



COVID-19 and the arts—frequently asked questions

May 2020

Health and safety

How widespread is COVID-19 in Australia?

The Australian Government Department of Health publishes daily updates through the [COVID-19 health alert](#). You can also download the Government's [Coronavirus Australia app](#) which provides official information and advice. All Australians are being encouraged to download the [COVIDSafe app](#) to assist in identifying outbreaks and speed up the process of contacting people exposed to COVID-19.

What measures are in place to slow the spread of COVID-19?

The Australian Government has implemented social distancing and limits on indoor and outdoor gatherings to slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect the lives of all Australians, particularly vulnerable members of the community. The latest information on lockdown measures is available on the [Department of Health's website](#).

When will Australians be able to attend arts and cultural events again?

Arts and cultural events will recommence in line with the lifting of social distancing and travel restrictions. This will likely be undertaken in measured steps to protect the health of the community and avoid the outbreak of further clusters.

The Prime Minister will continue to provide major updates on the Government's response, including decisions made by the National Cabinet.

Where can I find information on safe work practices for the arts?

[Safe Work Australia](#) provides guidance, including the [National COVID-19 safe workplace principles](#). The Australian Government's [Business website](#) provides a range of information to support businesses to manage COVID-19.

Creative and cultural sector assistance

What is the Government doing to support the cultural and creative sector?

The Government is delivering substantial measures, which include support for workers and organisations in the cultural and creative sector. In addition to whole of economy measures for businesses and individuals, there is targeted support to the arts through the Relief and Recovery Fund and the [Australia Council's](#) programs such as the \$5 million Resilience Fund.

For more information on funding visit the Office for the Art's [COVID-19 update page](#).

Where do I find information on support being provided by state and territory governments?

All states and territories are providing support to the arts sector in response to COVID-19. A list of arts agencies in each state and territory is provided on the Office for the Art's [COVID-19 information and support page](#).

I received a grant for an activity that I can no longer do because of COVID-19. What should I do?

The Office for the Arts will continue to provide administrative support for funded activities. If your activity is affected by COVID-19, please contact your program officer who will work with you to reasonably and flexibly manage your funding agreement. For more information on funding agreements visit the Office for the Art's [COVID-19 update page](#).

Can I still apply for an arts activity planned for later in 2020 and what do I do if it cannot go ahead due to ongoing restrictions?

Artists and organisations are still encouraged to apply for funding when it is made available. Strong consideration should be given to digital options for initiatives. The Government will continue to be reasonable and flexible in managing funding agreements.

Can we use grant money we received for a cancelled project for another purpose?

If your activity is affected, please contact your program officer who will work with you to reasonably and flexibly manage your funding agreement.

For more information on funding agreements visit the Office for the Art's [COVID-19 update page](#).

I have received, or am likely to receive an arts grant while I'm receiving JobSeeker. How will this affect my payment?

Lump sums received may be counted as income for the purposes of JobSeeker, depending on your circumstances. Further information on the treatment of different types of income under JobSeeker is available from [Services Australia](#).

My arts organisation missed out on Four Year Funding for 2021–24. What help is available for us during this difficult time?

The Government is delivering substantial measures, which include support for workers and organisations in the cultural and creative sector. In addition to whole of economy measures for businesses and individuals, there is targeted support to the arts through the Relief and Recovery Fund and the [Australia Council's](#) programs such as the \$5 million Resilience Fund.

For more information on funding visit the Office for the Art's [COVID-19 update page](#).

Income and business support

How can I find out if I am eligible for JobKeeper?

For more information on the JobKeeper payment visit:

- [Treasury's JobKeeper payment information page](#)
- [The Australian Tax Office JobKeeper Payment information page.](#)

If I am not eligible for JobKeeper what other income support is available?

If you are not eligible for JobKeeper, visit the [Services Australia website](#) to find out if you are eligible for individual income support through JobSeeker.

Visit [the Office for the Arts JobSeeker page](#) for a series of useful scenarios relating to circumstances in the arts and culture sector.

If I am not eligible for JobSeeker what income support is available?

If you are not eligible for JobSeeker you may be eligible for another type of income support depending on your circumstances.

Visit the [Services Australia website](#) to find out what options might be available to you.

I have employees who are in Australia on temporary work visas. Can they stay and work here?

Contact the [Department of Home Affairs](#) for information about current visa arrangements.

I am having difficulty paying my employees. Is there any Government support or relief I can apply for?

Cash flow boost payments are available to eligible businesses when they lodge their March 2020 activity statement to the Australian Taxation Office.

For more information visit the [Australian Tax Office Cash flow boost page](#).

I need cash flow assistance and am not eligible for the Government's cash flow boost. What other support is available to me?

A number of Australia's banks have established dedicated hotlines to assist businesses with cash flow needs.

Visit the [Australian Banking Association](#) website for hotline numbers.

Can the Government help me to make changes to my arts business in the future to make it more sustainable?

Information, grants, services and support from across government to help your business succeed can be found [on the business website](#).

What can the Australian community do to support the Arts?

There are many things the Australian community can do to continue supporting the arts sector including: donating the cost of tickets for cancelled events, buying directly from artists, streaming Australian films and music and buying Australian books.