

**Submission
No 234**

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

Organisation: Creativism

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CREATIVISM

Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Planning and Environment
The Legislative Council
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SYDNEY NSW 2000

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INQUIRY INTO THE MUSIC AND ARTS ECONOMY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a Senior Partner and emeritus Head of Creative Arts at the O-vation Group of Music and Entertainment Companies, Director of Creativism, a Western Sydney-based Arts and Culture sector advisory firm, and Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Madmap, a “social mapping” technology startup company. I am also a composer, pianist, vocalist and music educator.

The NSW Government has, in recent years, demonstrated a willingness to support a Creative Economy, through the establishment of Create NSW to support the development of arts & culture, and through Jobs for NSW and initiatives such as the Sydney Startup Hub to support the technology & innovation sector.

I have long argued that Arts & Culture, and Technology & Innovation, represent two sides of the same coin - both examples of an innovation-based economy built upon original thinking, imagination and creative approaches to solving problems. Solutions for one must incorporate solutions for the other. As the NSW economy continues to grow, and in particular shift its core towards the Central and Western Sydney Cities, building a strong foundation for individuals and organisations to engage in the Creative Industries is absolutely critical.

As the Deloitte Western Sydney Cultural Infrastructure Report of 2015 highlighted, Western Sydney is home to 30% of NSW's population, but receives approximately 5.5% of NSW Government Cultural Arts funding. This is supported by approximately 1.1% of Federal funding to

service the 10% of Australia's population currently in that region. With the population of NSW expected by Planning NSW to reach close to 10 million people by 2036, and the shift of the creative economy towards Western Sydney, NSW Government planning for the future must not merely seek parity with the Eastern city, but build a comprehensive infrastructure to support decentralisation for both the creation of, and consumption of Creative Arts towards the new Western Sydney, and towards hubs throughout Regional NSW.

O-vation and Creativism have long advocated for the creation of Creative Centres in Western Sydney and Regional NSW, providing the greater Creative Sector (of both Arts & Culture, and Technology & Innovation) physical bases of operation. The NSW Government has successfully opened the Sydney Startup Hub above Wynyard Station – and, while it should have opened in Parramatta in the first place as originally intended, it nonetheless serves as an example of how Government can support creative ventures through providing resources and easy access to the creative community. We have had less success developing such facilities in Western Sydney – a long term lease on a particular Government-owned asset within Parramatta Park that could have sustained a Western Sydney Creative Centre in the heart of Parramatta's CBD was instead awarded to a consultancy firm owned by a former NSW Minister for less than 30% of its value (and, as it so transpired, was one-eighth that of the highest commercial bid for the site). The kind of support that is readily available for the establishment of working spaces in the Sydney CBD, such as the Sydney Startups Hub, is non-existent outside of the inner city.

Create NSW has responded to our calls with the Western Sydney Making Spaces Initiative, but this program is insufficient to solve a systemic lack of existing infrastructure, or to sufficiently accommodate the needs of the Creative Economy of the new Western Sydney.

The NSW Government is well advised to consider the example of Musitec and the St. Paul's Creative Centre initiatives by the SA Government. A not-for-profit industry "Cluster" organisation, Musitec, as it describes itself, "aims to build business opportunities for musicians, technologists and creative industry practitioners by bringing together individual talents to collaboratively develop new products and services to build new companies, create jobs and grow industry". The St. Paul's Creative Centre physically co-locates Creative Industry organisations, especially those focused on music, creating a collaborative working environment and public attraction as home of a digital fabrication workshop and the SA Music Hall of Fame memorabilia display. This is, effectively, an Arts & Culture version of the Sydney Startup Hub – solving the same problems for the same industry.

Supporting creative industry individuals, community organisations and corporations with access to physical office space, training areas, rehearsal, production and teaching facilities will not only stimulate the nascent Western Sydney and Regional NSW creative economies, but serve those communities with the creative output of those organisations – stage shows produced by local

companies, sculptural and visual art displays in modern galleries, dance classes, choir performances and more. The flagship Sydney Startup Hub should, in the next five to ten years, occupy the entirety of the Fleet Street Creative Precinct in North Parramatta, to become the world's most exciting place to create, and Camellia should become our "Silicon Core", housing campuses for the world's greatest creative technology organisations.

We must support nascent creative individuals, community initiatives and commercial ventures with world-class creative infrastructure. The NSW Government's commitment to establish the flagship Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences in Parramatta is sacrosanct - establishing "satellites" of Eastern Sydney-based institutions reinforces the perception of Western Sydney as second best. *Any move to renege on this commitment to the people of Sydney and NSW is absolutely unacceptable and unforgivable.*

As the population of Western Sydney explodes over the next 20 years, the new MAAS must be joined by world-class performance spaces, rehearsal spaces, and production facilities to culturally enrich the millions of people that will call Western Sydney home. A theatre complex, for example, capable of hosting long-term Broadway-style musical productions does not exist outside of the city - these can have a halo effect for local business, encouraging travel and spending.

Issues surrounding the day to day practice of musicians and members of the music industry will be well discussed in other submissions to this Inquiry - so I conclude by emphasising that the new Western Sydney economy, and the economy of New South Wales in the future, will be driven by the Creative Industries. Comprehensive, systematic investment in cornerstone institutions, smaller creative centres, larger creative hubs and the closer relationships between Government and stakeholders that such facilities engender, are essential to support the creative individuals, community organisations and commercial ventures that will generate jobs, enrich local communities and stimulate interest and investment as Western Sydney and Regional NSW grows.

Regards,

Andrew Quah