

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

**Organisation:** Shoalhaven City Council

**Date received:** 27 February 2018

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The Director, Portfolio Committee No. 6  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Inquiry into the Music and Arts Economy in New South Wales**

The following information has been collated by Shoalhaven City Council staff and the Shoalhaven Arts Board in response to the NSW Legislative Council's Inquiry into the Music and Arts Economy in New South Wales.

*That Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Planning and Environment inquire into and report on the music and arts economy in New South Wales, including regional New South Wales, and in particular:*

#### **(b) policies that could support a diverse and vibrant music and arts culture across New South Wales,**

##### Response:

The Shoalhaven has a diverse and vibrant music and arts culture with many community groups and volunteer organisations pursuing music and arts practice of note, with support from some government agencies (both local, state and federal). However, like many regional areas a strong and consistent approach to music and arts across the school sector is lacking. Funding for trained teachers, excursions to external agencies for engagement in best practice and opportunities to pursue student interests without significant personal funds are lacking. Policy that supports the growth of music and arts engagement at schools that provides funds for trained teachers and offered opportunity for organisations and schools to connect and provide support, training and education would further support the growth of a diverse and vibrant music and arts culture in the Shoalhaven.

##### Recommendations

- That the NSW government look at ways to increase and sustain music and arts specialist educators in all schools.
- That regional music and arts culture is further supported through a diverse grant program that encourages best practise and community engagement.

#### **(c) policies that could support the establishment and sustainability of permanent and temporary venue spaces for music and for the arts,**

Response:

Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, owned, operated and entirely funded by Shoalhaven City Council, plays a prominent role in cultural life in terms of the presentation of professional touring performing arts. Apart from being a venue for hire for independent national and international touring productions, the venue also entrepreneurs an annual performing arts season, an annual Morning Matinees Season, and offers a range of community engagement opportunities. The venue also fosters creativity and emerging artists via biannual open mic events, and provides significant support to an eisteddfod, community theatre groups, school and community cultural events and productions.

Shoalhaven City Council would welcome the development of policy to assist with creative capacity building to assist in Council's ability to:

- support local artists,
- build new audiences,
- improve its capacity to contribute to the cultural life of its community,
- stimulate creative endeavour – in terms of creating works with provenance/resonance to our community,
- assistance to develop work with local creatives/performers/artists,
- increase the capacity and sustainability of the region's creative economy,
- measure the impact of the region's creative economy,
- promoting regional artistic leadership and vision,
- creating communal meaning, engagement and stewardship,
- increase capacity to take the arts to small communities within the LGA.

**(d) policy and legislation in other jurisdictions, and options for New South Wales including red tape reduction and funding options, and**

Response:

The idea of a year-long, funded festival of culture is one that has shown remarkable outcomes throughout Europe, and has recently been embraced by Creative Victoria in their 'Regional Centre for Culture' grant program. A funding program that encourages a holistic development of music, visual arts, literary arts and other cultural pursuits with a focus on a single region each year would help to ensure communities can explore ideas that might not have long term outcomes, but have immediate impact, can invest in or upgrade infrastructure that will support long term engagement with music and arts and encourage community pride in the arts and culture of the region.

Recommendation

- That by using the model of the European Centre for Culture a new funding program is devised that provides significant funding to one council per year for investment in a holistic program of arts, music and cultural events.

**(e) any other related matter**

Response:

- Shoalhaven Regional Gallery and Shoalhaven City Council strongly support the work of Museums & Galleries NSW (MGNSW), particularly in relation to their 'Standards program' and 'Museum Advisor Program' which work within the industry to build capacity

of regional cultural organisations to meet professional industry standards and operate at a high level in the care and keeping of collections.

- Shoalhaven City Council welcome the initiative of the NSW Parliament to consider the policy and funding needs for the music and arts economy and encourage a review of capital funding for the refurbishment and enhancement of spaces available in regional Australia for the arts. In particular Public Libraries have suffered from a reduction in State Government support over many years and local councils are often unable to meet the shortfall in such a way as the community is able to benefit from the full scope of library activities expected of a modern community knowledge centre. Shoalhaven City Council requests that as part of this inquiry the funding model for public libraries is considered and funding from State Government is increased.

Yours sincerely

Acting Group Director  
Finance, Corporate and Community  
Shoalhaven City Council

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