



COVID-19 and the arts—frequently asked questions

March 2021

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?

Governments have 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 Government is making COVID-19 vaccinations available to Australians in a phased roll out throughout 2021. The latest information on public health 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 are recommencing in line with the lifting of social distancing and travel restrictions. This is being undertaken in measured steps to protect the health of the community and avoid the outbreak of further clusters. There will also be differences across jurisdictions. The Government has released a [Roadmap for Reactivating Live Performance Venues and Events](#) to provide additional certainty and guidance with a nationally consistent health-based approach to reactivating safely which accommodates jurisdictional differences.


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 economic 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 for the arts through the [COVID-19 Creative Economy JobMaker Package](#), [Relief and Recovery Fund](#), funding for [Australia's national cultural](#)



[institutions](#) and the [Australia Council's](#) programs. Additional funding for the sector has also been announced in 2021. For more information, please visit the Office for the Arts [COVID-19 update page](#).

Where do I find the guidelines for the Creative Economy JobMaker Package?

The guidelines for the RISE and Sustainability Funds under the Creative Economy JobMaker Package were released on 11 August 2020. The guidelines include details on how applications for funding can be submitted, and what types of organisations and activities are eligible. For more information, please visit the Office for the Arts [COVID-19 update page](#). The [Temporary Interruption Fund](#) guidelines are available from the Screen Australia website.

On 4 December 2020, the Government announced that arts and entertainment businesses can apply for an eligibility check under the Show Starter Loan Scheme. If they are found to be eligible, they can apply for a loan under the Scheme from ANZ, the Commonwealth Bank, the National Australia Bank or Westpac. Further information is available on the [Show Starter Loan Scheme 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 Arts [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.

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.

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](#).

Income and business support

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 monthly or quarterly 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 Australian Government's business website](#). This includes information on the Australian Small Business Advisory Service – Digital Solutions program, a Digital Readiness Assessment tool, Digital Directors training package and information on the Digital Skills Finder platform, which brings together free and paid private sector digital skills training for individuals in an easy-to-use portal.