

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO

**Group: 2**

**Program: 2.1**

**Question No. BE15/080**

**Senator Collins asked the following written question from the 27 and 28 May 2015 hearing:**

1. How much of the money being taken from the Australia Council to fund the NPEA will be diverted from arts grants to fund the duplication of administrative functions currently fulfilled by the Council?
2. Will the NPEA be exempt from the efficiency dividend?
3. What analysis or business case has been conducted to ensure there is no replication of services or systems?
4. What channels of appeal are being established to ensure transparency in the distribution of funding through the NPEA?
5. In 2013-14, \$97m was available through the Australia Council to fund the small to medium and independent sector. In 2015-16 this funding is \$75.2m. This represents a 30% cut. How does the Minister envisage the new Program will ensure that creative, innovative new works and skills (creative and technical) continue to be fostered in areas that traditionally have provided this capability for the wider industry?
6. The small to medium companies are in the process of being assessed under a new 6 year grant application process through the Australia Council. This new framework was launched last year by the Minister. This funding cut will reduce the funds available to support many of those companies and puts the assessment process in limbo. The Australia Council has announced it has suspended this Program. How will the Ministry address this in the short term so that the sector has some certainty regarding their futures?
7. Will there be any additional assistance given to workers whose positions within Small to Medium arts organisations become untenable as a result of the uncertainty caused by the establishment of the NPEA?
8. What consideration has the Ministry given to potential job losses in arts organisations stemming from the decision to establish the NPEA?

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

1. The 2015-16 Budget transfers departmental funds of \$3.965m over four years (2015-16 to 2018-19) from the Australia Council to the Ministry for the Arts.
2. Yes.
3. The National Program was developed in the 2015-16 Budget process.

4. Guidelines for the National Program are being developed in accordance with the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines. Information on complaints and how they will be dealt with will form part of the guidelines.
5. It is anticipated that organisations of all sizes will be eligible to apply for National Program funding. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the National Program will be open to a wider range of organisations than the current Australia Council grants program, allowing a more diverse group of applicants to benefit.
6. The Australia Council has publicly stated it will honour the current contracts of multi-year funded organisations until their conclusion at the end of 2016.
7. Please see the response to question 6.
8. Please see the response to question 6.