

The ABC should support the arts and excellent programs like The New Inventors

Thank you for the chance to contribute to this inquiry. Mark Scott is misleading when he suggests that the changes to the arts' programming are as a result of trying to best honour the Charter obligations about supporting the arts. The ABC continues to open platforms and channels for which they have no funding. The proposed changes to the arts' unit and internal production will have serious implications for further generations of Australians. With the convergence of technology we are now experiencing it is clear that content rights will become even more valuable. By denying the ABC the opportunity to recoup costs on content made by the ABC the current ABC management is ensuring that even less Australian content will be broadcast by the ABC. By giving content rights to those serving commercial imperatives the ABC is bringing into question its own independence. It is less expensive to produce content internally. By relying on expensive co-productions the ABC will overall produce less Australian content, and will broadcast less Australian content. There is nothing in the ABC Act or Charter to specify that the ABC must create content, or create content outside of Sydney or Melbourne. By closing down the internal production capacity of the ABC outside of Sydney and Melbourne, and changing the ABC from a creator of content to a distributor of content the current ABC management throws into question the future of the ABC. When some years from now the ABC is only a distributor of content, and broadcasts little Australian content, and that content reflects Sydney and Melbourne culture alone, what will be the purpose of continuing to fund a national broadcaster?

The arts in Australia deserve support from the ABC. Taxes are given to the ABC to do this. The New Inventors supports science, ingenuity, and the arts. These programs should be supported. If the ABC has over reached itself, it should question if a repeat channel such as ABC2 is necessary. The ability to make content all over this country, reflecting the Australian culture in all its variety, and to make excellent programs such as The New Inventors: that is necessary.

Yours faithfully,  
Mr Matthew Scott