

**Submission  
No 519**

## **SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

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The current laws surrounding Sydney's nightlife are an embarrassment and need to change. It is time that the people of Sydney wanting to enjoy the night-time economy are treated like adults and not like children, being told when they must go home to bed.

At the age of 30, my clubbing days are for the most part behind me, to the 1.30 lockout and 3am last drinks don't necessarily directly affect me - but when I do want to be out enjoying the night earlier in the evening Sydney feels like it is on the verge of complete death. I experienced a more vibrant late-night economy in much smaller cities like Perth and Adelaide in recent times. Sydney should be striving to have a vibrant 24-hour economy that competes with the likes of New York and London, even Melbourne - at the moment it could not be further from it.

For Sydney to be a globally competitive city it needs to be able to attract young talent. If I were from anywhere else and fresh out of university today, I seriously doubt that I would see Sydney as the place I wanted to set up my roots. On my first attempted night-out I would firstly find it difficult to find somewhere fun, and when I did I would likely have to deal with aggressive, militarised security and then eventually, in the venue, be informed of their weird rules around drinking - like you can only drink from plastic after 10pm. How have we got to this?? I know the crazy rule about the fact I can't eat my dinner in an area where people are smoking isn't up for review at this stage, but it deserves a mention as probably the most absurd rule you have to live by in Sydney pubs.

I would find it hard to recommend Sydney to a young person now looking for a fun city in which to spend their 20's and those are the exact people that we should be attracting - for study and for work - to ensure that Sydney can remain globally competitive as a place for people to live and travel. I have shared far too many an uber pool with a disappointed visitor to our city, on their way home much earlier than they would have liked because it has all become too hard. Living in Elizabeth Bay I also walk past the groups of travellers standing around outside their hostels and feel for them, worried that they may have been sold a terrible lie about Kings Cross being a fun place to spend their holiday.

Live music has all but disappeared from our city and it would be silly for any young musician to even try and make a go of it in Sydney. They are far better off moving to Melbourne, a city where the Government has made a conscious effort to nurture and promote the arts, and the venues that allow them to master their art aren't crippled by so much regulation that its easier to just whack a few pokies in and watch the money roll in, all the while contributing nothing to cultural life in Sydney.

In a couple of weeks I am moving to London. The fall back was moving to Melbourne. I am not quite ready to live a quiet suburban life and need something more from the city I live in that Sydney is able to offer at this time. It didn't need to be this way, and hopefully it wont always be this way. I hope that as the outcome of this review it will be realised that some very really damage has been done to Sydney's night time economy and global image. It can't go any longer, with every venue in Sydney that closes, we are getting further and further from where we need to be.