

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2015**

**Communications Portfolio**

**Australia Council**

**Question No: 58**

**Australia Council**

**Hansard Ref: Written, 30/10/2015**

**Topic: Artist in residence properties**

**Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:**

1. Are the Council's properties overseas, used for Artists in Residence, presently occupied? Which ones? By whom?
2. Who actually owns those properties? What plans are there for their future? Are they to be sold?
3. How were those properties acquired? By purchase? When? For what price? Or by gift or bequest? From whom?
4. What other properties are held by the Council, by lease or other arrangements? Are those arrangements being continued? If not, what are the savings being realised?

**Answer:**

1. The Artists in Residence program which places professional practising artists in residence in Australian schools is distinct from the Australia Council's International Residencies Program. Please refer to responses to QoNs 45 and 46 for more information.

The Australia Council owns\* three of the properties used for its International Residencies Program: BR Whiting Library, Rome; Keesing Studio within the Cité International des Arts, Paris and a second studio within the Cité International des Arts, Paris.

Writer Paul Hetherington is currently undertaking a residency at the BR Whiting Library in Rome.

Writer Ursula Dubosarsky is currently undertaking a residency at the Keesing Studio within the Cité International des Arts. Visual artist Justine Khamara is undertaking a residency within the second studio at the Cité International des Arts.

2. The Australia Council owns\* three of the ten properties used to deliver its International Residencies and will continue to use the properties for the Program. Please refer to response to QoN 46 for more information.
3. The Keesing Studio in Paris was leased to the Australia Council in 1985 for 75 years through a bequest by the late Nancy Keesing. The Keesing Studio is within the Cité International des Arts in Paris.

The second studio within the Cité International des Arts was leased to the Australia Council for a sum of 260,000 francs in 1985 by La Fondation de La Cité International des Arts until

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2060. This is subject to a lease between the Cité International des Arts and Ville De Paris (City of Paris) which also ends on that date.

The BR Whiting Library was bequeathed to the Australia Council in 1991 by Lorri Whiting, wife of writer B.R. 'Bertie' Whiting.

4. The Australia Council owns the Australian Pavilion in Venice, within the Giardini della Biennale (Biennale Gardens) complex. The new Australian Pavilion was opened in May 2015, and is used for the Australian exhibition as part of the Venice Art Biennale and Venice Architecture Biennale in alternate years. The Pavilion project began with a \$1 million investment by the Australia Council which has been used to leverage \$6.5 million in private sector support. The land on which the Australian Pavilion is built is held on a rolling five year lease with the City of Venice, as with all national pavilions within the Giardini complex.

\*These three residencies are referred to as "owned" because they are identified on the Australia Council's balance sheet as an asset. This includes the BR Whiting Library in Rome which is owned by the Council, and the two studios at the Cité International des Arts in Paris which are on a long lease hold until 2060.