



**REVIEW OF THE AUSTRALIA COUNCIL**  
**MAY 2012**

Cover image: ***Travelling Colony*** by Brook Andrew. Image: Prudence Upton, courtesy Carriageworks.

The Hon Simon Crean MP  
Minister for the Arts  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

We are pleased to present you with the report of the Australia Council Review.

As the primary funding body for the arts, since its inception the Australia Council has played a central role in ensuring the vitality and resilience of the Australian arts sector. Committed and knowledgeable staff, and engaged and passionate peer assessors have, on behalf of the community, seriously assumed their responsibilities to support and nurture 'excellence' among Australia's arts practitioners and organisations. They have helped to create an artistic environment which has enriched Australia's fabric in countless ways.

Inevitably, the sector and the Council have both changed significantly in the forty years since the Council was established. Technology, particularly digital technology, has dramatically changed society, and so too has it changed participation and practice in the arts, design and the cultural industries. The old orthodoxies which defined artforms have in many areas been outstripped by innovation, collaboration and adventure. Widespread access to fast broadband will only accelerate the pace of these changes.

It is timely, in the context of a new National Cultural Policy discourse, to pause and to explore how the Australia Council now reflects a sector that is multifaceted, sophisticated, inspired and constantly moving. It is also important to ensure that the Australia Council is best positioned to support the flow of social and economic dividends from the arts to the community. This is particularly so as the tectonic plates of our economy move us beyond our high dependency on natural resources towards a new economic paradigm in this, the Asian Century.

In conducting the review under our terms of reference, our overarching aim was to establish a clearly expressed mandate for the Council that allows it to be responsive, innovative and relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century policy and arts environment.

We have tried to be bold but balanced – reflecting the often forthright and always helpful views expressed during our consultations.

The report makes eighteen recommendations across six key areas for major reform to the Council, through a recalibration of the Council's purpose, and a significant revision of the Council's governance structure and peer review process.

These reforms may not be easy to implement but they will, over time, put the Council in the best possible position to carry a key role in the contemporary arts sector and in the context of the broader objectives of the National Cultural Policy. The changes will require the engagement and support of the sector if they are to succeed and achieve their aims. We strongly believe the reforms will establish the Council as a modern, relevant organisation that is able to adapt to the changing needs of the Australia arts sector in the decades to come.

In undertaking the Review, we have also identified a number of important potential areas for action which warrant consideration in future. These include the creation of a national organisation to take the lead in supporting excellence in Indigenous arts practice, the exploration of the potential role of the Australia Council in ensuring better collaboration between the arts sector and the national collecting institutions, consideration of the Council's scope beyond implementation of the Review's proposed reforms, and the role that the Council can play in encouraging the arts sector to develop content in the age of wide access to high-speed broadband services.

We also note the current work being undertaken by Dr Ken Henry to develop a White Paper on Australia in the Asian Century, the terms of reference for which require consideration of current government policies in light of increasing engagement with Asia. In this context, there is a clear role for the Council to look for opportunities to build a strong dialogue with our Asian neighbours, particularly China and Indonesia. The opportunities for artistic engagement in Asia and the role that the Council will play in this should be explicitly addressed as part of Dr Henry's paper.

We wish to acknowledge the positive and open approach the Australia Council has taken in engaging in the Review process. Importantly, we thank all of those who without exception gave us carefully considered input to this review, including the many people with whom we met face to face and the 2007 people who took the time to give their views through the online survey.

Finally, we wish to thank the outstanding support we have received from the staff of the Office for the Arts who provided an exemplary contribution, both intellectual and organisational, to the review. We simply could not have completed this exercise without the competent, professional and steadfast assistance of the Secretariat.

Yours sincerely



Gabrielle Trainor



Angus James

Chairs, Review of the Australia Council

7 May 2012

# Review of the Australia Council

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## Introduction

In 1973, the National Gallery of Australia purchased Jackson Pollock's seminal work, *Blue Poles*, for the princely sum of \$1.3 million – a record for contemporary American artwork at the time. The purchase elicited public outrage that it was elitist, extravagant and could have been far better spent on community art projects or more traditional (and popular) artforms. When asked about the purchase in the week of its announcement, then Prime Minister Gough Whitlam distanced himself from the decision, noting that it had been made at arm's length from the Government by the Gallery's Acquisitions Committee. This did not stop him, however, from using the image three months later for his annual Christmas card.<sup>1</sup>

Today *Blue Poles* is widely recognised as one of the most savvy purchases in the national collection. It is fortuitous that the purchase was not subject to political or public will: what the Gallery's Acquisitions Committee knew was the importance of this work – both to the international art world and in the Australian context. With the benefit of hindsight, we can see that the purchase was part of a major social and cultural transformation. On the one hand, Australia was still a socially conservative nation looking to England for its cultural, social and political legitimacy. At the same time, it was being belatedly influenced by post-war changes arising out of the civil rights and women's movements and was beginning to develop its own points of cultural, social and political reference. In a sense, Australia was finally coming of age.

1973 saw another far-sighted development for the Australian arts sector. The Australia Council, which had five years earlier been created as a division of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, was finally established as a separate agency operating at arm's length from government. At the time, the arts sector was in a fledgling form, lacking serious funding and a strong identity. In the Council's first annual report its inaugural Chairman, Dr H.C. Coombs (known as 'Nugget' Coombs) described the conditions in the sector that led to the Council's conception and ultimate creation:

*"In the performing arts the professional companies, with one or two exceptions, were small, precariously financed and inexperienced. Even among the handful of large companies, none was more than two decades old...while in literature, the visual arts and the crafts many creative individuals were forced to compromise their standards in order to survive. The Aboriginal arts, except where they struggled to survive underground, were largely underappreciated or ignored. Intensifying the effects of this thinness of professional activity, there was a lack of professional organisations capable of stimulating the performance or protecting the rights of artists".<sup>2</sup>*

When nursing the Council's enabling legislation through Parliament, Prime Minister Whitlam highlighted the overseas exodus of Australian cultural expertise and indicated that the new Council would address this as a funding body designed to foster and support excellence in Australian artistic practice – "we want to ensure that our greatest artists remain in Australia, and that the whole Australian community is the richer for their presence."<sup>3</sup>

Compare this scene with the Australian arts sector today. It is no exaggeration to say that it has transformed in its sophistication and scope. Australia now punches far above its weight on the international arts stage, it

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<sup>1</sup> L. Barrett, *The Prime Minister's Christmas Card*, (Power Publications, Sydney; 2001), p.10.

<sup>2</sup> H. C. Coombs, Chairman's Report, *Australia Council Annual Report 1973*, p. 14, quoted in H. Guldberg, *The Arts Economy 1968-1998*, (Australia Council, Sydney; 2000), p.85.

<sup>3</sup> Second Reading Speech, Australia Council Bill 1974, 23 July 1974.

fosters great innovation and creativity and there are real and sustainable career paths in Australia for artists working at the highest level of achievement across all artforms.

The Australia Council has played a significant role in this transformation. For the better part of four decades, it has been the primary national funder of artistic work of excellence and of the framework that supports that work. During that time, it has built its support from a narrow focus on organisations working in more ‘traditional’ artforms, to a broad agenda supporting artists and organisations from the smallest artist run initiative to major performing arts companies. In 2010-11 the Council delivered grants and project funding of nearly \$164 million in the form of almost 1,900 separate grants, enabled the creation of over 7,500 new artistic works and provided direct funding to over 900 artists and 1000 organisations.<sup>4</sup> It now offers funding across 50 separate grant categories and 40 initiatives.

Funding from the Council has enabled Australia to not only establish a high level of artistic practice domestically – it has also assisted to build Australia’s international profile. Successful artists such as Tracey Moffat, Ken Unsworth, Peter Carey, Kate Grenville, John Butler Trio, the Presets, Christine Anu, Paul Grabowsky, Peter Sculthorpe, Ben Frost, Leah Purcell and Dan Sultan (to name but a few) have all received support from the Council at the early stages of their careers. The Council has provided targeted support to companies such as Back to Back Theatre and Chunky Move which, sustained by an injection of base funding, have built strong profiles and strengthened their organisational capacity. The Council has also worked over a long period with major companies that have forged international reputations, such as Bangarra Dance Theatre, the Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Australian Ballet. These are but a handful of an extensive list – it is impossible to name them all here. The evidence base is strong: funding the arts sector via an expert funding body, in the form of the Council, has served Australia well.

The Council now works in a sector that is almost unrecognisable from four decades ago. It is safe to assume that the sector will continue to evolve at an ever-increasing rate over the next four decades. The time is right for a consideration of the Council’s place in the sector, and for a detailed and honest consideration of whether and how it could better fulfil that role.

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In 2012 we are again at the precipice of significant change in Australia - this time driven by economic and technological rather than social forces. We have experienced the longest continuous period of growth in the Australian economy, fuelled by the greatest mining boom in Australia’s history – with all the ensuing benefits including low unemployment and a bigger economy.

While Australia experienced a mild contraction as a result of the global financial crisis and the high Australian dollar, notably in manufacturing, our economy was insulated by the buffering effect of the mining boom. Australia is particularly well-placed to address global economic uncertainty: our economic credentials are among the strongest in the world, and the Australian economy is expected to outpace all major advanced economies over the next two years.<sup>5</sup> However, we cannot ignore the economic risks currently facing many other developed countries. What the global financial crisis did reveal to us is the vulnerability of those areas

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<sup>4</sup> Australia Council 2010-11 Annual Report.

<sup>5</sup> International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook*, April 2012, quoted by the Treasurer Wayne Swan MP, “IMF World Economic Outlook”, 18 April 2012.



of our economy that are open to shifts in support from the private sector and government – such as the arts sector.

We are increasingly aware of the need to stimulate areas of long-term advantage in our economy, to build our economic resilience so that we are able not just to survive but to take advantage of change and instability. This will require creativity and innovation across many areas that do not traditionally demonstrate these characteristics. The Review believes the arts sector has a great opportunity to be a leader in this endeavour – to stimulate ideas and invention. It must be properly funded to undertake this role.

Coupled with this is the need to make the most of the opportunities afforded by the monumental impact of technological change on every aspect of our lives. For the arts sector, the growth of high speed broadband in particular has the potential to revolutionise the way in which artistic work is both created and experienced. Supported by major investment in better built infrastructure, like ubiquitous fast broadband connections, we are operating in a global system linked in to the rest of world. It is the content in the pipes – and how we create, present, learn from and use that content – that will keep us in the game and shore up our future prosperity.

The role of government in this time of transition is to enable and encourage growth and innovation. Australia has a growing reputation for being ambitious, competitive and forward thinking – these are qualities which must also be evidenced in our arts sector, particularly at the elite end of the spectrum. It is realistic to assume that government will always be a major source of financial support for the arts, but increasing the sector's capacity to innovate and grow will assist it to build its earned revenue and support from the private sector – including sponsorship and philanthropy.

Successive governments have invested in the arts 'for art's sake', but also because of the economic and social dividend it provides in areas across our economy. The arts sector contributes to Australia's productivity through direct contribution to outputs, employment and growth. These are the benefits that are relatively easily identified and measured – such as through sales of tickets and artworks, creation of new jobs and earned income of arts organisations. Indeed, the cultural sector has become a true economic force, contributing over \$30 billion towards GDP per annum, exceeding the contribution of the agriculture, forestry & fishing industries.<sup>6</sup> However, there are wider benefits that are not as easily quantified or identified. These benefits are seen in non-arts areas of our economy such as education, social cohesion, national imagination and health.

A growing body of evidence supports the premise that communities with a strong arts focus are more vibrant, cohesive, healthy and innovative. Together, these characteristics contribute towards our capacity to be productive and to grow as a nation. As the National Cultural Policy Discussion Paper, launched by the Minister for the Arts, the Hon Simon Crean MP, in August 2011, notes: "a creative nation is a more productive nation".<sup>7</sup>

In this context, the Australia Council plays a pivotal role. The Council operates as the Australian Government's primary funding body for the arts, focusing on the highest levels of artistic endeavour. Its role

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.cci.edu.au/sites/default/files/dbogg/Creative%20Economy%20report%20card%20March%202011.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> <http://culture.arts.gov.au/discussion-paper/introduction>.



is to work as the expert agency quarantined from the tides of government and politics by its legislative mandate. Like the sector it is designed to fund, it needs to be able to innovate, to respond to change and to take advantage of opportunities wherever they may present themselves. In doing so, it will be able to support a sector that is also responsive and flexible.

In 2012 the Australian Government has committed to developing a National Cultural Policy that aims to place the arts front and centre in the national psyche. This important piece of work will influence the next decade of Australian Government investment in, and support for the arts. The Review of the Australia Council forms a central part of the process to develop the Policy. It could not come at a better time for the Australian arts sector.

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The Review received a broad mandate from the Australian Government through its terms of reference. Essentially, we were tasked with looking at the very principles underpinning the establishment of the Council and to consider whether its original purpose continues to be relevant today. As a second arm of this consideration, we were also asked to look at how the Council could better serve its purpose in future through an improved governance model. The full terms of reference for the Review are included on page 11.

A number of key themes emerged through the consultation undertaken for this Review. In particular, there was a strong recognition among stakeholders of the important role the Council has played in developing the Australian arts sector as it is today. There was a high degree of support for the Council and an acknowledgement of the skills and expertise of its staff and peer reviewers. At the centre of this is faith in the two principles on which the Council was established – that is, operation at arm’s length from government, and decision-making on funding based on the assessment of artistic merit by a panel of peers. Furthermore, there was almost universal support for the view that the Council should primarily support work of artistic ‘excellence’, in all its guises. Finally, stakeholders highlighted the ever-present need for the Council to be flexible and strategic – more nimble – in relation to how it allocates its funding, to enable it to adapt and change along with the sector.

Ultimately, the Review makes eighteen recommendations across six areas that outline a broad mandate for change. These recommendations, and the conclusions that support them, are listed in full below beginning at page 13. In relation to the Council’s purpose, the Review recommends it be updated to ensure that the Council focuses on funding and promoting artistic excellence in all its forms, leaving the primary work of policy development and programs supporting broad access to the arts to the department of state – the Office for the Arts. In making this recommendation we recognise the interlinked nature of access and excellence in the artistic life cycle – these concepts are not mutually exclusive. It is also clear to this Review that the standard of excellence is difficult to define and highly subjective, but as the expert funding body for the arts, the Council is well-placed to make this assessment, using peers drawn from the sector as its decision makers.

The Review recommends the Council focus on four areas of activity in pursuing its purpose: providing funding to promote and sustain excellence in the arts sector, promoting a sector that is distinctly Australian, ensuring there are audiences and markets for the work it funds and promotes, and working to maximise the social and economic contribution made by the arts sector to Australia. In doing this, the Council must also increase its collaborations and linkages across all levels of government and within the sector. To meet identified needs

and enable the Council to fulfil its revised recommended purpose, the Review recommends additional annual funding of \$21.25 million per annum.

In relation to the Council's governance and administration, the Review recommends a revised, more conventional governance board structure with a strong strategic and contemporary focus, clear lines of communication with the Australian Government and mandated planning processes. It outlines a new model for grant allocation that allows the Governing Board to remove consideration of funding applications along artform lines and to establish and change the way in which applications are received, depending on needs in the sector. This addresses an important gap identified by stakeholders through the Review in relation to new and multidisciplinary artforms - which currently struggle to fit within the Council's funding programs (despite the Council's initiatives to try and address this issue). Importantly, the revised structure retains a focus on the input of experts from the various practice areas to inform and enrich the Council's engagement and depth of understanding with the sector. It also imposes a strategic approach to funding that makes a clear link between excellence, high-level goals and individual funding decisions. Ultimately, these changes must be implemented through a new Act.

If implemented, these recommendations are designed to firmly establish the Australia Council as the expert body for funding work of artistic excellence as part of a contemporary arts ecology. The reforms will deliver flexibility to allow the Council to use its expertise to respond to needs in the sector and to make judgements about how to structure, adapt and change the manner in which it provides funding as the sector evolves. But the recommendations also provide for safeguards by prescribing a more formalised requirement for communication and planning with the Australian Government.

The Australia Council has been critical to the success and growth of creative practice in Australia and internationally. The reforms recommended through this Review will play a role in continued success into the future and will give Australia a refreshed organisation with a contemporary mandate which supports the diversity and the richness of the Australian arts sector today.

## Terms of Reference

The National Cultural Policy will set the framework for Australian Government support for arts, culture and the creative industries for the next ten years. The objective of the policy is to increase the social and economic dividend from the arts, culture and the creative industries. A strong artistic sector producing the highest quality work results in positive social and economic impacts for the nation. The funding delivered to the arts through the Australia Council ensures that high calibre artistic product is made for Australian audiences.

The Australia Council's original purpose was to ensure:

*“the best is encouraged and those who produce it are given the greatest opportunity to achieve the highest quality of which they are capable” (Nugget Coombs).*

The review should assess whether the original purpose remains relevant today. The review will determine the appropriate governance and administrative model to ensure the Australia Council is able to:

- act on funding decisions guided by the overall principle of excellence and artistic merit;
- have a strong and robust arms length peer assessment process for all funding decisions and that the decision making process meets the community's expectations of fairness and transparency;
- be guided by enabling legislation that reflects the diversity of the Australian arts and cultural sector today and, with consideration of emerging creative areas, into the future.

It will do this by examining:

- the benefits and limitations of the current model of the Australia Council for supporting innovation as well as Australia's cultural heritage;
- the *Australia Council Act 1975* and ensuring it articulates a clear role for the Council that reflects the contemporary Australian arts and culture sector;
- the structure of the Council and considering ways to improve internal budget demarcation, grant eligibility criteria and peer assessor diversity to ensure that funding opportunities offered by the Council reflect the contemporary arts and culture sector;
- the respective roles and possible duplication of the Australia Council, Screen Australia, the Office for the Arts and other government funding agencies; and
- appropriate international models and considering what can be learned from them.

## Methodology

On 19 December 2011 the Minister for the Arts, the Hon Simon Crean MP, announced a Review of the Australia Council, noting that it would be undertaken in the context of the development of the National Cultural Policy.

Mr Angus James and Ms Gabrielle Trainor were appointed as co-Chairs to the Review. Officers of the Office for the Arts within the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, the Arts and Sport were seconded to provide a Secretariat to the Review.

The Review of the Council was informed by broad consultation, including:

- drawing on key themes emerging from consultation undertaken for the National Cultural Policy, which included over 450 written submissions and 2000 online responses to National Cultural Policy discussion paper.
- additional targeted consultations with stakeholders across the arts sector, international arts funding organisations and government, specifically in relation to the Australia Council Review. One or both of the chairs attended each of these meetings, supported by the Secretariat.
- 2007 responses to an online survey specifically targeting the Australia Council Review's terms of reference. The survey was launched on 23 February and closed on 9 March 2012.

The Australia Council provided the Chairs with a confidential submission to the Review. The Chairs also met with the Council's Chairman on two occasions in the course of the Review, and attended a Council Board meeting in Perth in February 2012. Ms Trainor attended an assessment meeting for the Council's Theatre Board in February 2012.

In drawing its conclusions, the Review has relied on financial data, statistics and other information provided by the Council, as well as publicly available material such as annual reports and portfolio budget statements. The Review did not undertake independent research in relation to the Council's financial performance – the figures presented in this report are as provided by the Council or as committed by the Government (such as through the Budget).

The Review restricted its consideration to the scope dictated by the terms of reference. It did not consider in detail broader issues such as whether the Council's scope of operation should be expanded to cover the arts and cultural sectors more broadly – for example, to include national collections. This is something that can be considered by the Australian Government in future, once the strategic and governance issues identified by this Review have been addressed. The recommendations on governance have been constructed to allow for an expansion of the Council's mandate into broader areas of arts and culture funding with *excellence* as its remit, should the Government wish to undertake consolidation of agencies in the future.

The Review is presented in six sections. Sections 1 to 3 address issues relating to the Council's purpose and role in supporting the Australian arts sector and fulfilling Government priorities. Sections 4 to 6 consider how the Council could be best placed to implement this purpose.

## REVIEW OF THE AUSTRALIA COUNCIL – Key Conclusions and Recommendations

In line with its terms of reference, the Review makes eighteen main recommendations for action by the Australian Government. Key conclusions leading to each of these recommendations are also provided.

### 1. Key conclusions: Relevance of the original purpose of the Council

#### 1.1 Nugget Coombs' vision

- o The intent of Nugget Coombs' original vision for the Australia Council: *“to ensure the best is encouraged and those who produce it are given the greatest opportunity to achieve the highest quality of which they are capable”*, remains relevant today.
- o The Act creating the Council as an arm's-length body, funding and promoting the importance of excellence in the arts, is supported. However, excellence, while inevitably subjective, needs to be better defined in the context of the Council's purpose.
- o The Council's interpretation of its current purpose through its Act is multifaceted, broad and requires clarification.

#### 1.2 Key Performance Indicators

- o While it is understandable that the Council will develop different statements of its outputs to meet the needs of differing audiences, there is no obvious through-line or connection between the Council's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and its stated Strategic Priorities and Deliverables.
- o There must be a more constructive discussion between the Council and the Minister about the Council's Strategic Plan and its KPIs to ensure they:
  - align with the Council's legislative purpose and the Government's policy objectives; and
  - follow best practice governance principles of being **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound**.

#### 1.3 Relevance of original purpose today

- o The Council's means for executing its purpose needs to be flexible enough to support the evolution of artform practice in a more contemporary arts sector.
- o The National Cultural Policy is an opportunity to update the Council's purpose to ensure that it is clearly defined, enabling the Council to respond to changes in the arts landscape, and to clarify what is meant by the importance of 'excellence' as the primary measure of Australia Council funding. It is vital that the Council's purpose aligns with and contributes to the implementation of the National Cultural Policy's goals.
- o The National Cultural Policy also presents an opportunity to rebrand the Australia Council as part of a broad marketing strategy.

## **Recommendations: Purpose**

### ***Recommendation 1***

The Review finds that Nugget Coombs' original vision for the Council is still relevant but needs to be updated to reflect the Council's place in a 21<sup>st</sup> century Australia and a contemporary arts sector. It must be communicated clearly, and be used to inform the Council's Strategic Priorities and KPIs, that are agreed to by the Minister for the Arts. The measure that is implicit in this vision is that of 'excellence', and this continues to be the Council's benchmark for the work it supports.

The Review recommends that a new purpose for the Council be expressed as follows:

**To support and promote vibrant and distinctively Australian creative arts practice that is recognised nationally and internationally as excellent in its field.**

This purpose should be supported by four principles for the Council. These are to:

- support work of excellence, at all stages of the artistic life cycle,
- promote an arts sector that is distinctively Australian,
- ensure that the work it supports has an audience or market, and
- maximise the social and economic contribution made by the arts sector to Australia.

The purpose should also be supported by a clear statement of its functions under its legislative mandate, which would include:

- to administer and measure the impact of funding to artists and arts organisations in a manner which achieves high accountability standards;
- to undertake and commission research and advocate for Australian arts to promote the sector and to better inform policy decisions; and
- to support and promote professional development and cultural leadership in the Australian arts sector.

### ***Recommendation 2***

This statement of purpose should be supported by a three year Strategic Plan, agreed with the Minister, which defines the KPIs against which the Council should be measured.

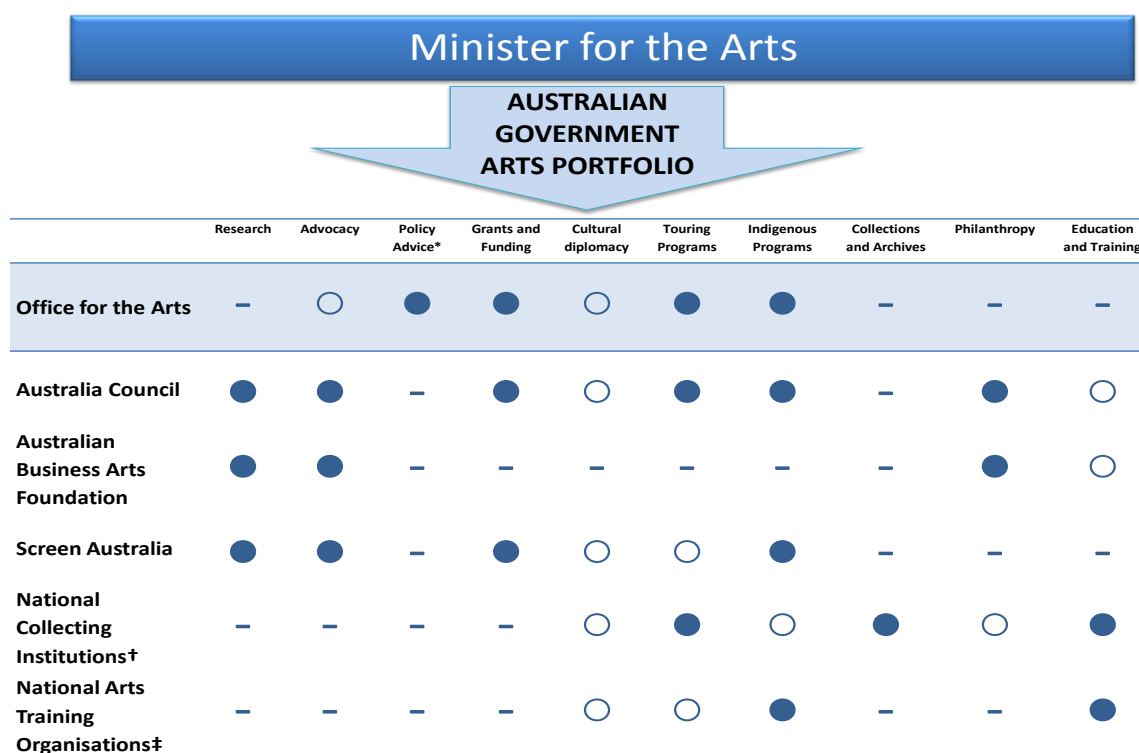
## 2. Key conclusions: Relationship with other arts agencies

### 2.1 The arts sector ecology and ecosystems

- o The Australian arts sector ecology is broad, complex and interwoven. While an increasing number of arts producers and sector participants do not necessarily see themselves as having a direct connection with government arts organisations, the Australia Council, the Office for the Arts and the range of other agencies which operate in the arts environment each have important roles to play and a variety of functions to fulfil.
- o In the case of the Council, while each Artform Board has mapped its own role in the sector’s ecology through Sector Plans, the Council’s overall contribution to that ecology is not well articulated.

### 2.2 Duplication and linkages in functions

- o Within the sector ecology, the Council operates as part of a complex and broad network of arts funding agencies and departments at the federal, state and territory levels. While there is evidence of cross over in program delivery with other agencies (as shown in the figure below, “Australian Government Arts Portfolio Agencies – areas of activity”), each organisation has a mandate in specific parts of the sector - including the Office for the Arts (OFTA) providing programs promoting community access to the arts, aligned with Australian Government policy, and with Screen Australia providing support for excellence in the commercial screen production sector.



**KEY:**

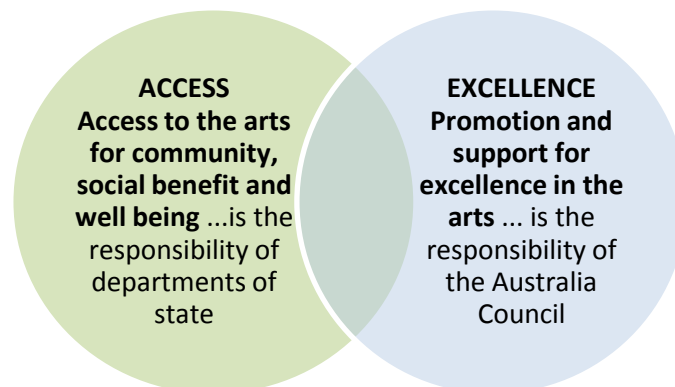
- Indicates core business activity undertaken by the agency.
- Indicates non-core activity undertaken by the agency.
- \* Advice provided directly to the Minister for the Arts or the Australian Government.
- † Includes the National Library of Australia, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, National Gallery of Australia, Australian National Maritime Museum, National Museum of Australia, National Portrait Gallery, Museum of Australian Democracy/Old Parliament House and the National Archives of Australia.
- ‡ Includes Australian Film, Television and Radio School, Australian Youth Orchestra, Australian National Academy of Music, Flying Fruit Fly Circus, Australian Ballet School, National Institute of Dramatic Art, National Institute of Circus Arts and the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA) Dance College.



- o The Council’s role within this context is as the Australian Government’s principal funding agency for the arts, an agency which invests in excellence.
- o As identified by the 2011 Review of Private Sector Support for the Arts, there is an element of duplication in relation to the work undertaken by the Australia Business Arts Foundation (AbaF) and the Australia Council’s Artsupport program – and the work of these programs would benefit from amalgamation. We are not persuaded by the view that business and philanthropy will be less likely to support the activities of the merged AbaF and Artsupport if it exists within the Council structure. We support in principle its placement within the Council but agree that the tax consequences for AbaF’s Australia Culture Fund need to be examined.

### 2.3 The Australia Council, excellence and broader Australian Government priorities

- o The Council’s suggestion that it should have a greater policy role and expanded program functions needs to be tested against its new purpose. This should be done by applying the recommended filter of activity that is primarily directed towards *Access to artistic practice and performance* versus activity that is primarily directed towards identifying and promoting *Excellence in artistic practice and performance*. For clarity, *Excellence in artistic practice and performance* can be achieved equally across all forms of practice, whether in community arts or on the main stage of the Opera House. As shown in the diagram below, the two concepts, ‘access’ and ‘excellence’, are not mutually exclusive, but provide a rational framework for delineation.



- o To illustrate the application of this filter, the Review offers the following examples:
  - In relation to arts education and artists’ professional development, it is the role of the Council to support professional development of the practising professional artist and within arts organisations. It is the role of OFTA to support the national arts training organisations and the work of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority in its role developing the Australian Arts Curriculum.
  - In relation to Indigenous arts practice, the Council is best placed in focusing its resources on supporting and recognising excellence in the lifecycle of Indigenous arts. OFTA is best placed to support community cultural maintenance as part of the Australian Government’s broader policy on ‘Closing the Gap’. There should be further examination of how ‘soft infrastructure’ for

Indigenous arts practice can be better supported enabling, for example, a network of leading Indigenous practitioners and organisations.

- In relation to cultural diplomacy, the Council should diversify its approach to investing in international engagement and cultural exchange, with a sustained emphasis on Asia.
- Of all of the areas of cross over between OFTA and the Council, the Review has found that the place of the touring programs is the most contentious. The Review notes and commends the work in train to clarify the place of the touring programs more generally and recommends a filter of Access versus Excellence be applied, with touring programs supporting Excellence being moved to the Council.

#### **2.4 Building links between arts portfolio agencies**

- o There is an opportunity to explore linkages with other agencies within the arts portfolio, especially those delivering a like function as illustrated in the figure “Australian Government Arts Portfolio Agencies – areas of activity”. The Government’s work to develop to planning and performance measures across agencies provides an opportunity to create more active linkages.

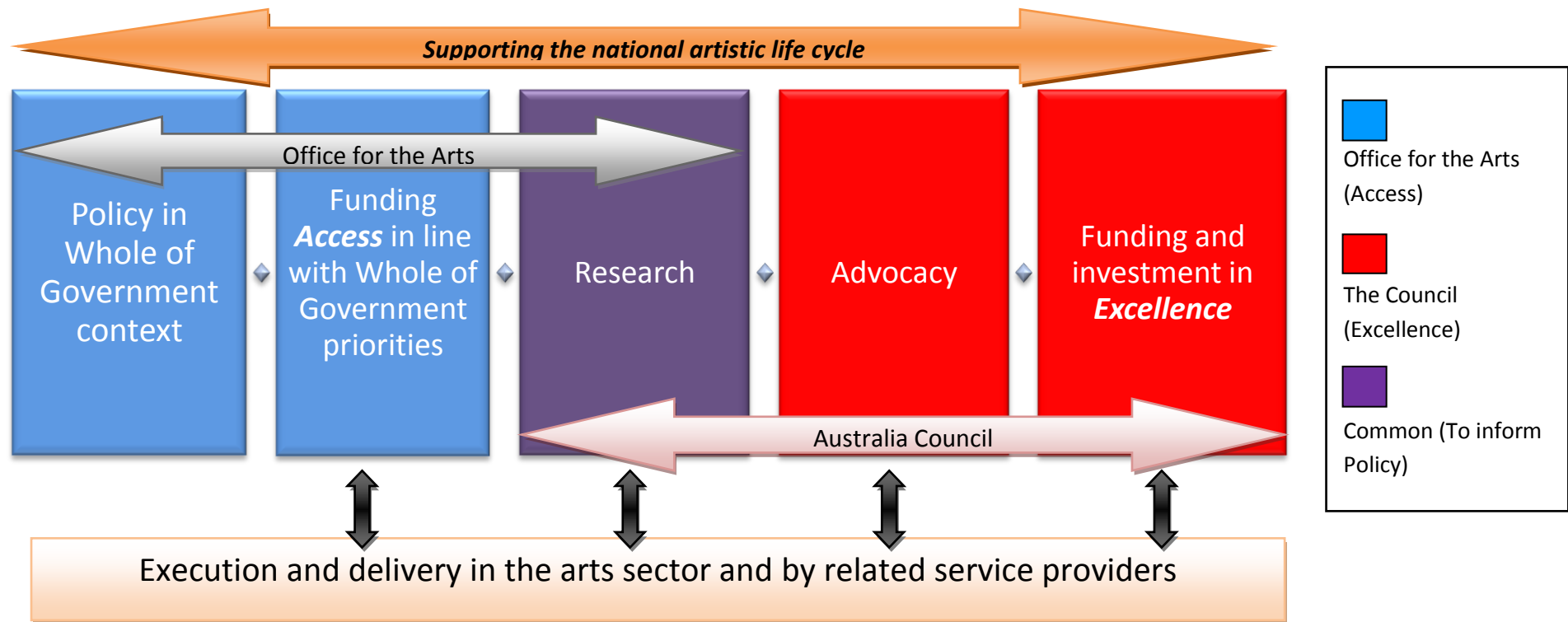
#### **2.5 Gaps in functions – the Australia Council as an advocate for the arts**

- o The Review found there is a high and largely unmet expectation in the sector that the Australia Council should be a strong voice in support of the arts. The Council should influence policy through its role as an expert agency and advocate for the arts sector through an agreed, and appropriately resourced, research program as discussed in the next section in relation to the Council’s funding requirements. We do not recommend in all cases the Council conduct research on its own account, but rather that it should leverage the strong research and learning capabilities of the universities and tertiary education sector.

#### **2.6 Impact of change in Purpose**

- o There is a need for clarification of the roles and program delivery of OFTA and the Council. The figure below, “Recommended Functional Map for the Australia Council and the Office for the Arts”, represents the proposed delineation in focus areas of activity for OFTA and the Council.

**Recommended Functional Map for the Australia Council and the Office for the Arts**



## 2.7 Relationship with state and territory funding bodies

- The Council should work to establish deeper and more formalised mechanisms for discussion with state and territory arts funding bodies.

### **Recommendations: Duplication and Linkages**

#### ***Recommendation 3***

The Review recommends that the Council work to remove duplication through the merger of AbaF and the Artsupport program as recommended by the Review of Private Sector Support for the Arts undertaken by Mr Harold Mitchell AO in 2011. However, this Review recommends the merged functions should sit within the Australia Council, subject to the resolution of the taxation issues surrounding transfer of the Australia Cultural Fund which is administered by AbaF.

#### ***Recommendation 4***

The Review recommends that the Council and OFTA undertake a joint program audit. This audit would take account of the Council's new purpose and apply the excellence versus access filter to current programs. The agreed program split would then be the subject of sector consultation, before implementation.

- The Council is best placed to focus its resources on supporting and recognising excellence in Indigenous arts practice and OFTA is best placed to support access to Indigenous arts practice, with its attendant, wider social and economic objectives, in community.
- A similar principle to that above may also apply to community arts projects.
- The audit must include assessment of touring programs. The Council should administer those programs which focus on work of excellence and OFTA on those which promote access to artistic product.
- Service delivery, wherever possible, should be devolved to the sector.

#### ***Recommendation 5***

The Review recommends that the Council work to grow the Council's linkages. The Review:

(a) concludes that the Council has a clear and important role in supporting professional development in the arts sector as part of its remit to support works of artistic excellence. To this end, the Review recommends the Council become a member of the Australian Roundtable for Arts Training Excellence in order to engage more directly with the national Arts Training Organisations. The Council's support in the professional development area should extend to supporting strategic initiatives in the sector as well as specific programs of support. Particular initiatives identified through the Review's consultations for further investigation include:

- the development of a 'mentor bank', matching expertise (both artistic and administrative) in

major and key organisations with small-to-medium organisations in need of professional development assistance, and

- an information portal providing information on jobs, training, education and professional development opportunities for young and emerging artists, especially those that support business development and management and cultural leadership in the arts context.

(b) recommends more regular and formal dialogue with other arts agencies, especially the national collecting institutions, to promote collaboration and to better leverage the role and value of the collections as part of the sector; and

(c) recommends the Council diversify its approach to investing in international engagement and cultural exchange, with a sustained emphasis on the Asian region.

### **3. Key conclusions: Funding requirement to support the new purpose**

#### **3.1 Current funding allocations**

- o The Council's limited discretionary spend is at odds with its role as the Australian Government's arm's-length funding body for the arts and its role to sponsor innovation and creativity in the Australian contemporary arts sector.
- o This can be addressed in part by reconsidering the amount of the Council's funding that is "locked up", especially for the Major Performing Arts (MPA) organisations. This funding should in future be opened up to peer review on a competitive basis, consistent with the recommendations of the 1999 Nugent Report.<sup>8</sup> The Review supports contestable funding through the 'excellence pool' for eligible MPA organisations and notes Cultural Ministers' commitment to seek funding for that pool in the 2013-14 Budget context.
- o The Council should continue to ensure its national focus and spread, particularly through the allocation of funding. It must effectively promote available funding opportunities in all states and territories, including through providing national information sessions and by holding Board meetings around the country.
- o The private sector dollar is a key component of the arts sector ecology. The Council's Artsupport model has been very successful in leveraging that private sector dollar and in adapting to changes within the sector.
- o There is a role for the Council to continue to explore new funding models for the arts sector – to complement the work to be undertaken by the new body formed through the amalgamation of AbaF and the Artsupport program. The Australian Government should provide additional funding to the Council to facilitate this process.

#### **3.2 Benchmarking and Analysis**

- o Although Australia compares reasonably well with its international counterparts on a per capita comparison of funding to arts councils, this comparison may not take into account the difference in scope of these agencies and the size of the population available to support the sector, through private support and earned revenue such as ticket sales.
- o Based on the arts sector's capacity to contribute more broadly to the well-being of a nation and its economy, we have examined Australian Government funding to the arts as a percentage of GDP and found that it is merely 0.1% of GDP. We are well behind other comparable countries as demonstrated by the table below.

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.cmc.gov.au/sites/www.cmc.gov.au/files/Securing\\_the\\_Future\\_-\\_Inquiry\\_into\\_the\\_Major\\_Performing\\_Arts\\_-\\_1999.pdf](http://www.cmc.gov.au/sites/www.cmc.gov.au/files/Securing_the_Future_-_Inquiry_into_the_Major_Performing_Arts_-_1999.pdf)

### Comparison of government arts expenditure as a percentage of GDP <sup>9</sup>

	Australia	Canada	New Zealand
Expenditure	<b>\$740 million</b>	<b>\$2.079 billion</b>	<b>\$235 million</b>
Total % of GDP	0.084 %	0.156%	0.198%

- o The Council’s limited discretionary funding and the growing numbers of grant applications mean that the pool of ‘unfunded excellence’ is growing – and may represent a mismatch between the needs of the sector and the level of Australian Government support.

### **Recommendations: Funding Requirement**

#### ***Recommendation 6***

In order to facilitate implementation of the new purpose for the Council, the Review recommends that the Australian Government provide additional funding of \$21.25 million per annum to the Council to cover current funding pressures and changes to its purpose as follows:

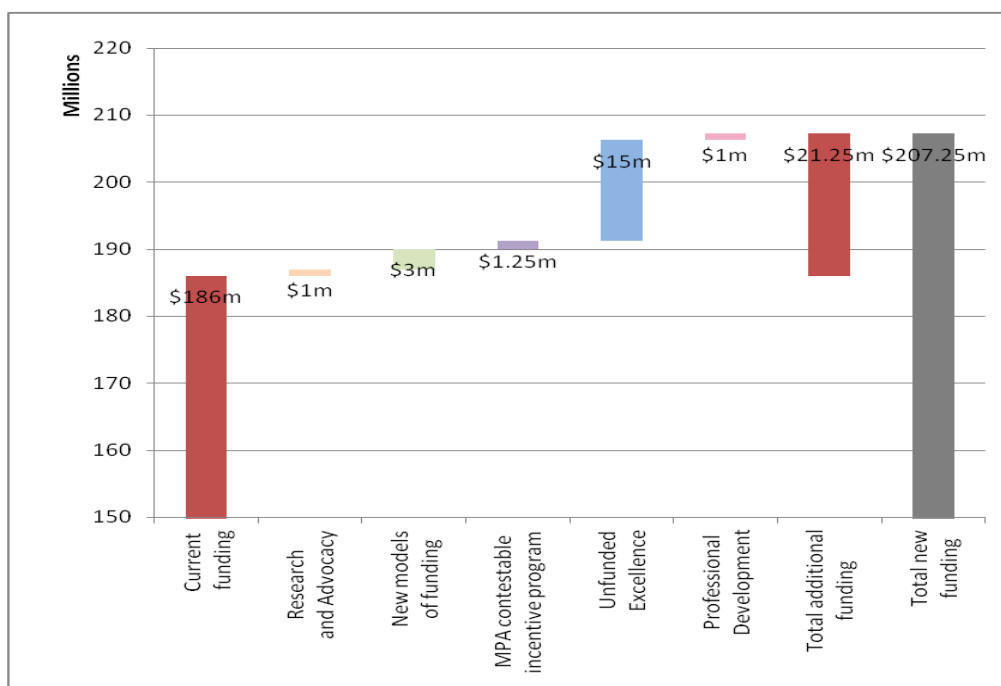
1. Research and Advocacy – The provision of this additional funding will be tied to a Key Performance Indicator as agreed with the Minister. Funding is to be used by the Council to develop a detailed and systematic data collection program for the benefit of the Australian Government and the sector as a whole (much the same as that undertaken by Screen Australia, including an annual ‘state of the industry’ report). Additional funding of \$1 million per annum would enable this work to take place.
2. The Council to act as a funding generator – the Council’s role in developing funding to the arts from the sector could be enhanced through the addition of a ‘commercial’ funding program allowing the Council to develop new models of funding for the sector, such as micro-loans and matching programs. Additional funding of \$3 million per annum would enable the Council to establish a pilot program rolling out new models of funding.
3. MPA contestable fund – top-up funding to the Council of \$1.25 million per annum as the Australia Government contribution to establish a \$2.5 million excellence funding pool available to MPA organisations on a competitive basis, to reward outstanding performance in fulfilling MPA goals with criteria to be determined as part of the opening up of the MPA organisations to broader peer review.
4. Unfunded excellence – As discussed above, the Council has identified significant levels of unfunded excellence among its current application base. On the basis of estimates that unfunded excellence for the Council is about \$15 million, this Review proposes top-up funding of this amount to meet this growing gap in the sector.

<sup>9</sup> Source: GDP levels are from 2009-10 World Bank figures; Government of Canada 2009-10 Estimates Part I and II; New Zealand Government, 2009-10 Arts, Culture and Heritage Vote (estimates). Relates to federal funding and does not include state and territories in Australia nor the spend in the provinces in Canada.



5. Professional development – The Council has an important role in building the professional capacity of the arts sector. Funding of \$1 million per annum will assist the Council to develop, in collaboration with training and development providers and private sector mentors, formal programs of professional development for arts sector managers and cultural leaders. This will also fund the investigation and early development of an arts careers information portal and a mentor bank to provide opportunity and expert support for those who work in the sector.

**Recommended additional annual funding for the Australia Council**



***Recommendation 7***

The Review recommends that, in order to provide the Council with increased funding flexibility, the Australian Government pursue with the states and territories the opening up of the MPA Framework to allow for competitive funding based on peer review.

***Recommendation 8***

To arrest the erosion of the Council’s funding base, the Review also recommends exempting the Council from any further application of the efficiency dividend.

## **4. Key conclusions: The Council's Governance Model**

### **4.1 Current governance model**

- The Review found the following key attributes of the current governance structure should be preserved in a revised model:
  - The principle of arm's length decision-making for the Council which imposes appropriate levels of involvement and control by the Minister,
  - The Governing Council's ability to delegate its powers, and
  - Representation and repositories for artform excellence that provide a voice for traditional parts of the arts and creative ecology.

### **4.2 Administrative Efficiency**

- While the Council's funding is appropriated by Government each financial year, the Council provides its funding to the sector on a calendar year basis. This affects the Council's ability to accurately forecast its end of financial year result and has led to the Council's successive forecasts of budget deficits.
- The Review supports the view that the Council move to accrual accounting to provide a more accurate picture of its financial performance and assist in its forward budget planning.
- The Review found that while Council had done a good job of reducing and maintaining a low ratio of administration costs to grants delivered, continued focus is needed in this area and would encourage Council to undertake regular efficiency reviews to further reduce the administrative costs of operation.
- The Council has made considerable efforts in recent years to reduce its administrative spend and, overall, the Council compares favourably with international counterparts in relation to the efficiency of its administrative spend.
- The Council compares less favourably with other grant giving bodies in Australia (Australian Research Council (ARC), National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)) that use a competitive peer assessed approach to funding. However, while these organisations deliver a similar number of grants, this unfavourable comparison may be explained by ARC and NHMRC dealing with larger grant sizes and overall budgets. By comparison, the cost of administration may be higher for the Council which administers smaller grant sizes to organisations which require a higher degree of reporting and compliance.

### **4.3 International Governance Models**

- Comparison of international governance models has provided helpful guidance for this Review. The Review observed that while broadly similar, each approach reflects the respective country's priority areas.
  - The Canada Council for the Arts provides a good example of the way in which the Strategic Plan of an agency can be developed in consultation with the Minister and the sector and

implemented through a grants program. Its peer review process, involving a broad range of peers who serve from time to time, is also instructive.

#### **4.4 Revised Governance model**

- The Review found the following major impediments in the current governance structure which should be addressed through implementation of this Review's recommendations on governance:
  - The Council does not have the ability to develop a balanced, conventional, skills-based board that serves the Council's strategic and operational needs. In particular, the role of the chairs of each Artform Board on the Council has inherent conflicts.
  - The size of the Governing Board is currently determined by the number of Artform Board chairs and not the needs of the Board.
  - The credibility of the Council's new Governing Board with the arts sector must be balanced with the requirement for broad-based strategic planning and policy setting; sufficient independence to reduce the potential for conflict of interest; and broader professional expertise among its membership.
  - There is no requirement for the Council to take a formal role in setting the strategic direction of the organisation, for example, through a Strategic Plan.
  - There is currently not sufficient provision for the Minister and the Council to collaboratively engage in corporate and strategic planning processes.
  - The appointment process is currently burdensome with Ministerial responsibility required for every appointment, and the Governor-General's approval needed to appoint the Chair.
  - There is no requirement for the Minister to take into account the organisation's overall skill sets when appointing members of the Governing Board, the Artform Boards or the Council's General Manager/CEO.
  - The Board currently has no formal role in the appointment of the General Manager/CEO of the Council.

### **Recommendations: Governance**

#### ***Recommendation 9***

The Review recommends that new enabling legislation for the Council clearly provide for a conventional, skills-based Governing Board. The new Act should limit membership of the Board to nine, with all appointments made by the Minister after receiving advice from the Chair. The Chair should be appointed by the Minister. The Board should be composed primarily of people with a deep experience in and passion for artistic practice who can bring a balanced blend of skills and expertise to the Council and through it, to Australia's cultural life.

**Recommendation 10**

The Review recommends that this new Board set its direction and develop its vision with management through its strategic planning processes. Its Board sub-committees (for example, Audit, Finance, Risk, Nominations) should operate to contribute to the governance of the organisation but not to approve funding or dictate the Council's strategic priorities.

**Recommendation 11**

The Review recommends that the CEO should be appointed by the Board following consultation and agreement with the Minister.

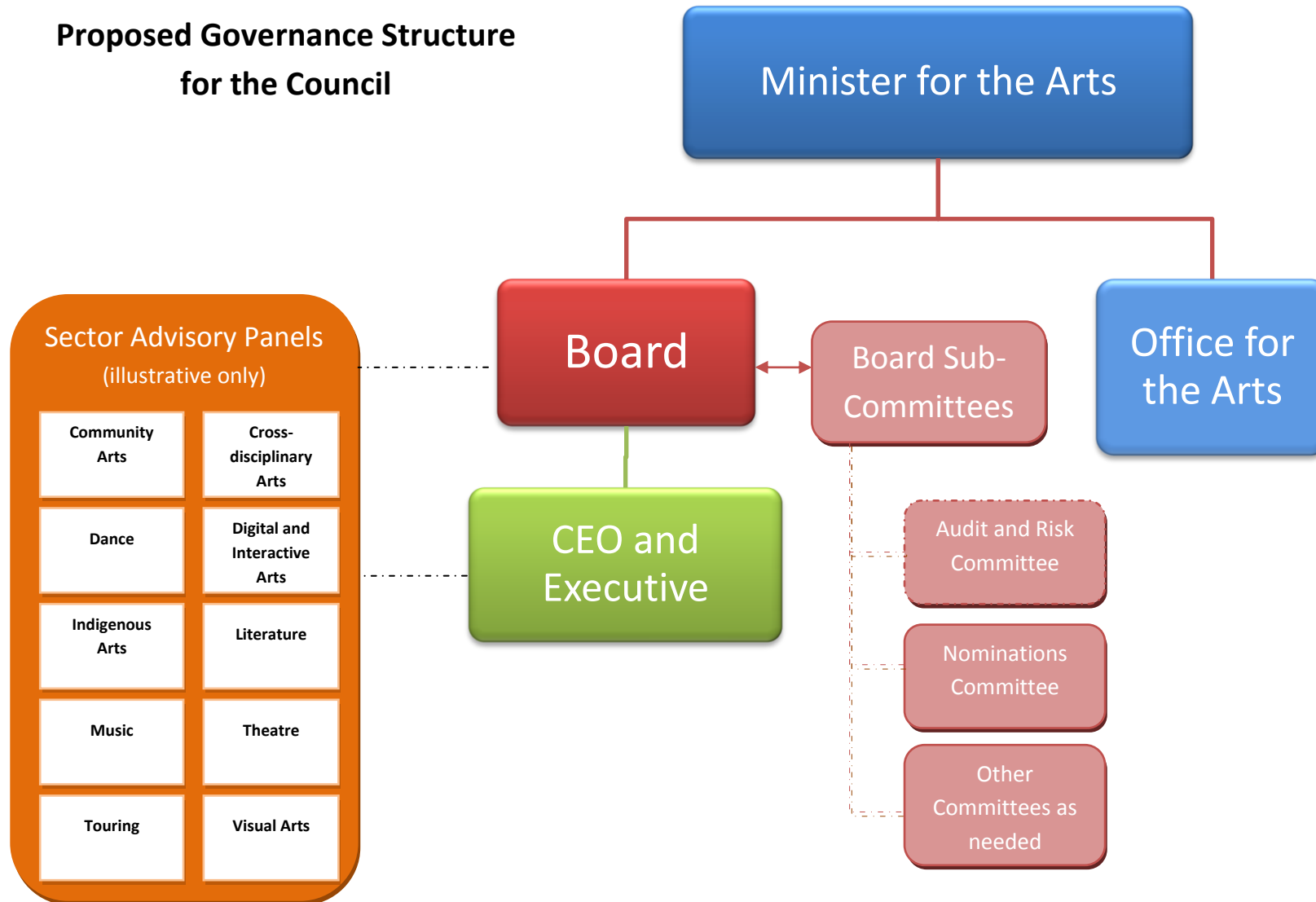
**Recommendation 12**

Sector Advisory Panels, which would be the principal agents for engagement with the artforms and custodians of artform practice within the sector, should support and inform the work of the new Board and management, as directed by that Board. Specifically, the Panels should provide sectoral expertise and advise on and inform the Strategic Priorities of the Board. The Board may constitute any number of Advisory Panels and determine their mandates based on the needs of the Board in developing and executing its Strategic Priorities. It may conclude the activities of any Panel as it sees fit.

**Recommendation 13**

A new governance structure for the Council should be put in place, described in the figure "Proposed Governance Structure" on page 27 below, that allows for clear lines of responsibility and function for the Board and executive under the Minister, in consultation with OFTA. New operational structures for the Council's executive and staff may flow from the implementation of this model.

# Proposed Governance Structure for the Council



## **Core elements of a revised structure for the Council (governance related)**

<b>Minister</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appoints the Chair and the Board (the Minister consults the Chair on Board appointments).</li><li>• Approves the Council's Strategic Plan.</li><li>• Power to direct the Council <u>except</u> in relation to grant decisions and the appointment of peers.</li><li>• Approves the appointment of the CEO (on the recommendation of the Board).</li></ul>
<b>Office for the Arts</b> Primary adviser to the Minister Responsible for policy formulation and advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides governance oversight of, and support to, the Council.</li><li>• Links with the Council's research and advocacy function to develop policy advice to the Minister.</li><li>• Whole of Government approach to policy development.</li></ul>
<b>Board</b> Consists of nine members, including the Chair appointed by Minister, plus the CEO as ex-officio.  Appointments to be skill based with appropriate geographic representation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sets the Council's strategic vision and direction and develops a Strategic Plan and budget for approval by the Minister.</li><li>• Appoints the CEO (in consultation with the Minister).</li><li>• Responsible for the monitoring of management performance in executing the core functions of the Council, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ to administer and measure the impact of funding to artists and arts organisations in a manner which achieves high accountability standards;</li><li>▪ to undertake and commission research and advocate for Australian arts to promote the sector and to better inform policy decisions; and</li><li>▪ to support and promote professional development and cultural leadership in the Australian arts sector.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Sub-Committees of the Board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board has the power to convene sub-committees to assist in the work of the Board, as required. These might include committees such as Finance and Risk and Nominations (and other committees such as CEO Recruitment established by the Board on a needs basis).</li><li>• The Council is required to establish and maintain an Audit Committee under the CAC Act.</li><li>• These Committees support the Board's governance functions and may include Board members as well as members of the Executive and external experts (for example in accounting and finance), as required.</li></ul>
<b>Sector Advisory Panels</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Panels appointed by the Council's Board to provide arts sector specific knowledge for informed and inclusive development of strategy and focus on artform excellence, vibrancy and innovation to the Council's Board and management.</li><li>• As part of a transition process, the number of panels could reflect the artform disciplines presently within the Council but these may change over time at the direction of the Board.</li></ul>

## 5. Key conclusions: Administration - structure and execution

### 5.1 Grants: Decision-making and process

- While the sector supports the concept of peer review, it does not consider grant making processes in the Council to be sufficiently transparent.
- Differing approaches to peer review, while justifiable in some areas, are not well explained and present an inconsistent approach to the sector. This is compounded by an apparent ad hoc approach to investment.

### 5.2 Revised Grants Assessment Model

#### *Action Area 1: The Division of Artforms and the Perception of Inequitable Budgets*

- The current structure of the Council does not allow for movement of funds between the Artform Boards. As a result, Boards are unable to respond to changing priorities in the sector.
- Funding via artform is historically based with no clear reference to audience participation, practitioner numbers, or artform cost.
- There is overwhelming support for a more flexible approach to funding away from the Artform Board structure. The Review finds that the current structures give the Council limited capacity to deal with collaborations or new works which do not fit with artform definitions. One consequence of this structure is that artists are skewing their practice so that projects ‘fit’ into an artform categorisation.
- A new approach to funding outside of the Artform Board structure is required. Lessons can be learned from other jurisdictions, but careful attention must be given to the eligibility criteria to support practice across the lifecycle, whether established or emerging.

#### *Action Area 2: Addressing Support for Strategic Initiatives*

- While it is appropriate that the Council be able to undertake strategic initiatives, there needs to be a consistent and transparent approach to their initiation and selection of participants.
- Artists who pursue commercial outcomes from their work should not be unfairly disadvantaged in applying for support from the Council. However, recognising that these projects may have different measurements of success, consideration should be given to new models of support to encourage entrepreneurship.
- Creative Scotland’s Ideas Bank, through which creative ideas can be tested and developed for a number of investment possibilities, is a model which this Review finds has considerable merit.

#### *Action Area 3: Addressing the need for peer diversity*

- The Review finds that while peer review is highly respected, the process in its current form through the Artform Board structure unreasonably limits the type of peers who can be appointed to assess work and therefore potentially hinders the diversity of the type of work funded.
- The Review has heard that the burden of the workload of membership to an Artform Board discourages potentially high quality peers from accepting positions on those Boards.



- The Review believes the balance between consistency of assessment and ensuring greater diversity in the assessment process is achievable through rotation of peers involved in assessment.

## **Recommendations: Administration**

### ***Recommendation 14***

The Review recommends that a new model for grant allocation be implemented that:

- a) Replaces the standing Artform Board structure with a general stream for grant applications across all artforms; and
- b) Maintains the centrality of peer assessment but promotes flexibility and breadth by adopting, but adapting, the model employed by the Canada Council for the Arts that allows for more peers to become involved in assessment and thereby diversifying the mix of peers

This model is described in the figure “Recommended Grants Application Process” on page 31 below.

### ***Recommendation 15***

To support these reforms the Review recommends a new operational structure for the Council which would cover key areas set out in the figure on page 33, “Overall Structure for the Council”. These aspects of the Council’s recommended governance structure are included to show how the Board and Executive would interact, especially noting the role of the Sector Advisory Panels.

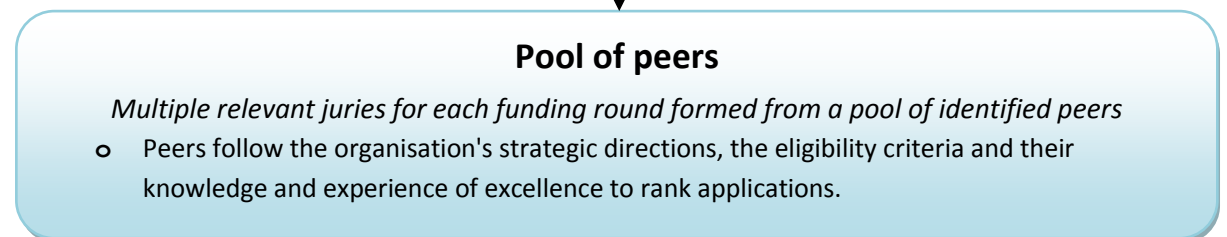
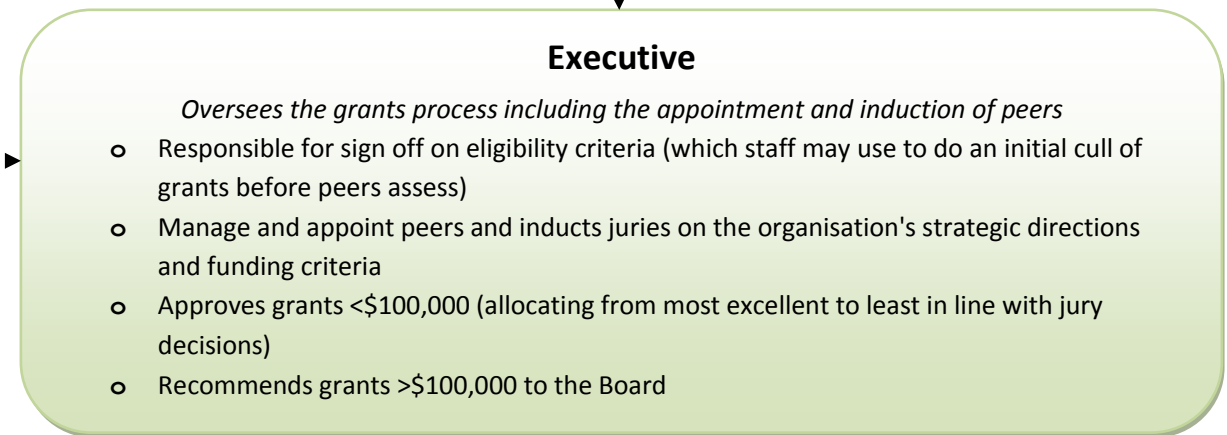
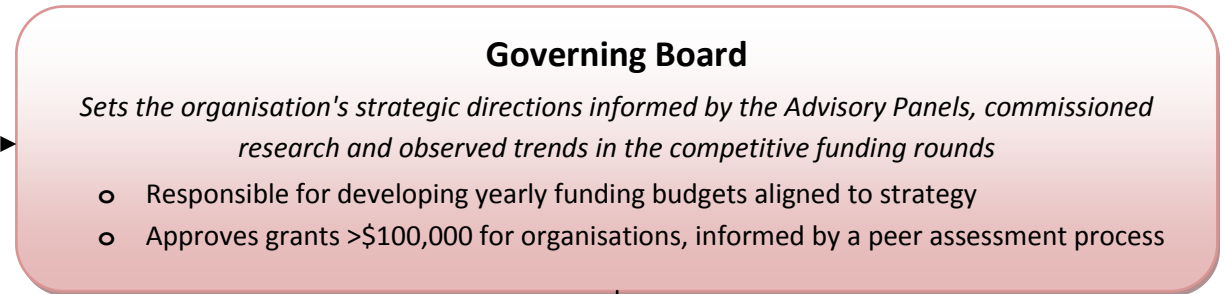
### ***Recommendation 16***

The Review recommends community consultation to inform the Council’s finalisation of its new operational structure.

## Recommended Grants Application Process for the Council



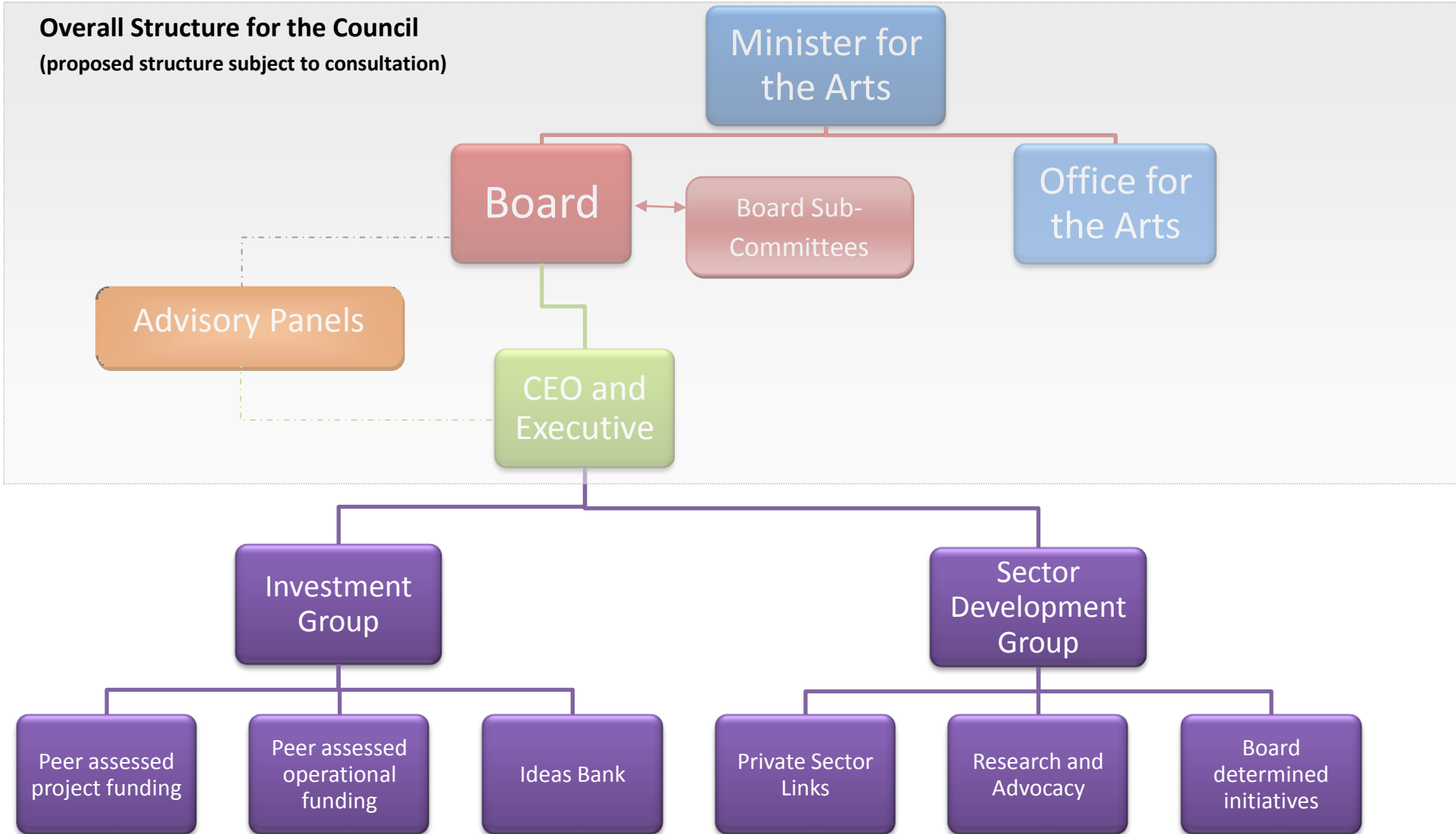
*\*Note: Advisory Panels listed above are illustrative only. The Board will determine what type of panels it requires, as well as individual duration, membership and mandate.*



## Recommended Grants Application Process

- The strategic direction of the organisation is informed by Advisory Panels which, as custodians of artform practice within the sector, are able to keep the Board abreast of innovation, excellence, challenges and opportunities within artforms. The role of the Board is to take this advice from across its Panels, balance this alongside its own commissioned research and the patterns it sees emerging from the peer assessment rounds, and to synthesize this information into a clear vision and priorities for action for the organisation as a whole.
- This strategic direction is an integral part of the peer assessment process. When juries are formed, peers receive an induction which includes the Council's strategic direction and information on general grant eligibility. Peers' judgment of excellence is used to rank applications within a round, with reference to the Council's strategic framework.
- Staff will identify potential peers from a pool to form juries each round. Final selection of juries will be determined by matching of available peers to the types of applications received. If a high number of applications are received, the number of juries used to assess that round will increase to ensure a manageable level of applications per jury.
- There is active participation by the Executive in the jury appointment and management process to ensure consistency of approach.
- This process delivers flexibility to deal with all types of artform applications (including collaborations).
- It creates a truly contestable and dynamic funding model directly informed by the organisation's overall strategic direction.
- As the commitment and work load is reduced and the pool of peers increases, the breadth and diversity of peer assessors appointed to juries will increase.
- As a result of the high turnover of peers, there is also greater education and engagement with the sector (through the peers passing on their experience) about the mechanics of the grant process.
- Higher turnover of peers also allows for high and more regular inclusion of peers from states which have expressed feelings of isolation from the grant process.

**Overall Structure for the Council**  
(proposed structure subject to consultation)



**Figure 33 - Overall Administrative Structure for the Council – Description of Core Elements (Non-Governance Related)**

<b>Board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for developing yearly funding budgets.</li> <li>• Approves grants in excess of \$100,000 for organisations, informed by a peer assessment process.</li> <li>• Through the Strategic Plan, provides national moderation of grant processes and directs research and advocacy efforts.</li> <li>• Monitors and is accountable for the proper conduct of the Council’s funding functions as defined by the Act.</li> </ul>
<b>CEO and Executive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoints peer assessors recommended by the Investment Group (which may take advice from the advisory panels).</li> <li>• Provides advice to the Board on all aspects of the Council’s business including strategy development.</li> <li>• Assists the Council to be accountable to Government under the Act.</li> <li>• Manages internal budgets and the day-to-day business of the Council.</li> <li>• Supports the core streams of the Council’s business – Investment Group and Sector Development Group.</li> </ul>
<b>Investment Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary funding distributor of the Council – responsible for the administration of grant rounds and the development of more innovative funding models. Funding distributed in this Group is provided across all artforms and is subject to peer assessment.</li> <li>• Responsible for recommending peer assessors to the Board.</li> <li>• Responsible for induction of peers and communicating the Strategic Plan of the Council before assessment commences.</li> <li>• Responsible for reporting on peer outcomes to the Board to facilitate national moderation.</li> </ul>
<b>Peer assessed project funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Funding available on a project basis to individuals or organisations across all artforms.<sup>10</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Peer assessed organisational funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Multi-year funding for the operations and annual program of significant arts organisations across all artforms. Eligibility criteria would require applicants to demonstrate leadership in the sector and foster links between companies.</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas Bank</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Based on the model provided by Creative Scotland, this section would support arts-related projects that may have a potential commercial dividend. The Ideas Bank would allow applicants to pitch their ideas to</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> Project basis means short, time specific work. The ongoing costs of a company or its ‘usual’ annual mainstage programming would not fit the definition of project funding.

the Council’s staff, and if the project meets key eligibility criteria, it would proceed to peer assessors. If asked to progress, the project may be supported through seeding money or through ‘matchmaking’ with private sector sources. This section would also progress innovative approaches to funding such as micro loans and crowd sourcing. It will also explore new funding opportunities to create sustainable arts and creative businesses, including equity investment, such as that offered by the not for profit organisation, Social Ventures Australia

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**Sector Development Group**

- Strategic arm of the Council where funding is based on interventions or opportunities, not on peer assessment of excellence.

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**Private Sector Links**

- A new section of the Council that is created through the amalgamation of Art Support and AbaF and/or the Council’s commercial funding programs. This section would undertake work to investigate and support new models for funding.

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**Research and Advocacy**

- This section would commission and in some cases conduct the research required to enable the Council to be an advocate to Government on the state of the sector and in relation to specific issues. It would also collect data on the applications received by the Council and their outcomes to inform the Governing Board on opportunities and gaps within the sector. This would inform the Council’s approach to its Strategic Plan which determines the Council’s funding priorities.

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**Board-directed initiatives**

- This section would devise strategic initiatives to address target areas identified through the Council’s Strategic Plan or Ministerial directed activity that does not involve a peer review component. Initiatives could include cross-government issues such as Asian engagement, activity in regional centres, etc. The formation of specific initiatives would be informed by the advisory panels.
  - Any funding dispersed through this section would be determined by the Executive in line with the Strategic Plan.
-

## 6. Key conclusions: The Australia Council's enabling legislation

### 6.1 Legislation that reflects the contemporary arts sector

- The principles of operating at arm's length from government, and peer review for the granting of support to the arts sector, are central to the role of the Council and should be enshrined in legislation.
- The *Australia Council Act 1975* is out of date and represents a challenge to the effective support of the contemporary arts sector in Australia.
- The scope of legislative amendments required to update the current Act will be extensive and complex and this approach is therefore not recommended. Development of a new Act presents the greatest opportunity to implement the recommended changes.
- The enabling legislation for the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia and Screen Australia provide the most relevant 'templates' for a new Act for the Council.

### 6.2 Other governing legislation

- The Council's operation under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* continues to be appropriate and relevant to the Council's purpose and functions, especially taking account of the arm's length approach to funding.

### 6.4 Transitional Arrangements

- The development of a new Act will require transitional arrangements, to ensure continued execution of the Government's arts agenda and an orderly transition to a more contemporary organisation.
  - With the term of the current Chair expiring in mid-2012, the appointment of a new Chair will be an important first step to encourage the sector's engagement with the proposed reforms and, specifically, to elicit community comment on the exposure drafts of a new Act. Those exposure drafts would be the opportunity to canvass a new, contemporary name for the Council to match its legislative mandate.

## Recommendations: Enabling legislation

### **Recommendation 17**

The Review recommends development of an entirely new Act for the Council, based on the templates provided by the enabling legislation for the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia and Screen Australia, for introduction to Parliament in the 2014-15 financial year. The new Act should do the following:

- a) preserve the principles of operation at arm's length from government, and peer-based review of funding decisions;
- b) require the development of a Strategic Plan for every three years, updated annually in the Budget context and agreed by the Minister;
- c) provide for a new Board for the Council, made up of nine members all appointed by the Minister in consultation with the Chair (who will be appointed by the Minister alone). The Act must allow for the appointment of Board members with appropriate skills to meet the Council's governance

needs as well as having strong and demonstrated knowledge of the arts sector.

***Recommendation 18***

The Review recommends that the Chair's mandate be to consult further on the proposed changes, specifically through exposure drafts of the new Act and prepare the organisation for the new Act's implementation as well as facilitate and drive the transition.



## Appendix 1: Biography of Mr Angus James



**Angus James** is a Principal Partner of Aquasia, an independent corporate advisory partnership which he founded in late 2009.

Mr James is also the Deputy Chairman of the Australian Chamber Orchestra and a board member of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. He was previously Chief Executive of ABN AMRO Australia and New Zealand, and a member of ABN AMRO's Asian Management Team, which oversaw its retail, investment banking and asset management activities across many countries in the Asia Pacific. He has also previously held the positions of Non-Executive Director of the Business Council of Australia and Non-Executive Director of the Australian Financial Markets Association.

He has a Bachelor of Economics from Macquarie University, and was awarded the 2008 Alumni Award for Distinguished Service for recognition in the fields of Investment Banking, Business Leadership and the Arts.

Mr James took a leave of absence from the board of the Australian Chamber Orchestra for the period of this Review.

## Appendix 2: Biography of Ms Gabrielle Trainor



**Gabrielle Trainor** is a non-executive director and a former lawyer, journalist and public sector executive. She was a founding partner of John Connolly & Partners, a communications and public affairs firm, where she worked for 20 years advising large listed companies on the management of difficult issues.

She has specialised in investor relations, government relations and public policy, particularly in relation to mergers and acquisitions, other large transactions and major pieces of litigation. For fifteen years, Ms Trainor has been a director of a range of public, private and not for profit entities. In the arts they include Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Youth Orchestra. She has a long term involvement in indigenous affairs having been a director of Cape York Partnerships and a member of the Victorian Government's Aboriginal Economic Development Group which reported in 2010.

She is an Honorary Associate in the Graduate School of Government at Sydney University and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She has been on a number of special industry and government committees, including as a Judge of the NSW Premier's Public Service Awards.

Ms Trainor was educated at the University of Melbourne and was awarded a 1986 Churchill Fellowship. She studied in the USA and UK, including as a visiting scholar at the Department of Communications at Stanford University.

# Appendix :

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Australia Council Review  
Survey

## A Research Report

26 March 2012



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Please note that the data contained in this report has been prepared for the specific purpose of addressing the items contained in the project contract between **TNS Australia** and the **Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport**. It may not be suitable for other applications. The use of this data for any other purpose should be discussed with the lead author. TNS accepts no responsibility for unauthorized use of this data by a third party.

# 1. Executive Summary

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As part of the development of a new National Cultural Policy, on 11 August 2011 the Australian Government launched a discussion paper examining how the arts and culture should be supported in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century considering the major shifts in the way Australian's work, enjoy and participate in the arts and culture. Hundreds of public submissions were made in response to the National Cultural Policy discussion paper. Many of these submissions discussed the role of the Australia Council, which is currently a significant channel in which the Australian Government delivers support to the arts and cultural sector.

On 19 December 2011, the Minister for the Arts, Simon Crean, announced an independent review of the Australia Council, the first major review of the Australia Council in twenty years.

TNS Social Research (TNS) was commissioned to conduct an online survey to gather feedback from the Australian public about their opinions on whether the original purpose of the Australia Council remains relevant today, and what changes, if any, should be made to the Australia Council in February 2012. A summary of key findings appears below.

## 1.1 Demographic representativeness of sample

Overall, people who completed the Australia Council Review survey reflected a broad cross section of Australians. However, the achieved sample was not statistically representative of the Australian population<sup>1</sup>.

When benchmarked against the Australian population, people who completed the survey were more likely to be:

- Aged between 18 and 64 years old;
- From New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory or Tasmania
- From in a metropolitan location.

Hence, males, people aged under 18 years and over 65 years, people from Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia, and people living in regional and rural areas are under-represented in the survey sample.

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<sup>1</sup> The demographic profile of Australia Council Review survey respondents was benchmarked against Australian population statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2006 Census Basic Community Profile (Australia)

The analysis of survey data should therefore be treated with caution, and only be considered a reflection of people who completed the survey, and not the Australian population overall.

## 1.2 Key Findings

### Relationship and experience with the Australia Council

Just over half of the respondents had not applied for Australia Council funding in the last 10 years. Amongst those who had applied for funding, 61% had received at least one grant. Organisations were significantly more likely to have ever applied for, and received a grant compared to individuals.

Perceptions of the grant application process were mixed, with respondents most commonly agreeing that the chance of getting funding is too low (72% agreement). Negative perceptions of the grant decision making process were correlated with having not been successfully awarded funding. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents rated all four statements about the importance of receiving grants and funding highly (statements rated between 77% to 70% importance). Again, grant recipients were significantly more likely to rate all four statements as important.

### Perceptions of the Australia Council

When asked to describe what they thought the purpose of the Australia Council is in the Australian arts and cultural sector, respondents agreed that it was **to support the arts in Australia through delivering funding, and advocating for the sector through lobbying, marketing and research.**

Respondents predominantly agreed that the Australia Council **is meeting its original purpose**: *"the best is encouraged and those who produce it are given the greatest opportunity to achieve the highest quality of which they are capable"* (63% said yes). Compared to the total, organisations, arts administrators and grant recipients were significantly more likely to agree that the Australia Council is meeting its original purpose.

Also, a very high proportion of respondents considered that **the original purpose of the Australia Council is still valid** for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (87% said yes). A strong result, especially considering there were few significant differences between subgroups.

There was however, a negative undertone about funding distribution, and a strong sentiment that the Council's current service delivery model does not fairly distribute funding in a way to reflect the true diversity of the Australian arts and culture sector. Notably, this criticism was framed in terms of a perception that a disproportionate amount of funding is given to major organisations at the expense of individual artists and smaller arts organisations.

### Practical suggestions for change

Practical suggestions for change to the operations of the Australia Council overwhelmingly **focused on diversification of funding to a wider spread of individual artists and smaller organisations**. Across the open-ended questions pertaining to what the Australia Council could do differently and suggestions of alternative models for arts funding, respondents considered a number of practical solutions which most commonly aimed to make funding more accessible to a wider variety of artists.

Common suggestions for changes to the operations of the Australia Council included:

- To ensure that funding allocation is representative of the Australian arts and culture sector, especially for emerging artists, contemporary music and community arts;
- To change the grant application process to make it more accessible through fast-response grants, smaller seeding grants, and for the decision making process to be more transparent;
- That delivery of funding be devolved to more localised channels that have stronger connection to the community;
- Investigate other best practice models for arts funding, yet consider in the Australian context;
- Better communicate and proactively foster relationships with potential applicants through providing more practical advice and support;
- Boost funding to the arts in Australia through investigating ways to support philanthropy and crowd-funding;
- Make being an artist more financially sustainable through lobbying for an artist's allowance and tax incentives.

### Future focus

Respondents were exposed to a list of four areas of potential future focus for the Australia Council, and asked to select those they agreed should be prioritised. Areas of focus for the immediate future subsequently reflected an aspiration for **increased flexibility and increased funding** (84% and 83% respectively), followed by increased transparency and developing better systems (at lower levels of 67% and 66% respectively). Interestingly, organisations, arts administrators and grant recipients were significantly more likely to indicate no need for the Australia Council to increase transparency.

### Definitions of excellence

Excellence was overwhelmingly considered to be a **subjective term** when used in the context of the arts. Despite respondents commonly highlighting the relative nature of excellence, especially in terms of art-form and audience, the majority of respondents still considered that the use of the term excellence has some value for the Australia Council.



## 2. Introduction

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### 2.1 Background

As part of the development of a new National Cultural Policy, on 11 August 2011 the Australian Government launched a discussion paper examining how the arts and culture should be supported in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century considering the major shifts in the way Australian's work, enjoy and participate in the arts and culture. The National Cultural Policy will set the framework for Australian Government support for arts, culture and the creative industries for the next ten years. Hundreds of public submissions were made in response to the National Cultural Policy discussion paper. Many of these submissions discussed the role of the Australia Council, which is currently a significant channel in which the Australian Government delivers support to the arts and cultural sector.

On 19 December 2011, the Minister for the Arts, Simon Crean, announced an independent review of the Australia Council, the first major review of the Australia Council in twenty years. As part of this independent review, in February 2012, the Office for the Arts commissioned TNS Social Research (TNS) to conduct an online survey to gather feedback from the Australia public about their opinions on whether the original purpose of the Australia Council remains relevant today, and what changes, if any, should be made to the Australia Council.

### 2.2 Methodology

A quantitative research methodology was employed via an online survey which was hosted on the TNS survey platform and accessed via **embedded link through the 'culture.arts.gov.au' website**. An online survey was considered the most appropriate methodology because it is easily accessible and allows for fast and broad dissemination via online networks. The survey was open to the public for a two week period from 11am AEST, Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> February till 5pm AEST, Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The survey was publicised by The Office for the Arts via radio, print and online media channels, as well as via social media, in order to maximise response from a broad range of individuals and organisations. In addition, an email directly inviting participation in the online survey was sent to email addresses sourced from Australia Council stakeholder lists. A dedicated support email address was provided to collect any queries from respondents during the fieldwork period.

**A total of n=2007 survey questionnaire responses were received.** The results of the survey will be considered alongside other consultation findings being conducted by the Review committee and will in turn contribute to the review of the Australia Council.

### 2.2.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed by TNS and the Office for the Arts through drawing upon the Terms of the Review. Specifically, the questionnaire was developed to collect information on whether the original purpose of the Australia Council remains relevant today, and what changes, if any, should be made to the Australia Council. The questionnaire comprised ten closed ended questions and six open-ended questions. There were also seven closed ended demographic questions. The questionnaire was designed to quantify respondent's relationship and experience with the Australia Council, what they consider the purpose of the Australia Council to be, and offer suggestions for change.

### 2.2.2 Data cleaning and processing

Following closure of the online survey, the data was checked and cleaned to remove potential spam and multiple complete cases from the same respondent, by way of checking for duplicate email addresses and IP addresses. The final tables were generated according to specifications and provided in Excel format for further analysis and incorporation into the report.

### 2.2.3 Demographic, aggregate and cross-sectional analysis

The data from the closed ended questions was analysed and charted on an aggregate level. Please note that some percentages displayed in the graphs do not add up to 100% due to rounding (down or up) of decimal numbers to form integers.

The closed ended questions were also cross-sectioned against the demographic data, and tested for significant differences (95% confidence level) in order to reveal any differentiation of support for the goals amongst sub-sets of the sample.

**Significance testing** involves testing whether a metric (a mean or a proportion) of the sample/ segment is significantly different from the total sample or another sample/ segment. This involves specifying a confidence level (usually 95%) which means that 95% of the time the result will hold true, if the result is found to be statistically significant. The test uses the mean, standard deviation and sample sizes of the samples/ segments to compute a test statistic, which is compared against a standard value (determined by the confidence level specified). This comparison determines whether there is a significant difference between the 2 samples / segments at the specified confidence level.

Please note that these differences are calculated relative to the samples/ figures being compared; i.e. the differences between two samples/ figures are relative to their sample size and the standard deviation of the sample. TNS practice is to test statistical

differences at the 95% confidence level (so we are 95% confident that there is a difference), which is in line with Australian and international market research standards.

Any statistically significant differences have been noted in the text as 'significant differences'. References to 'slight differences' were used when noting an interesting or indicative difference that is not statistically significant.

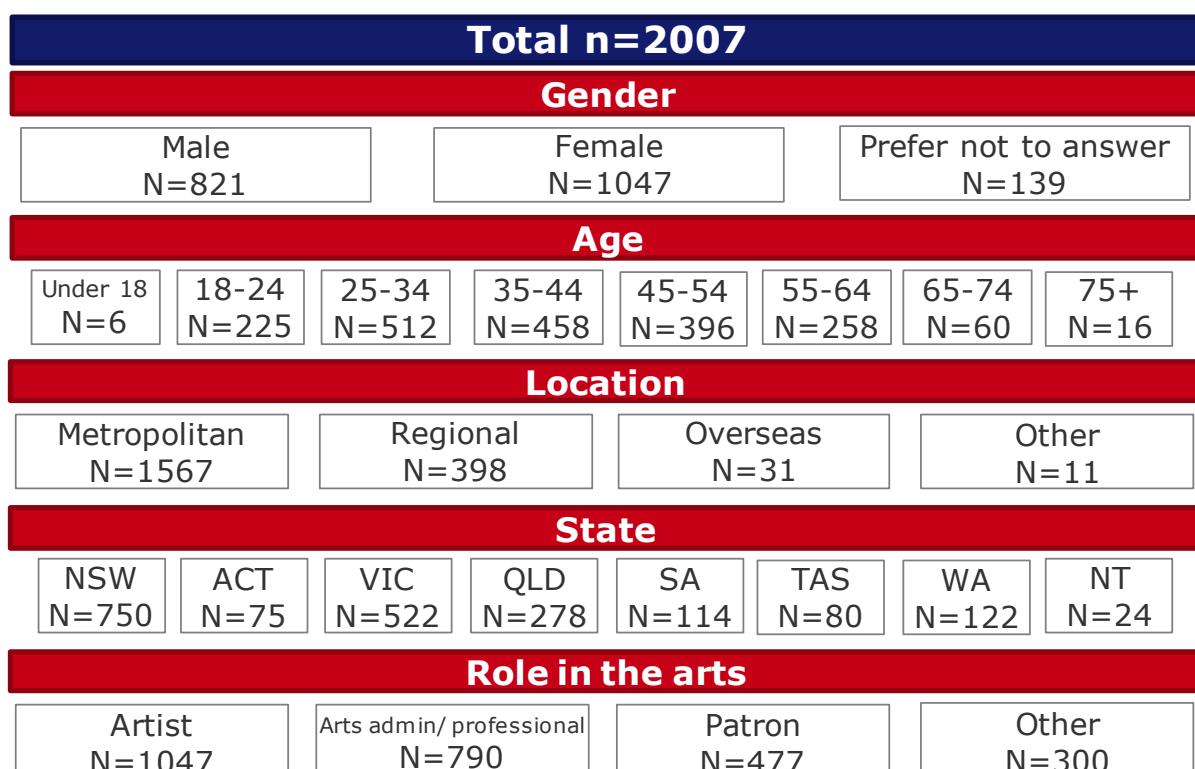
## 2.2.4 Open-ended analysis and reporting

The open-ended questions were qualitatively examined in order to reveal common themes. Once the most common themes were identified for each open-ended question, a deeper analysis of these themes was provided. Emerging from the analysis of the themes is an overall narrative concerning respondents' attitudes towards the purpose and future direction of the Australia Council.

## 2.2.5 Sample profile

Below is the demographic breakdown of the total sample achieved in the Australia Council Review survey.

**Figure 1: Australia Council Review Survey respondent sample profile**



## 2.3 About this report

This report details findings from the analysis of the survey data. It provides details of the closed-ended questions against certain demographic characteristics of the sample, and also provides detailed written analysis of the open-ended questions. Verbatim quotations are used to illustrate findings where appropriate. A demographic break-down of survey responses is provided.

### 3. Relationship and experience with the Australia Council

The Australia Council Review Survey captured respondents with a breadth of experience with the Australia Council. In general, **organisations reflected a stronger relationship with the Australia Council compared to individuals, signified by a higher likelihood of having ever received funding**, and higher levels of agreement with the more favourable statements about the Council’s funding application processes.

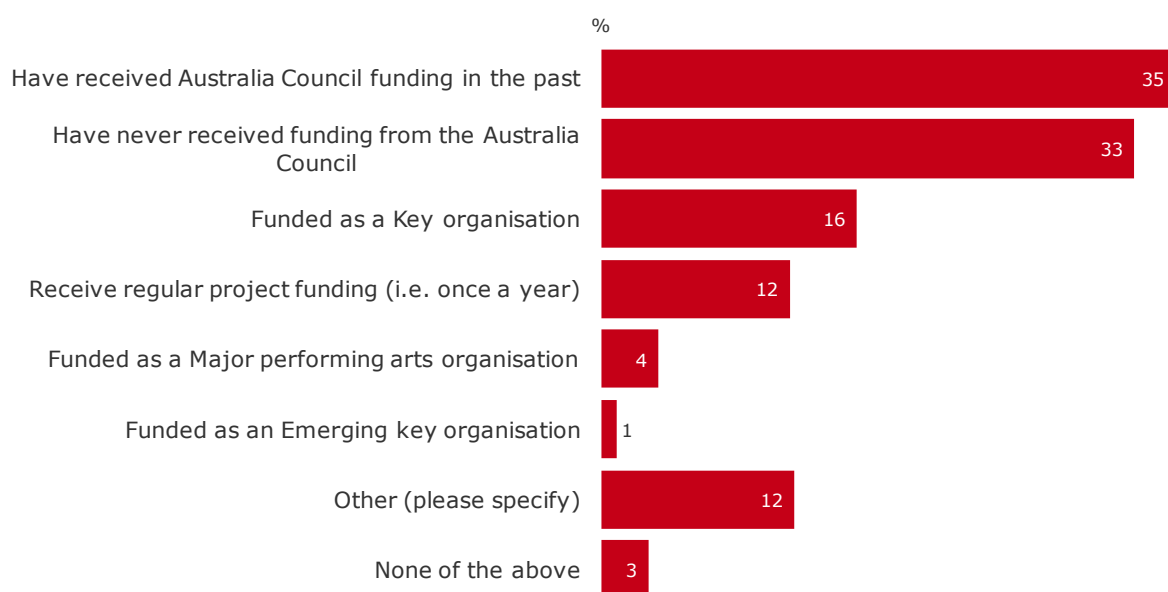
Overall, perceptions of the grant application process were very mixed; most notably there was distinct dissatisfaction with the process amongst respondents who had never received funding. Despite there being some negative perceptions of the grant application process, the majority of respondents rated the importance of gaining Australia Council funding very highly.

#### 3.1 Funding relationship

##### ➤ Funding relationship of Organisations

Most organisations indicated they have received Australia Council funding either in the past (35%), or are currently funded as a Key Organisation (16%), Major Performing Arts Organisation (4%), Emerging Key Organisation (1%), or receive regular project funding (12%). One-third of organisations had never received funding from the Australia Council. These organisations, however, were significantly more likely to have never applied for funding in the first place.

Figure 2: Funding relationship- Organisations



Base: Organisations n=314

B1. What is the nature of your organisation’s relationship with the Australia Council?

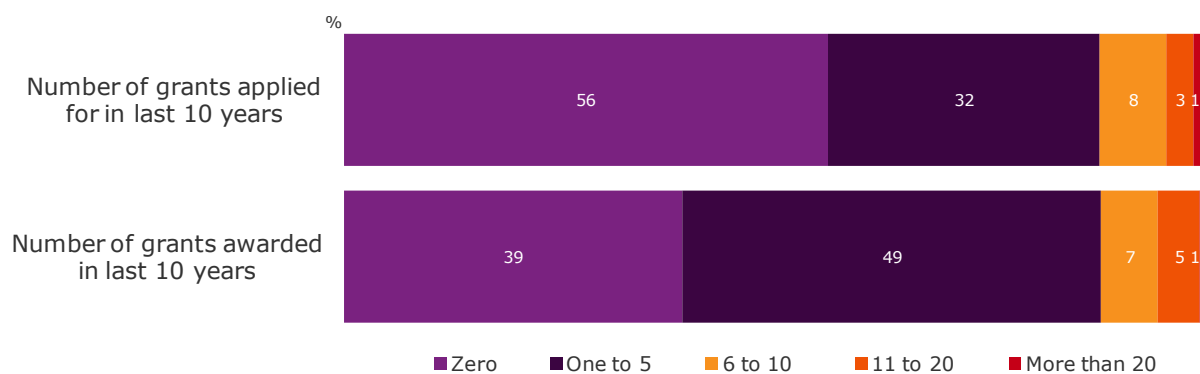
➤ **Australia Council grants**

More than half of respondents (56%) had not applied for an Australia Council grant in the last 10 years. Individuals, emerging artists and those interested in literature, visual arts and music, were significantly less likely to have applied for a grant. Whereas those respondents interested in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Arts, inter-arts and community arts were significantly more likely to have applied for a grant.

Amongst the 44% of respondents who had applied for a grant in the last 10 years, 61% received at least one of these grants; 49% were awarded between 1 and 5 grants, 7% were awarded between 6 and 10 grants, 5% were awarded 11 to 20 grants, and 1% had been awarded more than 20 grants in the last 10 years.

Individuals, emerging and mid-career artists, and people aged below 34 years were significantly less likely to have been successfully awarded a grant. It follows that organisations, especially Key Organisations, those interested in ATSI arts and community arts, and artists aged between 45 and 54 years were significantly more likely to have been awarded funding in the last 10 years.

**Figure 3: Grants applied for and grants awarded in last 10 years**



Base: B3 total n=2007, B4 Those who have applied for grants in last 10 years n=878  
 B3. In the past 10 years, how many times, if ever, have you applied for an Australia Council grant? B4. You mentioned you have applied for [INSERT DIGIT/S FROM B3] Australia Council grant(s). How many times have you been awarded an Australia Council grant in the past 10 years?

### 3.2 Perceptions of the grant application process

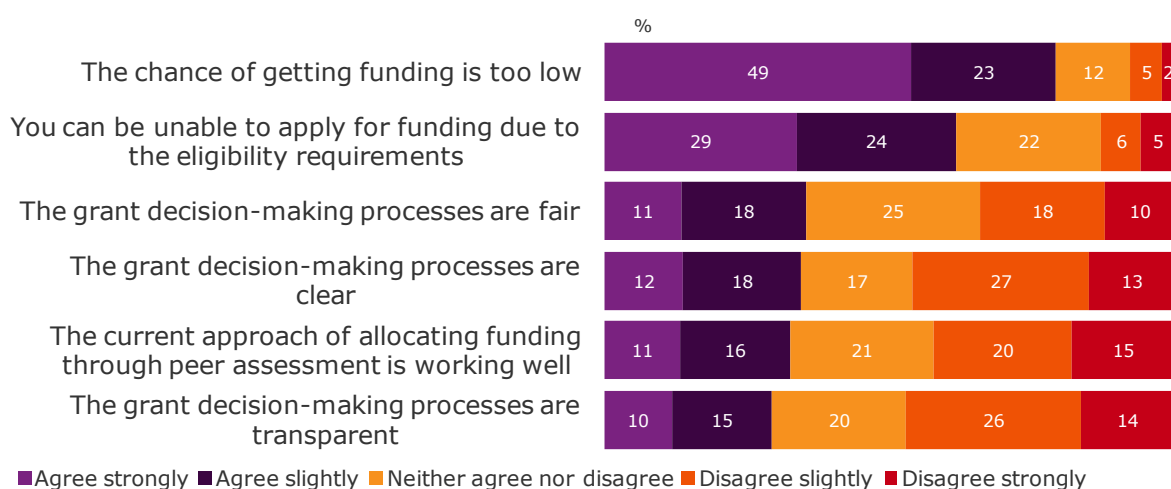
Respondents were required to complete a statement association/ agreement exercise. Most overwhelmingly agreed that the chance of getting funding is too low (72%); driven by a significantly higher proportion of artists (especially established artists), funding applicants, and organisations that have never been funded. Respondents were next most likely to agree that one can be unable to apply for funding due to eligibility requirements (52%). Those interested in community arts were significantly more likely to agree with this statement.

That the grant decision making processes are transparent received the highest rate of disagreement (40%) and the lowest rate of agreement (25%). That the grant decision making processes are clear received the same level of disagreement from respondents (40%). Artists (especially established artists) and those who've ever applied for a grant were significantly more likely to disagree with these statements.

That the grant decision-making processes are fair received a similar proportion of agreement and disagreement (29% and 28% respectively) and the highest level of 'neither agree nor disagree' (25%). Organisations, arts administrators, those who've been awarded funding, and those interested in inter-arts, theatre and community, were significantly more likely to agree that decision making processes are fair; whereas established artists and respondents from NSW were significantly more likely to disagree.

Just over one-third of respondents disagreed that peer assessment is working well; driven by artists (especially established artists) and male respondents. Conversely, organisations, arts administrators, those who've been awarded funding, those interested in ATSI arts, inter-arts, theatre and community were significantly more likely to agree that peer assessment is working well.

**Figure 4: Perceptions of the grant application process**



Base: Total n=2007

B5. Listed below are several statements about the application and approval process for Australia Council grants and funding. We'd like to know how you perceive the process, regardless of whether you have ever applied for an Australia Council grant.

**Figure 5: Perceptions of the grant application process by selected demographics**

% Agree	Total	Individual	Organ-isation	Artist	Admin	Patron	Awarded funding	Not awarded funding
The chance of getting funding is too low	<b>72</b>	72	72	77	73	66	68	73
You can be unable to apply for funding due to the eligibility requirements	<b>52</b>	52	52	54	55	48	51	53
The grant decision-making processes are fair	<b>29</b>	27	39	26	39	19	52	21
The grant decision-making processes are clear	<b>29</b>	27	40	28	37	18	54	21
The current approach of allocating funding through peer assessment is working well	<b>27</b>	25	40	23	37	18	52	18
The grant decision-making processes are transparent	<b>25</b>	23	37	22	33	17	45	17

Base: Total n=2007/ Tested for significant differences against total (95% confidence): **Blue**=significantly higher/ **Red**=significantly lower

B5. Listed below are several statements about the application and approval process for Australia Council grants and funding. We'd like to know how you perceive the process, regardless of whether you have ever applied for an Australia Council grant.

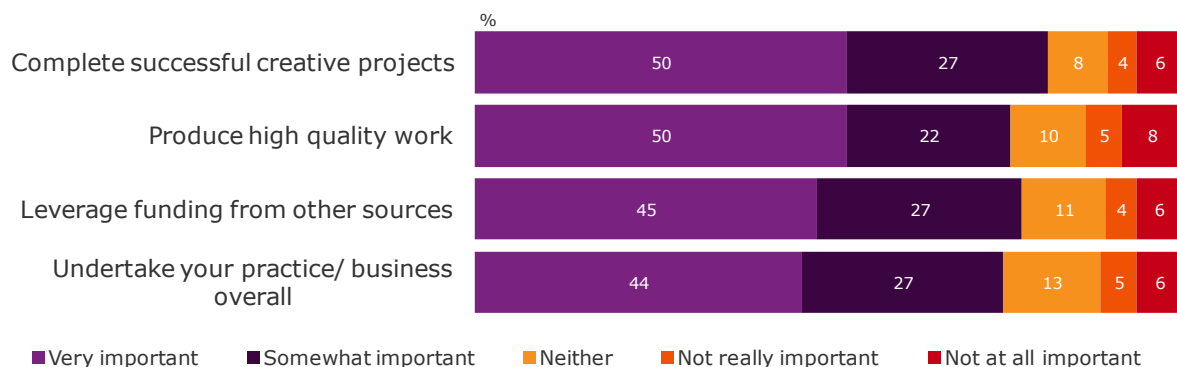


### 3.3 Importance of Australia Council grants

Next, respondents completed an importance rating exercise. On a total level a high proportion of respondents considered that Australia Council grants and funding were important to complete successful creative projects (77%), produce high quality work (72%), leverage funding from other sources (72%) and lastly to undertake practice/business overall (70%).

There were also some significant differences between the demographic sub-groups when compared against the total. Those respondents who have applied for, and been awarded grants were significantly more likely to rate all four statements as important. The rating of the importance of grants to undertake successful creative projects was significantly higher amongst organisations (nett), small and medium organisations, and emerging artists. The importance of grants to produce high quality work was significantly higher amongst medium-sized organisations and those interested in inter-arts. It follows that the importance of grants to leverage funding was most pronounced amongst organisations (nett), small organisations, arts administrators, and inter-arts, theatre and community art-forms. The importance of grants to undertake practice overall was significantly higher amongst organisations (nett), small organisations, emerging artists, 25-34 year olds, and those interested in inter-arts.

**Figure 6: Importance of Australia Council grants and funding**



Base: Total n=2007

B6. How important do you believe getting Australia Council grants and funding is for you/ your organisation to...?

**Figure 7: Importance of Australia Council grants and funding by selected demographics**

% Nett Important	Total	Individual	Organ- isation	Artist	Admin	Patron	Awarded funding	Not awarded funding
Complete successful creative projects	<b>77</b>	76	<b>82</b>	80	80	<b>69</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>72</b>
Produce high quality work	<b>73</b>	71	78	73	76	<b>65</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>67</b>
Leverage funding from other sources	<b>72</b>	70	<b>82</b>	74	<b>77</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>66</b>
Undertake your practice/ business overall	<b>70</b>	69	<b>76</b>	<b>74</b>	73	<b>60</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>64</b>

Base: Total n=2007/ Tested for significant differences against total (95% confidence): **Blue**=significantly higher/ **Red**=significantly lower

B6. How important do you believe getting Australia Council grants and funding is for you/ your organisation to...?

## 4. Perceptions of the Australia Council

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Overall, the Australia Council was perceived by respondents to be an important organisation for supporting, funding and advocating for the arts and culture sector in Australia. It was also considered that the Council is doing well in terms of funding the arts, having good administration and operations, and providing useful marketing and research into the arts sector. Despite common criticism from respondents that the Australia Council does not fairly distribute their support across the sector, most respondents felt the Australia Council is meeting its original purpose, and an even higher proportion of respondents felt the original purpose was indeed still valid.

### 4.1 Perceived purpose of the Australia Council

The majority of respondents (86%) provided an answer on what they think the purpose of the Australia Council is in the Australian arts and cultural sector; the remaining 14% of respondents indicated they 'don't know'. The range of responses reflected a breadth of knowledge of, and attitudes towards, the Australia Council. Most respondents provided factual and optimistic answers about the purpose of the Australia Council. However, there were some overt criticisms of the current operations of the Council, in particular a number of respondents made the distinction between what the purpose of the Australia Council currently *is*, and what the purpose of the Australia Council *should* be.

These responses were analysed to identify salient themes as listed in order of frequency below.

- 1. To support the arts in Australia**
- 2. Allocate grants and funding for the arts**
- 3. Be an advocate of the Australian arts sector**
- 4. Not enough diversity in grant recipients**

**Figure 8: The purpose of the Australia Council- Key themes and sub-themes**

<b>The purpose of the Australia Council</b>
<b>To support the arts in Australia</b>
Support the arts sector for a thriving culture and arts community in Australia
Support the best/ produce excellence/ based on artistic merit
Support diversity in art-forms
Support artists throughout career
Support innovation and risk
<b>Allocate grants and funding for the arts</b>
Peak funding body to the arts/ distribute Australian Government funds
Allocate grants and funding to artists via peer review process
Fund non-commercially viable art and creative projects
<b>Be an advocate of the Australian arts sector</b>
Provide policy advice to Government/ lobby Government
Undertake research into the arts sector in Australia
Provide leadership in the arts through strategic vision
Promote Australian arts sector to build audiences
<b>Not enough diversity in grant recipients</b>
Disproportionate amount of funding goes to major organisations
Funding repeatedly given to same artists/ organisations

Base: Total n=2007

C1.What do you think the purpose of the Australia Council is in the Australian arts and cultural sector?

#### **4.1.1 To support the arts in Australia**

To support the arts in Australia was the most commonly perceived purpose of the Australia Council. Within this broad sentiment many respondents further articulated the scope of support, whether in regards merit or criteria of projects that are supported, type of art-form, artist’s career stage, or the different types of practical support such as artist grants and advocacy. There were several sub-themes concerning the Australia Council’s role ‘to support the arts in Australia’ identified in this analysis including:

- **To support the arts sector for a thriving culture and arts community in Australia:** The Australia Council was seen as an important body to facilitate a broader purpose of supporting a thriving culture and arts community within Australian society. One of the perceived benefits of supporting a vibrant arts sector in Australia was increasing Australia’s profile in the international sphere.

*‘I believe the purpose of the Australia Council is to help ensure that Australia has a vibrant, viable, and exciting arts sector that contributes to the cultural life of the nation. To encourage risk, and to support projects and organisations based on their artistic merit. To support Australian artists in their endeavours while not dictating the form or content of their work.’*

*'To support, encourage and promote the work of Australian artists, enhancing the cultural wealth of Australia and furthering our prominence on the international stage.'*

- **To support the best/ produce excellence/ support based on artistic merit:** Many respondents articulated that the purpose of the Australia Council is to support only the best artists, organisations and projects in order to produce excellence in the arts in Australia.

*'To support artists and promote the opportunity to produce excellence in the arts'.*

*'To distribute funding for Australians making and presenting high-quality art and arts practice for fellow Australians in the most efficient and effective manner. The Australia Council has a national remit and overview, and as such, its decisions should be based upon excellence relating to a national and even international standard of practice and relevance.'*

- **To support diversity in art-forms:** There was a strong belief that the purpose of the Australia Council is to support a diverse range of art-forms. These comments reflected an aspiration for inclusiveness in funding criteria.

*'To enable and support a diverse range of projects and art forms that have significant artistic or social merit, but are not necessarily financially sustainable without funding.'*

*'Support the creation and development of new works across a range of art forms that reflect contemporary Australia, and /or interests of Australian audiences'.*

- **To support artists throughout career:** Commonly aligned to comments concerning support for diversity in art-forms were comments arguing that the purpose of the Australia Council is to support artists throughout all stages of their career. Some respondents emphasised support for emerging artists, and others for mid-career or established artists.

*'To provide support, both financial and otherwise, to emerging, mid-career and established artists.'*

- **To support innovation, experimentation and risk:** A smaller number of respondents specifically articulated that the purpose of the Australia Council is to support artists and projects that demonstrate innovation and experimentation, and take risks in their field. There was a perceived need to support such innovative or risky projects through Australia Council funding.

*'To support innovation in the arts and provide opportunities for new artistic voices to be heard that are representative of the reality of the diversity of Australian society.'*

*'To respond to and stimulate new, experimental, work, take risks, realise the vision of talented people who cannot necessarily or would wish to achieve commercial success given the restrictions on innovation that this often involves.'*

#### 4.1.2 Allocate grants and funding for the arts

That the purpose of the Australia Council is to allocate grants and funding for the arts in Australia was frequently mentioned. These comments were typically focused on three key sub-themes as follows:

- **Peak funding body to the arts/ distribute Australian Government funds:** Many respondents provided a factual definition that the purpose of the Australia Council pertains to their role as an official Australian Government arts funding body. Some comments pointed to the restrictions placed on the Australia Council due to being a government body; conversely others highlighted the Australia Council's 'arms-length' independence from the Government.

*'The Australia Council is the Federal Government agency responsible for funding and resourcing the Arts in Australia.'*

- **Allocate grants and funding to artists by peer review:** That the Australia Council allocates grants to artists to undertake specific projects was commonly mentioned. It was often specified that this funding is allocated via peer review process in order to fairly distribute resources.

*'To provide peer assessed decisions as to where the government funding should go'*

- **Fund non-commercially viable art and creative projects:** That the Australia Council distributes funds to otherwise non-commercially viable projects was highlighted by a number of respondents. Similar comments highlighted that Australia Council funding makes being an artist more financially viable, and as discussed previously especially for risky or innovative projects.

*'...to practice access and equity in the way that it allocates resources and develops policy to be a balance to the 'commercial imperative...'*

*'To provide funding to creatively deserving bodies who cannot afford to practice or develop their art without it, and without which, they may not afford to sustain the ability to continue practicing their art.'*

#### 4.1.3 Be an advocate of the Australian arts sector

Another key theme was that one of the roles of the Australia Council is to be an advocate of Australian arts to other Government departments, as well as the wider public. Within this broad role of advocate of the arts were four sub-themes as follows:

- **Provide policy advice to Government/ lobby Government:** A number of respondents perceived that the role of Australia Council is to contribute towards arts policy and advise other government departments on the arts. It was also commonly mentioned that the Australia Council lobbies Government for greater funding and support for the arts.

*'To develop, advocate, resource, implement and monitor the national cultural policy with artists, local and state government, cultural organisations and other partnerships.'*

- **Undertake research into the arts sector in Australia:** A handful of respondents highlighted the Australia Council's research into the arts in Australia as an important facet of the advocacy and policy development role of the Council.

*'To provide in-depth research on arts and culture/provide grants to practitioners and artistic personnel/fund arts related organisations/contribute to broader policy issues.'*

*'To provide funding for arts-making, to research and provide information about and for the sector which improves the way in which we make work ad to advocate on behalf of the arts and cultural sector to government.'*

- **Provide leadership in the arts through strategic vision:** The Australia Council was heralded by some respondents as fulfilling a leadership role and executing a strategic vision for the arts in Australia.

*'Provide leadership and support nationally in arts and cultural sector.'*

*'As a peak body to fund and provide strategic directions to sustain and grow the culture sector in Australia.'*

- **Promote Australia arts sector to build audiences:** A less common sub-theme was the role of the Australia Council in building audiences. It was perceived that the Australia Council has a role in promoting the arts to the wider public, especially in regional areas in order to build audiences and grow public support for the arts. Some respondents mentioned the role of the Australia Council in building international markets for Australian arts.

*'...invest in audience development, nationally and internationally...'*

*'To broaden the knowledge and support of a wide range of the arts - not merely opera and ballet - to a wider audience.'*

#### **4.1.4 Not enough diversity in grant recipients**

There were a number of criticisms about the role of the Australia Council. These criticisms were primarily focused on a sentiment that the Council's allocation of funding is unfair and that funding decisions do not represent the diversity of the Australia arts and culture sector. Some of these respondents articulated that the Australia Council does not offer a 'level playing field' and can be 'closed', 'elitist' and 'nepotistic'.

*'The purpose should be to reflect and change with the breadth of participants in Australia and create opportunities for many artists to be funded, supported or include. You are either in the club or not in the club currently.'*

More detail on the two identified sub-themes is described below:

- **Disproportionate amount of funding goes to major organisations:** There were some comments that highlighted a degree of cynicism in the distribution of funding to major organisations and events. Generally, these respondents argued that the Australia Council supports major organisations at the expense of more emerging, local, community based artists, organisation and projects. Some respondents commented that funding to major organisations is not subject to peer review.

*'The purpose of the Australia Council is to ensure the bulk of arts funding flows to major performing arts groups, and usually those groups producing and performing works by dead European males, eg, symphony orchestras and opera companies.'*

- **Funding repeatedly given to same artists/ organisations:** There were also a number of comments arguing that grants are repeatedly awarded to the same recipients therefore limiting opportunity for other applicants. Some of these respondents explained that the Australia Council was too conservative in its funding decisions, or that funding is only given to already prominent artists.

*'To support ALL artists to make studio-based work so that they don't have to work menial jobs. Not just the 'art stars'.'*

*'To support all artists, not the same ones over and over again. Not friends of friends, but to provide funding to all on a fair and equal basis. There is too much nepotism and helping out friends in the current system. Some artists receive multiple grants, while others never receive anything in a life time.'*



## 4.2 Original purpose of the Australia Council

### 4.2.1 Whether Australia Council is meeting original purpose

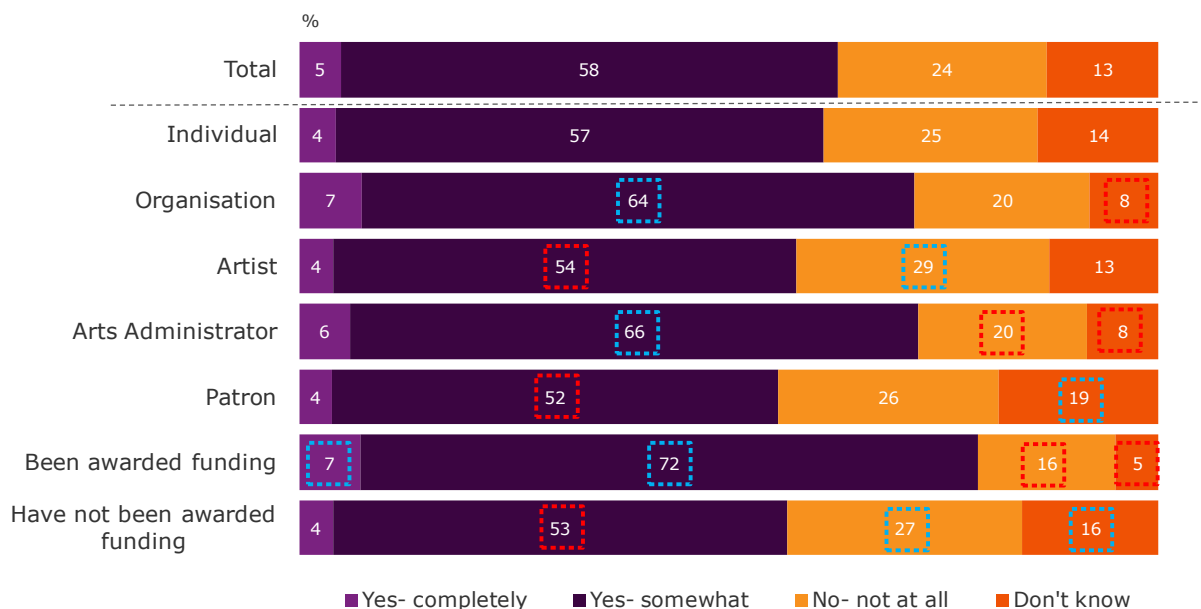
The Terms of Reference of the Review note that the original purpose of the Australia Council was to ensure:

*"the best is encouraged and those who produce it are given the greatest opportunity to achieve the highest quality of which they are capable"*

On a total level the majority of respondents believed that the Australia Council is meeting its original purpose (63%). Just below one-quarter indicated the Council was not at all meeting this purpose. There were, however, a number of significant differences on a sub-group level as detailed below.

- **Sub-groups who were significantly more likely to believe that the Australia Council is meeting its original purpose include:** organisations (nett), small and large organisations, arts administrators, funding recipients, those interested in ATSI arts, dance and inter-arts and female respondents
- **Sub-groups who were significantly more likely to believe that the Australia Council is not meeting its original purpose include:** artists (nett), mid-career and established artists, those who have not been awarded funding, those interested in music, males, and respondents from NSW.

**Figure 9: Australia Council meeting original purpose by total and selected demographics**

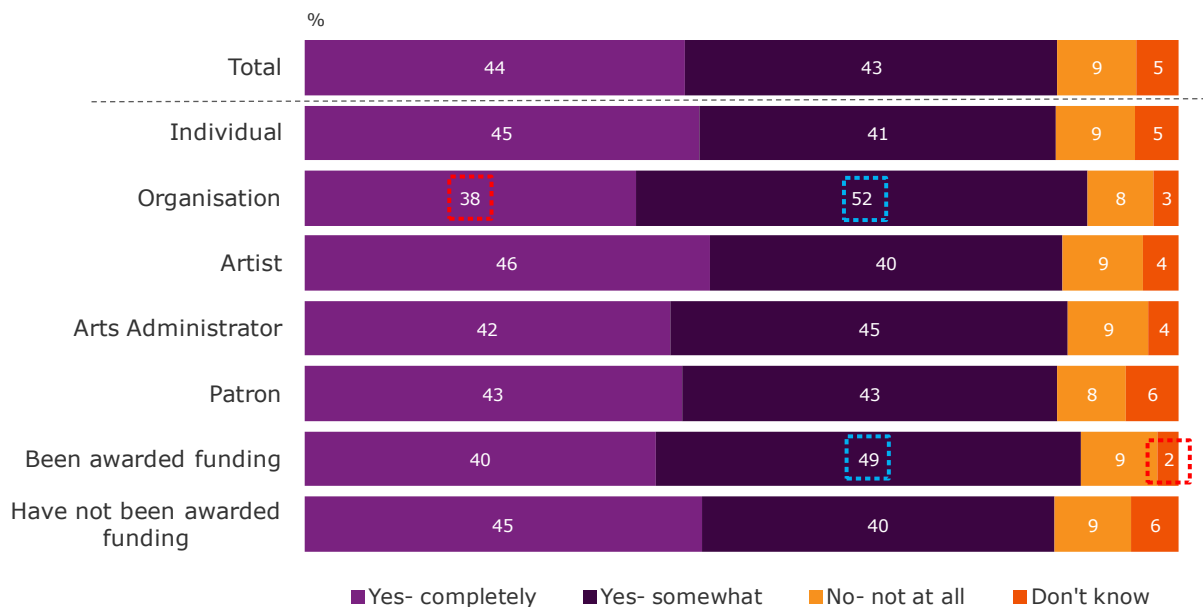


Base: Total n=2007/ Tested for significant differences against total (95% confidence): **Blue square**= significantly higher/ **Red square**= significantly lower  
 C2.Do you think that the Australia Council is meeting this purpose?

### 4.2.2 Validity of original purpose

The validity of the Australia Council’s original purpose for 21<sup>st</sup> century Australia was reinforced by the vast majority (87%), and was evenly distributed between those respondents who felt the original purpose was completely valid (44%), and those who felt it was somewhat valid (43%). There were very few significant differences between the demographic sub-groups; emerging artists were significantly more likely to indicate that the original purpose is ‘yes-completely’ valid, and organisations and those who’ve been awarded funding were more likely to indicate ‘yes-somewhat’. Respondents interested in community arts were the only demographic sub-group to have a significantly higher proportion who felt the original purpose is no longer valid (23%).

**Figure 10: Validity of original purpose by total and selected demographics**



Base: Total n=2007/ Tested for significant differences against total (95% confidence): **Blue square**= significantly higher/ **Red square**= significantly lower

C3.As we develop a new National Cultural Policy in 21st century Australia, is this still a valid purpose?

### 4.2.3 Agreement with statements about the purpose of the Australia Council

Pre-prepared statements about the purpose of the Australia Council received varied levels of agreement. That the Australia Council is an **advocate of arts and culture** rated most highly (70% agreement); underpinned by significantly higher agreement from funding recipients.

That the Australia Council **supports excellence** rated next most highly at 65% agreement. However, this statement attracted disparate levels of agreement within subgroups; sub-groups who were significantly more likely to agree included organisations (nett), small organisations, administrators, funding recipients, respondents interested in ATSI arts, dance, inter-arts, literature and theatre, females and respondents over 65 years; sub-groups who were significantly more likely to disagree included established artists and males.

There were fewer sub-group differences in the level of agreement for **promotes arts and culture to the Australia community** (56% agreement). Respondents aged 65 years and over were significantly more likely to agree. Arts administrators, organisations that have never been funded and NSW respondents were significantly more likely to disagree.

Just over half of total respondents agreed that the Australia Council **supports innovation**. There was significantly higher agreement amongst organisations, arts administrators, funding recipients, those interested in ATSI arts, dance and theatre, key organisations, females and those over 65 years.

Just under half of all respondents agreed that the Australia Council **reflects Australia's cultural heritage**; driven by significantly higher agreement from funding recipients, those interested in inter-arts, females and those over 65 years. Respondents interested in community arts, and from NSW were significantly more likely to disagree.

Under half (46%) of respondents agreed that the Australia Council **reflects the contemporary Australian arts and culture sector**; underpinned by significantly higher agreement amongst funding recipients, key and regularly funded organisations, females and those over 55 years. Respondents interested in music were significantly more likely to disagree with the statement.

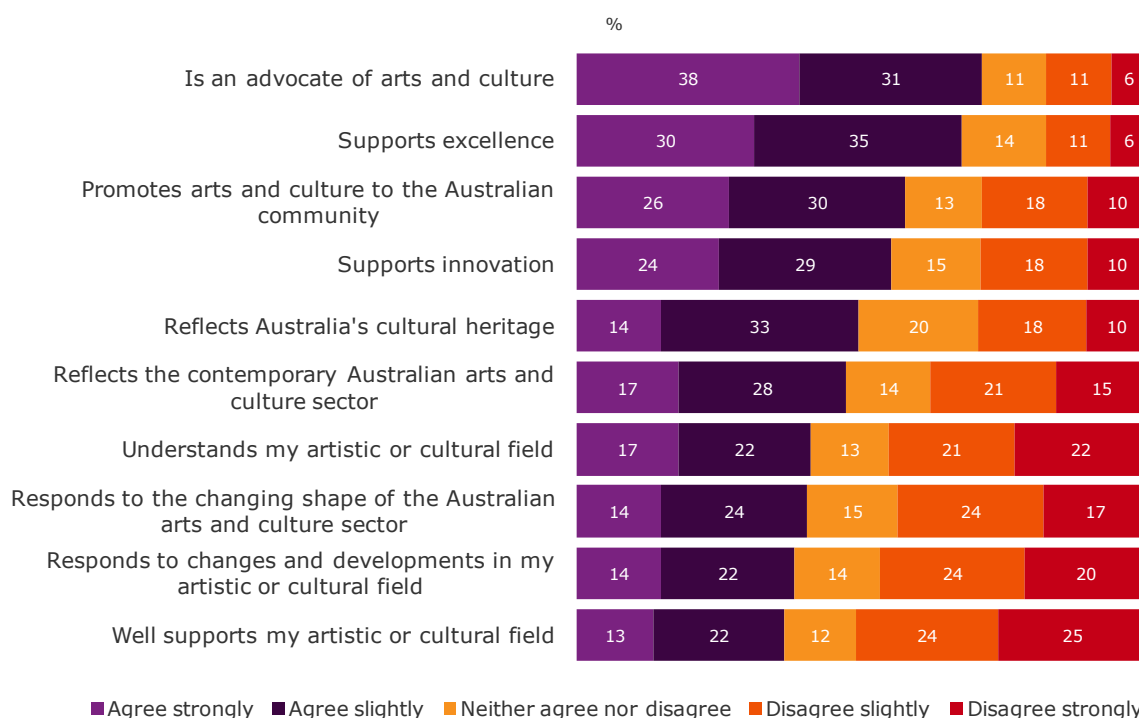
More respondents disagreed (43%) than agreed (39%) that the Australia Council **understands my artistic or cultural field**. Agreement was driven by arts administrators, small organisations, key organisations, funding recipients, those interested in ATSI arts, dance and theatre, females, and those over 65 years old and respondents from WA. Disagreement was significantly higher amongst artists (especially mid-career and established artists), those interested in music and male respondents.

Amongst the 38% of respondents who agreed that the Australia Council **responds to the changing shape of the Australian arts and culture sector** were significantly more arts administrators, funding recipients, those interested in ATSI Islander arts, dance, inter-arts and theatre, key organisations and females. Those respondents interested in music, established artists, and organisations that have never been funded were significantly more likely to disagree with the statement.

Just over one-third of respondents agreed, and 44% of respondents disagreed that the Australia Council **responds to changes and developments in my artistic or cultural field**. The sub-groups who were significantly more likely to disagree included artists (nett), established artists, those interested in music, organisations that have never been funded and male respondents. Conversely, there were significantly higher rates of agreement amongst arts administrators, grant recipients, those interested in ATSI arts, dance, inter-arts and theatre, large and key organisations and females.

Almost half of all respondents disagreed that the Australia Council **well supports my artistic or cultural field**. There were significantly higher rates of disagreement amongst artists (nett), established artists, those interested in music, organisations that received funding in the past, and organisations that have never been funded. Agreement was significantly higher amongst arts administrators, funding recipients, those interested in ATSI and Torres Strait Islander arts and inter-arts, key organisations, regularly funded organisations and female respondents.

**Figure 11: Agreement with statements about purpose of the Australia Council**



Base: Total n=2007

C4. Listed below are several statements about the purpose of the Australia Council. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

**Figure 12: Agreement with statements about purpose of the Australia Council by total and selected demographics**

% Agree	Total	Individual	Organ-isation	Artist	Admin	Patron	Awarded funding	Not awarded funding
Responds to the changing shape of the Australian arts and culture sector	<b>38</b>	37	43	33	43	35	50	34
Supports excellence	<b>65</b>	63	73	61	70	60	74	61
Supports innovation	<b>53</b>	51	62	48	58	46	65	49
Promotes arts and culture to the Australian community	<b>57</b>	57	55	55	56	55	61	55
Is an advocate of arts and culture	<b>70</b>	70	71	69	70	69	75	68
Reflects the contemporary Australian arts and culture sector	<b>46</b>	45	47	42	49	40	57	42
Reflects Australia's cultural heritage	<b>47</b>	46	48	44	49	44	52	45
Understands my artistic or cultural field	<b>39</b>	38	44	36	45	33	57	32
Responds to changes in my artistic or cultural field	<b>35</b>	35	38	31	41	33	51	30
Well supports my artistic or cultural field	<b>35</b>	35	35	32	39	31	49	29

Base: Total n=2007/ Tested for significant differences against total (95% confidence): **Blue**=significantly higher/ **Red**=significantly lower

C4. Listed below are several statements about the purpose of the Australia Council. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

### 4.3 What the Australia Council is currently doing well

A notable proportion (42%) of respondents indicated they 'don't know' what the Australia Council is currently doing well, which could be indicative of a lack of knowledge of the grants, initiatives and projects of the Australia Council, or perhaps also reflect cynicism on behalf of some of these respondents that the Australia Council is currently not doing anything well.

This question received mixed responses from those 58% of respondents who did provide an answer; most respondents identified an area they felt the Australia Council was doing well, however there were also a number of respondents who clarified their praise for one area of the Australia Council's operations with criticisms of another. In addition, there were also some respondents who provided entirely critical feedback of the Australia Council in this question. The main criticisms of the Australia Council pertained to funding of major performing arts, key organisations, and the opera and classical music genres. The most salient themes that emerged in the analysis of these open-ended responses are listed below in order of frequency:

1. **Funding the arts/ artists**
2. **Administration and operations**
3. **Marketing and research**

Figure 13: What the Australia Council is doing well- Key themes and sub-themes



Base: Total n=2007

D1.What do you think the Australia Council is currently doing well? What are some practical examples of this?.

### 4.3.1 Funding the arts/ artists

The broadest area of praise for the Australia Council related to its **role as administrator** of funding and grants to artists and organisations. Many respondents provided general comments about arts funding and the benefits of grants to artists. Branching from general comments about arts funding were comments about specific areas of support and funding which are discussed below.

- **Funding key and major performing arts organisations/ classical and opera genres:** Funding of key/ major organisations and genres such as opera and classical music were the most common (and contentious) points of comment. A few respondents praised the support of excellence as demonstrated by some of the Major Performing Arts organisations. The triennial funding period was also praised in terms allowing security and long term planning for such organisations. Conversely, there was a strong sentiment from a number of respondents that funding major/ key organisations was disproportionate, and diverted funding from other art-forms and music genres. Such comments reflected a sense of unfairness and disparity in the funding priorities of the Australia Council.

*'It supports the major organisations and the triennially funded organisations well - provides funding security over three years.'*

*'Funding major performing arts organisations (although given limited government funding I do not support the current imbalance of funding towards these companies). The ideal would be that they were funded well without disadvantaging more contemporary and hybrid expressions of Australian culture.'*

- **Funding emerging artists:** Specific Australia Council programs such as ArtStart and JUMP were praised by respondents as providing important opportunities for young and emerging artists. In particular, ArtStart for recent graduates was commonly heralded as an important program that can provide a basis for developing an arts business or professional practice.

*'ArtStart!! Fantastic, fabulous - targeting professional development for all rather than rewarding "excellence". "Excellence" is great, but people don't get to be "excellent" without sustained nurturing and support. We are here to help one another, rather than just compete. Right??'*

*'I believe the new initiatives for Young and Emerging Artists (ArtStart and JUMP) are incredibly successful. They help place artists on a platform in which they are encouraged to find strategic ways to further their career and make it sustainable. I believe the next step is to be able to support more artists and projects beyond the emerging artists stage...entering the newly established artistic challenge.'*

- **Funding Indigenous/ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts:** A number of respondents mentioned that the Australia Council was doing well in providing support and funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts. In particular the independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Board was seen as an important feature of the Council.

*'Support for Indigenous Arts, and cultural projects engaging with diverse communities.'*

*'Maintaining an independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander department and board. However, it is extremely under resourced both financially and with Indigenous staff.'*

- **International and national touring opportunities/ residencies:** The Australia Council's support for national and international touring and residency activities was praised by a number of respondents. Respondents mentioned a range of Australia Council programs across a range of art-forms including performing arts, contemporary music, literature and visual artists. Specifically mentioned programs included International Pathways, Going Global, Road Work, and various residencies.

*'Touring programmes such as Going Global, Road Works and marketing like APAM.'*

*'AC supports international touring and showcase prospects for Australian bands.'*

*'Providing artist studio residencies and international travel. Supporting the development of new work. Supporting emerging artists. Supporting emerging curators in residencies.'*

- **Community Partnerships:** Some respondents mentioned the Australia Council was doing well in community arts through Community Partnerships. In particular the Creative Communities grant was heralded as an excellent initiative.

*'Community Partnerships. The creative communities initiative has leveraged millions of \$ for the arts in the community.'*

*'Incubating projects which link arts and non-arts organisations eg the Creative Communities Partnership Initiative: that's a great idea - would like to see the promotion of its results more widely disseminated...'*

- **Grants, programs and initiatives that are flexible and responsive to cultural change:** There were a number of comments about various programs and initiatives of the Australia Council that respondents perceived to reflect the Council's flexibility and responsiveness to change in Australia's cultural sphere. Some of the examples provided by respondents included Geek in Residence, SoundClash, NBN Broadband Arts Initiative, InterArts and emerging/ independent producers.

*'Developing new initiatives to reflect the changes in our cultural landscape. For example the Geek In Residence Program and the Soundclash program.'*

*'New initiatives to respond to changes in sector and Australian environment, eg digital, NBN Constructive and supportive relationships with individual companies.'*

*'Supporting individuals - commending innovation and encouraging self sufficiency and entrepreneurship. Eg. Artstart Grant, fellowships, independent producers.'*



*Responding to a changing industry, and society at large - creating grants/opportunities which reflect these changes. Supporting the development of work in early stages therefore supporting experimentation.'*

#### **4.3.2 Administration and operations**

There were a variety of comments about numerous aspects of the Australia Council's administration and operations, most commonly in regards to their staff, online facilities and the peer assessment process.

- **Helpful/ knowledgeable staff/ customer service:** Some respondents highlighted they had had positive experiences with Australia Council staff. Staff were reported to be helpful, approachable and knowledgeable, not only about procedures and processes but are also familiar with the arts and culture sector.

*'As an artist and recipient I have received encouragement and advice from staff before applying that I believe have helped me more accurately direct my applications. The funding I have received has been invaluable to my career. I also believe them to be amazingly fair as I initially received funding based on work I had done and not knowing any other artists or having been to art school. I'd had one show. That funding has since propelled my career forward.'*

*'The staff are personally engaged, communicative and supportive:- in short they are connected to artists.'*

- **Website and online grant application process:** A few respondents complimented the Australia Council's website, specifically the online grant application and acquittal process. The online application process was said to make applying for grants easier.

*'The online application, although is in premature stage is really efficient.'*

*'Management of grants and acquittal processes through online reporting portal implemented in the last 2 years.'*

- **Peer assessment:** The Council's peer assessment process was deemed by many respondents as an effective method for allocating grants. These respondents indicated they perceived the process to be fair and robust. However, there was a number of other less favourable comments about the process, specifically about the selection of the peers and whether they are actually the most suitable candidates.

*'The peer assessment process is good as long as the peers are actually peers and have the experience and breadth of knowledge to make decisions that are not limited to their own taste or cultural agenda.'*

### 4.3.3 Marketing and research

The Australia Council's marketing and research was highlighted by a few respondents as an area that the Council is doing well.

- **Marketing development initiatives:** The Australia Council's marketing summit, marketing and business support, and international marketing/ market development - especially through touring support were highlighted by a number of respondents as positive aspects of the Australia Council's operations.

*'Market development initiatives including digital online strategies, APAM & international touring support, undertaking and enabling ongoing research.'*

- **Research into the arts sector in Australia:** Respondents mentioned the benefit of numerous pieces of research undertaken by the Australia Council into the Australian arts sector including 'More than Bums on Seats', The 'Throsby' study, and recent research into social media. Research was said to be an important part of providing information to the industry as well as advocating on its behalf.

*'I think the Australia Council provides a lot of research that is highly valuable and useful.'*

*'Research and analysis (such as the recent social media report and the Jan 2011 report with QUT on Cultural policy)'*

## 5. Practical suggestions for change

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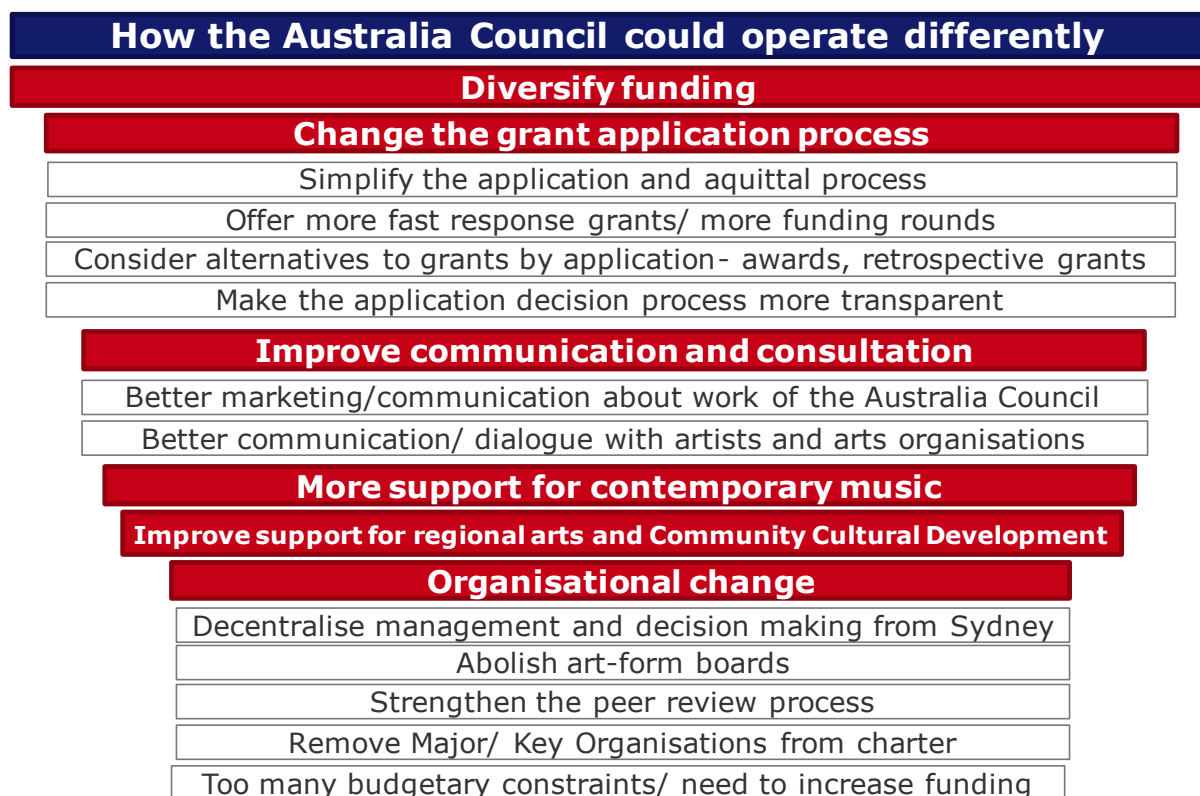
Practical suggestions for changes to the operations of the Australia Council overwhelmingly concerned **distributing support and funding to a more equitable and diverse range of applicants and art-forms**, potentially through localised and community based channels. Arguments for the more equal distribution of funding were largely framed in terms of a strong perception that a disproportion amount of funding is provided to major organisations at the expense of individual artists and smaller organisations. In summary, there was a strong sense that the Australia Council needs to make funding more accessible, whether that be through **simplifying the grant application process, improving communication with and support to potential applicants, or increasing their flexibility in regards to their processes and eligibility criteria.**

### 5.1 How the Australia Council might operate differently

Just under three-quarters (72%) of respondents provided an answer concerning how the Australia Council might operate differently. Respondents embraced the opportunity to provide proactive suggestions about changes to the Australia Council and a broad range of detailed responses were provided. The analysis revealed six key themes and several sub-themes as outlined in detail below.

- 1. Diversify funding**
- 2. Change the grant application process**
- 3. Improve communication and consultation**
- 4. More support for contemporary music**
- 5. Improve support for regional arts and Community Cultural Development**
- 6. Organisational change**

**Figure 14: How the Australia Council might operate differently- Key themes and sub-themes**



Base: Total n=2007

D2. Do you have any suggestions for how the Australia Council might operate its business differently? If so, what are some practical examples?

### 5.1.1 Diversify Funding

The most common theme concerning how the Australia Council might operate its business differently related to funding a more diverse range of individuals, organisations, and art-forms. Comments pertaining to diversification of funding were usually framed by criticisms that a disproportionate amount of funding is allocated to major and key organisations, notably opera and orchestral music. In particular it was suggested that a greater share of the funding budget be distributed to:

- smaller and medium organisations;
- young and emerging artists;
- mid-career artists;
- artists and organisations from regional areas;
- females; and
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

*'Reduce the funding to opera and ballet - make funding across all types/variations of art forms fairer and more transparent. Place more importance on support of independent artists, rather than those funded by corporations.'*

*'Support the arts nationally by ensuring that arts practice is enabled in geographically and demographically diverse and distant communities.'*

*'98% of Australia Council funding is directed towards opera or orchestral music. This fact in itself represents a complete imbalance, and blinds the Council to developments in the Australian artistic circles. Balancing out those funding numbers with other artistic circles, particularly live music venues, artists and infrastructure would be a simple and practical solution.'*

*'Important to fund more programs for mid-career professional artists. These artists are a great resource for Australia, their skills and experience need to be valued and supported.'*

### **5.1.2 Change the grant application process**

It is likely the grant application process defines many respondents experience and relationship with the Australia Council; it is therefore not surprising that many respondents suggested that the process be changed to better meet their needs. The main suggestions for how the process could be changed are discussed below.

- **Simplify the grant application and acquittal process:** There was a common perception that the grant application and acquittal processes are too complex, too time-consuming, and perhaps only accessible to those with excellent writing and administration skills. There was a sentiment amongst some respondents that artists and smaller organisations are already time and resource poor, and the grant application and acquittal process only further erodes these resources. A few respondents commented that they felt disadvantaged in the application process because of their poor writing skills, which they felt by no means reflected the value of their skills as an artist. Others pointed to the use of professional grant writers as indicative of the undue emphasis on writing skills in the application process. Therefore, many respondents suggested that the process could be simplified by way of less written justification, use of plain language questions, and more practical examples of artist's work.

*'It feels as if good grant writers get the money as opposed to good artists. Should be an option of applying for a round of funding that doesn't require a full submission - maybe a 2-3 mins clip of someone talking or a 2-3 page EOI then working with AusCo staff to build the full application.'*

*'Rethink the application process... break it into a much simpler expression of interest process (like the recent triennial eoi's) that allows individuals and organisations to propose the guts of their idea in a less onerous way... then cull the ones that were never really in the running, and invite the 'shortlist' to provide the more comprehensive (and time consuming) detail...'*

- **Offer more fast response grants/ more funding rounds:** Another common suggestion for change to the grant application process was to shorten time-frames between application and project start date, either by offering more funding rounds in the year, more quick-response grants, or alternatively that due dates could be abolished all together and applications be processed continuously. The time-frame for grant applications were considered to potentially hinder

opportunities that might arise outside of the time-frame dictated by a funding round.

*'The implementation of quick response grants so that artists can take advantage of opportunities that unexpectedly arise. i.e. offers of tours, residencies, collaborations where funds may be needed more immediately than planned. These are opportunities to further an artists' career that may require financial support for airfares, materials etc.'*

*'More flexibility with funding rounds. More rounds, more often to respond more quickly to opportunities and projects.'*

- **Consider alternatives to grants by application:** A smaller number of respondents suggested that the Australia Council could consider alternative ways of allocating funding outside of an application process. Such comments were often founded by the belief that the application process is too complex and therefore disadvantages those artists or organisations for whom the process is alienating. Suggested alternatives to the grant application process included:
  - allocating awards to worthy artists;
  - allocating retrospective funds to artists' following the completion of projects;
  - advocating more strongly for an artists' 'dole';
  - smaller grants/ microloans;
  - arts Lottery i.e. UK model; and
  - matching funding sourced through crowd-funding.

*'Provide retrospective grants for projects that have gone ahead despite not receiving funding.'*

*'Ozco needs to be a proactive agency. That is to say, abolish grant applications and send out it's functionaries as buyers or producers to see work and when they find an artist or group they then work with them, funding them but also mentoring them to create the best product that then come something great but also an exportable commodity.'*

- **Make the application process more transparent:** There was a perception amongst some respondents that the grant application decision process, by way of peer review, is not transparent enough. Provision of better, clear, and more accessible feedback on grant applications from staff was suggested as a way to improve the transparency of the process.

*'Make the grant application process simpler and more transparent. Provide feedback on non successful applications in a timely manner and give non successful applicants tips on how to be successful next time around.'*

*'Greater transparency within application process and feedback post-decision. Peer assessment reconsideration, especially for those applying within a WA context.'*

*'Greater openness and transparency; less 'ivory tower' attitude.'*

### 5.1.3 Improve communication and consultation

There were a mixed range of responses calling for better communication on behalf of the Australia Council. There were two main streams of comments from respondents in this regard; those who felt the Australia Council was doing a good job, but is limited by scarce resources, and therefore needs to better promote their good work; and then there were those who felt the Australia Council could improve their communication and engagement with the arts sector.

- **Better marketing/communication about work of the Australia Council/ recognise budgetary constraints:** Some respondents suggested that the Australia Council could better promote its role and the work it does within the arts sector through improved marketing of the Council, as well as keeping more of a public profile and being honest and open with its constituents. It was perceived that the Australia Council is essentially doing a good job, but is hampered by scarce funding. Some of these respondents suggested better promotion of the work of the Council could help galvanise more Government funding, as well as increase understanding from artists and organisations about the limitations the Council operates within.

*'Needs to raise its profile and funding base through more effective advocacy and strong leadership.'*

*'It could communicate better in the wider community - I suspect most citizens do not know of its existence; what it does or how it is relevant to their lives'.*

- **Better communication/ dialogue with artists and arts organisations:** The Australia Council was seen to be lacking in terms of its level and depth of communication with the arts sector, most notably community based arts organisations. The Australia Council was perceived by such respondents as having no relevance to them because they operate without the support or involvement of the Australia Council, some respondents commented they do not even know what the Council does. Others explained how they felt the Australia Council is very 'hands-off' and not proactive about engaging artists or communities that are unlikely to approach the Council for support. It was suggested that the Australia Council take a more proactive role in the arts sector, and actively seek out and engage artists and organisations on the periphery. Further to this, there was also a stream of comments from respondents who were more engaged with the Australia Council and had applied for grants or support, but still felt the Council does not provide enough practical advice and support to potential applicants. It was suggested that the Australia Council could offer grant writing workshops and information sessions to potential applicants.

*'Organisation appears to be too far removed from the Grass Roots - even appears elitist. Need to engage or increase its presence in the artistic "frontline". I suspect 80% of artists and community arts organisations have almost no knowledge of the Australia Council or its potential relevance to them.'*

*'The Australia council should more actively engage with the arts community and foster art that is culturally relevant and excellent'.*

*'If this organisation is to be truly representative of arts and cultural production nationally then it needs to move beyond the narrow criteria that limit the accessibility of support and place it outside the reach of emerging cultural and creative workers and those from marginalised community and cultural sectors.'*

*'More engagement with people working in various areas of the arts. The perception is that it is high-brow and not accessible to most people, but works with closed set of people.'*

#### **5.1.4 More support for contemporary music**

Calls for the Australia Council to provide greater funding and support for contemporary music were common. Again, such comments were contextualised by a perceived imbalance in funding towards other more traditional musical genres namely opera and orchestral music; respondents commonly quoted that 98% of music funding went to these classical genres over more contemporary musical styles. A number of respondents expressed a level of outrage about said funding distribution given the struggling state of contemporary music in Australia. Such respondents explained how contemporary music was in a state of financial struggle, how live music venues were besieged due to restrictive planning laws, and how difficult it is to make a living wage from being a contemporary musician. A number of respondents explained that contemporary music deserves greater support from the Australia Council because it has cultural relevance for communities, demonstrated by thriving attendance at live music shows. Respondents provided a number of practical ways the Australia Council could further support contemporary music:

- Increase proportion of funding to all kinds of contemporary music;
- Work more closely to find ways to support existing community music organisations such as independent radio; and
- Advocate for live music to other Government departments on State and Local level.

*'Support some contemporary music projects, give grants to up and coming independent bands and musical acts. Invest in festivals for exposure of independent Australian musicians with a particular focus on grass roots projects. Touring grants for contemporary musicians. Drop all the pretension; support some music people actually care about. Focus on assisting up and coming live music venues and art spaces, join the struggle to make these venues less expensive and impractical to operate due to poorly thought out government legislation.'*

*'The music industry is in need of support. There are organisations that work to foster emerging Australian music, organisations like independent radio (FBi and 2SER, RRR, ZZZ) as well as internet radio stations. These organisations are the lifeblood of the Australian music scene, and yet are constantly on the verge of folding or under pressure to commercialise to remain solvent and operational. Australia Council should consider partnering with these sorts of organisations*



*within the music scene to 'support the supporters', to allow them to stay afloat in order to be a channel for awareness of emerging artists.'*

*'De-fund Opera Australia. Use the money to support contemporary art music - eg pump up funding to the What Is Music festival, TINA etc etc etc.'*

### **5.1.5 Improve support for community arts and Community Cultural Development**

The Australia Council was perceived to be lacking in its support for community arts and Community Cultural Development (CCD). There were a variety of criticisms in this regard primarily concerning a lack of recognition of CCD by the Australia Council. These respondents argued that the Council needs to reinstate a specific CCD board and also increase funding to CCD organisations and projects. Other respondents argued for greater support of community arts and organisation in general, especially in regional areas. Some respondents expressed concern for the implications of measuring community projects against notions of excellence, and therefore suggested that the Australia Council take a flexible approach to definitions of excellence in the community arts context.

*'1) take notice of the brilliant CCD work around Australia and value it in terms of funding 2) don't get so swept up in excellence (which is relative) and pay attention to community involvement on arts projects with community artists having great value...'*

*'Recognise and support Community Cultural Development (CCD) practice as a valid art form in its own right. Foster participation through the arts by funding CCD practice in its own stream.'*

*'If this organisation is to be truly representative of arts and cultural production nationally then it needs to move beyond the narrow criteria that limit the accessibility of support and place it outside the reach of emerging cultural and creative workers and those from marginalised community and cultural sectors.'*

### **5.1.6 Organisational change**

There were a diverse range of suggestions pertaining to changes to the organisational structure of the Australia Council. While such comments were in the minority, there were nevertheless some decisive suggestions made by these respondents. The most common suggestions for organisational change are discussed below.

- **Decentralise management and decision making from Sydney:** The most common suggestion for structural change within the Council was to decentralise the Council from its current location in Sydney. Some respondents suggested moving the Council to Canberra; others suggested the Council could operate out of a number of regional offices. Such suggestions were founded on arguments that the Australia Council is too Sydney (and Melbourne) centric at the expense of other cities and regions in Australia. Less commonly, other respondents

suggested that the Australia Council completely integrate with the Office for Arts in Canberra.

*'De-centralise. Set up offices in each state rather than operating out of Sydney.'*

*'Completely integrate with the Office for the Arts funding programs. This was Labor policy at the 2007 election and has never been done.'*

- **Abolish art-form boards:** There were a number of comments which suggested that the Australia Council abolish its art-form Boards in order to better reflect the changing nature of arts practice in Australia. Art-form boards were perceived by these respondents as too restrictive and silo based, especially for interdisciplinary projects.

*'The artform boards are an out-dated and irrelevant way to fund art in the 21st Century. Inter-arts does not sufficiently capture cross-artform organisations - the inter arts office does not have the budget or capacity to support interdisciplinary projects or organisations of sufficient scale.'*

*'It should break the artform areas it so concentrates on, allowing for more cross art form support. To define artists in boxes such as visual arts, music, etc limits the scope of artistic practice. Although some attempt is made to address this through the Interarts Board, this area has suffered through various interpretations of what they do - new media or genuine cross arts practices. The money placed into interarts is also inadequate as moneys are largely tied to traditional art forms.'*

- **Strengthen the peer review process:** The need to appraise the Australia Council's system for allocating grants via peer review was raised by some respondents. For the most part these respondents were not arguing to bring to an end the peer review process, in fact many respondents felt the peer review process needs to be further strengthened and reinstated as the fundamental basis for decision making in the Australia Council. Others argued that peer review be more closely scrutinised primarily in terms of how the peers are selected and whether they have any vested interests. As discussed previously, there was some concern from respondents that the application decision process is not transparent enough.

*'More transparent decision making processes. Higher turnover of peer review boards making decisions. More complexity in mix of backgrounds of people on peer review boards.'*

- **Remove Major/ Key Organisations from charter:** Another suggestion, which relates strongly to the above themes regarding diversification of funding by the Australia Council, was to remove Major Performing Arts and Key Organisations from the Australia Council's charter. It was suggested the Office for Arts could administer funding directly to major organisations. It was perceived that this would free up the Australia Council to work more closely with individual artists and smaller organisations.

*'I think the review should look at a split of the Australia Council. I think the current model skews the overall energy of the Council towards dealing with the Major Organisations. This deflects time and energy away from the smaller grants and arts projects areas. Isn't it time to move to a model where the Major Orgs are just funded directly from the federal ministry? This would clear the way for the Aust Co to more ably focus on the other more important developmental areas and give it time to research and create new and relevant policy into the future. At the end of the day, the Major Orgs are really not being assessed artistically. They are businesses and they are only scrutinised as such and it seems unlikely any of them will ever be defunded.'*

- **Too many budgetary constraints/ need to increase funding:** As mentioned above in the context of improved marketing of the Australia Council, a number of respondents specifically argued that the Australia Council requires greater Government funding in order to better undertake its role and deliver the best possible outcomes for the arts and culture sector in Australia. These respondents felt that the Council in its current state operates with too many budgetary constraints, which is fundamentally to the detriment of the sector.

*'I believe that the Australia Council needs a better Federal budget allocation so that it can support new growth areas in the creative economy. Its budget is currently restricted by efficiency dividends and the need to support cultural institutions. Increased funding would enable the Australia Council to improve support for growth areas, innovation, small to medium organisations, projects and artists.'*

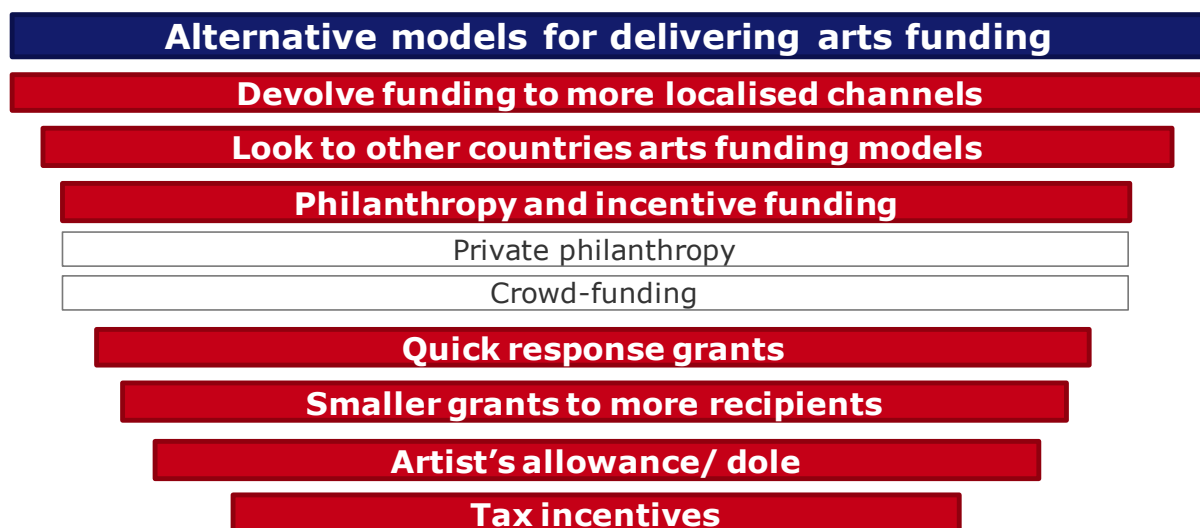
## 5.2 Alternative models for arts funding

Many respondents (60%) were unable to provide an answer about alternative contemporary models for delivering arts funding that support innovation as well as excellence. Amongst the 40% of respondents who did answer this question there was some indication that respondents struggled with the question; some respondents explained it was beyond their area of expertise, or that they needed more time to research alternatives, others questioned the terminology of 'excellence' and 'innovation', and others indicated they had already answered this question in the survey's previous question about how Australia Council could operate its business differently. There were also a number of respondents who were hesitant to outline alternative models because they felt the Australia Council currently delivers a good model of funding, such as the peer review process, and hence were fearful of potential changes to the existing Australia Council model. Other respondents argued that any alternative model for arts funding must be developed for the unique Australian context. The analysis also revealed that many comments provided for this question were similar to those provided at the previous question about how the Council could operate differently. Therefore, this analysis concentrates on **practical suggestions for alternative funding models** which are discussed in greater detail below.

### 1. Devolve funding to more localised channels

2. **Look to other countries arts funding models**
3. **Philanthropy and incentive funding**
4. **Quick response grants**
5. **Smaller grants to more recipients**
6. **Artist's allowance/ dole**
7. **Tax incentives**

**Figure 15: Alternative models for delivering arts funding- Key themes and sub-themes**



Base: Total n=2007

D3a. Are there alternative contemporary models for delivering arts funding that you think would support innovation as well as supporting excellence? If so, what are these models?

### 5.2.1 Devolve funding to more localised channels

The most common suggestion for an alternative model for arts funding in Australia was that the Australia Council could devolve some funding to more localised channels such as State and Local Governments and community based organisations. Some respondents articulated that this could be done in partnership with the Australia Council. It was perceived that more localised agencies and organisations would better deliver funding to the community because they have a deeper knowledge of their community, and therefore can work more closely with local artists. It was also considered that delivering funds by way of localised channels would better reflect diversity in the arts and culture sector. Respondents provided some examples including the German arts funding model which is administered at local level, or Arts Victoria's Castanet network.

*'Devolve a percentage of funds to the states to distribute through funding so that the diversity of Australian work can be supported - created by a diversity of artists based in many geographical locations and presented to communities that find the work relevant, engaging and genuinely exciting.'*

*'Greater devolution of funds to key bodies on the ground in different regions of the country who are plugged into the needs of the community of artists, and of audiences, and are able to respond more quickly to the rapidly changing face of Australian cultural activity. Innovation and excellence must be supported in all communities, but these are relative terms - at the moment innovation and*

*excellence is defined primarily by what is innovative or excellent in a metropolitan (even inner city) context.'*

*'Not sure whether this will work; have smaller grants managed and offered by local regional galleries. Promotes the gallery, creates employment, promotes local artists. Advertises the arts and delivered locally. Locally delivered teaching programs.'*

### **5.2.2 Look to other countries arts funding models**

The adoption of various other countries funding models was suggested by numerous respondents. However, respondents rarely gave detail of the actual model and commonly just provided the name of the region or country they believed had an effective arts funding model. The most common regions/ countries that respondents considered to have desirable arts funding models were:

- Europe (general) Ministry of Culture/ The European Cultural Foundation
- Scandinavian countries (general)/ Denmark/ Norway/ Sweden/ Finland
- Germany
- France
- Netherlands
- Belgium
- Switzerland
- Ireland
- United Kingdom
- Canada

Amongst those few respondents who provided some detail about overseas arts funding models, the German Arts Policy (which distributes funds through local channels) was praised, as were various Irish policies including the Tax incentive Scheme and the artist's allowance. Aspects of the British arts funding model were praised by some, notably the British Arts Lottery; conversely other respondents specifically highlighted the British model as an example of arts funding that is not working and should not be adopted by Australia. While many respondents did highlight looking overseas for a good working model, others warned that Australia must develop its own unique model that is most suited to the Australian context. Others stressed that The Australia Council's existing model is actually working well, and is held in high regard internationally.

*'The Irish system is one which is often quoted but I haven't looked at in detail. It seems to operate on a very simplified grants structure plus an interesting tax structure for, eg, writers. Basically, handing out money to people with a track record of creating non-commercial art, with minimal or no consideration given to aesthetic. Make it easier for more artists to create art. No one can pick who'll be remembered in 200 years' time, I feel it's better to fund as many as possible; that would create a really interesting world.'*

*'The Australia Council is seen internationally as very progressive in this area. Other best industry models are CALQ (Quebec, Canada), Swedish Arts Funding*

*(eg. Iaspis), and the multifaceted approach of Switzerland in regard to cultural funding (Swiss Cultural Fund etc,)'*

*'German arts funding model - administered at a local level. Local arts administrators know best the interests of the community, as well as quality and needs of artists. Bursaries for individual with demonstrated achievements and commitment to a productive career in the arts. Not having to worry about a consistent income supports innovation and excellence.'*

### 5.2.3 Philanthropy and incentive funding

Various forms of philanthropy were heralded by a number of respondents as a model that could provide greater funding for the arts in Australia. Comments pertaining to philanthropy commonly suggested the Australia Council could adopt an 'incentive funding' model that matches the amount earned through philanthropy. Conversely, other respondents raised concerns about philanthropy, especially crowd-funding, with the view that such a model is unlikely to deliver excellence. The two broad philanthropy funding models are discussed below.

- **Private Philanthropy:** Gaining financial support for arts projects through private philanthropy of businesses and individuals. The Australia Councils existing model of Art Support was used as an example of such a model that encourages private philanthropy of the arts. Another example provided was the UK's Gift Aid which was described as a model that provides incentives for business and individuals to fundraise for the arts. Coupling private philanthropy with incentive funding from the Australia Council was perceived as potentially encouraging such philanthropy in the first instance, as well as stimulating investment in the arts and culture sector.

*'I strongly support the "matching" of donations with government funding such as recently proposed by Harold Mitchell in his report (including donations for core functions). As someone who is both a board member and a donor I know that the idea that my contributions might be matched by government increases my likelihood of donating, and also makes me think more strategically about what I donate for.'*

*'I would love to see a huge push for and support for greater levels of philanthropy in Australia and different models for obtaining private funding.'*

*'I believe that a matching grants fund would stimulate more investment across various sectors. I think there should be more programs that are prototyped alongside those currently on offer - building on those programs that find traction throughout various arts sectors.'*

- **Crowd-funding:** Crowd-funding was highlighted by a number of respondents as an important and useful model for delivering project funding. Respondents commonly mentioned existing crowd-funding websites such as KickStarter and Pozible as useful tools for directly funding projects in a transparent way. It was suggested that the Australia Council could implement their own crowd-funding

model, or could offer matching incentive funding to selected projects on existing crowd-funding websites.

*Yes, perhaps something along the lines of kickstarter, where the community or a transparent panel assesses the projects in a transparent way. this is viewable online and all the world can see what each of the projects are.*

*'Crowd funding is an important new model, it should be embraced, maybe the council should administer their own 'kickstarter' equivalent'*

*'The Kickstarter program is an awesome model for supporting innovation...if someone has a great idea, they can bring that idea to fruition without having to put out a huge financial outlay themselves...'*

#### **5.2.4 Quick response grants**

A model that includes quick response grants or rolling closing dates for grant applications was suggested by numerous respondents. Fast turn-around times for applications were considered to be more responsive and flexible to the needs of artists, especially when opportunities arise within a short time frame. The Australia Council's existing 'Going Global' grant, and ArtsNSW Quick Response funding were provided as examples of such funding models.

*"'Quick Response" grants would assist particularly nascent artists in career development, by allowing them to apply for fast response funding for residencies and professional development programmes.'*

*'More flexible models. Innovation needs responsive programs, fast turnaround times and the ability to enable artists/companies to take up opportunities when they arise. Rolling closing dates (or no closing dates), a quick response programs, more processes similar to Going Global (where applications can be made at any time) and results are fast.'*

#### **5.2.5 Smaller grants to more recipients**

The delivery of funding by way of smaller grants, to a greater number of recipients, was considered another useful model for funding the arts. It was believed that smaller grants would enable more projects to be initiated. Respondents commonly referred to smaller grants as 'start-up grants' or 'seed funding', which indicates that such grants are positioned to help artists instigate a project, rather than to fund the project in its entirety. It was commonly suggested that smaller grants also be 'quick response', to enable a more fluid and constant turn-over of creative projects. A few respondents mentioned The Awesome Foundation, a model which distributes multiple \$1000 grants on a monthly basis to applicants; in particular one respondent suggested such a model represents 'responsive, rapid and informal funding processes'.

*'Lots of small(er), seeding grants to individuals and small groups/companies. With a quick turnaround and easy application process.'*



*'More frequent funding at smaller amounts to get projects up and running constantly.'*

*'Much more low cost smaller grants to small artistic business enterprises. Giving small amounts to a larger number of highly creative driven artists running small businesses would provide a much greater chance of more artists reaching their full artistic and commercial potential long term.'*

### **5.2.6 Artist's allowance/ dole**

Another popular suggestion was that the Australia Council could implement, or lobby for, an artist's allowance or 'dole'. An artist's allowance was described by proponents as a regular, consistent income for practicing artists. An allowance was considered to provide artists with basic financial support in order to free them from having to work non-arts related jobs, and therefore dedicate more time to their art practice. Some respondents pointed to such models operating in Ireland and France.

*'Early to mid career artists have very little professional income, this dictates the requirement to find work often in un-associated fields. It demands, in order for a average subsistence, that the artist need qualify in areas outside their intended professional sphere. I suggest an Artist Pension for early stages of development to allow for a greater commitment to full time practice.'*

*'The French, Belgium, Swiss governments long standing practice of supporting professional artists through the 'Artists' Stipend' -where e.g professional actors who can prove they have had 3 months paid work as an actor in a year, is eligible for a stipend of about 500 euros (in France) per week, for the other 9 months of the year, to be able to continue to develop artistic work. This has enabled many companies, to spend longer time on the creation of new theatre shows- the excellence of the productions reflects the longer time able to be put into the productions - a consequence of the stipend. The stipend also enables professional artists to continue to develop their skills, experience and create eg theatre productions, thereby enhancing the quality and depth of theatre works.'*

### **5.2.7 Tax Incentives**

Tax incentives were suggested as a useful way to encourage philanthropy (as discussed above), or to provide artists' with various tax concessions in order to cut expenses. While respondents tended not to provide much detail about proposed tax incentive models, a few examples of supposedly good models were provided including the Irish Tax Incentive Scheme, French tax incentives, the Australian Tax Policy - which helped the Film Industry, and the existing Australian DGR (Deductable Gift Recipients).

*'Cost-cutting (tax breaks, insurance cover, legal support, marketing/evaluation support) \* investment \* brokerage of partnerships.'*

*'110% tax deductibility for donations to arts organisations.'*

*'Clearer and easier tax initiatives that apply to individual artists as well as organisations (eg: the DGR)'*

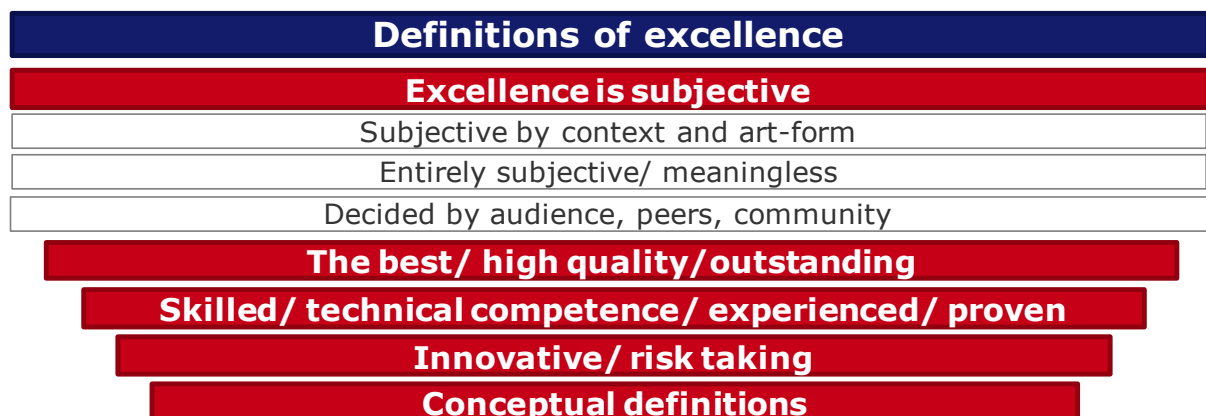


### 5.3 Definitions of excellence

There was an enthusiastic range of responses about how to define excellence from the 73% of respondents who answered this question. Overwhelmingly, respondents pointed to the subjective, contextual nature of excellence in the arts. Such comments (pertaining to subjectivity) broadly fell into three sub-themes; that excellence cannot be defined, that excellence is subjective according to context, that excellence is subjective to its audience and peers. Other respondents carefully provided definitions that were inclusive of various elements they perceived to define excellence in the arts. Commonly mentioned factors included being the best, of high quality, technically competent, experienced, innovative, and original. Others opted for more conceptual definitions of excellence through use of words like integrity, beauty and truth. The five key themes of excellence as identified in this analysis are discussed in greater detail below.

- 1. Excellence is subjective**
- 2. The best/ high quality/outstanding**
- 3. Skilled/ technical competence/ experienced/ proven**
- 4. Innovative/ risk taking**
- 5. Conceptual definitions**

Figure 16: Definitions of excellence- Themes and sub-themes



Base: Total n=2007  
D3b.And how do you define excellence?

### 5.3.1 Excellence is subjective

That excellence is subjective was the most common sentiment identified throughout respondents' comments. Within the wide range of comments about the subjectivity and relativity of definitions of excellence in the arts, were many different perspectives about the value of the Australia Council using such a term; the minority argued the term was fraught, even meaningless, and therefore should not be used by the Australia Council. More commonly, respondents did see some value in the term despite perceiving that the term was subjective. The most common sub-themes concerning subjective notions of excellence are detailed below.

- **Subjective by context and art-form:** Excellence was perceived by many respondents as relative to a particular context such as the art-form, the individual artist's experience, or the environment in which art is being made or appreciated. Different art-forms were believed to have different criteria for measuring excellence; one respondent gave the example that even with the music art-form there are so many genres of music for which excellence has a different meaning. These respondents did not seek to dismiss the term excellence and its relevance to the arts, but stressed the need for excellence to be measured within specific contexts.

*'A highly contextual term that is reflective of the quality of a relationship to the 'arts' as defined and experienced by either: an individual; a group; a community; a state.'*

*'The excellence test in the arts is satisfied when the best possible outcome is reached in each individual arts context. This is as true for the Berlin Philharmonic as it is for amateur community singers in the outback'.*

*'Defining excellence is problematic as each form of artistic expression requires a different approach. The interpretation of such a term into dot points which are then applied as a funding criteria is also limiting.'*

*'As an emerging Artist I feel that supporting excellence requires funding available in different skill level categories. I would define excellence as demonstrating your art form at a creative, innovative and technical skill level either at the top of or substantially differently from your peers. Not all art forms and not all art is the same. So funding should be available for specific art forms...'*

- **Entirely subjective/ meaningless:** Some respondents declined to provide a definition of excellence, arguing that it is a worthless exercise because ultimately the term is entirely subjective and therefore rendered meaningless. Many respondents who made such arguments also felt that the Australia Council should exclude the word 'excellence' from any of its terms for assessing applications.

*'A meaningless tail-chasing exercise. In the arts all opinions are subjective.'*

*'Again loose this word. The arts are subjective. One man's excellence is another's rubbish.'*

- **Decided by audience, peers, community:** Another common response concerning the definition of excellence in the arts was that it is subject to the judgment of peers, an audience, or the community. It was believed the esteem of peers and/or an audience is ultimately the measure of excellence in the arts. Some respondents specifically mentioned this is the context of the Australia Council's peer review process. Others focused on how the particular artistic work or project might be deemed excellent in terms of the community, with regards to process and outcomes of the activity. Conversely, other respondents were cautious about audience participation, appreciation, and ticket sales being used as the basis for defining excellence.

*'Work that is critically acclaimed by both peers and audience; that continues to engage with innovative ideas and practice; that demonstrates an evolving level of practice.'*

*'Deemed by peers/experts to be of very high quality'*

*'Difficult! I leave that up to the peers/panel/Board to decide for the most part.'*

*'Defining excellence in the arts is SO subjective, depending on your personal preferences and life experiences. For me excellence is the degree to which a work, a production, a performance, an organisation, a performer, a leader meets or exceeds the expectations of its audiences and/or stakeholders.'*

### **5.3.2 The best/ high quality/outstanding**

To be the best in a particular field, outstanding, or of very high quality were popular terms commonly used by respondents who sought to define excellence. These respondents commonly perceived that excellence can be identified as work which exemplifies the highest possible quality and is demonstrated through being superior to others, through being at the top of their field. Many respondents did clarify that excellence defined in such a way is also relative to other factors such as experience and opportunity.

*'Artistic excellence involves reaching a high standard or quality. The concept is multifaceted.'*

*'The best practice of the form or the sector - the best practitioners, the best equipment, the best spaces, the best presenters, curators, publicists and administrators...'*

*'The quality of being outstanding or extremely good.'*

*'Excellence is being the best (better than everyone else) and exceeding the highest expectations. It requires dedication, experience, hard work over a long period of time in all aspects of any given topic.'*

### 5.3.3 Skilled/ technical competence/ experienced/ proven

Related to the above discussion about definitions of excellence through recognising the best and highest quality, were comments pertaining to the measurement of excellence through skill, technical competence, experience and having a proven record of high achievement. Skill and technical competence were often considered to be only part of the formula for excellence, and were commonly considered alongside other factors such as innovation and creativity. That excellence be measured by way of reviewing artists' experience, their record of achievement, and reputation for delivering timely and high quality projects was also a popular suggestion.

*'Something that is a manifestation of a high level of SKILL (training, practice, trial and error) and/or INNOVATION (creative spark).'*

*'Artists with a proven track record in terms of talent, education, application and work ethic.'*

*'Proven long-term commitment to the artists chosen field of endeavour plus their track record and their standing with other artists in their discipline.'*

*'Technical competence - highly accomplished and polished work. 2. Creative personality and distinctiveness. 3. The capacity to deliver on-time and on-budget over many years and projects. 4. Critical acclaim and/or audience support.'*

### 5.3.4 Innovative/ risk taking

Innovation was commonly mentioned as an important element of excellence. Respondents mentioned various facets that contribute to innovation including risk-taking, pushing boundaries, and experimentation. For many respondents innovation was indeed the ultimate form of excellence because innovation first requires a level of accomplishment in a given field, which is then exceeded by way of innovation. Further to this, there was a strong sentiment that innovation is driven by ambition, inspiration and creativity, which in turn produces excellence in the arts.

*'To be innovative, exciting, pushing new boundaries, to make art in all its forms more accessible to the public - help breakdown stereotypes about art and assist in the understanding of art.'*

*'Operating at the top level of a field, expanding genre boundaries, taking risks to further artistic expression and producing outcomes which can be placed on an international level.'*

*'A commitment to producing the best possible via the encouragement of imagination, innovation and risk taking.'*

### 5.3.5 Conceptual definitions

There were a fewer number of respondents who defined excellence through conceptual descriptions. Such descriptions focused on the innate ability of the arts to engage the artist and the audience in ways that transcend the 'ordinary'. Excellence in the arts was therefore deemed to indeed be a subjective experience that can be activated by creative works that signify 'beauty' or 'truth' to the viewer. Some respondents explained that the occurrence of excellence in the arts cannot be described or measured by rational criteria, but is instead a lived personal experience that has a strong emotional or intellectual impact.

*'Work that is truthful, authentic and bold, presented by skilled artists. Work that is meaningful, and has both substance and style. Work that moves and excites as and reflects us broadly and in all our contradictions. Work that gives voice to the unspoken. Work that makes visible the unseen. Work that expresses Australian stories. Work that is inclusive.'*

*'Excellent work has a transformative impact on both the artists and audiences lifting them into a space of focused attention not possible in everyday life. Even the most difficult work creates moments of beauty and fresh perspectives on the human condition.'*

*'This is subjective, work that moves people in profound ways, where you can't see the strings, that has at its essence truth, can be different for everyone. Maybe excellence is a by-product of innovation and risk taking and ought not be a criteria prior to funding?'*

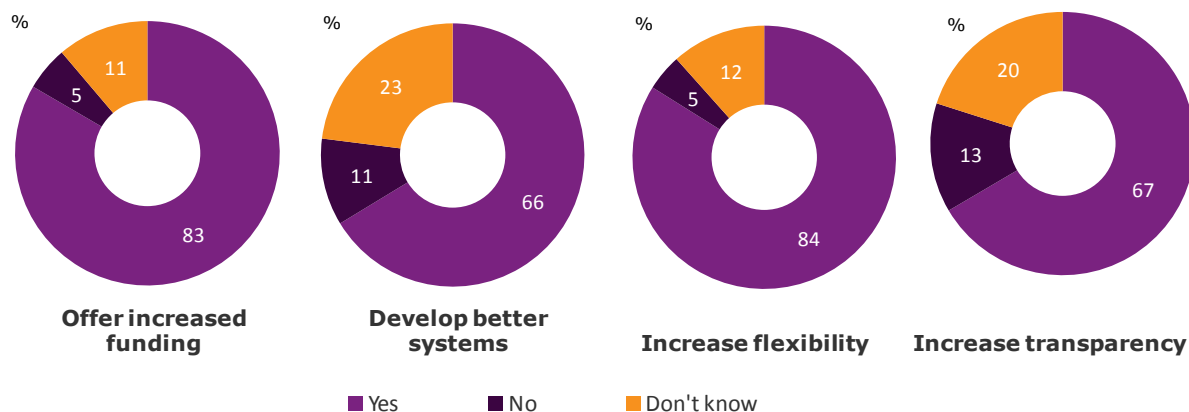
### 5.4 Areas of focus for immediate future

Towards the end of the survey respondents were exposed to a list of four areas of potential future focus for the Australia Council, and asked to select those they agreed should be prioritised. **Increased flexibility** was subsequently the most popular area of focus of the Australia Council for the immediate future (84%), followed very closely by increased funding (83%). Development of better systems and increased transparency had similar, yet lower, levels of support (66% and 67% respectively). Analysis of significant differences between sub-groups is outlined below.

- **Increased funding** was significantly more likely to be supported by organisations (nett), small organisations, organisations that received funding in the past, funding recipients, and those interested in community arts.
- **Develop better systems** was significantly more likely to be supported by artists and those who have not received funding.
- **Increased flexibility** was significantly more likely to be supported by established artists, and small organisations.
- There were no significant differences between sub-groups support for **increased transparency**. There were, however, a number of sub-groups significantly over represented amongst those who **did not support increased transparency**; these include arts administrators, grant recipients, respondents interested in

community arts, organisations (nett), small organisations, key organisations and regularly funded organisations.

**Figure 17: Areas of focus for immediate future**



Base: Total n=2007

D4.And finally, on which of the following areas, if any, do you believe the Australia Council needs to focus in the immediate future?

**Figure 18: Areas of focus for immediate future by selected demographics**

% Yes	Total	Individual	Organisation	Artist	Admin	Patron	Awarded funding	Not awarded funding
Offer increased funding	<b>83</b>	82	<b>90</b>	85	85	<b>78</b>	<b>89</b>	81
Develop better systems	<b>66</b>	68	<b>58</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>62</b>	67	<b>56</b>	<b>70</b>
Increase flexibility	<b>84</b>	83	87	86	85	81	84	84
Increase transparency	<b>67</b>	68	<b>60</b>	69	65	65	<b>60</b>	69

Base: Total n=2007 / Tested for significant differences against total (95% confidence): **Blue**=significantly higher/ **Red**=significantly lower

D4.And finally, on which of the following areas, if any, do you believe the Australia Council needs to focus in the immediate future?

## 6. Profile of respondents

Demographic data collected in the survey has been compared, and tested for significant differences, against Australian population statistics<sup>2</sup> in order to provide a benchmark of the reliability of the survey data to extrapolate to the overall Australian population.

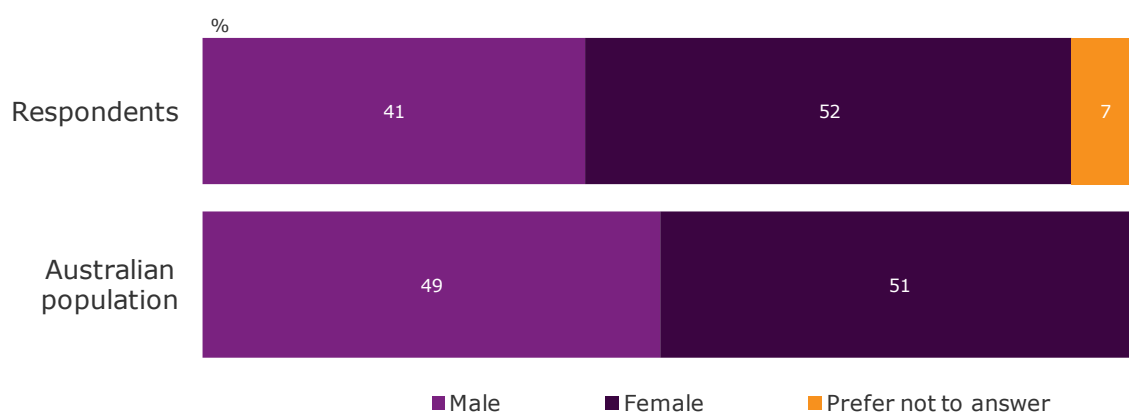
Overall, people who completed the Australia Council Review survey reflected a broad cross section of Australians. However, the achieved sample was not statistically representative of the Australian population. People who completed the survey were more likely to be aged between 18 and 64 years old; from New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory or Tasmania; and from a metropolitan location. Hence, males, people aged under 18 years and over 65 years, people from Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia, and people living in regional and rural areas are under-represented in the survey sample.

**Therefore, the results of the Australia Council Review Survey cannot confidently be extrapolated to the Australian population overall.**

### 6.1 Gender

There were more females represented in the survey than males (52% and 41% respectively). There were also a small proportion of respondents (7%) who preferred not to disclose their gender. Compared to the Australian population there were significantly fewer males represented in the Australia Council Review survey. However, the proportion of females was comparable.

**Figure 19: Gender of respondents and the Australian population (ABS 2006 Census)**



Base: Total n=2007, ABS 2006 Census  
E1. What is your gender?

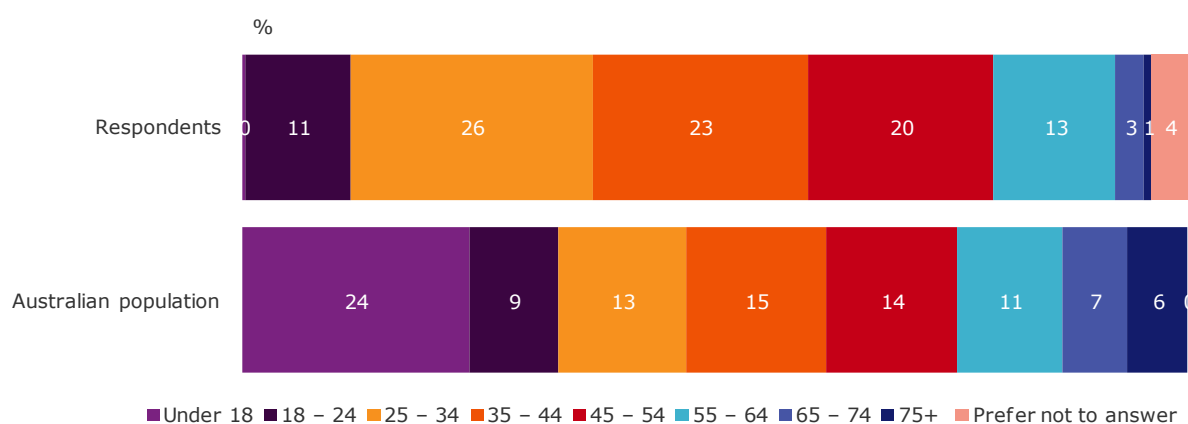
<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census Basic Community Profile (Australia)

## 6.2 Age

The Australia Council Review Survey attracted respondents from a range of age groups. Adults aged between 25 and 34 years were represented most strongly in the achieved sample (26%), followed by 35 to 44 year olds (23%), and 45 to 54 year olds (20%). There were fewer respondents at both ends of the age spectrum (under 18 and over 65 years).

The achieved age fall out of the survey is not reflective of the overall Australian population. In fact, the proportions for all the age brackets are significantly different to the Australian population.

**Figure 20: Age of respondents and the Australian population (ABS 2006 Census)**



Base: Total n=2007, ABS 2006 Census  
E1. What is your gender?

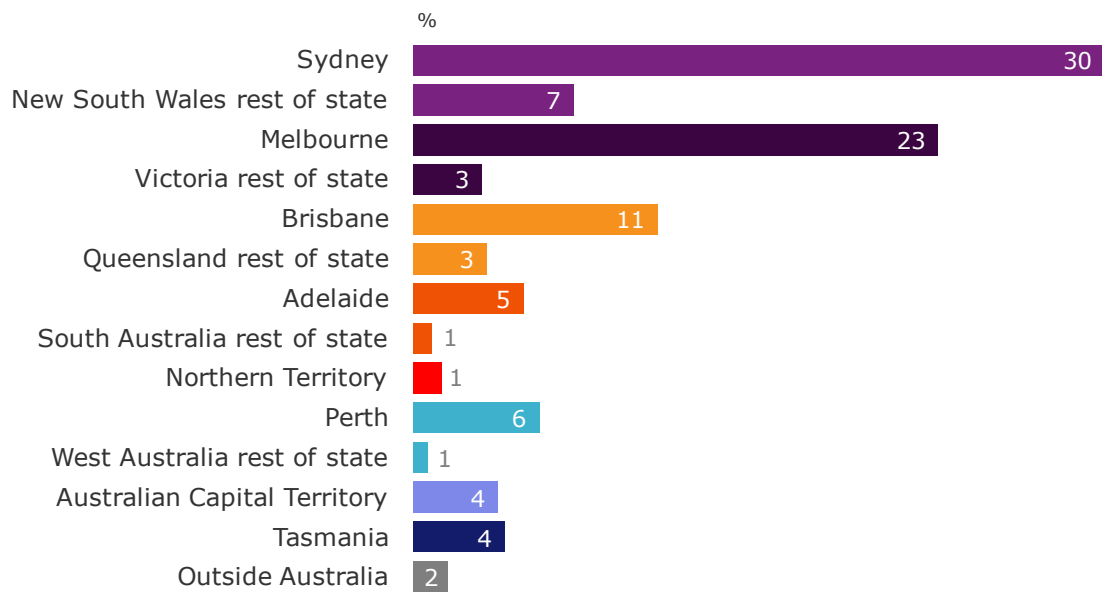
## 6.3 Location

Respondents were from a range of locations throughout Australia and 2% were from overseas. While the fall out by state reflected a broadly similar distribution to the Australian population, there were a number of significant differences. Notably, when compared to the Australian population overall the Australia Council Review Survey attracted a significantly higher proportion of respondents from New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania, and significantly fewer respondents from Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

The survey also attracted a significantly higher proportion of respondents from metropolitan locations compared to the Australian population (78% versus 68%). Correspondingly, significantly fewer respondents from regional and rural areas were represented in the survey compared to the Australian population (20% versus 31%).

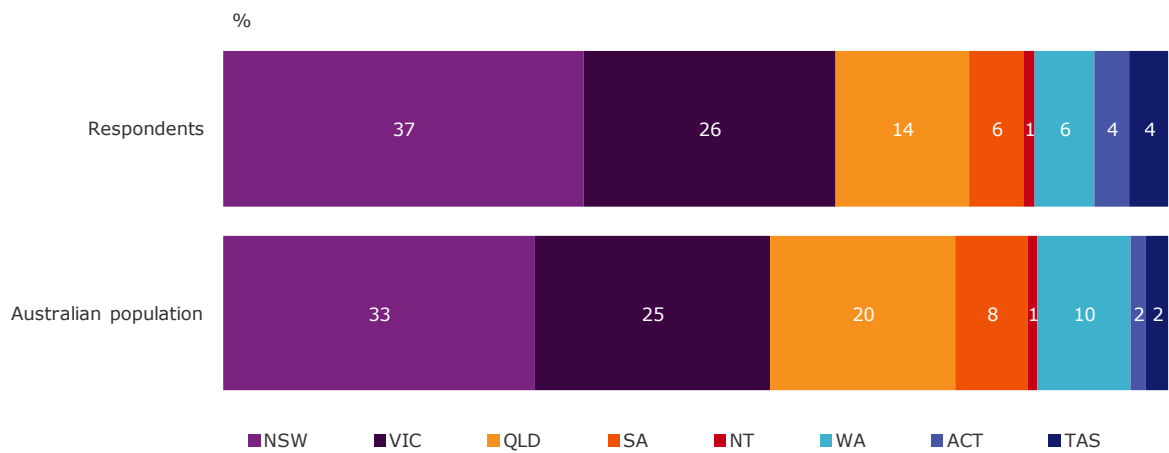


**Figure 21: Location**



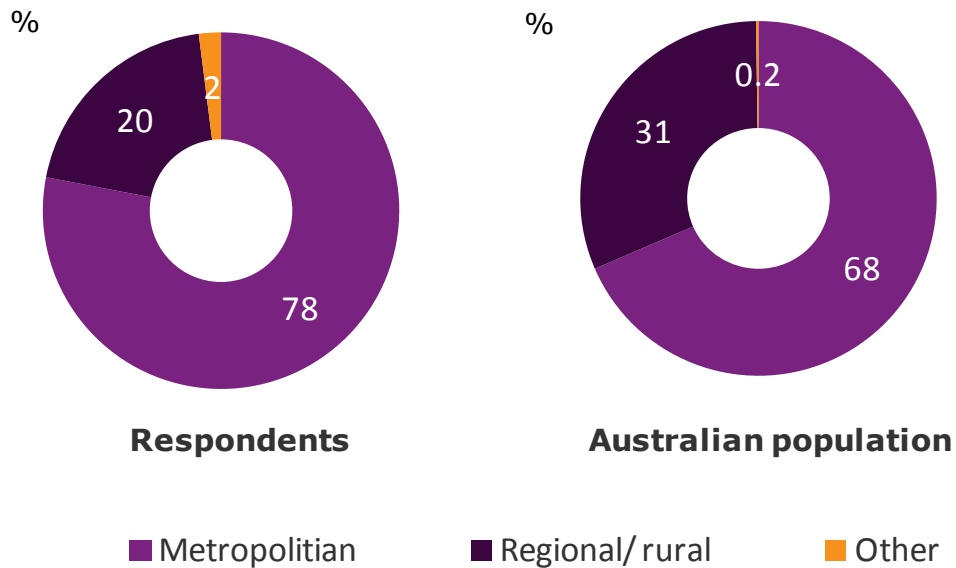
Base: Total n=2007  
A1. Where do you live?

**Figure 22: Location- State of respondents and the Australian population (ABS 2006 Census)**



Base: Total n=2007, ABS 2006 Census  
A1. Where do you live?

**Figure 23: Location- metropolitan or regional/ rural area and the Australian population (ABS 2006 Census)**

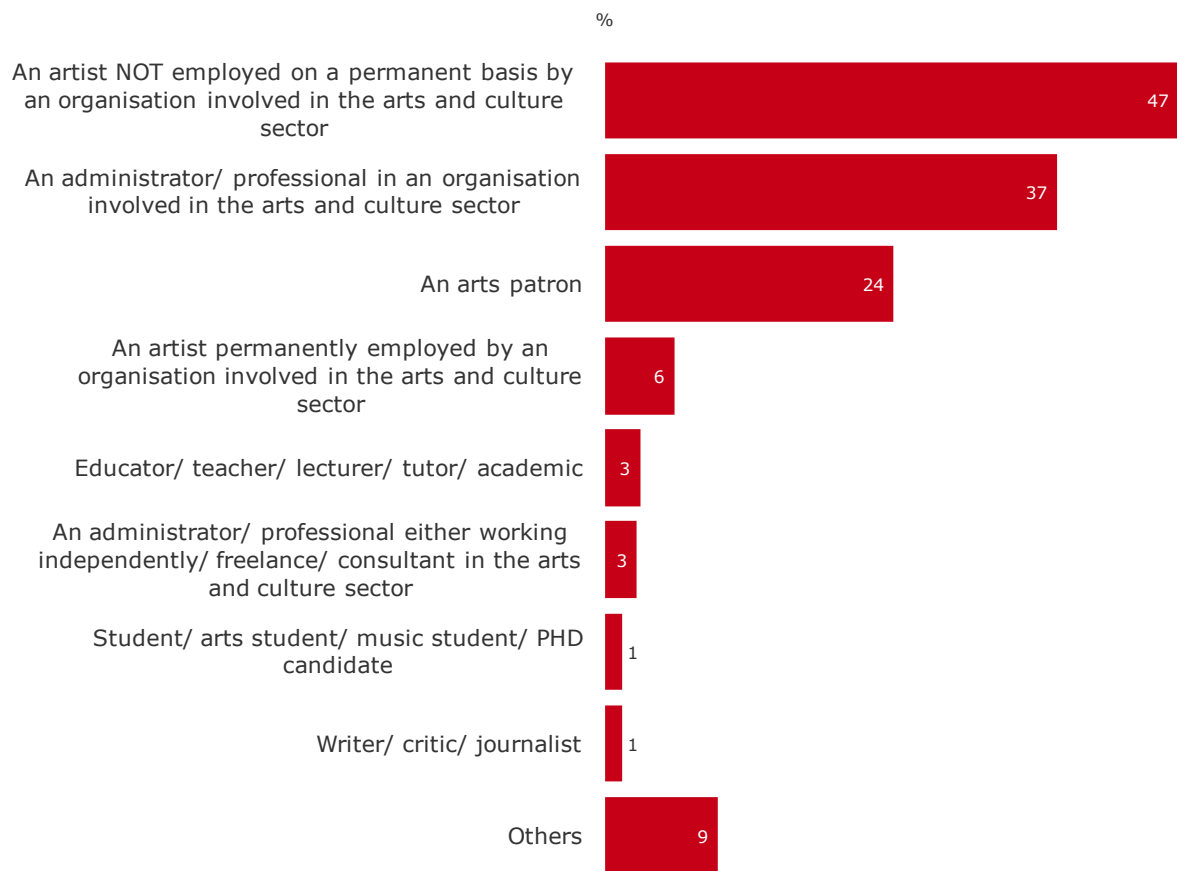


Base: Total n=2007, ABS 2006 Census  
A1. Where do you live?

## 6.4 Role in the arts

The Australia Council Review Survey primarily attracted respondents directly working in the arts either as artists (52%) and/or as administrators/ professionals in organisations in the arts and culture sector (39%). Just under a quarter of respondents considered themselves patrons of the arts.

**Figure 24: Role in the arts**



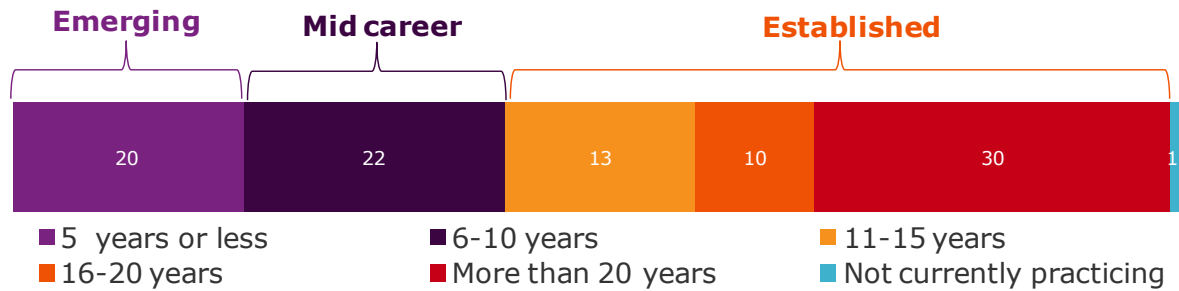
Base: Total n=2007

A2. We understand you may have a variety of different roles in the arts, so please tell us which of the following applies to you?

## 6.5 Experience as an artist (artists only)

The majority of artists who answered the survey were established, meaning they have been practicing for more than 10 years. Indeed just under one-third of artists had been practicing for more than 20 years. Emerging and mid-career artists accounted for a comparable proportion of artist respondents (20% and 22% respectively).

Figure 25: Year practicing as an artist



Base: Artists n=1047

A3. How long have you been practicing as an artist?

## 6.6 Employees in organisation (organisations only)

The majority of organisations that answered the survey were small, most commonly employing just 1 to 5 employees (44%), followed by 6 to 10 employees (15%), 11 to 20 employees (13%). Another 13% of organisations were medium sized with 21 to 100 employees, and 9% of organisations were large with 101 or more employees.

Figure 26: Number of employees in organisation



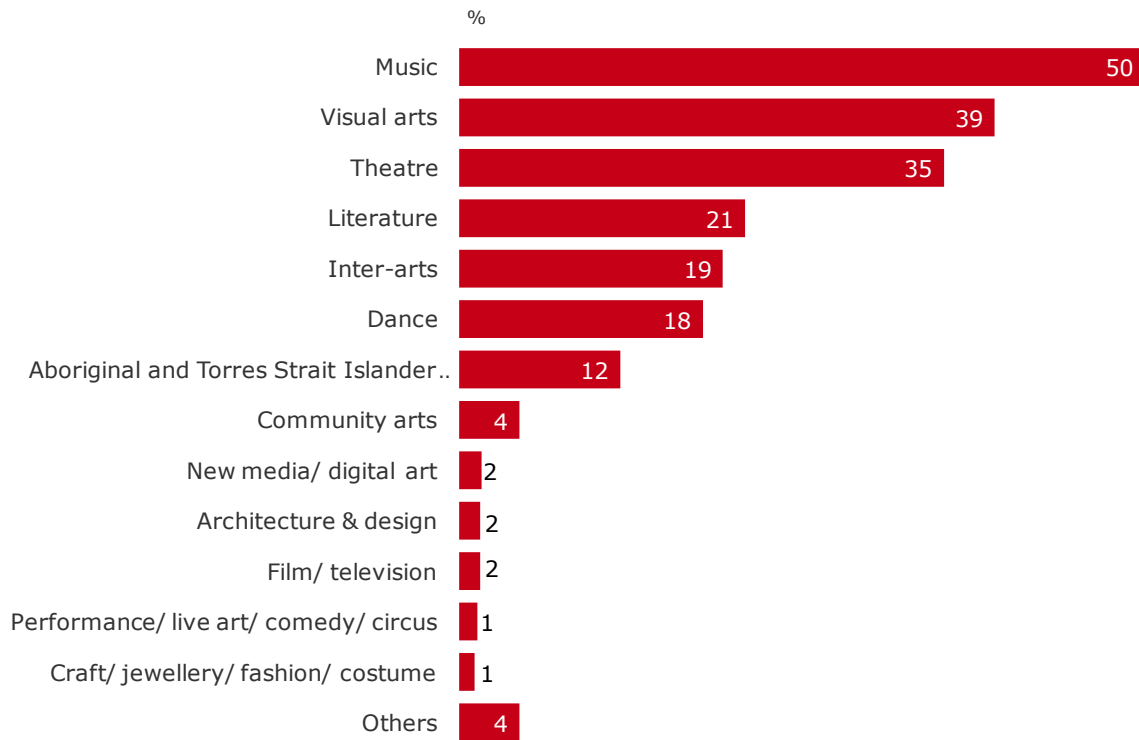
Base: Organisations n=258 \*Not all respondents answered A4, who then nominated to answer the survey as an organisation at A5 (n=314)

A4. How many people are regularly employed by the organisation you work for?

## 6.7 Art-form

Music was the art-form the highest proportion of respondents (50%) were interested in or involved with, followed by visual arts (39%), theatre (35%), literature (21%), inter-arts (19%), dance (18%) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts (12%).

**Figure 27: Art-form most closely involved with/ interested in**



Base: Total n=2007

B2. Which of the following art-forms are you most closely involved with/ interested in?

# APPENDIX: Australia Council Review Questionnaire

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## Introduction/ instructions

### Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey

As part of the discussion about a new National Cultural Policy, Minister for the Arts Simon Crean announced a **review of the Australia Council** on 19 December 2011.

Your contribution to the Australia Council Review is valued.

- The Term of Reference for the Review are [here](#). [insert link]
- The Review is interested in your views about whether the original purpose of the Australia Council remains relevant today and what changes, if any, you would like to see to the Australia Council.

This questionnaire should only take around **8-10 minutes**, and is being **undertaken by TNS Social Research on behalf of the Australian Government's Office for the Arts**.

Please remember:

- Your **responses will be kept in the strictest confidence**.
- None of the responses you give are directly linked to you as an individual. They are used purely for statistical purposes and all reporting is at an aggregated level. You can see our privacy policy [here](#). [insert link]

**To answer a question:** Most questions have a round button to click or a tick box to check. Click on the box or button that best describes your answer to each question. Sometimes you may need to type in your answer in the spaces provided.

If you forget to answer a question, or miss part of a question, then a message reminding you that the question needs to be answered will appear. If this happens, you need to complete your answer to carry on with the survey. Sometimes you'll need to scroll across or down the page to see all of the possible answers.

**To change an answer:** For questions with a single choice, click on a different button. For questions with multiple choices (tick boxes), click again on your original answer to clear the box and make a new choice. Please note you won't be able to revisit screens you have completed.

**To go to the next question:** When you've finished answering a question, click the Next button at the bottom of the screen.

**Dial-up users:** If you are on a dial up modem or other slow connection, some of the questions may take a few moments to load.

**To commence the survey** click on the >> button below. Then as you move through the survey please do not use your browser buttons (top left of your screen) rather use the >> buttons at the bottom of each screen.

[INSERT COMPLETION INDICATOR SCALE AT TOP RIGHT OF SCREEN]

## A: Background

To start with, we would like to ask you a few questions about you and your role. This will help us to direct our questions to you.

Please note:

- You won't be able to revisit completed questions.
- You need to complete the survey in one sitting- you can't exit and resume the survey.

ASK ALL

A1. Where do you live?

**(Please select one)**

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

Sydney	1
New South Wales rest of state	2
Melbourne	3
Victoria rest of state	4
Brisbane	5
Queensland rest of state	6
Adelaide	7
South Australia rest of state	8
Northern Territory	9
Perth	10
West Australia rest of state	11
Australian Capital Territory	12
Tasmania	13
Outside Australia	14
Other [PLEASE SPECIFY]	97

A2. We understand you may have a variety of different roles in the arts, so please tell us which of the following applies to you?

**(Please select all that apply)**

[MULTIPLE RESPONSE UNLESS=99]

An <b>artist</b> NOT employed on a permanent basis by an organisation involved in the arts and culture sector (e.g. freelance or independent)	1
An <b>artist</b> permanently employed by an organisation involved in the arts and culture sector	2
An <b>administrator/ professional</b> in an organisation involved in the arts and culture sector (e.g. curator, producer, artistic director)	3
An arts patron (a person who is <b>interested in</b> arts and culture in Australia but not currently earning income in the arts sector)	4
Other [PLEASE SPECIFY]	97
None of the above	99

IF A2=1 OR 2

A3. How long have you been practicing as an artist?

**(Please select one)**

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

5 years or less	1
-----------------	---

6-10 years	2
11-15 years	3
16-20 years	4
More than 20 years	5
Not currently practicing	6

IF A2=2 OR 3

A4. How many people are regularly employed by the organisation you work for?

**(Please select one)**

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

1-5 employees	1
6-10 employees	2
11-20 employees	3
21-100 employees	4
101 or more employees	5
Don't know	99

A5. Now, we'd like you to nominate whether you will be answering from the perspective of an individual or an organisation?

**(Please select one)**

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

Individual	1
Organisation	2

## B: Experience with the Australia Council

Now we'd like to get a better understanding of your experience with, and perceptions of, the Australia Council.

IF A5=2

B1. What is the nature of your organisation's relationship with the Australia Council?

**(Please select all that apply)**

[MULTIPLE RESPONSE]

Funded as a Major performing arts organisation	1
Funded as a Key organisation	2
Funded as an Emerging key organisation	3
Receive regular project funding (i.e. once a year)	4
Have received Australia Council funding in the past	5
Have never received funding from the Australia Council	6
Other [PLEASE SPECIFY]	97
Don't know	99

ASK ALL

B2. Which of the following art-forms are you most closely involved with/ interested in?

**(Please select all that apply)**

[MULTIPLE RESPONSE]

<u>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts</u>	1
<u>Dance</u>	2
<u>Inter-arts</u>	3



Literature	4
Music	5
Theatre	6
Visual arts	7
Other [PLEASE SPECIFY]	97
None of these/ not applicable	98
Don't know	99

ASK ALL

B3. In the past 10 years, how many times, if ever, have you applied for an Australia Council grant?

**(Type in number of times in digit/s below or '0' if never applied)**

[ALLOW MIN OF 0 AND MAX OF 4 DIGITS]

ASK IF NOT "0" at B3

B4. You mentioned you have applied for [INSERT DIGIT/S FROM B3] Australia Council grant(s).

How many times have you been awarded an Australia Council grant in the past 10 years?

**(Type in number of times in digit/s below or '0' if never successful)**

[ALLOW MIN OF 0 AND MAX OF 4 DIGITS. MUST BE EQUAL TO OR LOWER THAN B3]

ASK ALL

B5. Listed below are several statements about the application and approval process for Australia Council grants and funding. We'd like to know how you perceive the process, regardless of whether you have ever applied for an Australia Council grant.

**(Please select one per row)**

[SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW – ROTATE]

	Statement	Disagree strongly	Disagree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree slightly	Agree strongly	Don't know
a	You can be unable to apply for funding due to the eligibility requirements	5	4	3	2	1	99
b	The grant decision-making processes are fair	5	4	3	2	1	99
c	The grant decision-making processes are transparent	5	4	3	2	1	99
d	The grant decision-making processes are clear	5	4	3	2	1	99
e	The current approach of allocating funding through peer assessment is working well	5	4	3	2	1	99
f	The chance of getting funding is too low	5	4	3	2	1	99

ASK ALL

B6. How important do you believe getting Australia Council grants and funding is for you/ your organisation to...?

**(Please select one per row)**

[SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW - ROTATE]

	Statement	Not at all important	Not really important	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat important	Very important	Don't know
A	...undertake your practice/ business overall	5	4	3	2	1	99
B	...complete successful creative projects	5	4	3	2	1	99
C	...produce high quality work	5	4	3	2	1	99
D	...leverage funding from other sources	5	4	3	2	1	99

## C: Purpose of the Australia Council

ASK ALL

C1. What do you think the purpose of the Australia Council is in the Australian arts and cultural sector?

*(Please type your answer in the space provided below, or DK if you don't know)*

[VERBATIM]

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ASK ALL

The Term of Reference of the Review note that the original purpose of the Australia Council was to ensure:

***“the best is encouraged and those who produce it are given the greatest opportunity to achieve the highest quality of which they are capable”***

C2. Do you think that the Australia Council is meeting this purpose?

(Please select one)

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

Yes – completely	1
Yes – somewhat	2
No – not at all	3
Don't know	99

C3. As we develop a new National Cultural Policy in 21st century Australia, is this still a valid purpose?

(Please select one)

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

Yes – completely	1
Yes – somewhat	2
No – not at all	3
Don't know	99

ASK ALL

C4. Listed below are several statements about the purpose of the Australia Council. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

(Please select one)

[SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW – ROTATE]

The Australia Council ...

	Statement	Disagree strongly	Disagree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree slightly	Agree strongly	Don't know
a	... responds to the changing shape of the Australian arts and culture sector	5	4	3	2	1	99
b	... supports excellence	5	4	3	2	1	99
c	... supports innovation	5	4	3	2	1	99
c	... promotes arts and culture to the Australian community	5	4	3	2	1	99
e	... is an advocate of arts and culture	5	4	3	2	1	99
f	... reflects the contemporary Australian arts and culture sector	5	4	3	2	1	99
g	... reflects Australia's cultural heritage	5	4	3	2	1	99
h	... understands my artistic or cultural field	5	4	3	2	1	99
i	... responds to changes and developments in my artistic or cultural field	5	4	3	2	1	99
j	...well supports my artistic or cultural field	5	4	3	2	1	99

## D: Suggestions for change

ASK ALL

D1. What do you think the Australia Council is currently doing well? What are some practical examples of this?

**(Please type your answer in the space provided below, or DK if you don't know)**

[VERBATIM]

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ASK ALL

D2. Do you have any suggestions for how the Australia Council might operate its business differently? If so, what are some practical examples?

**(Please type your answer in the space provided below, or DK if you don't know)**

[VERBATIM]

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ASK ALL

D3a. Are there alternative contemporary models for delivering arts funding that you think would support innovation as well as supporting excellence? If so, what are these models?

**(Please type your answer in the space provided below, or DK if you don't know)**

[VERBATIM]

---

PLEASE SHOW QD3B ON SAME SCREEN AS D3A.

D3b. And how do you define excellence?

**(Please type your answer in the space provided below, or DK if you don't know)**

[VERBATIM]

---

ASK ALL

D4. And finally, on which of the following areas, if any, do you believe the Australia Council needs to focus in the immediate future?

(Please select one per row)

[SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW – ROTATE]

	Statement	Yes	No	Don't know
a	Offer increased funding			
b	Develop better systems			
c	Increase flexibility			
d	Increase transparency			

## E: Demographics

ASK ALL

E1. What is your gender?

**(Please select one)**

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

Female	1
Male	2
Prefer not to answer	98

ASK ALL

E2. To which of the following age categories do you belong?

**(Please select one)**

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

Under 18	1
18 – 24	2
25 – 34	3
35 – 44	4
45 – 54	5

---

55 – 64	6
65 – 74	7
75+	8
Prefer not to answer	98

## F: Thank and close

ASK ALL

F1. Are there any other final comments or suggestions you would like to make?

***(Please type your answer in the space provided below, leave blank and click next if you have no further comments)***

[VERBATIM - DO NOT FORCE RESPONSE – RESPONDENTS CAN LEAVE BLANK]

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F2. Finally, would you mind providing us with your email address?

**Your email address will help us to ensure authentication of all survey respondents, and it will not be used for any other purposes. Your email address will remain confidential and will not be passed onto the Australia Council or any third party.**

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

Please type email in box below

[INSERT TEXT BOX IN EMAIL FORMAT]	1
Refused	98

[INCLUDE A "SUBMIT" BUTTON ON THIS PAGE]

Thank you for completing the survey.

We would like to assure you once again that your responses are confidential. None of the answers you give are directly linked to you as an individual and all reporting will be at an aggregate level only. If you wish to discuss this survey or have any questions please send an email to [survey-support-263100561@tns-online.com](mailto:survey-support-263100561@tns-online.com)

You can now safely close the internet browser.

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