Police, Office for Police, Office of Small Business Commissioner, Department of Planning and Environment, Property NSW, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Transport for NSW, UrbanGrowth and City of Sydney. As at July 2019 government agencies involved in the delivery of the NTE Project include Create NSW, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Liquor and Gaming NSW, Destination NSW, Department of Premier and Cabinet, and NSW Police.

6. What are the differences between the Kings Cross and Sydney CBD night time economies compared with the night time economies in other areas, such as Parramatta and Liverpool?

Communities require authentic after dark experiences that respond to local character and reflect diverse demographics across the Greater Sydney area. While the Sydney CBD is promoting itself as a 24-hour global city, the offer across the rest of the state can be inspired by local communities, where activities are family friendly and authentic experiences are driven locally. For example, in 2019, the City of Canterbury Bankstown hosted Ramadan Nights Lakemba in Haldon Street and Railway Parade, from Sunday 5 May to Thursday 6 June. The event attracts more than 20,000 people to experience the street transformed into a late-night Arabian-style bazaar, where residents and visitors can explore the unique food and cultural experiences authentic to the local community. The event is an example of culture at the forefront of a vibrant and safe night time event offer, that celebrates cultural diversity and brings the community closer together.

Arts and culture offer an alternative to alcohol and sporting events as the main driver of the night time narrative. These activities provide an opportunity for the community to experience the local character of each community, highlighting the unique aspects of their neighbourhood. Through supporting and promoting free, locally-engaged, high-quality arts activities, the narrative of the NTE shifts to a focus on greater community engagement through family-friendly events, authentic community engaged activations catering for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

7. The Committee has been told that the lockout laws could be a factor in Sydney losing creative talent and opportunities to other cities such as Melbourne. Does Create NSW have any evidence that would support such claims and how could any such loss be avoided?

No