

A strategy for a state of the arts:

Arts Industry Council (Victoria)

Victoria's arts industry is a key strength of the state's culture, economy and liveability.

Successive governments have invested in the arts through the creation and operation of flagship institutions; through comprehensive policy frameworks in portfolio areas such as arts, education, health, regional development and innovation; as well as through the development and support of independent artists, arts organisations, audiences and artistic endeavour.

A **strategy** for a **state of the arts** is the only way to ensure that public investment in the arts will yield the very best outcomes for all Victorians. Stronger coordination between government and industry is required in order to progress and nurture this important arts ecology.

To secure the state of the arts in Victoria, the industry calls upon the Victorian Government to:

LEAD

A policy framework developed in consultation with the industry that develops the arts ecology confidently and strategically.

INVEST

Consultative, evidence-led public investment that catalyses industry development via proportionate funding streams.

EMPOWER

Industry partnerships that maximise public investment, strengthen networks of engagement and foster diversity.

BROKER

Clear metrics to measure the public value of the arts to broker further public and private investment in the arts.

1. LEAD

The Victorian Government, in consultation with the arts industry, should develop a strategic policy framework to nurture the arts ecology and develop the arts industry.

A strategic approach to a state of the arts is the only way to ensure that public investment in the arts will yield the very best outcomes for all Victorians. An arts policy should:

- Celebrate, support and advance arts and cultural activity in the state
- Affirm the role and value of arts and culture in the lives of all Victorians
- Affirm the right of participation by all Victorians and directly address barriers to participation
- Reflect and promote diversity in artform, scale, practice models, cultural heritage, location etc.
- Prioritise the independent artists, organisations and communities who make Victoria the state of the arts
- Identify opportunities to engage with emerging social and economic trends
- Identify clear priority areas set out in a cross-portfolio implementation plan
- Ensure that infrastructure and precinct investment is evidence-led and strategic
- Leverage talent through development and support for artists and their creative practice
- Position the Victorian Government as a strategic, forward-thinking leader in Australian arts and cultural policy.

2. INVEST

The Victorian Government should review its investment of the arts in consultation with industry, identifying actions for sector development that are supported by proportionate funding streams.

Undertaken in collaboration with industry, a review of current funding models is needed, creating an integrated investment framework with associated programs and projects.

The investment framework should:

- Express confidence in the expertise of the arts industry to deliver on government investment
- Be pragmatic in the appropriate roles and capacities of government and industry
- Align investment more evenly in accordance with the spatial distribution of Victoria's population, with a focus on regional and outer-suburban areas alongside inner Melbourne
- Afford artists and organisations the time and resources to develop and evaluate their work
- Be clear, transparent, intuitive and easy to understand
- Be adaptable and able to undergo continual review and improvement
- Be comprehensive, encompassing –
 - art creation, curation, production and development
 - participation, access, diversity and inclusion
 - regional development, local and international engagement, and tourism
 - organisational investment, including industry service and development
 - professional development and capacity-building
 - profiling, benchmarking, industry development and advocacy
 - arts industry research as the basis for evidence-led policy and investment
- Re-invest in indexation in order to maintain value and impact of subsidies.
- Be carried forward by a fully empowered arts agency.

3. EMPOWER

The Victorian Government should partner with industry in order to maximise its investment, strengthening networks of engagement and developing targeted strategies to address under-representation by various groups.

The arts ecology is complex, comprising artists and audiences; organisations and individuals; networks for the exchange of ideas; large public institutions and major and commercial producers; the small-to-medium enterprises that are the engine rooms for innovation; representative or peak bodies; and the many individuals who contribute generously with volunteer time or donations.

Empowering the ecology means:

- Undertaking a detailed mapping of the sector to understand its dynamic scope, ensuring investment goes further by uncovering efficiencies, avoiding duplication, modelling information and structures that can be shared, and ensuring that knowledge and expertise remains within the industry
- Creating evidence-led strategies to develop the arts industry by empowering key arts organisations to undertake that work
- Partnering with industry development and industry service bodies to ground and deliver these strategies
- Leveraging existing talent within the sector through peer-learning and capacity building initiatives
- Championing that arts voice across Victoria, across Australia and across the world.

4. BROKER

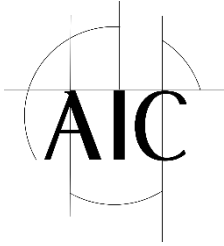
The Victorian Government should develop clear metrics to measure the public value of the arts sector in order to broker cross-departmental, philanthropic, corporate and international investment.

The arts ecology provides significant public value. With the planned closure of the ABS National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics, the role of the Victorian Government in capturing and measuring this value is more important than ever. We need a measurable public value standard that recognises and integrates artistic, economic, social benefits in order to maximise the impact of the government's own investment and help broker support from other areas.

This is an opportunity to:

- Build on existing and develop new tools to measure and evaluate the broader value and impact of government investment beyond short project-funded outcomes in partnership with the sector and research partners
- Quantify the impact of the arts on outcomes in health and well-being, education, regional and urban development, volunteerism, economics, community cohesion, tourism etc.
- Help shift the narrative of Government's relationship with the arts away from 'grants' and 'subsidy' towards a partnership with a return on investment. Present a clear rationale to broker cross-portfolio, philanthropic, corporate or international investment of the arts ecology
- Better align the distribution of arts and cultural funding to the Government's broader policies and priority areas
- Use the resources at our disposal to enable an evidence-led approach towards identifying and supporting arts and cultural success stories, priorities, and areas of need

- Empower artists and arts organisations to leverage their Government investment further.
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The Arts Industry Council (Victoria), established in 1989, is the independent voice for the arts: a peak industry body to enable all sectors of arts activity in Victoria to speak with a common voice.

We advocate on behalf of our constituency and contribute to public debate by providing leadership and forums for discussion across the arts.

We believe that...

- the arts are integral to Australian life;
 - everyone has the right to participate in and enjoy the arts;
 - a healthy, sustainable arts sector makes a vital contribution towards a strong economy, strong communities and a strong understanding of culture and identity;
 - we have a responsibility to support and nurture the arts sector at an individual, corporate and government level.
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