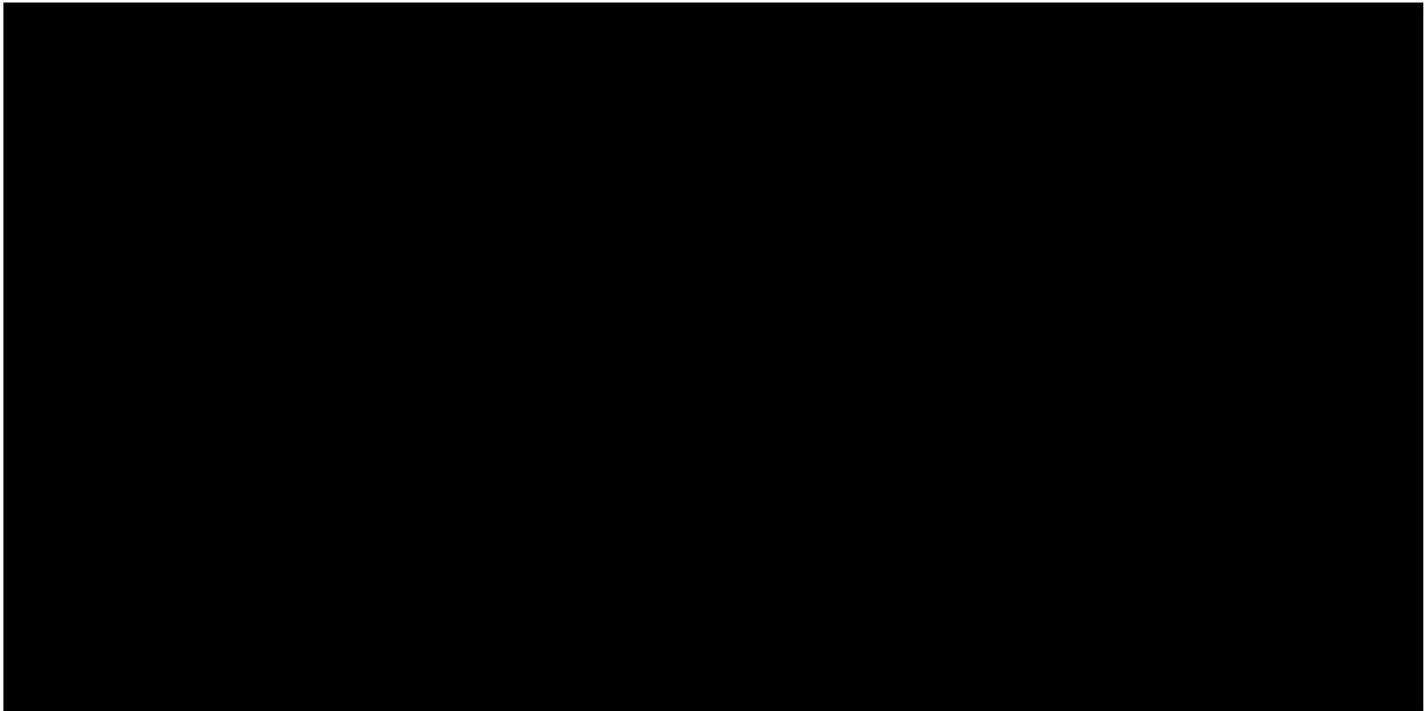




SUBMISSION TO GOVERNMENT: NEXT NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY
ABORIGINAL ART CENTRE HUB OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA (AACHWA)



AACHWA's Submission to the National Cultural Policy Consultation
May 2026



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INTRODUCTION

The Aboriginal Art Centre Hub of Western Australia (AACHWA) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to consultation on Australia's next national cultural policy and the future direction of *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*.

AACHWA is the peak body representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art centres across Western Australia, and a founding member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts and Culture Centre Alliance (see 'Art, Culture, Country, As One – Alliance submission to the National Cultural Policy'). Our membership spans some of the most remote regions in the country, including the Kimberley, Pilbara, Mid West and Western Desert regions. Together, these art centres support over 5000 Aboriginal artists from 90 language groups and 40 communities across 2 million square kilometres. The centres sustain cultural knowledge systems, generate employment and economic participation, and provide critical community infrastructure and wellbeing outcomes.

Aboriginal art centres are among Australia's most successful and enduring examples of self-determination from Aboriginal community-controlled enterprises. They are internationally recognised cultural institutions, major contributors to Australia's creative identity (contributing around one quarter of a billion dollars to the federal economy each year), and significant regional and remote employers. Yet despite decades of demonstrated cultural, economic and social impact, the sector remains chronically underfunded and largely invisible within broader government policy settings.

AACHWA strongly supports the five pillars established through *Revive* and believes Aboriginal art centres are uniquely positioned to deliver against all five. However, achieving the ambitions of a future national cultural policy will require structural investment in the Aboriginal art centre sector, particularly in:

- Increased (and indexed) operational investment through the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) program
- Dedicated national investment in art centre infrastructure
- Expanded training, accredited workforce development and career pathways for Aboriginal artists and arts workers
- New dedicated funding streams to support commercial and market development

These structural investments should recognise the proven performance and impact of WA artists and art centres in the sector, which is comparably underfunded compared to other States. Investment will assist in servicing art centres spread across 2 million sq km of regional and remote WA.

This submission outlines AACHWA's priorities in relation to the five *Revive* pillars and proposes key areas for future Federal investment and reform via the next National Cultural Policy.

PILLAR 1: FIRST NATIONS FIRST

The first pillar of *Revive* recognises First Nations stories as central to Australia’s cultural identity. Aboriginal art centres are one of the most successful and established mechanisms through which First Nations cultural authority, storytelling and economic self-determination are enacted in practice.

Art centres are First Nations-owned and led. Across Australia, and particularly in regional and remote communities, they support artists in maintaining and transmitting language and story, cultural knowledge, ceremony, kinship systems, and connections to Country through contemporary and customary cultural production. Art centres also create culturally safe employment and enterprise opportunities that allow Aboriginal people to remain living and working on Country, and support leadership through offering training and career pathways.

Importantly, art centres are not simply arts organisations. They are multi-faceted Aboriginal community-controlled enterprises delivering broad social, cultural and economic outcomes, often in communities with extremely limited amenities and few other employment pathways. They meaningfully contribute positively to multiple *Closing the Gap* targets (including, but not limited to, Targets #1, #7 #8, #14, #15, #16 and #17: Australian Government and Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations, 2020). Yet art centres remain substantially under-recognised within *Closing the Gap* frameworks, workforce, wellbeing and economic development policy and regional development strategies.

AACHWA recommends that the next national cultural policy formally recognise Aboriginal art centres as:

- Essential First Nations cultural infrastructure
- Community-controlled organisations contributing directly to multiple *Closing the Gap* outcomes
- Significant regional employers and economic development organisations
- Custodians and generators of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)

Priority Actions

Increased and Indexed IVAIS Funding

Operational funding through the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) program remains the foundation of the sector. However, funding levels have not kept pace with inflation, increased operational costs, or the expanding scale and responsibilities of art centres. Funding levels have not increased sufficiently as additional art centres have been added to the funding pool, and funding to individual art centres is currently insufficient to sustain staffing, wages, insurance, governance, infrastructure maintenance, and workforce development. Longer-term funding arrangements would also be welcomed, but they must anticipate change and realistic increases to sustain organisations.

While greater investment in commercial capability, workforce development, and market expansion will improve the long-term sustainability of Aboriginal art centres, ongoing government investment will remain essential. Art centres operating in regional and remote communities deliver significant unfunded social and cultural outcomes beyond arts production and sales, including community cohesion, cultural maintenance, intergenerational knowledge transfer, youth engagement, healthy ageing, disability inclusion and mental health and wellbeing. As recognised in the Productivity Commission's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander *visual arts and crafts study report* (2022), many of the broader social and community contributions delivered by art centres remain unfunded, reinforcing the need for continued government support alongside commercial investment.

The most recent increase to the national Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program in 2025 amounts to around \$45,000 per art centre, or about 3% of an average art centre's total revenue (Acker and Congreve, 2024). Such funding is more likely to be absorbed by the higher operational costs affecting businesses Australia-wide (with greater impact in regional and remote areas) than to address the long-standing structural underinvestment in the sector.

AACHWA recommends:

- A substantial increase in IVAIS operational funding nationally
- Longer-term dynamic funding agreements that factor in funding increases over time, to lessen the administrative burden on art centres
- Indexation tied to regional and remote operational costs and inflation (and the number of art centres funded overall)
- Increased dedicated Indigenous Arts Worker funding streams
- Programs developed by the Government in collaboration with peak bodies and local training providers to trial best-practice models for workforce and career pathways development

Art centres are consistently expected to deliver cultural preservation, employment, youth engagement, social cohesion and community wellbeing outcomes without corresponding investment from the portfolios that benefit from this work. At the same time, the ethical and artistic standards upheld by art centres is frequently undermined by short-term arts programming delivered by external organisations (such as sporting clubs, health services and local government) seeking community engagement outcomes rather than choosing to collaborate with their local art centre; Greater policy recognition is needed to reinforce the role of art centres as the ethical and professional standards setters for Aboriginal arts practice and cultural production across Australia.

The Federal Government’s substantial investment in the Indigenous Ranger Program provides a strong precedent for recognising community-controlled cultural and environmental organisations as essential national investments. As part of the March 2022 Federal Budget, the Commonwealth announced a \$636.4 million package (equates to approx. \$106 million annually) over six years to expand the Indigenous Ranger Program, aiming to double federally funded ranger jobs by 2030. The investment focused on establishing new ranger programs, strengthening opportunities for women and young people, and reinforcing the Federal Government’s long-term commitment to Indigenous land and sea management.

Despite operating in similar regional and remote contexts and with a comparable focus on Aboriginal employment and community-controlled service delivery, the Federal Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) program remains funded at approximately \$24-\$27 million nationally, with no substantial increase in funding for more than a decade. This is despite the Aboriginal art centre sector generating more than \$250 million annually for the Australian economy, demonstrating its significant cultural, social and economic contribution at both a regional and national level.

As part of its advocacy role, Aboriginal Art Centres Hub of Western Australia (AACHWA) presented comparative data to the Western Australian Government in 2024 following the allocation of an additional \$66.5 million to the WA Aboriginal Ranger Program for the 2021–2026 period. This funding enabled Aboriginal ranger programs in Western Australia to access significant operational investment from both State and Federal governments. The figures below are modelled from publicly sourced 2023–24 State and Federal funding announcements and demonstrate the scale and disparity of government investment between the Aboriginal arts sector and Aboriginal ranger programs in Western Australia.

Aboriginal Art Centres	Aboriginal Ranger Programs
31 Art Centres	30 Aboriginal Ranger Programs
5,400 Aboriginal Artists	171 Aboriginal Rangers
Federal Indigenous Visual Arts Industry (IVAIS) Program \$5.4 million	Federal Indigenous Ranger Program \$21.5 million
Western Australian Government: Dept of Cultural Industries, Tourism and Sport & Lotterywest (short-term - project-based grants) \$1.1 million	Western Australian Government: Aboriginal Ranger Program \$23.9 million



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Average annual investment (per art centre) \$205,000	Average annual investment (per ranger program) \$796,000
One-to-three-year funding agreements	Federal Government: up to seven-year funding agreements Western Australian Government: up to four-year funding agreements
70% female	75% male

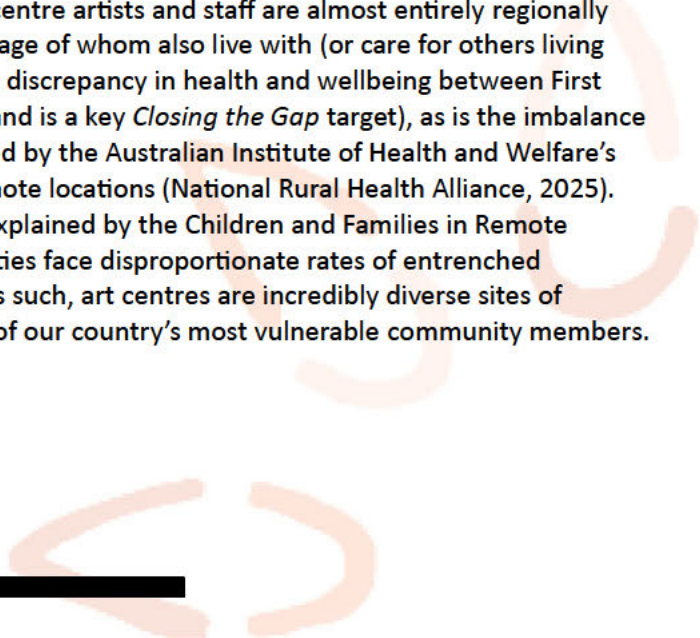


PILLAR 2: A PLACE FOR EVERY STORY



The second *Revive* pillar focuses on access and inclusion, ensuring all Australians can participate in cultural life. Aboriginal art centres are critical access points for cultural participation in regional and remote Australia, yet many operate in deeply inadequate facilities.

Art centres are, by definition, inclusive and share thousands of Australian stories nationally and internationally each year. In addition to supporting First Nations communities, art centre artists and staff are almost entirely regionally based and comprise around 70% women, a significant percentage of whom also live with (or care for others living with) physical or mental disabilities (AACHWA, 2026). The high discrepancy in health and wellbeing between First Nations and non-Indigenous Australians is well-documented (and is a key *Closing the Gap* target), as is the imbalance between regional and metropolitan-based Australians (as noted by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's 2025 *Rural Health Snapshot*), which is exacerbated in very remote locations (National Rural Health Alliance, 2025). Art centres support people facing significant social issues, as explained by the Children and Families in Remote Communities report 2025, which states that remote communities face disproportionate rates of entrenched disadvantage, food insecurity and chronic housing shortage. As such, art centres are incredibly diverse sites of cultural production that contribute to wellbeing among some of our country's most vulnerable community members.



However, in addition to the financial and operational pressures noted above, across Australia, many art centres face severe infrastructure challenges, including:

- Unsafe or deteriorating buildings due to inadequate funds to refurbish or rebuild, often spaces have been used that were adopted from previous services, such as mechanic workshops or community stores
- Buildings rendered unusable due to asbestos contamination
- High costs related to essential infrastructure improvements and maintenance, including difficulties in sourcing quotes and securing skilled tradespeople as required.
- Overcrowded workspaces, inadequate storage and archive facilities
- Insufficient accessibility for those living with disabilities
- Poor climate control in extreme environments, including sites rendered unusable for extended periods of the year
- Insufficient protection against environmental crises, including cyclones, flooding and extreme heat, with the majority of art centres located in remote communities experiencing dramatic and growing impacts of climate change
- Lack of digital infrastructure or access to reliable Internet
- Limited (or no) staff accommodation

Additionally, remote art centres face significant operational challenges that constrain their capacity to deliver core business activities and support equitable access and participation within the sector. These challenges include:

- ageing, limited, and in some cases non-existent vehicle fleets required to transport artists to and from art centres
- disproportionately high and increasing travel costs, which restrict access to markets, art fairs, exhibitions, and broader economic opportunities

These conditions undermine workforce retention (for both artists and staff), restrict artistic production, and limit opportunities for tourism, training, market and commercial development.

Despite repeated recognition of the cultural and economic importance of Aboriginal art centres, there remains no coordinated national infrastructure program for the sector.

Priority Actions

Establish a National Aboriginal Art Centre Infrastructure Fund

In the absence of dedicated Federal arts and cultural infrastructure funding, remote Aboriginal art centres are increasingly required to compete through broad regional development programs such as the [Building Better Regions Fund \(BBRF\)](#) and the [Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program \(RPPP\)](#). While art centres are eligible, these programs are largely designed around large-scale economic activation, co-investment and “investment-ready” infrastructure projects, often favouring local governments and larger organisations with greater financial and administrative capacity. This creates structural barriers for remote art centres, which frequently operate with limited resources despite delivering significant cultural, social and economic outcomes. Importantly, many of the core outcomes art centres deliver - including cultural maintenance, language preservation, community cohesion and intergenerational knowledge transfer - are not easily captured within conventional regional infrastructure assessment frameworks focused on economic growth and productivity.

In addressing this, AACHWA recommends the establishment of a dedicated Federal infrastructure investment program for Aboriginal art centres, supporting:

- New purpose-built, accessible art centre facilities
- Upgrades and maintenance of existing buildings
- Collection storage and archive facilities
- Staff housing in remote communities
- Digital infrastructure and connectivity
- Visitor infrastructure (such as retail and exhibition spaces for art centres that do not currently have them)

There is substantial government investment at the local, state and federal levels (including via Revive) in cultural amenity infrastructure (such as public art galleries, museums and cultural centres), but comparatively little investment in art centres as organisations the government relies upon to provide content for such institutions. Investment in infrastructure should recognise art centres as long-term cultural and economic assets, on a par with other nationally significant cultural institutions. This requires a reset in investment priorities that recognises the importance of where significant artworks are created, not just where they are ultimately exhibited.



PILLAR 3: CENTRALITY OF THE ARTIST

The third pillar recognises artists as workers and emphasises fair remuneration, career sustainability and professional development.

Aboriginal artists are the heart of our sector, while art centres provide the foundation for the sector's strength, sustainability and cultural vibrancy. Equally, the contribution of Aboriginal arts workers and arts centre staff is critical to the functioning of the sector. These workers undertake complex cultural, administrative, curatorial, community, and commercial roles that are essential to supporting artists, maintaining cultural continuity, and ensuring that audiences across Australia and internationally can engage with vibrant Aboriginal art and culture.

Art centres support one of the largest Aboriginal creative workforces in Australia. Nationally, art centres support approximately 22,000 artists and provide hundreds of Aboriginal arts workers with creatively rewarding and culturally appropriate employment. However, as noted above, art centres are currently struggling to survive on inadequate operational funding, with few resources to contribute to artists' development. This means that ambitious artistic projects or creative development programs for artists must generally be supported through project-based arts funding, which is highly competitive and entails a heavy administrative load (meaning many art centres simply choose not to apply). As such, artists are not supported or challenged to expand their practices, and opportunities for career progression and commercial advancement are diminished.

Concurrently, the development of sustained career pathways in the broader art centre sector remains significantly underfunded. In addition to fostering artists' careers, the broader contributions of art centres in delivering employment, local training, job-readiness preparation, education for children and young people, and social and community wellbeing and safety initiatives are not acknowledged in Federal policy documents outside the creative industries.

AACHWA's own workforce development initiatives, including the *Our Future* Indigenous arts worker training program, have demonstrated the enormous potential of targeted training and mentorship programs for Aboriginal arts workers (the majority of whom are also practising artists, subsidising their creative practice through art centre employment), and was cited as a case study for such in the first iteration of *Revive*. Participants consistently report increased confidence, skills, employment readiness and cultural engagement. Yet currently:

- There are limited accredited training pathways tailored to the remote Aboriginal arts sector
- Existing training systems are frequently unsuited to participation by regionally based workers and often fail to recognise cultural knowledge and lived experience; Aboriginal arts workers' sophisticated cultural, curatorial, community engagement, linguistic and administrative expertise is frequently invisible within mainstream qualification systems (such as TAFE Recognised Prior Learning models)
- Workforce development funding remains fragmented and insecure
- Aboriginal arts workers remain underpaid relative to comparable sectors, meaning that art centres cannot compete with other industries (such as the resources sector) to attract and retain regionally based Aboriginal employees
- Art centres are siloed at a policy and funding level within creative industries portfolios, with no recognition of or funding for the substantial contribution they make to sectors such as regional development, tourism, education and health

Priority Actions

Invest in Artistic Development Initiatives, Accredited Training, and Professionalised Career Pathways

AACHWA recommends the Federal Government invest in a coordinated national Aboriginal arts workforce strategy, including:

- Increased core funding (to enable programming alongside operational expenses) and/or a commissioning fund for Aboriginal artists to undertake ambitious new work
- Increased funding to Creative Australia to specifically support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artistic development and exhibition opportunities, particularly First Nations-led projects
- Accredited training pathways for arts workers and cultural practitioners encompassing:
 - Art centre operational training across governance, finance, strategy, legal, risk, work safety and business administration
 - Curation, collections/archive management and studio management
 - Education, tutoring, and cultural tourism development
 - Digital capacity building across branding, marketing and sales
- Remote and on-Country delivery models
- Development of RPL models appropriate to Indigenous knowledge systems
- Paid traineeships and apprenticeships, and other leadership development initiatives for future Aboriginal arts managers and curators



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- Partnerships with TAFEs, universities and community-controlled organisations
- Increased awareness and promotion of art centres as key providers of health and wellbeing, education, youth engagement and tourism outcomes
- Modern Award Review and development of sector-specific Award – AACHWA supports NAVA’s call for a federal award and minimum standards to cover the arts sector, including remote community work

The Aboriginal visual arts sector is one of the few creative industries in which Aboriginal employment rates exceed the broader workforce average. Additionally, in Western Australia, creative and cultural industries employ more people than mining, agriculture and tourism in regional and remote areas. Greater investment in this workforce presents a significant opportunity to support outcomes in Closing the Gap employment and economic participation.



PILLAR 4: STRONG CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The fourth pillar of *Revive* recognises the importance of cultural infrastructure in enabling thriving creative industries and communities.

Aboriginal art centres are among the most important cultural infrastructure assets in remote Australia, yet they are rarely treated as such within infrastructure policy or funding frameworks. *Revive*, for example, included a substantial commitment to funding arts infrastructure through Australia's nine national collecting institutions, but did not include funding for organisations such as art centres that will provide the content for them (Australian Government, 2023).

As noted above, infrastructure currently represents one of the most significant threats to the continued success and growth of the art centre sector, with many art centres operating from severely degraded sites, and others lacking key facilities, including accommodation for staff and Internet connectivity to support e-commerce. AACHWA's 2024 audit of Western Australia's art centre infrastructure recommended that a total investment of \$47,201,357 (ex-GST) was required to address the immediate physical infrastructure needs of the State's sector (though given the ongoing increases to the cost of living in Australia, this figure is likely to be insufficient in 2027: Project Fundamentals and Tracker Development, 2024).

In addition to producing artworks, several art centres (including internationally celebrated Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency, Mowanjum Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre and Warmun Art Centre) own a collection of their artists' significant works, which their communities have agreed to keep for legacy purposes, but which are at risk of incalculable cultural loss through degraded storage facilities. Arnhem, Northern and Kimberley Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ANKA) has provided best-practice guidelines for the sustainable infrastructure and management of community collections through resources such as its *Community Collection Care and Management Guide* and *Safe Keeping Report* (ANKA 2021 and ANKA 2017). These initiatives focus on establishing preservation-grade storage and providing training to support Indigenous leadership in managing their own cultural heritage. However, few art centres currently have the infrastructure and resourcing to act on their recommendations. While not every art centre owns an archival artwork collection, all require safe storage for works that are not currently being exhibited or sold, and many lack secure facilities for this purpose.

Alongside their built environments, many art centres currently struggle with digital infrastructure, with many remote centres operating with limited connectivity, which severely limits their ability to promote and sell their artists' work and to maintain permanent, secure archives of their creative and cultural output. AACHWA's *Our Mob Online* (OMO) digital capacity-building project has demonstrated the substantial positive impact that effective digital infrastructure and capacity-building can have on boosting art centre sales and archiving, and on improving digital presence and e-commerce participation.

Aboriginal art centres generate substantial economic return relative to investment, with the sector contributing more than \$250 million annually to the Australian economy through artwork sales, tourism, employment and associated regional activity. Art centres have also demonstrated increasing economic independence over time, with sector-wide sales income increasing by 73% over the last decade while grant income remained effectively static. By 2022/23, grants accounted for just 33% of average art centre income — the lowest proportion since 2008/09 — while sales represented 52% of income, one of the highest levels recorded in more than a decade. Alongside this economic contribution, art centres support community wellbeing, intergenerational knowledge transfer and regional liveability across remote Australia. Despite this, infrastructure and operational support remain heavily project-based and inconsistent, with many art centres operating from insufficient, ageing or climate-vulnerable facilities that are increasingly ill-equipped to respond to extreme heat and other climate impacts. Investing now to protect and strengthen these crucial cultural and community facilities will deliver cultural, social and economic benefits with both international and intergenerational reach for decades to come.

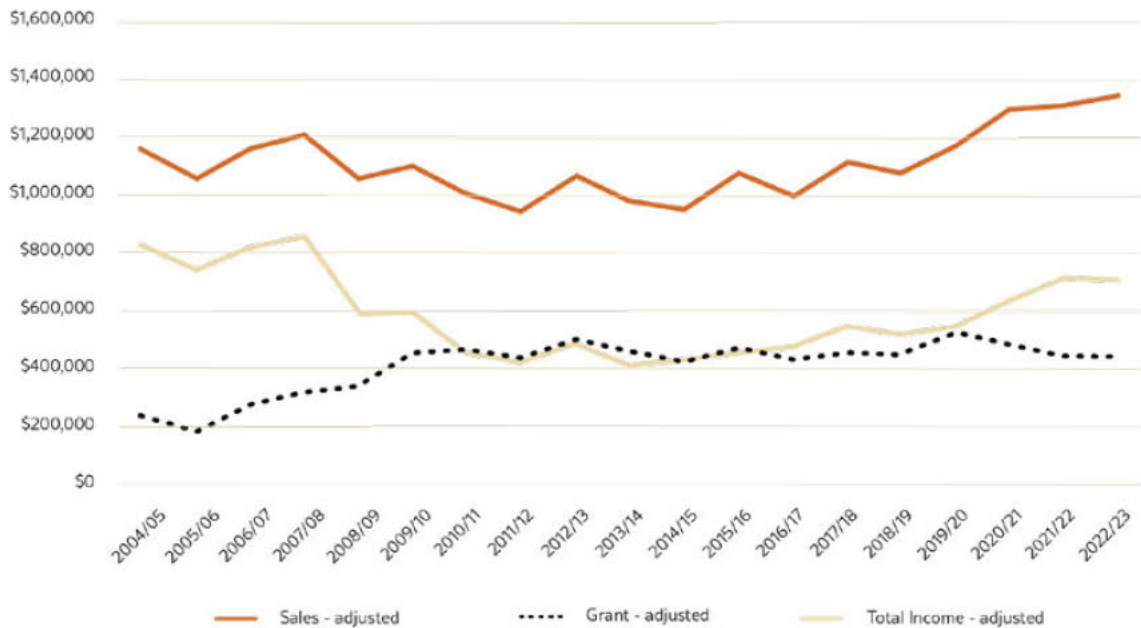
Refer to Figure 6: Changes to sales income, grant and income and total income (adjusted) 2024/05 to 2022/23 from Desart Inc, *Financial Snapshot of Art Centres – 2004/05>2022/23*.



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Figure 6:
Changes to sales
income, grant
income and
total income
(adjusted),
2004/05 to
2022/23.



Priority Actions

AACHWA recommends:

- Establishment of a national infrastructure fund for art centres and inclusion of Aboriginal art centres within national cultural infrastructure planning
- Recognition of art centres within broader regional development and economic diversification frameworks
- Integrated investment across arts, tourism, employment and infrastructure portfolios
- Support for digital infrastructure to improve access to markets, training and archiving
- Dedicated funding for collection care and preservation

The next cultural policy should explicitly position Aboriginal art centres as core national cultural infrastructure rather than discretionary arts projects.

PILLAR 5: ENGAGING THE AUDIENCE

Aboriginal art centres play a critical role in connecting Australian and international audiences with First Nations culture. They are major contributors to Australia's global cultural reputation and soft diplomacy capacity, and many art centres are currently poised to reach international markets. However, market development remains under-resourced and fragmented.

Many art centres face significant barriers in:

- Accessing national and international markets
- Effective use of branding, digital marketing and e-commerce capability
- Tourism development
- Freight and logistics
- Protection against fake Aboriginal art, merchandise and products

At the same time, demand for authentic Aboriginal cultural experiences and ethically produced artwork continues to grow.

As noted above, AACHWA's *Our Mob Online* project has demonstrated the economic impact of investment in digital infrastructure and building capability. Additionally, AACHWA's annual *Revealed* exhibition of innovative and emerging art centre work, and its accompanying art market and professional and artistic development program, represents a highly impactful, Aboriginal-led in-person and online showcasing model for art centres that has grown exponentially in scale over the past decade. This has included a substantial increase in digital access, with unique online engagement up 65% in 2025.

Art centres also have enormous potential to be integrated more directly into Australia's international cultural diplomacy agenda. Addressing access and barriers to Indigenous participation in international initiatives is one of the priority action areas of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), who, through the *Indigenous Diplomacy Agenda* are seeking to "maximise opportunities for Aboriginal people in a globalised world" and "promote the excellence of Indigenous Australian culture, expertise and innovation to the world" (Australian Government, 2021): increased collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Creative Australia would provide invaluable support to art centres in reaching international markets eager to engage with the world's oldest continuous living culture.

There is a significant and largely untapped international market opportunity for Aboriginal art centres and First Nations artists. Global demand for non-Western and Indigenous contemporary art is increasing, particularly in major art markets such as New York, Miami and Paris, where collectors and institutions are engaging more with themes of sustainability, decolonisation, cultural identity and environmental stewardship. At the same time, younger collectors are reshaping the international art market, driving growth in lower and mid-tier price points and seeking authentic, values-driven artistic practices. While Aboriginal art is internationally recognised as one of Australia's most important cultural movements, remote and regional art centres remain underrepresented in global commercial markets due to limited investment in international market development, commercial capability and long-term export pathways. With targeted investment and sustained international engagement, there is significant potential for Aboriginal art centres to expand export income, grow artist careers and strengthen economic returns to remote communities.

Priority Actions

AACHWA recommends increased Federal investment in:

- Showcasing exhibitions and events to promote the work of art centres and their artists, potentially including funding streams exclusively open to First Nations-led initiatives
- Ethical branding and provenance systems
- Export support and cultural diplomacy initiatives
- Tourism partnerships
- Marketing initiatives and training in digital storytelling and online sales platforms
- National and international commercial and market investment including an increase in IVAIS funding for major arts market and presentation opportunities like WA's *Revealed*
- Coordinated national promotion of art centres

CONCLUSION

Aboriginal art centres are one of Australia's great cultural success stories. They are globally recognised centres of artistic excellence and community-controlled cultural enterprise. They deliver employment, preserve culture, strengthen communities, support regional economies and create pathways for future generations of Aboriginal artists and arts workers.

Yet the sector remains structurally underfunded relative to its demonstrated impact, national significance, and value for money (with art centres generating an average of \$2,940,000 in sales annually, while Federal funding has remained at just \$45,000 per centre for the past decade). With Federal funding for art centres effectively diminishing over the past decade, the current fragile state of the global economy and the ever-rising cost of living have pushed Australia's art centres to a crisis point. The next national cultural policy presents a critical opportunity to move beyond symbolic recognition toward sustained structural investment for this uniquely vibrant and globally relevant sector of contemporary Australian culture.

AACHWA urges the Australian Government to prioritise:

- A substantial increase to IVAIS operational funding in recognition of the economic impact and potential of art centres, and the exponentially rising costs of running businesses in regional and remote Australia
- A dedicated national Aboriginal art centre infrastructure fund
- Long-term investment in artistic development, accredited training and career pathways
- Recognition of art centres as essential community-controlled cultural infrastructure with deep impact across culture, regional development, wellbeing, education and tourism
- Cross-portfolio investment aligned with *Closing the Gap*, regional development, economic participation, wellbeing and tourism priorities
- Dedicated new funding streams to support commercial and market development
- Increase IVAIS funding for major Aboriginal arts presentation and market event *Revealed*

With appropriate investment and policy recognition, Aboriginal art centres will continue to deliver profound cultural, social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal communities and for Australia as a whole.

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