



Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Communications**
Office for the Arts

Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS)—impacts of COVID-19

March 2020

COVID-19 (or coronavirus) is having unprecedented effects on communities in Australia and around the world. The Australian Government is working across all Government portfolios to support all Australian communities. The particular effects of COVID-19 on creative and cultural activity are evident and continue to be considered as part of the national response.

Up to date information about COVID-19 and how it relates to the arts sector, can be found at [arts.gov.au COVID-19 update](https://arts.gov.au/COVID-19-update).

We understand the serious impact COVID-19 is having on the delivery of arts and cultural activities, including those supported through the IVAIS program. Please be assured that we will continue to provide administrative support for your funded activities.

At this time, the health, wellbeing and safety of your artists, arts workers, art centre staff and communities more broadly is paramount and takes priority.

If your IVAIS activity is affected, please get in touch with your IVAIS Contact Officer via email preferably (contact details available in your activity in SmartyGrants) and we will work with you to make sure your grant agreement is managed as reasonably and flexibly as possible. You can also refer to the IVAIS general contacts section of this document.

Please find below responses to frequently asked questions we are hearing from IVAIS recipients. We will endeavour to update this document regularly pending developments with the Australian Government's response to the evolving COVID-19 situation and the emerging issues you raise.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Government doing?

The Australian Government has announced a series of response packages to support businesses and people's income. Through the Treasury, the Australian Government is delivering substantial economic support across the economy. This will help maintain business confidence, support investment and keep people in jobs. Additional household income and business support, including cash flow for small businesses, will flow through to strengthen the wider economy. Information about these measures can be found on the Treasury website: www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

A COVID-19 Business Liaison Unit has been established to assist businesses affected by the situation. The Unit can be contacted by email at COVID-19Coord@treasury.gov.au and by phone on 13 28 46 (Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:30pm AEST).

On 22 March 2020, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts (Minister for the Arts), issued a Media Release in relation to the Australian Government's response packages and supporting workers and organisations in the cultural and creative sector: [Paul Fletcher—The Cultural and Creative Sector and Covid-19](#).

State and Territory Governments have also announced their own stimulus packages which your organisation should investigate in relation to your relevant jurisdictions and organisations.

Up to date information about COVID-19 and how it relates to the arts sector, can be found at [arts.gov.au COVID-19 update](#).

Will our organisation be eligible to access these support measures?

As outlined at: [Treasury—Businesses](#), the Australian Government is providing up to \$100,000 to eligible small and medium-sized businesses, and not for-profits (NFPs) that employ people, with a minimum payment of \$20,000. These payments will help businesses and NFPs with their cash flow so they can keep operating, pay their rent, electricity and other bills and retain staff. There are also financial assistance measures available for individuals as outlined at: [Treasury—Individuals and Households](#).

The Treasury have developed factsheets on these measures which are available at <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus>. These factsheets include descriptions of each measure, and examples of how they can be applied to businesses and individuals in different circumstances. If more information is needed, please contact their Business Liaison Unit (see contact details in the above post).

You may also wish to liaise with your organisation's bookkeeper or auditor who may be best placed to assess and provide advice on your organisation's eligibility.

Our current IVAIS funding is due to lapse on 30 June 2020.

What is happening with our new grant agreement?

If your current IVAIS grant agreement funding is due to end on 30 June 2020, your Contact Officer would have been in contact with your organisation in late 2019 to conduct an End of Grant Agreement conversation. As noted at that time, this conversation, along with your milestone reports, informed future IVAIS funding recommendations to the Minister for the Arts as part of the IVAIS closed non-competitive grant opportunity.

The recommendations for funding from 2020-21 are being progressed and we are working to finalise the allocation of funding urgently. We understand the need for certainty regarding your funding and we will advise you of the outcomes as soon as possible. In our conversations in 2019, we had noted this would be in May or June of 2020 however, due to impacts of COVID-19, we anticipate this occurring earlier

Once these funding outcomes are known, your IVAIS Contact Officer will work with you to enter into a new grant agreement so that we can make 2020–21 payments as soon as possible in the new financial year.

We have an application in the IVAIS 2020–21 open competitive grant round. Will this round still happen?

The 2020–21 open competitive grant opportunity round closed on 16 March 2020 and at this stage the round is proceeding as planned.

The Government announced that the Budget will not be until October 2020. Will this delay our organisation getting our first 2020–21 payments?

The Government has passed legislation to ensure that existing programs, including IVAIS, can be honoured prior to the Budget's delivery in October 2020. We do not expect that there will be any impact on the payment of the first IVAIS payments in 2020–21.

Due to the financial impacts of the virus, we will need to review and change our organisation's IVAIS budget. Are we able to do this and how do we go about doing this?

We are very aware that the impacts of COVID-19 will mean that many organisations will have to review and revise their 2019–20 deliverables and budgets. If this applies to your organisation, please email your Contact Officer and we will work with you to make sure your grant agreement is managed as reasonably and flexibly as possible. Every effort will be made to make this process as simple and streamlined as possible.

In addition, as noted in the Minister for the Arts 22 March 2020 media release ([22 March 2020 Media Release](#)), both the Office for the Arts and the Australia Council are being as flexible as possible in providing reporting and other grant condition relief to organisations with existing Australian Government funding arrangements. These include:

- bringing forward payments
- delaying or removing reporting requirements
- varying the purposes and outcomes of funding
- extending timelines for projects
- allowing organisations to use money provided for a deliverable to be repurposed to pay essential bills such as wages, rent or utilities.

If you receive funding from the Australia Council please refer to their website:

www.australiacouncil.gov.au/about/covid-19.

Our art centre has had to close its doors temporarily, how will this impact on meeting our grant agreement performance indicators and obligations?

We understand that some organisations, particularly art centres, have made the difficult decision to close their doors to the public and artists at this time. As noted, the health, wellbeing and safety of your artists, arts workers, art centre staff and communities more broadly is paramount and takes priority at this time.

If this applies to your organisation, when you have time, please let your IVAIS Contact Officer know of this arrangement and we can work with you to make sure your grant agreement is managed as reasonably and flexibly as possible.

Can our art centre use IVAIS arts work funding to continue to pay arts workers in the event we are temporarily closed as a result of the COVID-19 emergency?

Art centres that are required to close should look for any opportunity possible for arts workers to work remotely. We will be flexible in relation to what this remote work would look like and we appreciate that in most cases this will be outside of usual arrangements. It may include, for example:

- preparation of art materials
- delivering art materials to artists
- assisting with online sales
- undertaking 'behind the scenes' work such as SAM database maintenance, and
- keeping in touch with artists (e.g. by phone and social media).

Where remote work is absolutely not possible, we encourage centres to get in touch with their IVAIS Contact Officer via email to look at alternative options. Our priority is to look after the safety and wellbeing of art centre personnel and their community and where possible to keep staff engaged and employed during this period.

In addition, the JobKeeper payment announced by the Australian Government on 30 March 2020, offers eligible businesses, including not for profit entities, subsidies to continue paying employees. More information is available on the [Job keeper fact sheet information for employers PDF](#).

Our art centre hosts job seekers through the Community Development Programme (CDP). If job seekers or artists cannot come to the art centre, how will our hosting arrangement be impacted?

For matters relating to your hosting arrangement, you will need to contact your relevant CDP regional service provider to discuss how this situation can be managed. For a list of providers for each CDP region visit [contact your local Provider](#).

You may wish to also contact a National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) regional office to discuss your concerns. See [NIAA's Regional Offices](#) or [National Indigenous Australian's Agency's website](#). The NIAA has further information regarding the impacts of COVID-19 and CDP which can be found at www.niaa.gov.au/covid19-remote-communities. For CDP jobs seekers, information can be found at <https://jobsearch.gov.au/covid-19-information>.

IVAIS contacts

Email: ivais@arts.gov.au

Phone: 1800 006 992

Office for the Arts: www.arts.gov.au

Useful websites

- Australian Government: www.australia.gov.au/
- Department of Health: www.health.gov.au/
- National Indigenous Australians Agency: www.niaa.gov.au/
- Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations: www.oric.gov.au/training/COVID-19