

Creative Partnerships Australia National Cultural Policy Submission

Creative Partnerships Australia is an initiative of Creative Australia 2013 with a vision to grow private sector support for the arts in Australia. The merger of the Australia Council's Artsupport program with the Australia Business Arts Foundation to form Creative Partnerships was a key recommendation of the 2011 review chaired by Harold Mitchell, *Building Support: Report of the Review of Private Sector Support for the Arts in Australia*. The sustainability of arts and culture in Australia relies on the continued growth of private sector support, initiatives that engage the philanthropic and business communities are at the heart of this vision. The more agile and focused nature of the Creative Partnerships has allowed it to focus on this specific component of philanthropy in arts funding in Australia. This agility has led to the realisation that the business community can also be further engaged in the arts sector. Arts goes beyond financial development to the laying down of shared culture and community. Agility and ease of access for artists are key to this.

With Creative Australia as the starting point for a new cultural policy, then it is clear that the work undertaken to date by Creative Partnerships Australia must play a key role in the development of future policy initiatives. This submission acknowledges the Australian Government's election commitment to roll the functions and funding for Creative Partnerships Australia into the Australia Council for the Arts, with the intention of bringing private sector expertise back into the Australia Council. In that context, we recommend that the Australia Council Act 2013 be reviewed to ensure that the functions include engagement with the philanthropic and business sectors, and also that consideration is given to ensuring that there is representation from the philanthropic sector on the Australia Council Board.

Background and Context

In 2013, Creative Australia consolidated the mission of Australia Business Arts Foundation and Arts Support to create Creative Partnerships. It is our vision that the transfer of this vital work to the Australia Council for the Arts will allow for the growth of private sector support for the arts to persist as an integral policy priority. Retaining what is good about Creative Partnerships Australia, in terms of agility and specific focus of the organisation, along with ease of access and connection to community for philanthropists, business and artists, will be important to retain as the organisations are combined.

Creative Partnership's private sector support survey, outlined in the *Giving Attitude* report, tells us about the pivotal role philanthropy and business play in sustaining the cultural sector. The total value of private sector support for the arts and cultural sector was \$540 million in 2019/20, with total cash support for the arts from donations and sponsorships increasing 8% percent to \$378 million. With details from JB Were's *The Support Report* predicting an increase in funding from Private Ancillary Funds and high net worth individuals across the next fifteen years, there is enormous capacity for the arts and culture to increase our share of private sector support and pave the way to a more sustainable future. These connections with philanthropy and business are intrinsic to laying down cultural connectivity in Australian society.

Since 2013, Creative Partnerships has built a suite of integrated programs and services that directly address these focus areas and have a proven track-record of success for the sector. As fundraising activity is specific to the context and artform in which artists and arts organisations produce their work, a range of initiatives and opportunities for learning and engagement are required.

Pillar One: First Nations

The increased potential for private sector support to fund and promote First Nations stories is vast and should underpin any policy related to fundraising for the arts and cultural sector. There is significant potential in this space the private sector to learn from First Nations artists and First Nations led organisations how best to support this crucial work via donations and business sponsorship. We strongly encourage this as Australia looks to grow its understanding and pride in Indigenous culture as it underpins our Australian identity.

Creative Partnerships is currently piloting a fundraising mentoring scheme for remote Indigenous art centres as part of the Indigenous Visual Arts Action Plan, that we hope will be continued following the transfer to the Australia Council. This and other future initiatives will be enhanced by the expertise in Indigenous arts at the Australia Council.

Pillar Two: A Place for Every Story

Fundraising capacity building and skills development is crucial for any cultural policy that leads to the long-term improvement of financial sustainability for the sector. There is a clear demand for this from artists and arts organisations, with thousands each year accessing the capacity building programs delivered by Creative Partnerships. As pillar two outlines, all Australians are the creators of culture and become custodians of our unique national story. Equipping artists and arts organisations with the ability to clearly their story and hone skills that allow them to reach and inspire donors and business sponsors is vital to the continued delivery of cultural content to Australian and international audiences.

As most artists and arts organisations need to supplement government support with other revenue in order to undertake their work, equipping them with the skills and expertise to attract and maintain private sector support is essential. Capacity building in fundraising has been at the core of Creative Partnerships' programs and services and should be continued when this responsibility is transferred to the Australia Council.

Pillar Three: Centring the Artist

As pillar three states, the role of the artist as worker and creator of culture is fundamental to the sustainability of the arts sector. This can be seen in relation to private sector support via Creative Partnerships' Australian Cultural Fund. The Australian Cultural Fund meets the needs of individual artists and small organisations by providing a platform through which to fundraise, and the incentive for donors to receive a tax deduction for gifts to artists.

The Australian Cultural Fund played a vital role in supporting the artist as worker during the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing a vehicle through which the *National Assistance Program for the Arts* and other crisis support programs distributed over \$1.6 million to artists. Last year alone, artists raised over \$9.5 million via the Australian Cultural Fund. There is great potential to grow this as the Australia Council for the Arts takes over the administration of the fund, especially as new partnerships arise with the philanthropic sector that utilise the fund to administer high-level, multi-year funding to artists.

The work undertaken by Creative Partnerships in capacity building and skills development for artists also supports pillar three, by recognising the centrality of the artist as and recipient of fundraising support services.

Pillar Four: Strong Institutions

Private sector support via donations, sponsorship, in-kind support and volunteering plays a vital role in the cultural sector's funding mix. The future sustainability of the creative industries in Australia is indelibly tied to this income and central to the next generation of cultural production. Creative Partnerships currently fills this role and detailed planning is required to continue to facilitate this engagement. Matched funding, as outlined in more detail in pillar five, provides just one example of a successful avenue for such engagement.

Commonwealth-led initiatives through which the arts and culture can build long-term, meaningful funding relationships with the private sector are central to ensuring this sustainable future. The success of such initiatives as delivered by Creative Partnerships are evidenced by funds raised by the arts and cultural sector, as well as the skills and capacity developed to grow these funds. In total, since 2013, Creative Partnerships has directly supported the Australian arts sector with more than \$60 million through the ACF, matched programs, and devolved funding from the Commonwealth Government; important support that is well placed to continue under the stewardship of the Australia Council for the Arts.

Ensuring that Australian artists and arts organisations have an understanding of and access to best practice fundraising and new funding models is central to the growth of private sector support for the arts. This starts with the collection of relevant and up to date data on current private sector support for arts and culture, via initiatives such as the *Giving Attitude* private sector support survey and report delivered by Creative Partnerships. This research provides crucial insight that allows the sector, and stakeholders such as government, philanthropy and business to understand current trends and practices in private sector support for arts and culture. This understanding is essential to the development of future policy that supports arts fundraising and will lead to the development of new and innovative funding models that specifically serve the Australian cultural sector.

Pillar Five: Reaching the Audience

Matched funding programs, whereby artists and arts organisations leverage Commonwealth funding to build a compelling private sector support campaigns and lay a path for continued engagement with donors. Last year, over \$1.53 million was raised by the arts sector through these programs, with over 2,000 new donors joining a community of arts supporters for the first time. These matched funding programs contribute directly to the realisation of pillar five, in that they enable artists and arts organisations to deliver creative work to audiences across Australia and internationally that simply would not exist if not for the support of the private sector. It is important to recognise that arts supporters are also arts audiences, and so crucial to the continued growth of private sector support for the arts is the delivery of high-quality programming to broad and diverse audiences.

In order to keep Australian arts and cultural institutions strong, a national approach to the financial sustainability of the sector is required. Understanding the specific context of different fundraising environments across Australia, including collaboration with local and state government bodies, leads to a coherent approach to private sector support for the arts. This includes on-the-ground work outside of cities and urban centres, reaching regional and remote communities. The localised support provided by Creative Partnerships' State Offices deliver crucial support for institutions across Australia build on their fundraising capacity and best leverage the specific context in which they operate. Creative Partnerships' State Managers have presence across each state and territory, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the environment of private sector support and the delivery of coaching and advice that inspires more sophisticated and successful fundraising.

Next Steps

As the mission to grow private sector support for the arts will be transferred to the Australia Council for the Arts, we propose that the national cultural policy promote the value of initiatives developed by Creative Partnerships that both drive increased philanthropic and business support for the arts and ensure the arts and cultural sector has the knowledge and expertise to attract and maintain this support. This means utilising the knowledge and expertise currently held by Creative Partnerships Australia to inform the future of Commonwealth-led initiatives related to private sector support for the arts.