

Dear Sir Madam,

please find here a submission for the inquiry into Australia's creative and cultural industries and institutions.

I am a scientist and mother of 3 children. I work in both science and the creative industries.

As a scientist I can see how important creativity is to children and adults, as makers and as viewers, or in both capacities and I'm so saddened by the way the Arts has been progressively sidelined, defunded and politicised across the last 8 years.

I am deeply concerned that Arts funding is becoming increasingly a tool to buy votes (as prior to the most recent election), and to direct artistic output in line with political wishes (as with the most recent Covid relief funding).

The arts are a powerhouse of jobs and growth:

- The creative and cultural industries employ 645,000 Australians
- The creative arts alone employ 194,000 people – four times the number employed by the coal mining industry
- Before the pandemic, creative industries jobs were increasing at twice the rate of the rest of the Australian economy.

But these jobs don't exist in isolation. When an artist makes a work they buy supplies from local shops, use local tradespeople. Artists' spending circulates in the local economy, doubling the returns economically and socially.

Artists' works don't exist in isolation. Each and every highly recognised artist (every painter, sculptor, musician, writer), was once an early career artist, who relied on support from the wider arts ecology, in the form of exhibition opportunities, funding, workshops etc. The current arts ecology has been stripped bare and the opportunities for support are sparse. The Government is starting the ecology, and weakening an industry that until now has produced world class work.

In summary, I wish for a country that has a vibrant, recognised and supported arts industry. For the benefit of our nation's economy, for my children's future and for the art and cultural mark we can leave on the world.

yours sincerely Penelope Cain