

**INQUIRY INTO INTEGRITY, EFFICACY AND VALUE FOR
MONEY OF NSW GOVERNMENT GRANT PROGRAMS**

Organisation: Jaybees Entertainment

Date Received: 21 August 2020

Dear Committee

On August 4 I wrote to my local member about music funding for Great Southern Nights in NSW and have not had any reply to my correspondence to date. My location on the South Coast of NSW has been impacted by drought, fires, floods and economic decimation, this has led to a complete loss of employment opportunities for our business, artists, entertainers and venues. Last summer, we were in the grip of the worst bushfire season on record which saw our highways closed and our tourist numbers eliminated from September to February, This is the peak season for the entertainment and hospitality industry on the south coast. the recovery which was expected following was met with drastic flooding to again prevent the tourism we so desperately needed. Our next opportunity should have been the Easter holiday period at which time most venues had to be closed due to Covid-19. Although most are now re-opened none are operating at full capacity and so are still struggling. Many South Coast towns are still in recovery mode from the fires with infrastructure damage and tourism in freefall. Every time there is another publicised case of Cove-19 it does enormous damage to the confidence of the small coastal communities.

So often the Government puts out programs which are not able to be accessed due to ridiculous criteria. This is not new, it has been my experience for a long time.

Discussing this issue with our members and this info comes from a local independent artist who has had a fair share of success and rejections in receiving funding from various government bodies; he makes the following observations.

After going through the grants process this year again these are a few areas where I feel positive changes could be made.

- The language used to differentiate between different types of grants and their specific requirements could be simplified and more defined.
- Application processing needs to be transparent so grants awarded can be scrutinised and successful applications can be used by new applicants to understand the process better.
- I received emails regarding the status of my applications weeks after the allotted processing time and well after the start time of my project. So It would seem that the office that was processing was overwhelmed. Maybe introducing a number limit of applicants would help and also encourage people to apply faster.
- If there is a particular business structure that is favoured or that gives applicants an edge over others ie: a not for profit. That information needs to be made public.
- For those artists who are really struggling, the time, effort and knowhow it takes to apply for these kinds of grants is a huge barrier that favours experienced grant writers.
- The fact that there are people whose business is “grant writing” and that they can be employed to apply for various government grants because they know the right way to go about it and the language to use, speaks to the fact that the focus is on the application process and language rather than the art that the grant is supposed to support.
- In an ideal world, arts grants would be applied to maximum effect benefiting and supporting a greater number of artists rather than the reality of most successful grants favouring those with commercial backing and funding to employ “grant writers”.

anonymous.

I hope this enquiry can actually have some benefit to addressing the grass roots of the industry and those artists outside of Metropolitan areas who are largely forgotten when the criteria for funding is put together. Realising their particular place in the scheme of things and making funding accessible to them in their locale would benefit their communities especially as rebuilding is so necessary in post-fire, post-flood, post cove-19 times in NSW.

I have included the email that I originally sent to my local members below.

Thank you for healing my concerns.

Yours Faithfully

Narrell Brown J.P.

Managing Director

Jaybees Entertainment.

Sanctuary Point NSW .