

**Submission  
No 95**

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

**Organisation:** Department of Premier and Cabinet

**Date Received:** 4 September 2020

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Mr Stewart Smith  
Director, Committees  
Public Accountability Committee  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Smith

**Submission - Public Accountability Committee into the integrity, efficacy and value for money of NSW Government grant programs**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the above Inquiry.

The NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet has robust processes for managing grants programs that ensure transparency and value for money for the people of NSW. A range of measures are in place to maintain the integrity of grants programs and deliver a fair and equitable allocation of funding under these programs.

The attached submission has been prepared by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and focuses on grants it currently manages. Information about the Regional Cultural Fund will be included in the submission from the Department of Regional NSW who manage the Regional Growth Fund.

I am confident in the robust processes the Department has established to deliver grants programs that are efficient, effective and deliver value for money for people of NSW.

I can be contacted via email  
information.

should the Committee require further

Yours sincerely

**Kate Foy**  
**Deputy Secretary**  
**Community Engagement**  
4 Sept 2020

## Department of Premier and Cabinet funding & grant programs

**Aboriginal Affairs NSW** delivers a range of grants to eligible organisations and groups based in NSW or working with Aboriginal communities in NSW. All grant programs administered by Aboriginal Affairs NSW have program guidelines in place which cover eligibility, assessment and approval processes to ensure fair, accountable and transparent administration of grants to communities. These include:

- [Aboriginal Affairs NSW NAIDOC Grants](#) are annual grants to support activities and events in NSW held during NAIDOC Week that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements. There is \$200,000 funding allocated in 2020 under this program.
- The [Aboriginal Languages Community Investments Program](#) aims to assist with progressing functions of the *Aboriginal Languages Act 2017 (NSW)* by providing one-off funding for Aboriginal community organisations and groups to support Aboriginal language activities in communities across NSW. In 2020, the program was allocated \$300,000 in funding. Future years funding and budget will be determined by the Aboriginal Languages Trust Board.
- [Cultural Grants](#) provide one-off funding for Aboriginal organisations and groups to deliver cultural events which help strengthen Aboriginal identity, cultural connections and languages. In 2020 the program was allocated \$200,000 in funding.
- The [Minister's Discretionary Fund](#) which supports Aboriginal community organisations and groups in communities across NSW. \$200,000 has been allocated to the fund for 2020 as part of DPC's budget.

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs receives requests for funding from a range of sources both in person and through correspondence from Members of Parliament, Non-Government Organisations, community groups and members of the public. Any MP or organisation can seek support from the Minister's Discretionary Fund.

All grants and donations are considered and approved at the discretion of the Minister. This gives the Minister flexibility to fund small projects and worthy causes that often are ineligible or unsuccessful in securing funds through other grant programs. Aboriginal Affairs NSW manages the administration of the Minister's Discretionary Fund and ensures all funding is appropriately managed and acquitted.

**Create NSW** delivers a range of funding opportunities for arts and cultural organisations, professional artists and arts/cultural workers across a wide range of artforms and disciplines. All grant programs administered by Create NSW have program guidelines in place which cover eligibility, assessment and approval processes to ensure fair, accountable and transparent administration of grants. Full eligibility criteria and further information about how the Create NSW Grants are determined and approved, including oversight of funding determination, transparency of decision making, and independence of project assessments are covered in the Grant Guidelines for each of the Programs listed.

In 2019/20, the NSW Government reformed the Arts & Cultural Funding Program to establish ten Artform Advisory Boards. This was in response to feedback from the arts and cultural sector calling for a more flexible and responsive funding program, and greater transparency and accountability. The Boards leverage artform expertise drawn from a diverse pool of NSW artists, small and medium organisations, major performing arts organisations, state-significant organisations and cultural institutions. The Artform Boards play a significant role in assessing the merits of funding proposals

across each artform and in providing strategic advice to the NSW Government, providing consistency, stability, and a considered approach in funding for the NSW arts and cultural sector.

Negotiated (non-competitively assessed) programs within the Arts & Cultural Funding Program provide stable multi-year grant funding to a range of key arts and cultural organisations. It includes:

- **Key Festivals** funding provides funding to support some of the most significant festivals in NSW, including Sydney Festival, the Biennale of Sydney and Sydney Writers Festival. Funding is negotiated between Create NSW and the funded organisation based on key performance indicators and assessment of operational and artistic performance
- **State Significant Organisation** funding supports key NSW based institutions - the Museum of Contemporary Art, the National Art School and Carriageworks. Funding is negotiated between Create NSW and the funded organisation, based on key performance indicators and assessment of operational and artistic performance
- **National Performing Arts Partnership** funding is provided to the most significant performing arts organisations, including Opera Australia, Sydney Symphony, Sydney Theatre Company and Bangarra Dance Company. Funding is negotiated in a three-way partnership agreement with the company, Create NSW and the federal arts funding body, the Australia Council for the Arts.
- **Regional Arts Boards and Regional Arts NSW** funding supports regional arts development officers and regional support networks to ensure arts and cultural development in regional NSW. Funding is negotiated with the Boards and Regional Arts NSW according to assessment of operational performance.
- **Service Organisation** funding supports key operational arts organisations, including Arts Law, Museums & Galleries Association, and the Band Associations. Funding is negotiated between the companies and Create NSW and co-funding partners (such as the Australia Council) according to assessment of operational performance.
- **Premier's History & Literary Awards** funding is provided annually to support and celebrate NSW writers and historical research and publications. The prizes are a set amount awarded annually.

Strategic Funding within the Arts & Cultural Funding Program (including one-off strategic investments) provide Create NSW and the Minister for the Arts the flexibility to fund small projects and worthy causes that often are ineligible in securing funds through other programs in the Arts & Cultural Funding Program.

The Minister for the Arts receives requests for funding from a range of sources both in person and through correspondence from Members of Parliament, Non-Government Organisations, community groups, and members of the public. Any MP or organisation can seek support from Strategic Funding. Strategic Funding can also support strategic artform initiatives proposed by the ten Artform Advisory Boards.

All grants are considered and approved at the discretion of the Minister. Create NSW manages the administration of Strategic Funding and ensures all funding is appropriately managed and acquitted.

Current grant programs include the:

- [Arts & Cultural Funding Program](#), competitive applications for funding can be made through two open rounds each year, with applications assessed by the relevant Artform Advisory Board. The reformed grants program is designed to support a wider range of artists, organisations and cultural workers through more accessible entry criteria and has made access to funding simpler for the sector.

This has been achieved by reducing the number of eligibility criteria from 26 to four, simplifying 14 project categories to one category, consolidating multiple funding rounds into two open funding rounds each year; and including long-lead funding notification dates – including for touring across NSW – which has allowed applicants to submit funding applications with greater scheduling

Competitively assessed programs within the Arts & Cultural Funding Program include:

- [Project funding](#) to deliver a range of arts and cultural activities to communities across NSW, which supports the employment and development of professional NSW-based artists and arts and cultural workers.
- [Creative Koori Project funding](#) to support the Aboriginal arts and cultural sector for NSW by providing funding for cultural and creative projects delivered by Aboriginal artists, organisations and communities.
- [Annual Organisation funding](#) provided on an annual basis to support Arts and Cultural Organisations (including service organisations) to deliver multiple arts and cultural activities throughout a single calendar or financial year. Funding can contribute to any aspect of an organisation's program.
- [Local Government Authorities \(LGA\) Arts & Cultural Programs](#) supporting Local Government to deliver activities over a period of up to three years. Local Government Funding will commence from 2020/21 and will support arts and cultural outcomes of an annual program of activity by a facility or unit of Local Government.
- [Independent Arts & Cultural Organisation Multi-Year Funding](#) supports Independent Arts and Cultural Organisations to deliver, develop and present multiple arts and cultural activities over a 2+2 year period. Funding will commence from 2020/21 and can contribute to any aspect of an organisation's program.
- [Small Project Grants \(Quick Response\)](#) supports the creation, development and presentation of new work and professional development or promotion for NSW-based professional artists and arts and cultural workers. This quick response grant mechanism enables professional artists and arts and cultural workers to participate in time-sensitive opportunities offering grants from \$500 to \$5,000 towards projects.
- [Creative Leadership Program](#) provides opportunities for individual artists, practitioners and arts/cultural workers to undertake self-directed professional development programs or significant opportunities to support their personal, creative and career advancement. These grants are available across a range of artforms.

Other funding programs administered and supported by Create NSW include:

- [Creative Kids](#), which is a four-year initiative to encourage school-aged children and young people to participate in creative and cultural activities. Parents, guardians and carers can claim a \$100 voucher per year to put towards the cost of lessons and fees with registered Creative Kids Providers. The program encompasses a wide range of eligible activities face-to-face and online.

- [Creative Kids Digital](#) provides more options for providers to deliver their arts and cultural programs online. Supported digital experiences include online lessons, activities, workshops, webinars, and film and performance streaming.
- [Creative Kids Small Business Grants](#) allows Creative Kids providers to apply for funding of up to \$5,000 to support their digital transition. This program helps to mitigate COVID-19 restrictions and ensures young people have continued access to programs and activities.

There are multiple **Screen NSW** Funding Programs which support the film and television industry within NSW and encourage screen investment production attraction and incentives. These include:

- [Early Development](#) which supports projects at short document/draft stage for digital and multi-platform/narrative TV/factual/documentary/feature films.
- [Advanced Development](#) supporting projects readying for market with strong chance of attracting partners; later stage draft/non-draft/pitch materials for finance/market and finance travel/preliminary casting/script readings
- [Slate Development](#) supporting NSW production companies and is intended to provide significant development opportunities for all suitable and eligible screen content for any eligible NSW production company that is significantly affected by COVID-19.
- [Market Travel](#) providing opportunities to NSW producers and key creatives for travel relevant to financing for projects. Applications are considered on a rolling basis.
- [Festival Travel](#) for NSW key creative whose projects have been officially invited to screen at significant festivals outside Australia. Applications are considered on a rolling basis.
- [Time Critical Shooting](#) supporting shoots for essential material that must be gathered before a project's official production schedule.
- [Production Finance](#) provides funding for projects produced or post-produced in NSW. Funding allocations are guided by the ratios linking the Create NSW contribution to the amount spent in the State.
- [Regional Filming Fund](#) encourages NSW screen productions to film outside metropolitan Sydney through assistance to offset costs of shooting; minimum 5 days in regional areas.
- [Made in NSW Local TV Drama fund](#) invests in the production of new local TV drama series in NSW by providing production funding.
- [Emerging Filmmakers Fund](#) supports production/post-production short films by new and emerging filmmakers. Executive Producer attached to projects by Screen NSW.
- [Screenability Filmmakers Fund](#) supports production/post-production for short films by new and emerging filmmakers, including at least one key creative with a disability. Films premiere at Sydney Film Festival. Executive Producer attached to projects by Screen NSW.
- [Made in NSW International Footloose](#) provides incentives to attract international filming to increase NSW market share of production /generate employment/enhance skills/facilitate introduction of new film related technology.



- [Post, Digital Visual Effects \(PDV\) Rebate](#) 10% rebate of qualifying expenditure (over \$500,000) on Post, Digital & Visual Effects (PDV) work carried out in NSW.
- [Location Scouts and Inbounds Program](#) - attracts production/postproduction to NSW by inbound visits from producers, directors and other creatives, both Australian and international;
- [Screen Audience Development](#) - provides grants to support public screenings, festivals or tours that provide opportunities for audiences to see and experience quality screen content and innovative practice, and one-off or annual events in single or multiple venues – one round per year.
- [Screen Industry Development](#) - supports organisations that create professional development opportunities for NSW screen practitioners at various stages of their careers – one round per year.
- [Strategic Opportunities Program](#) - supports individual initiatives and events that demonstrate benefits to the NSW screen industry. Applications are considered on a rolling basis.

Create NSW also works with the Department of Planning, Environment and Industry to deliver the \$100 million [Regional Cultural Fund \(RCF\)](#), established in 2017 under the Regional Growth Fund. The RCF has provided funds to 136 projects across Regional NSW with a total project value of \$196 million. The Create NSW team is involved in providing advice and support to funding recipients to ensure each project's success. All RCF projects are due to be delivered from 2019 to 2021 and as at 28 August 2020, 59 projects had been successfully delivered. Specific information regarding the RCF which relates to this Inquiry will be included in the submission to be made by Regions NSW who manage the Regional Growth Fund.

The [Heritage NSW Grants Program](#) helps owners, custodians, managers and communities to recognise, value and care for heritage. The Program provides grants to heritage owners and custodians, local government and the community to deliver a broad range of heritage outcomes. All grant programs administered by Heritage NSW have program guidelines in place which cover eligibility, assessment and approval processes to ensure fair, accountable and transparent administration of grants. Full eligibility criteria and further information about how the grants are determined and approved, including oversight of funding determination, transparency of decision making, and independence of project assessments are covered in the guidelines for each of the Programs listed.

There are currently several competitive categories of grants available under this Program, with a funding round generally held every two years:

- [Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Grants](#) provides organisations with funding for projects that increase understanding, respect, celebration and cultural participation in Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- [Caring for State Heritage Grants](#) which provides matched funding to help conserve, manage, maintain and activate assets on the State Heritage Register.
- [Community Heritage Grants](#) which provide funding to help identify, conserve, interpret and promote heritage assets.

The next funding round is expected to open late 2020 for projects delivered in 2021-23.

In addition, grants are open year round under a non-contestable grant category:

- [Emergency Works](#) which is available only for gazetted Aboriginal places, items listed on the State Heritage Register, or items with a current Interim Heritage Order, to protect and/or repair damage caused by unexpected events such as an extreme storm or accident, with the outcome being to improve the condition of heritage items and mitigate the risk of further damage.

As funding is competitive for all categories, except for Emergency Works grants, applicants are assessed against the criteria for each Program category and ranked. If oversubscribed, not all eligible applications will be funded.

**Partnerships & Engagement** manages the Premier's Discretionary Fund, which has been operating annually since at least 1998. In 2020/21, \$2.3million has been allocated to the fund as part of the DPC budget.

Since 2011/12 the allocation has been consistent at \$2.3 million per annum. Prior to that, funding allocations were more ad hoc, with \$14.2 million allocated in 2010/11 by the then Premier. In 2008/9 and 2009/10 the base funding was \$2.7 million per annum.

The Premier receives requests for funding from a range of sources both in person and through correspondence from Members of Parliament, Non-Government Organisations, community groups and members of the public. Any MP or organisation can seek support from the Premier's Discretionary Fund.

All grants and donations are considered and approved at the discretion of the Premier. This gives the Premier flexibility to fund small projects and worthy causes that often are ineligible or unsuccessful in securing funds through other grant programs.

DPC manages the administration of the Premier's Discretionary Fund and ensures all funding is appropriately managed and acquitted. All successfully funded projects are listed annually in the Department of Premier and Cabinet's [Annual Report](#).