

**Submission  
No 349**

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

**Organisation:** Watling & Bates  
**Date received:** 28 February 2018

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## Inquiry into the Music and Arts Economy in NSW

Dear Committee,

Watling & Bates are a songwriting duo who undertook a NEIS program in 2015 to develop the Bow & Curtsy music program for the aged care sector.

Our development of the program had two aims:

1) to bring a professional, well-targeted, and research-ready musical program to the aged care sector;

2) to provide an income stream to support our career as songwriters and contemporary performers.

We have found challenges in commercial acceptance of our program:

Our fee of \$230 for 1.5 hour performance is deemed unaffordable by centres in inner regional centres with high population density, reportedly due to the industry dependence upon volunteer musicians.

In response, we have developed a regional tour program, heading west and ranging from Miles in Queensland to Barraba in NSW, as centres in outer regional and remote areas consider our fee to be reasonable.

In order to undertake these tours, we must make arrangements with host centres of venues to perform in-kind to cover our accommodation costs, allowing us to service centres within a 2 hr driving locus of our host.

Our program is not included under the funding instrument for aged care as we are not music therapists, therefore our fee impinges on small entertainment budgets commonly raised by hospital auxiliaries.

We believe that the work we do has therapeutic value and we would like to partner with researchers to establish its benefit upon folks in care, in particular those with dementia.

We would like to draw the committee's attention to the difficulty we have found in the delivery of our quality music program to the aged care sector.

We hope that Arts Health policy changes may allow for acceptance of the role of musicians as therapeutic agents in the aged care sector, with the dual outcome of benefiting aged care residents while creating an employment opportunity to support musicians while they pursue creative works of songwriting and recording to contribute to the Australian music industry.

Further information and media is available on our website [watlingbates.com/bowcurtsy](http://watlingbates.com/bowcurtsy).

Thank you for your time in consideration.

Kind regards, Kym Watling & Geoff Bates