

**Submission
No 109**

**INQUIRY INTO THE MUSIC AND ARTS ECONOMY IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

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The NSW government's approach to the music industry, the arts in general and the nightlife economy is laughable. There is almost no support from the government for these incredibly important industries. Sydney, our country's flagship city has become an international laughing stock. Often I meet foreign tourists who lament even coming to our city because there is nothing interesting for them to do. I have many friends from overseas who come to Australia and tell me they won't visit me because they don't want to come to Sydney. Young people need creative outlets, and live music and nightlife are a significant part of that.

A few suggestions for how this can be improved:

- Get rid of the ridiculous lockout laws. Not only do they not work (the violence and anti-social behaviour just moves to different areas), you are alienating tourists and young people.
- Similarly alcohol free zones in public space actually do the opposite of what they are supposed to, by removing the rights of law abiding citizens to congregate in public space you ensure that those public spaces become dominated by the very delinquents these laws were designed to discourage. Having responsible people populate these spaces keeps the idiots away, but those responsible people stay away for fear of being prosecuted. As shown by events such as Reclaim The Streets music can be a galvanising force in creating safe public spaces.
- Some sort of legislation similar to in Melbourne which either puts the onus of soundproofing venues on developers or forbids noise complaints from people moving into properties near established live music venues. We have lost too many venues to greedy property developers and curmudgeons.
- Invest in the arts. After the disastrous cuts to the federal arts budget in 2015 many arts organisations are still struggling for funding, many of these organisations work with young and emerging artists i.e. the people who keep our cultural life alive and evolving. The state government should try to compensate for the callous disregard the federal government seems to hold for the arts.
- Support all ages gigs, invest in helping to make our festivals and venues safe and welcoming spaces for everyone.
- Programs which support regional artists and musicians, not just those in the cities.

If we continue to fail the music, arts and nightlife sector as we are now our state's cultural life will stagnate and ultimately die, leaving NSW a flaccid husk, where only the elderly and the reactionary want to live.