

CBRarts Forum Making CBRarts Happen Summary Report



April 2016

Introduction

The ACT Government is currently developing an Arts Funding Plan to outline our arts funding priorities, ensuring we have a funding model that is sustainable, flexible and meets the objectives of the ACT Arts Policy. We are committed to an ongoing conversation with the community about the implementation of the ACT Arts Policy, including the development of the Arts Funding Plan.

CBRarts Forum: Making CBRarts Happen

On 17 March 2016, 28 local arts workers and other stakeholders took part in the CBRarts Forum – *Making CBRarts Happen* at the Former Transport Depot in Kingston. Responding to feedback, the Forum was designed to provide more time for discussion among participants, and hold an expert panel discussion.

A number of participants were also asked for a voxpop video [What does funding for a diverse and valued arts sector look like?](#)

This Forum was an important part of the discussion between government, organisations and individuals about the direct and indirect funding support available to the arts sector. Discussions ranged from the features of the Canberra arts sector to sector needs towards the Arts Policy's key principles. These discussions will inform the development of the new Arts Funding Plan.

Purpose

This report provides a summary of the discussion of Forum participants, as well as the evaluation form results. Views expressed within this document may not be the views of the ACT Government. The views will be considered when developing the Funding Plan.

The Arts Funding Plan will also be informed by:

- ACT Government priorities;
- available resources;
- a review of current mechanisms and analysis of associated data;

- issues raised during consultation to develop of the 2015 ACT Arts Policy and other engagement activities; and
- innovations and best practice models nationally.

Continuing the Conversation

You can engage in the conversation about the ACT Government future Arts Funding Plan by using #CBRartshappen on Twitter, subscribing to artsACT eNews, or checking for updates on this website. Feedback will be accepted by Friday, 27 May 2016 and we welcome your tweets, emails, mail or requests to meet with us, to put forward your views on the development of the Arts Funding Plan.

Panel Discussion: The Future of Arts Funding – Local and National Perspectives

The panel discussion was facilitated by Cathy Hunt, Director of Positive Solutions. The panel participants were:

- Marie-Louise Carroll, Creative Partnerships Australia;
- Frank Panucci, Australia Council for the Arts; and
- Adam Stankevicius, Arts and Events, ACT Government.

Panel members gave an overview of their role in arts funding and the floor was opened to questions from the facilitator and forum participants. During the panel discussion and questions several key themes emerged.

Sector Capacity

- The costs of administration for grant writing for an artist or organisation may be unsustainable for organisations in the context of limited staff resources and actual financial benefit.

Engagement with Public Funding

- General consensus that government funding is likely to be static for the immediate future, and organisations and artists need to consider other sources of funding including federal government funding, philanthropy, sponsorship and business partnerships. This need has resourcing implications for small organisations.
- The low application and low success rate amongst ACT artists who do apply for Australia Council funding.
- The need to increase the ACT based artists sitting on Australia Council Funding panels in a peer capacity.

Developing the case for Private Funding

The importance of artists and arts organisations:

- having a clear, succinct and exciting ‘narrative pitch’ for philanthropists, articulating the aesthetic and social impact of engagement; and
- the importance of knowing who your audience is and nurturing relationships with donors and potential donors.

Future Trends

Future trends in arts funding were discussed including:

- shared services organisational models;
- more focus on the demonstrating qualitative benefits of the arts when making the case for funding;
- engendering genuine partnerships between philanthropists artists and arts organisations (not just donating money); and
- New models of funding:
 - interest free micro loans;
 - the growing trend of individual giving – private giving is increasing at a rate higher than grants through philanthropy;
 - the rise in the number of community giving organisations, giving circles and collective giving (e.g. crowd funding); and
 - impact investment – donors wanting to see a direct impact.

Group Discussions

The group discussions identified key features of Canberra’s arts sector and then progressed to consider how the ACT Government can support the four principles outlined in the ACT Arts Policy.

- **Canberra: a city of great art and great artists:** The importance of understanding the character of the Canberra’s dynamic and diverse arts sector, and hearing about what is valued by both the Canberra community and the sector.
- **Supporting Great Art and Great Artists:** Community expectations about ACT Government funding, management of future sector needs and flexibility of funding programs.
- **Developing the vitality of the arts ecology:** Importance of access to funding to support artists at all stages of their careers and the relevance of the current categories.
- **Diversifying funding for Canberra arts:** Expectations for funding recipients when it comes to philanthropy, sponsorship, crowd-funding, entrepreneurial and other opportunities and what is needed to take advantage of these opportunities.

- **Providing for participation and access to the arts:** The opportunity to improve support for community access and participation, and access to under-represented sections of the community.

Collaboration across the sector

- The sector needs to talk to each other more and cultivate active networks.
- Canberra's arts sector is incredibly diverse, there are a lot of opportunities (e.g. collaboration with National Cultural Institutions and embassies), world-class venues (e.g. Canberra Glassworks) and the calibre of local artists is high.
- Relationship building – identified need for the sector to spend time building relationships amongst themselves and also with community and government.
- The value of and opportunities that may be presented through the close connections and proximity of a small city.
- The local and the national institutions are a repository of knowledge and should work more collaboratively.
- Leveraging the benefits of Canberra's geographic location – corridor between Sydney and Melbourne.
- Consideration of shared resources models; experts servicing a range of organisations.

Diversifying Funding

- The need for structured models of giving feedback to support the development of funding proposals.
- Change the historical perception of the Australia Council being inaccessible and focus more on submitting better, bolder applications.
- Increase ACT representation on peer funding panels for the Australia Council and build capacity for peer representation through arts organisations.
- The importance of collaboration and partnerships across community, industries and organisations.
- The importance of thinking laterally and consider funding sources outside of the arts, and tailor pitches, using appropriate language.
- The sector should think outside the ACT.

The community valuing the arts

- Disconnect between what the broader community values and expects in the arts sector and what artists and arts organisations value.

- Encourage the community to engage in meaningful interaction with the arts as opposed to one off events.
- Encourage understanding and engage the broader ACT community, the arts sector needs to be more proactive about telling their stories to the broader ACT community.
- Audience development, community engagement and an understanding of practice are at the heart of the development of great art and great artists.
- There are a lot of free arts activities in Canberra, which impacts the community's willingness to pay for arts content.
- The perception that artists will work for free needs to change.
- Acknowledgement of unfunded sector such as amateur theatre and the issues arising when the community is unable to differentiate activities across funded and non funded, professional and amateur sectors.

State of Artists and Art Forms

- Artists in the ACT are entrepreneurial and risk taking but this can lead to high degree of burn out and transience. How can artists be nurtured?
- Currently there is an underinvestment in promotion and production of work (particularly live performance).
- The visual arts is a strength of the ACT arts sector.
- A greater investment in literature should be considered.
- Up-skilling of arts workers is needed such as leadership training and professional development at the appropriate stage of their careers.
- There needs to be a greater recognition of senior artists.

ACT Arts Fund

- Out-of-round maximum funding should be increased.
- ACT Government should increase available arts funding overall.
- There needs to be a variety of affordable spaces for artists to congregate and create works.
- Arts funding should be policy-led, maintained and grown.
- Fostering cultural participation through scholarships could be considered.
- There needs to be different points of access – from grassroots level to professional.

Developing Opportunities across the ACT Government

- There needs to be more opportunities for local content in events – as platforms and to generate activity for Canberra art organisations and studio spaces.
- It would be useful to have a policy about actively engaging artists in ACT Government delivered events defining a minimum percentage of local content.
- Cross agency funding (e.g. health, education, economic development) is important. The importance of greater advocacy from the arts sector and within government, with arts embedded in all areas of government (e.g. health, education, economic development).

Evaluation and Feedback

artsACT received mainly positive feedback about this forum. Of the 28 attendees, 11 people (approximately 40%) completed the survey. The survey was available in hardcopy on the day and was also sent out to attendees after the forum.

The reasons people came to the forum included:

- interested in hearing from the panel members;
- wanting to contribute to the development of the sector and arts policy;
- to learn more about funding provided by artsACT and other sources, as well as national trends; and
- they felt it was their responsibility as leaders in the sector to participate.

All elements of the forum were noted as useful and informative. In particular, the panel discussion and networking with other people from the sector seemed to be the most valuable.

Ideas for improving future forums included:

- making the sessions shorter and clarifying the purpose of each session;
- changing the time so that more people could attend (suggestions for better times included evenings and weekends);
- name tags to include organisation as well to facilitate networking;
- more notice;
- a reminder about respecting the opinions and contributions of all participants at the beginning of the forum; and
- having stalls with organisations represented and the opportunity for one-on-one networking.

Useful links

- ACT Government Grants Portal <http://www.grants.act.gov.au/>
- artsACT grants <http://www.arts.act.gov.au/funding>
- Australia Council grants <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/funding/new-grants-model/>
- Creative Partnerships Australia <https://www.creativepartnershipsaustralia.org.au/>
- The Funding Network Australia
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEj4bI8OLy5Enh1U4-fdaGg>;
<https://www.thefundingnetwork.com.au/events/upcoming-events-list/>
- Ministry for the Arts grants <http://arts.gov.au/funding>
- Other options for funding and support <http://www.arts.act.gov.au/funding/other-options-for-funding-and-support>

Thank you to everyone that participated!

