

Review of the Australia Council

Terms of reference

The National Cultural Policy will set the framework for Australian Government support for arts, culture and the creative industries for the next ten years. The objective of the policy is to increase the social and economic dividend from the arts, culture and the creative industries. A strong artistic sector producing the highest quality work results in positive social and economic impacts for the nation. The funding delivered to the arts through the Australia Council ensures that high calibre artistic product is made for Australian audiences.

The Australia Council's original purpose was:

to ensure "the best is encouraged and those who produce it are given the greatest opportunity to achieve the highest quality of which they are capable" (*Nugget Coombs*).

The review should assess whether the original purpose remains relevant today. The review will determine the appropriate governance and administrative model to ensure the Australia Council is able to:

- act on funding decisions guided by the overall principle of excellence and artistic merit;
- have a strong and robust arms length peer assessment process for all funding decisions and that the decision making process meets the community's expectations of fairness and transparency;
- be guided by enabling legislation that reflects the diversity of the Australian arts and cultural sector today and, with consideration of emerging creative areas, into the future.

It will do this by examining:

- the benefits and limitations of the current model of the Australia Council for supporting innovation as well as Australia's cultural heritage;
- the *Australia Council Act 1975* and ensuring it articulates a clear role for the Council that reflects the contemporary Australian arts and culture sector;
- the structure of the Council and considering ways to improve internal budget demarcation, grant eligibility criteria and peer assessor diversity to ensure that funding opportunities offered by the Council reflect the contemporary arts and culture sector;
- the respective roles and possible duplication of the Australia Council, Screen Australia, the Office for the Arts and other government funding agencies; and
- appropriate international models and considering what can be learned from them.