

Submission to the Senate Inquiry into recent ABC program decisions

Dear Senators,

I am extremely disappointed in the recent decisions by the ABC to close its acclaimed Natural History Unit and to outsource all TV documentary and drama, and now their plans to axe *The New Inventors* and 'rest' *Collectors* (both stimulating and very informative programs). I believe it is also going to axe *Art Nation* (its only TV arts magazine program) and disband its TV arts unit. This act of cultural vandalism will also seriously diminish the ABC's role as an archivist of important Australian artistic achievements.

I further believe the ABC plans to close TV production units altogether in some states.

The community is rapidly losing the ABC as the innovator and producer of diverse programs of cultural value and intellectual integrity that it is meant to be. Instead it is being transformed into a platform for programs that are made by the same companies that make commercial television content, and with an eye to commercial sales after first screening on the ABC.

Apparently changes that will reduce Radio National arts programming by almost one-sixth are also being considered at this time.

All of this seems to me to be privatisation of the ABC by stealth. We do not need more commercial television we need an independent, innovative and strong ABC to continue to educate, entertain, inform and challenge the Australian public. To achieve this I expect the ABC to be a producer of innovative quality programming in all areas, and as such I want:

1. the ABC to be less dependent on outsourced programming
2. the ABC to be funded and rebuilt so that it has strong specialist units to produce high levels of high quality and genuinely local in-house programming in all program genres on radio, TV and online
3. a public broadcaster that is focused on diversity and quality, not ratings.

Yours sincerely,
Carmel Cowan