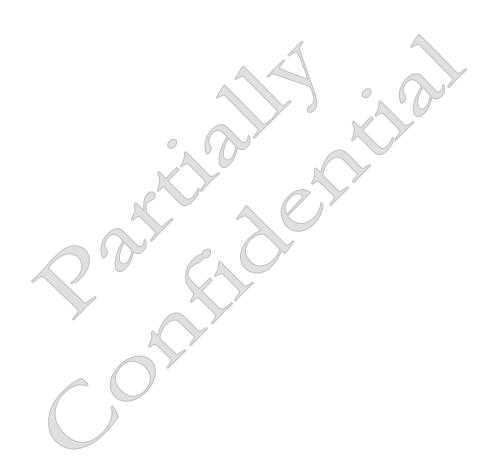# INQUIRY INTO THE MUSIC AND ARTS ECONOMY IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 28 February 2018

I am a Londoner by birth, and am now a resident in Sydney working for a wide ranging entertainment business active primarily in music. I thought it was important to post some thoughts on how important creative arts are to a city, at personal, business and wider community levels.

Given my submission, it's important to point out that I'm 43, for some perspective in case the views seem self-serving – they're not, I'm interested in Sydney particularly providing a vibrant and attractive youth culture to locals and visitors.

The foundation of a city's reputation to a young population is the entertainment culture – the ability to unwind, create and meet like-minded people in an environment that is both exciting and forward thinking. London, while having many issues of safety and overcrowding, is a thrilling hotbed of music, advertising, film, arts and culture. There are low barriers to starting an entrepreneurial night, exhibition or band, there are inspiring figures and leaders to emulate, there are hundreds or even thousands of busy hotspots in town to find your voice/tribe/calling. They are everywhere, they push fashion, they drive culture forward, they innovate and attract the most talented, and they also develop the next generation who are eager to build their own companies, labels, empires.

Sydney isn't London, it's a city built on a harbour, it has a host of unique and amazing characteristics that no other city can emulate, particularly London, in terms of lifestyle, fitness and health. It is highly attractive in many ways. However the entertainment and night culture, for want of a better phrase, has been strangled to near asphyxiation over the last 3-4 years by a government, particularly as state level, that is money led and unwilling to see the value of a thriving entertaining city – the effects of this will not be seen now, but with the next generation of youth who aren't brought up with the level of inspiration we know makes a difference.

Lock out laws, heavy handed policing, unfair zonal distribution of precincts, just generally limited thinking around nurturing the city all in the name of safety and perceived dangers. Using a sledgehammer to hit a pin. I don't have a magic bullet solution, but taking a look at Melbourne, at the reputation that city has, the innovative thinkers behind White Nights, the late night café culture, the dealing with problems there, wouldn't be a bad start.

It's very clear that Sydney is becoming a very unattractive city for anyone creative to stay in, particularly the real talent in the 20-30 range, and addressing this in whatever progressive way is possible would be a really positive first step – survey the youth, understand the perspectives of overseas visitors, compare ourselves to Amsterdam, or Barcelona, or even London or Manchester. I imagine it would be quite eye opening.

Maybe Sydney isn't destined for that kind of future, but the way things are handled, the enjoyment of the experience and the creative outlook at the moment don't strike me as that rosy.

Thanks.