

**Submission
No 123**

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

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I've been teaching at universities and tertiary institutions for the past twenty years, always in the area of music. At its core, music is a key marker of humanity. There is no human culture that does not create music in some form or other. This is the nature of art.

However, music is also an industry, a core component of the creative industries. As thus, it needs the same kind of support that other industries enjoy.

On a purely fiscal level, the national live music industry has been found to return \$3 for every \$1 put into it. In 2014, the live music industry generated a conservatively estimated \$15.9bn (Live Music Office 2015), or roughly the same revenue as the export of natural gas (Office of the Chief Economist 2016: 25). It is noteworthy that this accounts for live music, not recorded music, music publishing, education, or any other areas.

But financial revenue tells only part of the story. Music has health benefits. My own findings in my research on regional music speaks of the effects on mental health of attending live music. Students who study music have been demonstrated to achieve higher results in other subjects. WAM in Perth undertook a project that addressed deaths of intoxicated people in remote areas who attended live events. It reduces insomnia, connects people reducing loneliness, and lowers stress. Few industries are as positive as music.

However, in order to reap these benefits, music needs legislative assistance. The work that the South Australian government has done in assisting live music is creating the most vibrant scene in the country...in Adelaide! By contrast the NSW government's poorly implemented lockout laws have moved Sydney backwards making it difficult to establish a sustainable and successful career as a musician. So too, the recently voted down Marrickville Music and Arts Precinct (voted down, I add, by the Greens) had deprived the inner west of what could have become a buzzing industry in a former industrial area.

Several things need to happen to establish a solid music scene in Sydney.

- * The effects of the lockout laws need to be addressed.
- * The red tape surrounding entertainment licences need to be reduced.
- * Benefits for venues that do have live music need to be established.
- * The trend of owners moving next to a venue, then complaining about the noise and shutting down the venue should cease.
- * Microfestivals and touring should be supported throughout the state.
- * Professional development opportunities for musicians should be developed. QMusic and WAM are excellent at this.
- * Music NSW is a long way behind WAM and QMusic. This needs to be addressed.
- * Competitions for songwriters and performers should be developed. I've been a judge for QMusic's songwriting competition for the last four years, and it forces people to write and enter something.
- * Financial support for developing artists should be provided.