

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO 1
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2009-10
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

1. Artists Spaces

- a. There is a critical shortage of studio spaces for artists in metropolitan Sydney and regional NSW, has the government considered any programs to supply unused Government property for cheap artists' spaces?

ANSWER:

The NSW Government has a strong record of making unused Government property available for arts use. For example, the Gunnery in Woolloomooloo includes 12 studios for visual artists, and CarriageWorks at Eveleigh incorporates two large rehearsal and training studios that are available to artists through Performance Space's extensive residency program.

Arts NSW also supports a range of initiatives which provide studio space for artists. These include:

- Varuna, the national writer's centre,
- Critical Path, which offers three-month dance residencies at its studios in Rushcutters Bay,
- Connect Studios and the Artists Studios in Parramatta in partnership with Parramatta City Council,
- Fraser Studios in Broadway in partnership with Frasers and the City of Sydney which has 3 performing arts studios for up to 10 artists in 2009 and between 10-15 visual arts studios,
- Hill End artist studios in partnership with Bathurst Regional Art Gallery and the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, and
- A Month in the Country, a residency program and farm house studio managed by HotHouse Theatre with support from Albury City Council.

In 2009 Arts NSW has also begun investigating how to support creative enterprise hubs to revitalise empty spaces in CBDs and provide new spaces in our cities for artists to develop their work. \$50,000 per annum for 2009 and 2010 has been provided to Renew Newcastle Ltd to place up to 32 arts projects in 22 empty commercial spaces. Arts NSW is working with the Department of Planning to develop protocols for the establishment of creative enterprise hubs in other town centres.

2. Sydney Opera House

- a. What measures if any have been taken to ensure that the iconic Sydney Opera House is able to make essential repairs and renovations to its buildings?

ANSWER:

I am advised the Sydney Opera House will receive funding of \$41.7 million from the NSW Government in 2009/10, including \$29 million for maintenance.

3. Professional Development grants for arts practitioners

- a. If an arts practitioner in Victoria wants to travel or undertake a visit for professional purposes, in Victoria they can apply for a grant. Is it the case that we don't have comparable NSW-specific grants in many art forms for individual practitioners, for example grants for materials or travel?

ANSWER:

Arts NSW generally provides program and/or project funding to organisations incorporated on a not-for-profit basis as well as local government and auspiced individuals. As part of the Arts Funding Program, individuals are also eligible to apply for a suite of fellowships and scholarships which provide professional development opportunities, including – in some instances – overseas travel. A copy of the 2010 Arts Funding guidelines can be found at www.arts.nsw.gov.au.

4. Indigenous Art and Culture

- a. Are there any special programs to provide seed funding for independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art and Cultural Projects?
- b. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and culture groups have no real source of income and may need economic support through schemes like the CDEP to allow them to practice their craft and exhibit their work. What measures is the Government taking to help Indigenous artists, performers and craftworkers?
- c. Has Arts NSW developed an Indigenous Arts Development Strategy for Western Sydney with appropriate funding and resources?

ANSWER:

- a. Arts NSW's 2010 Arts Funding Program Guidelines acknowledge that within NSW, Indigenous cultural expression plays a major role in the revitalisation of cultural practices and strengthening of Indigenous identity and identifies the importance of promoting and supporting Indigenous arts and cultural activities.

All programs and projects funded through the Arts Funding Program are expected to be accessible to Indigenous people and communities as creators, participants and audiences.

The *Indigenous strategic arts fund* supports the growth of Aboriginal arts and cultural organisations to allow them to reach a level that they can then apply for program and project funding through the Arts Funding Program.

Additionally, the *Western Sydney Indigenous strategic arts fund* specifically targets the large Indigenous population base within Western Sydney and was developed in response to the need for greater growth for Indigenous arts in Western Sydney.

- b. The NSW Government is currently developing an Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy.

The strategy will aim to foster a vibrant NSW Aboriginal arts and cultural sector that affords Aboriginal people of NSW greater opportunities to:

- participate in, share and strengthen their culture through arts practice; and
- develop careers and businesses in the arts and cultural sector.

- c. Funding and resources for Indigenous arts development within Western Sydney is provided as addressed above.

The need for a specific strategy for Western Sydney will be considered in the development of the broader NSW Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy (refer to part b).

5. Access and funding for Artists with a Disability

- a. In the 'Speak Up: Arts and Disability Priorities' Report by Accessible Arts it was recommended that a systemic approach to the support of arts and disability initiatives across NSW was identified as a key priority area. Without long lasting change and opportunities, individuals with a disability are left with an ad hoc array of one-off projects. What systemic Government-funded programs have been initiated to provide accessibility and opportunities to artists with a disability and for audience members with a disability across the whole of NSW?

ANSWER:

NSW is working with other jurisdictions through the Cultural Ministers Council (CMC) to improve opportunities and choices in the arts for people with a disability. The CMC National Arts and Disability Strategy was approved by Ministers on 9 October 2009. This Strategy will facilitate greater linkages and collaboration between jurisdictions to assist in achieving the best possible outcomes for people with a disability.

Arts NSW and the Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care both provide core program funding to Accessible Arts NSW, the state-wide peak body for art and disability. Accessible Arts NSW also receives project funding from the Department of Community Services and Arts NSW.

The State Government funds Accessible Arts NSW to promote and provide opportunities for people with disability to participate in arts and cultural activities either as audience members or through professional development. This includes providing advice and assistance to government agencies and arts organisations on meeting the needs of people with disabilities to encourage their full participation in the cultural life of New South Wales.

Arts NSW's 2010 Arts Funding Program Guidelines identify the need to facilitate access including providing opportunities for people with a disability to fully participate in arts and cultural activities and valuing their artistic aspirations and achievements. Organisations funded through the Arts Funding program are expected to consider the needs and requirements of people with a disability as creators, participants and audiences.

The state's cultural institutions foster access to services and participation of people with a disability in the arts through a diverse range of programs, including providing tours that meet the specific needs of participants, such as guided signed Auslan–interpreted tours, sensory tours, alternative format guides in Braille, large print and audio.

The State Government is committed to providing equitable services, access and improving employment participation for people with a disability. This is articulated and acknowledged through the *Disability Services Act 1993*, the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*, and the State Plan.

6. Screen NSW's Production Investment Fund

- a. The Premier announced an extra \$5 million for Screen NSW's Production Investment Fund earlier this year. Can you tell us what additional film business this has brought to NSW, and how many new jobs have resulted from this investment?

ANSWER:

I am advised \$26.5 million of additional film business has been generated since July 2009, creating approximately 720 jobs.

7. Film infrastructure and funding in NSW

- a. Rachel Ward's film 'Beautiful Kate' was based on a story originally written as being set in NSW, yet was filmed in South Australia. Are other states doing better than NSW in attracting feature film productions?
- b. The Victorian Government has invested in the film production studio at the Docklands in Melbourne. What is the NSW Film and TV Office doing about improving studio and production capacity in NSW?

ANSWER:

- a. No. I am advised NSW had a higher share of national feature film production than any other state in 2008/09. This reflects the Government's commitment to provide highly competitive screen production incentives.
- b. NSW has world-class production facilities, including the largest sound stages in the Southern Hemisphere at Fox Studios. Additional facilities are available for smaller scale productions. I am advised NSW facilities meet the needs of the industry.