

**Submission  
No 154**

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

**Organisation:** South East Arts  
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## **Music and Arts economy in NSW**

### **Music Festivals**

In our region there are a number of very successful and long running music festivals that provide significant economic benefit for the regional economy. However, most of these festivals are run by volunteer committees with issues of succession planning, volunteer burn-out, lack of strategic and long term planning and development for events.

Some funding is available to support festivals, however this is largely for associated projects, promotion and marketing, and rarely for management, staffing and running costs. Ticket income is generally used to cover performer fees and production expenses. Multi-year funding to cover operational and staffing costs would encourage these festivals to move to a more professional footing and help to build skills and experience for regionally-based workers.

### **Live music venues**

In our region the most successful live music venues are pubs and clubs who often use income from other sources (alcohol sales, poker machines, food etc) to supplement the costs of presenting live music. These venues are of course not suitable for youth under 18, one of the key markets for live music. As with festivals, most of the other live music events are presented and managed by volunteer committees and groups, the musicians are often restricted to door split deals, are generally underpaid or play for 'exposure' only. Touring support for live music is very limited and often regional areas miss out on touring acts due to the financial risk of presenting.

The restrictions around noise and live music for venues can be a real impediment for many venues to present. Often the rules around these restrictions are generic and do not take into consideration the various noise levels of different styles of live music. There are also various impediments to businesses interested in presenting live music (eg cafes, bookshops, restaurants) that limit their ability to host musical performances.

There has been a considerable growth in the House-concert movement with a number of on-line platforms bringing together artists and private venues, providing ticketing services and promotional content. As with the recent growth in the sharing economy, such as transport (eg Uber) and accommodation (eg Air BnB) there is a lack of legal and legislative frameworks and clarity around house concerts, with presenters unsure about issues such as insurance, liability and responsibilities. Some research and recommendations around this area would be helpful to encourage growth in this area.

### **Arts Business Training**

Musicians, along with other creative people, can lack appropriate knowledge and understanding of the range of arts business skills relating to their area of work and employment. More training and support for musicians in this area will help them deal with financial, legal, copyright, promotion and administrative aspects of their arts practice.