

**Submission
No 339**

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

Name: Miss Emma McGarry

Date received: 28 February 2018

Hi there,

I am a music-lover from regional NSW who has worked for a record label in Sydney for the past 3 years, along with several NSW-based music events. I'm also a regular attendee of music and arts events across the state. The local music industry, although facing many challenges, is doing well to provide music-lovers with many avenues to enjoy music; from small live venues to large scale festivals, through weekly parties, and online communities. The sense of community amongst music lovers is very strong.

In terms of challenges; there are several for businesses, musicians, and music-lovers. Sydney music venues and nightlife businesses have been under immense pressure during the period since lockout laws were introduced, with their capacity to generate revenue impacted and therefore opportunities to provide a space for up-and-coming talent or higher-risk/lower income events limited. Having spoken to international and interstate visitors to Sydney, it is clear to me that the impact the lockout laws have had on tourism & the overall view of Sydney has been immense. Sydney is no longer regarded as a place to visit for music or culture, particularly for young people.

In terms of musicians themselves, the opportunities presented locally are quite limited, particularly for mid-tier acts, who struggle to tour interstate or internationally due to the immense cost. Having come from a regional area, I know that few musicians can afford to take their music to rural and regional areas due to the cost, and in turn, rural and regional musicians are given less opportunity to reach an audience outside their local area. This means that regional music-fans are in turn limited in their ability to attend high-quality music events, with all-ages events are also hugely limited in both these and metropolitan areas.

To help address some of these issues, the following measures would create an immense amount of change:

- Significantly increased investment for the contemporary music sector (funding for artists, venues, and events)
- Increased support for music export interstate and internationally
- A contemporary music plan for NSW with clearly identified priorities and strategies
- Significant support for all-ages activities in NSW – for young bands and young audiences
- Better regulation and policies that support and foster a thriving live music scene across NSW (regional, metro and everything in between)
- Support and recognition for live music venues as cultural institutions and the backbones of our night-time economy
- Support for musicians financially and culturally
- Policies and initiatives that make festivals and venues safe and welcoming spaces for all
- Support for programs that work towards the music industry being representative of NSW people – including specific programs for women and GNC artists, regional artists, artists with disability, western Sydney artists and young artists

Myself and many other music-lovers would be more than happy to work with the government to help develop these plans and continue to push for positive change with the NSW music industry.

Please consider these measures and how best we can achieve a thriving music industry for music fans, musicians, and to position NSW as a music destination to the world.

Thanks, Emma