

**Submission
No 409**

SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
Confidential

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in regards to Sydney's night time economy. My submission covers two areas –

- the importance of the arts to Sydney in creating a safe, night time economy and how this may be better facilitated.
- the importance of residential amenity and preserving and improving noise and crowd controls so that residents aren't impacted or alienated by night time activities.

One of the best ways to improve Sydney as a night-time destination is to better support Sydney's diverse and exciting artistic communities. Artists are very good at creating vibrant, safe environments which enhance the character and economy of the areas they exist in, but the current state of the arts in Sydney is perhaps at its lowest ebb in many years with fewer venues (which are also frequently of lower quality than existed previously) and increasingly bad conditions for artists.

The models that operate in many European cities, Berlin, for example seem to work well at balancing a vibrant night life with residential amenity and creating good venues and conditions for artists. These models involve various levels of government support and regulation at significantly higher levels than are currently the case in NSW.

Sydney's night life can be enhanced by increasing the number of government-run (and funded) venues and community centres, as well as providing funding for artist-run spaces so that venues have good equipment, staff support and are fully sound-proofed, thereby protecting resident amenity. In addition, the government should ensure that proper wages and performance fees are paid to artists for their services.

The current conditions for most artists in New South Wales at the moment can only be described as appalling compared to many other places in the world. Many venues have minimal sound proofing, bad acoustics, sub-standard equipment, conditions and wages for artists. For example, performance fees in many parts of Europe are frequently up to 10 times more than the fees offered in most NSW contexts.

I strongly support a vibrant arts scene and night life in Sydney but this must be balanced with good conditions for artists and protections for residential amenity.

Many venues are not adequately sound-proofed so that they unreasonably impact upon local residents thereby alienating important clientele and creating ongoing antagonism and problems. Adequate soundproofing can usually mitigate such problems.

Larger venues are more likely to produce negative impacts in terms of drunken behaviour and greater impacts on residential amenity than diversified smaller venues which can usually avoid such problems.

The government could provide –

- subsidies for sound proofing for venues
- subsidies and upgrading of venues
- require venues to provide reasonable performance fees and conditions for artists on par with international standards and/or provide subsidies to pay artists proper professional fees for their services. Many venues these days exploit artists - some offer no pay at all which is an extraordinary situation that has becoming increasingly common in recent years.

In summary, initiatives which would stimulate Sydney's night time economy while protecting resident amenity and minimising unsafe behaviour would be –

- greatly increasing the number of government-funded venues (like 107 Projects in Redfern) and providing proper funding for sound proofing, equipment, technical and other staff and artists' fees.
- government provision of more sites and venues for artist-run spaces and subsidies for staff, sound proofing and equipment needs.
- encouraging the proliferation of smaller venues and spaces vs. larger ones which create greater impacts
- a policy of decentralising venues to other suburban areas as well as creating additional smaller venues in the CBD and other inner-city precincts.

In regards to improving Sydney's night time economy, It is most important that noise controls are maintained or even tightened so that nearby residents aren't impacted by new venues and that noise problems with existent venues and unruly behaviour by patrons are successfully addressed so that potential local audiences are encouraged rather than alienated. Smaller venues and sound proofing can, in most cases, effectively achieve this.

Thank you for considering my submission.