

National Cultural Policy Submission

OneSpace Gallery

Submitted: On behalf of a for-profit arts business

Thank you for the invitation to contribute to the NCP development.

Jodie Cox (my co-director) and I have chosen to reiterate our plea to the Australia Government about the development of a specific fund for artwork acquisitions for regional galleries and institutions.

We pitch works to this layer of infrastructure regularly and know just how strapped for acquisitions budget they are. Even the larger ones are now slowing in collections development, even if they have just had major injections of capital funds into new premises or extensions from their Local Governments and State Governments . The extent of this dilemma has been highlighted recently by our experience with a major institution which has no less than four separate reserves of works with us, with no clear pathway to acquire them with identified funds. This has been difficult for our artists, our own cash-flow, and the ability for curators to prepare and curate these works into their planned thematic exhibitions.

Jodie and I have held many roles within government and the not-for-profit and for-profit sectors, and now have many other experiences through our roles as commercial gallery directors in recent years. What we know is how important artist's economic outcomes are for themselves and their families. And how important institutional recognition through acquisitions is to their sense of purpose as professional artists and the encouragement is brings to their ongoing viability and their contribution to the cultural life of our country. It also demonstrates the respect they deserve for what they do, and the value they bring to all our lives and communities.

We would be happy to speak with you more on this topic if you wanted further clarification of our views and we wish you every success in the filtration of the many contributions you will no doubt receive.

best wishes, John S.

John Stafford Gallery Director

AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL COLLECTIONS (ARC) – DEVELOPMENT FUND

Grants are important to make new work, but artwork acquisitions affirm the quality, value and integrity of the output of Australia's creative artists.

WHAT?

A regional collections development fund that utilises and enhances the existing regional gallery infrastructure and professional expertise to boost the collections of regional galleries across Australia, creating increased viability of the visual arts sector.

OUTCOMES

1. Strengthen both regional and national identity - deeper, more meaningful regional collections that tell the stories of the regions and the nation
2. Strengthen the individual artist career path and artwork creation/production - a more viable and sustainable visual arts community through an increase in sales of visual artists' work
3. Strengthen the art market supply chain - increased viability of the commercial gallery network across the country which has flow-on effects both economically and culturally
4. Increase the cultural and economic activity surrounding the visual arts as an art form.

WHY A FUND?

5. Regional galleries have very limited collections funds at present which restricts their ability to tell stories of their region and to build unique collections that attract visitation and enhance tourism opportunities (Strengthen both a regional and national identity)
6. Lever of existing funding and investments - regional galleries have existing infrastructure, systems and professional curatorial and/or gallery staff to develop and manage their regional collection within a State/Territory and National context
7. One current method of collecting in regional galleries occurs through art competitions. This is a very resource intensive method for both individual artists and the regional galleries. It often also precludes or complicates existing commercial commission arrangements between artists and their representative commercial galleries.
8. A dedicated collections development fund model enhances the national demand for visual arts product and further contributes to artists' self-worth and to the national cultural identity
9. Creating greater viability across the visual arts ecosystem – each acquisition of a living artist contributes financially to the individual artist; small businesses that supply/retail their materials (i.e. specialist art materials supply businesses); representative gallery/ies which take a commission; framing companies that mount/frame the work; freight companies that collect and deliver the works; and staff of the acquiring institution which then accessions, conserves, interprets and displays the work in their local collection.
10. Creating quality regional (non-capital city) collections that enhance tourism offerings– providing access to quality artworks for regional communities and their visiting tourists.

HOW?

11. Regional Galleries to apply for funds to the Office for the Arts (OFTA) to build their collections
12. OFTA develops guidelines and ensures that regional galleries have a current collections policy
13. Allow a certain maximum percentage (10%) of funds to be allocated to professional wages of gallery/curatorial staff to acquire and accession the works
14. Provision should also be made for the enhancement of the scheme through national and local private business donor support, as the scheme is predominantly targeted toward the purchase of work by Australian/ local State & Territory artists.

WHO BENEFITS?

- **Regional Galleries** – build unique collections, identity, community, tourism, education
- **Artists** – income, profile, career development
- **Representative Commercial Galleries** – increased viability of commercial gallery network
- **Artist Run Initiatives** – increased viability of Artist Run Initiatives gallery network