

NSW Parliament Inquiry into grants session Monday 1 February, 2021

Response to Questions on Notice by Elizabeth Rogers:

1. Specific examples of advised quick turnaround grants that were subsequently delayed.

Recent issues arose concerning Arts Rescue and Restart funding offered by Create NSW as part of an economic recovery program post Covid to the 14 RADOs. RADO's were advised about the program 1 December 2020 and were formally advised 4 December to submit proposals for three art forms: Contemporary Music, Literature and Residencies. In addition, a full application was required to be submitted for \$130,000 that was announced by the Minister for the Arts on 6 November as an allocation to each RADO. Applications had to be submitted by a deadline of 14 December for projects that could be delivered between December 2020 and 18 April 2021.

South West Arts, one of the 14 RADOs provided the following example:

“Announcements for the successful applications pertaining to Contemporary Music were provided 28 January, although no contracts have been provided and funds not released.

As a consequence of a supposedly "quick turn around of funding assessment and release" events planned for New Years Eve had to be funded through RADO core funding on the hope that funds would be released; January events have had to be cancelled as I don't have enough cash to carry the events, and February events will also not proceed if funding is not available by 1 February.

Literature and Residency announcements have still not been made yet the timeline for expenditure remains the same putting huge pressure on delivery when planning for start dates have to be constantly put back. Artists tentatively booked are starting to withdraw as other opportunities present themselves.” (via email 29/1/2021)

Other RADOs have made similar comments, especially in relation to the \$130,000 allocation, that the projects were to be delivered from December onwards to be completed by end of March and all reporting by 30 April and that considerable time and effort was expended in developing these projects with little notice, writing a full grant application and the delays in notification and payment. The additional project funding was very much welcomed but it is the delays in notification and receiving payment that is the issue. In a number of cases, they started these projects in good faith, using their limited reserves, engaging and paying artists and arts workers to commence the activities.

2. The CHAIR: We could have plenty more time on this. There is one question I would ask you to take on notice, which is about going forward. There is a recommendation at the end of the NAVA submission about recommending measures to lift the integrity for the grants schemes and it has six dot points. Can I ask you to take on the notice whether or not you agree with that as a set of measures going forward?

ER: I fully support the six points recommended at the conclusion of the NAVA submission and to elaborate on the final point, I understand that there has been no increase to the pool of money allocated to Arts and Cultural Development Program over the past five years. It is this Program that the small and medium arts organisations in NSW apply to in the various competitive rounds. It is critical that there is an increase to this program to ensure the ongoing sustainability of artists and arts organisations in NSW.