

Ausdance Talking Points to Accompany Presentation on July 3

Pillar 1 First Nations First:

We would like to see more support for First Nations dance across the sector.

This absence is particularly noted in regard to First Nation cultural practice where dance is central to expressing cultural identity. Our programs at Ausdance facilitate and support cultural knowledge, education and practice.

We want to see more than just one flagship First Nations Dance Company.

First Nations grassroots community groups, independent artists, collectives we are connected to were not aware of this consultation and require support.

Types of support required (which is also applicable to non-First Nations artists):

- More opportunities for First Nations people to engage and access dance.
- Career pathways at every stage of life (including fellowships, paid internships, secondments, and mentorships).
- Funding to support through different appropriate methods (e.g. multi-year annual project and also proposing a multi-staged project).
- Schools, teachers and educational institutions need funding, training and opportunities to partner with other organisations/independent practitioners to be able to provide, embed and access cultural knowledge in dance.
- Greater acknowledgement of cultural masters in contributing to and assessing areas of school/tertiary curriculum.
- Appropriate remuneration which acknowledges their significant contribution.
- Investment in the cultural maintenance with groups across the country that provide support to strengthen their capacity and prepare them for future opportunities.

Pillar 2: A Place for every story:

Ausdance recommends prioritising the contribution dance artists of all cultures and all abilities make. The policy emphasises visual arts and music. Dance is a major contributor

to cultural storytelling and is one of the most diverse art forms. Its profile should be more explicit in the NPC.

Dance Studios

Australia's small business dance studio is an enormous and vital part of the dance ecology. Social and recreational dance includes diverse cultural dance practice but has been traditionally overlooked by Australia Council.

We ask how Creative Australia is going to connect to diverse community dance practice?

- Implement processes that measure the impact of creative and cultural dance activities.

Art Therapy

Recent metadata analysis reveal dance therapy and dance for wellbeing is the most effective from all forms of art-based therapy, particularly amongst Parkinson's and dementia patients.

Dance therapy and dance for wellbeing should be central to investment. Revive only refers to investment art and music therapy. Ausdance Network are actively involved with these groups through their local memberships, partnerships, programs and databases.

Other Areas that have been affected by defunding reinvested into:

- Youth dance practice
- We want to ensure that dance is considered within the Regional Arts Fund. Audiences and practitioners and living and working in regional and remote Australia.
- Disabled and neurodiverse dance companies (Restless Dance ,MADE, Ripe Dance)

Pillar 3: Centrality of the Artist

Artist as Creator and Worker

We support government's commitment to include artists in the Review of Modern Awards and minimum standards in the arts sector. We look forward to dance artists and workers being involved in discussions with newly created Centre for Arts and Entertainment Workplaces.

A 2017 report by Australia Council and other creative industries research out of the UK indicated that dance was the most precarious of all arts employment and dance artists are some of the lowest paid of all arts workers.

Dance is a female dominated art form/industry. We re-emphasise the major pay gap for female workers that will need addressing more definitively when the government is considering new levels of funding for Creative Australia.

- We would like dance practitioners to be remunerated consistently with other disciplines.
- Clearly delineate dance practice from other activities included under 'Fitness and Recreation' award.

Arts Education

As founding members of the National Advocates for Arts Education, we are keen to see NAAE's recommendations fully implemented.

However, implementation of the national Arts curriculum remains a problem: Teachers are not sufficiently well supported to teach The Australian Curriculum. The Arts, a solution is to acknowledge that Arts subject associations should deliver teacher development programs with subject-specific expertise. Ausdance runs Dance Artist in Schools programs in many states providing opportunities for dance artists to be employed by primary and secondary schools.

- We ask for a review of national ATAR systems which moderate Arts subjects down in relation to their STEM counterparts, devaluing the efforts of talented hard working young people who are therefore dissuaded from pursuing a career in creative arts.
- Recognise the centrality of dance education and training to the Australian dance ecology. Studio, school, and tertiary dance education sectors are integral to the success of the wider dance ecology. The skills learned through dance are transferable and sought after in careers outside the dance industry.

Pillar 4 Strong Cultural Infrastructure / Institution

Data Collection

We support improved data collection for arts and culture and better collaboration with agencies charged with collecting such data.

Unique to the Dance sector, the statistics for dance participation and engagement is divided between different government agencies including Australia Council for the Arts, ABS Sport and Recreation and State of Play.

Consolidating the data will give a truer reflection of how extensive dance engagement is amongst the population. Dance is in the top three most popular organised form of physical recreation engaged.

Safe Practice

We strongly support the action to create safer workplaces/spaces for artists (facilities, cultural and child safety). Ausdance network is heavily invested in making safer artistic environments for dance students and youth dance practitioners, having pioneered and trademarked guidelines around Safe Dance Practice and child safety.

We have identified a need for a review of work safe spaces for dance training and performance.

Invest in Ausdance to continue development of accreditation and industry standards for safe dance practice (platforms to activate and maintain best practice in dance teaching activities to improve the safety of dance engagement for adults and children).

- Will the Centre for Arts and Entertainment workplaces extend their review to private dance studios who looking to government for greater industry regulation?
- Will there be intersection of Creative Australia with non-government funded/commercial areas of the dance sector? Small businesses? Dance Studios? In reviews of safe dance practice.
- Establish the Arts Personal Services, Retail, Tourism and Hospitality Jobs and Skills Council (works with Jobs & Skills Australia). Is this going to be new, or how does it relate to the Independent Reference Committee for Arts & Culture or Industry and Advisory Boards (look at work and safety).

Infrastructure supports artists.

More investment in existing and new arts organisations/arts centres/dance festivals that can umbrella a diverse range of dance artists providing them with access to performance opportunities, safe dance spaces, and administrative and workplace support. As examples, there is urgent need in SA for stable funding for DanceHub SA (in transition funding) and The Mill, Ausdance SA, who provide support for many individual artists. We have many more examples which we could provide you with for each state and territory.

Over the past decade there has been decreasing support for small to medium dance companies and independent dance artists. Since 2008-2012, the funding support for the S2M dance companies has halved. In 2008-2012, there were 16 key organisations which received multi-year funding.

Pillar 5: Reaching/Engaging the Audience

More support to promote across all scales and types of dance. Provide deeper avenues to engage with community and audiences.

In addition to dance audiences, the government should promote the extensive and wide-ranging health and wellbeing benefits that dance engagement and recreation has (dance as a health and wellbeing activity across the life span).