

Submission  
No 118

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

Dear members of NSW Parliament,

I have very humbly worked as a musician in the dance music scene throughout Australia and have professionally played as a DJ for over 15 years. I began working at weddings and birthday parties throughout my school years, acquiring equipment and building experience at each, with the hope of taking my career beyond hired halls to nightclubs and festivals. Somehow, after years of work I was lucky enough to make that happen through the support of many friends, club owners and promoters throughout NSW. It enabled me to build some kind of a name and travel Australia doing what I absolutely love.

Over the past few years I have sadly seen a shift in the industry. Laws were passed and the venues that once supported the community have struggled to stay afloat, sadly closing their doors and gradually shutting down the opportunities for the majority of my friends to earn an income or punters to enjoy themselves. DJs, Bands, Bartenders, Promoters, Venue Managers, Graphic Designers, Photographers, Videographers, Security Guards, Door Hosts, Dancers, Visual, Lighting and Transfer Teams, Cleaners, everyone that I've worked alongside have drastically lost work opportunities and have been encouraged to move into other lines of employment with dozens of clubs closing due to the financial struggle caused by overly strict regulations.

Understandably, certain areas are incredibly desirable locations for residential development. Although when the majority of venues had to close their doors in these locations, no alternatives were given, we no longer have a "go-to" location for nightlife in NSW. Internationally, the desire for young tourists to travel here has dwindled, with the culture and reputation of our city becoming so sadly dark. When leaving venues after 1am, you now walk on to ghost-town-like streets, taxis talk constantly about how much their work has slowed, the struggle of supporting their families, parking is in abundance and the majority of late night eateries have closed their doors. Although it doesn't feel safer, it feels more ominous and erratic. I feel that we could continue adding to the list of problems that our city faces, but instead, something honestly has to change. We're all ready to help.

NSW is filled with thousands of musicians, artists and live event enthusiasts, who want to perform and create. It is also a city that is growing in population and with that comes people who want to be entertained. The focus of those artists needs to be honing their craft and presenting to the world various bodies of work and performances that put Sydney on the map as one of the most forward thinking cultural hubs. A place that we're proud of. Funding musicians and venues helps this, as does granting venues more freedom to trade at later hours and relaxing the intensity of oversight from regulatory bodies to give them the freedom to thrive. It would give more artists a home to develop and present their work to local communities and international visitors, with residencies that lead to them performing at larger events both locally and overseas.

NSW needs a plan to give music, nightlife and culture here something to look forward to. Local artists still have hope seeing the success of international musicians in their field and are praying for the same opportunities. Young artists and promoters need support. Throwing all ages events that encourage the new generation to act intelligently while they are out could stop the problems before they arise. Educating the community on the effects of alcohol and substances to create a better understanding on the negative outcomes of each would reduce violence dramatically. We need to support all of NSW with more forward thinking regulations and policies to support the music scene as a whole. Focussing on bringing back the night-time economy, giving hungry locals places to work and employment opportunities for students outside of day-time study. Introducing systems that educate and help those people who are considered problem makers, rather than condemning the community as a whole would build trust and a positive relationship between authorities and punters, rather than a divide between police and the public. Extending public transport hours or rewarding well behaved late night ride share employees could reduce frantic rushes of people needing an affordable means of transport home and would create a more welcoming space for all.

NSW and the city of Sydney has such a creative population, all that they're hoping for is the support to feel as though they can create, work and succeed, rather than constantly feeling like they can't.