

Lyne Walshe

Visual Arts and Design Section
Office for the Arts
Department of Infrastructure,
Regional Development
Transport and Communication

16 December 2020

Dear VADS Members (Visual Arts and Design Section)

RE: Growing the Indigenous Visual and Design Industry

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute to this consultation in a bid to assist the sustainability of the Aboriginal Art in NSW.

In 2006 through no fault of my own a car t-boned my vehicle and wrote it off. Leaving me with a lifelong disability. A neck injury that has decreased the strength in my upper and lower limbs and limited movement in my neck causing chronic pain and mental anguish. Up until this time no compensation has been forthcoming. So, it has been a huge challenge to retrain into an area that will suit my new abilities. I am descendent from Guringai Sydney mob, living in regional Gathang speaking Country. It was due to this accident I had to leave full time employment as a teacher and am attempting to retrain and develop skills in the art industry.

The development of art is proving a very isolating and insecure undertaking, as there is no support close to me and if there is, they are limited in resources and abilities to assist me. In NSW there is such competition for a very small pot of the dollars available. It is so competitive it cannot support any new or diversified enterprises from entering the market. The research and development in this field is a near impossible task for many regional areas. I cannot get domestic help let alone funding for art. Regional areas have proven that they are a creative bunch many times over.

As an independent artist, working in a contemporary art space is difficult when there are no other Indigenous artists to collaborate or confer with on a regular basis, in an environment that offers little support to collaborate and confer with other indigenous artists. A cultural centre that both educates and builds artists skills in practical, legal, grant writing, and selling prospects needs to be established to support our people and the artists in our area. Providing a sustainable career in culture and arts is important for many regional artists and their communities by knowing how to access wider markets both national and international.

Specialist equipment is required that supports individual abilities and takes the physical stress and strength out of the tasks that need to be performed. This allows inclusion for all the community to learn and develop skills that in any other circumstances would not be possible. A small regional gallery that could support artists and provide an opportunity to showcase their work to the ever-

increasing tourists to the area. Without a cultural, educational, skill building and gallery in the community a potential market drives past this possible dissemination point and we all loose and waste an opportunity to increase the productivity, inclusiveness, educational, cultural, and skill development of yet another regional enterprise.

Supporting the same grants every year is a safe option for the granters but, how efficient would it be to allow a substantial amount to be allocated to new and innovative country regions that support a strong community. This strategy would build small and large enterprises, the beginning of building autonomy and self-sufficient hubs for artists in the areas that are far from the town facilities. The regional town hubs cover too large an area, with combined councils this is even larger than ever before. An artist's hub in our area covers the southern end of that council area. An artist's hub in our area would cover around 80 km south and the towns between, north 20 km and the towns between, and west around 69 km and the related towns. That is a lot of isolated and worthy people who deserve a cultural and artistic hub to express and contribute to a therapeutic and creative pursuit that supports mental, physical, and emotional health within our region.

I hope you view this submission with an empathetic mindset that triggers ideas and opens some creative and supportive ideas for a sustainable and developing Indigenous artist community in the bush as always has been and always will be artists, in Australian bush. Again, thank you for this consultation and the opportunity to express my community's views on a sustainable and lasting creative hub and support for our artists in our area.

Yours faithfully



Lyne Walshe

