



CIRCUITWEST

28 August, 2020

Committee Secretary
Senate Committee on Australia's Creative and cultural industries and institutions
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

PO Box 867
Subiaco WA 6904

Chair
Guy Boyce

Executive Director
Ryan Taaffe

Dear Committee Chair and Members

CircuitWest is the service organisation for the performing arts in Western Australia. We bring together a sector that builds and reflects community and cultural life. First and foremost, CircuitWest stands for inclusive, thriving communities, enlivened with rich cultural expression and engagement. CircuitWest connects dozens of venues and artists to thousands of people in communities all over Western Australia and we have a major role in the well-being of our state. Like other states and countries that well-being has been tested and is in great need of being repaired.

We do not put forward a submission based on the intrinsic impact of the arts alone. It is important to measure the economic impact of arts and culture, but it is equally important to recognise and measure the public good or community development outcomes that the sector is responsible for. Whilst providing an outlet for entertainment the performing arts sector also enhances community cohesion and resilience through an increase in social capital, civic pride and pro-social behavior, morale of the community, reduced social isolation, economic development and population attraction/retention. Governments at all levels play a pivotal role in building cohesive, livable, prosperous communities and the performing arts is a natural enabler of those outcomes. Our research tells us that Government values the performing arts sector as a sector that generates community wellbeing. Government at all levels has evolved over a considerable period and has a significant role in engaging with the community to plan for the future across the broad spectrum of economic, social and environmental wellbeing. The performing arts sector has also changed over many decades and radically over the last ten years. The sector is now seen as having strong alignment with community building and community development/wellbeing.

CircuitWest represents the range of stakeholders in the performing arts sector venues, producers, artists, technicians, Local Government and is a key delivery partner with the State Government in a statewide capacity building program for the performing arts. The performing art sector is an ecology and this ecology is severely weakened if any of its components cease to exist or if there is less of them. We risk the loss of jobs, skills and people in these areas and the communities will lose access to arts and culture. Venues will become empty pieces of infrastructure that are underutilised and unavailable for artists and producers to generate income and make themselves more sustainable and for the core community/public good outcomes will remain unachieved.

As we move forward from COVID_19 every child needs to be able to dream, every towns superstar need a stage to play on and everyone who has been faithfully staying at home need to have a chance to one day go back to their favourite seat and enjoy the great creativity of Australia. In same way the footy fans have waited with patience and maturity with the expectation that there will be a sport to go back to, the same goes for performing arts fans.

I attach a series of video Vimeo links to short videos that speak to the importance of these organisations, people and institutions in terms of social and economic impact importance.

Performing Spaces

A resource for local government to enhance community wellbeing through the performing arts.

<https://vimeo.com/340611001>

Merredin Helps Wheatbelt Families Thrive with Performing Arts

Cummins Theatre Merredin shows how performing arts for families is an essential part of liveability in regional communities

<https://vimeo.com/447419080>

How Arts Narrogin Used Performing Arts to Connect Its Elders

Arts Narrogin introduces Take Your Seats – to improve the lives of the town's seniors and bring them into the community where they belong.

<https://vimeo.com/446373868>

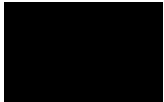
How Harvey handled one of the biggest challenges to people in rural towns

The performing arts team at Harvey Recreation and Cultural Centre, along with partners from the Shire, the WA College of Agriculture and Headspace show how performing arts can change lives and help with serious community issues.

<https://vimeo.com/446732564>

I am happy to speak to this submission further.

Kind Regards



Ryan Taaffe
Executive Director
CircuitWest