

Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts

Answers to questions on notice

Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates, October 2008

Outcome: 4 **Question No:** 149
Output: 4.1
Division/Agency: Australia Council
Topic: Australia Council – emerging artist funding
Hansard Page ECITA: 134 (20 Oct)

Senator Birmingham asked:

We are talking about a \$6.6 million figure over four years at present. What funds previously were given to young and emerging artists?

Answer:

The Australian Government has allocated funds to specifically support young and emerging artists since 1996. Total Australian Government funding for young and emerging artists through the Australia Council is summarised below:

Title of Program	Years Funded	Amount
The Emerging Artists' Program	1996-97	\$500,000
	1997-98	\$1,000,000
	1998-99	\$1,500,000
	1999-00	\$1,250,000
	2000-01	\$1,250,000
Young and Emerging Artists Program	2001-02	\$1,250,000
	2002-03	\$1,250,000
	2003-04	\$1,250,000
	2004-05	\$1,250,000
	2005-06	\$1,250,000
	2006-07	\$1,250,000
	2007-08	\$1,250,000
TOTAL		\$14.25 million

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Outcome:	4	Question No:	150
Output:	4.1		
Division/Agency:	Australia Council		
Topic:	Sydney Theatre Company - income		
Hansard Page ECITA:	134 (20 Oct)		

Senator Birmingham asked:

Is the primary income stream of the company government grants or box office receipts or otherwise?

Answer:

The primary income stream of Sydney Theatre Company is box office receipts, which in 2008 is expected to represent approximately 62 per cent of total income.

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Outcome:	4	Question No:	151
Output:	4.1		
Division/Agency:	Australia Council		
Topic:	Australia Council – Indigenous expenditure		
Hansard Page ECITA:	134 (20 Oct)		

Senator Birmingham asked:

Turning to the Indigenous expenditure and allocations for the Australia Council, why is the council receiving \$3 million less in grants for Indigenous specific measures in the budget this year?

Ms Keele - The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board received \$3 million in what we call strategic initiative funds, which went for a period of three years from inside council. Those will be ending at the end of this budget year. That is why the budget shows \$3 million less. I would have to get you the detail on what the initiatives were for, but they have made an intervention and that has carried out what it was meant to do. It was not meant to go on.

Senator Birmingham - What types of programs were being funded there?

Answer:

In 2005, the Council established a three to four year Strategic Initiatives Program which provided additional funding to three key strategic focus areas. Indigenous art was one of the areas which received this additional funding. The variance in indigenous funding from 2007-08 to 2008-09 of \$2.8 million, as provided in the Council's Portfolio Budget Statement AGIE table, reflects the payments for these initiatives peaking in 2007-08 with the initiatives winding down in accordance with their established timelines.

Specific programs funded under this initiative include:

Showcasing the Best Strategy

To provide international presentation opportunities for Indigenous artists through long-term international market development.

Artists in Work Strategy

To increase the participation of Indigenous people in the arts sector through employment opportunities such as traineeships, scholarships, employer incentives and general positions.

The Other Side Of The Coin Strategy

To protect and promote Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property.

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Celebrations Festival Strategy

To provide support for iconic Indigenous cross-artform cultural festivals around Australia, including the development of business plans for identified festivals.

Indigenous Philanthropy Strategy

To develop and implement an Indigenous philanthropy mentoring program to increase philanthropic fundraising by Indigenous arts organisations.

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Outcome:	4	Question No:	152
Output:	4.1		
Division/Agency:	Australia Council		
Topic:	Australia Council – Indigenous Arts		
Hansard Page ECITA:	135 (20 Oct)		

Senator Birmingham asked:

What programs is the council running to support Indigenous arts now?

Answer:

The Australia Council supports Indigenous arts through the programs of the artform boards, the Arts Development division's support mechanisms (research, skills development, international audience development etc) as well as through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board's funding programs include:

- [Fellowships - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts](#)
- Key organisations multi-year grants will be offered in 2009
- [International performing arts markets - travel fund](#)
- [Indigenous arts worker's program grant](#)
- Presentation and promotion
- [Skills and arts development](#)
- [International residency Cite Internationale des Arts](#)
- [New work](#)
- [Red Ochre Award](#)
- Music bound quick response travel fund

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Outcome:	4	Question No:	153
Output:	4.1		
Division/Agency:	Australia Council		
Topic:	Australia Council – Visual Arts and Craft Strategy		
Hansard Page ECITA:	135 (20 Oct)		

Senator Birmingham asked:

Why have programs relating to the Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy (VACS) been cut from \$6 million in funding to \$5.3 million in funding?

Answer:

The total funding for the VACS in 2008/09 is \$6.114 million as set out on page 31 of the 2007/08 Portfolio Budget Statements for the Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Portfolio, an increase of \$1.14 million from 2007/08. Of the total \$6.114 million, \$5.289 million is administered by the Australia Council. The remaining \$0.825 million is administered by the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts for the Contemporary Touring Initiative and an Indigenous art centre projects component.

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Outcome:	4	Question No:	154
Output:	4.1		
Division/Agency:	Australia Council		
Topic:	Australia Council – Annual report		
Hansard Page ECITA:	Written Question on Notice		

Senator Birmingham asked:

If the Australia Council annual report has not yet been tabled, when will it be tabled and was any consideration given to having the annual report ready in advance of Supplementary Estimates as a courtesy?

Answer:

The Australia Council annual report was tabled in the Senate on 29 October 2008 and the House of Representatives on 10 November 2008, meeting all requirements of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* and Senate procedures.

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Outcome: 4 **Question No:** 155
Output: 4.1
Division/Agency: Australia Council
Topic: Australia Council - Staff
Hansard Page ECITA: Written Question on Notice

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How many permanent staff recruited since the budget estimates?
2. What level are these staff?
3. How many temporary positions exist or have been created since budget estimates?
4. Since budget estimates, how many employees have been employed on contract and what is the average length of their employment period?
5. Have staffing numbers been reduced as a result of the efficiency dividend and/or other budget cuts?
6. If so, where and at what level?

Answers:

1. Five
2. All employees other than the CEO are employed under Section 41 of the *Australia Council Act 1975*. There is no APS level equivalent. The Australia Council employs people in a classification structure from Bands 1 to 6 (with Band 1 being the most junior grade). Members of the Australia Council's Leadership Team are employed on Common Law contracts. Of the five people employed in this period, four were employed at Band 3 classification (roles include Program Officers and Section Coordinators) and one was employed at Band 2 classification (Administration Officers).
3. Eight.
4. Since budget estimates, 18 employees have been employed on contract, with the average length of employment period being 1.6 years.
5. The Australia Council has reduced its staff profile from an FTE of 145 to 122.
6. The reduction in FTE is comprised of 10 common law positions that had either reached their end date or where the incumbent had resigned and was not replaced. It included one Executive Director position. The remaining 13 positions were offered redundancies, five of which were Band 2 with the remaining eight being Band 3 positions.

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Outcome: 4 **Question No:** 156
Output: 4.1
Division/Agency: Australia Council
Topic: Australia Council – Razor Gang
Hansard Page ECITA: Written Question on Notice

Senator Birmingham asked:

7. What discussions has the Australia Council had with the Razor Gang Mk II?
8. Has the Razor Gang indicated any cuts/savings to be made by the Australia Council?

Answers:

1. The Australia Council has not had any discussions with the Department of Finance and Deregulation or the Expenditure Review Taskforce.
2. The Australia Council has not had any discussions with the Department of Finance and Deregulation or the Expenditure Review Taskforce concerning any savings proposals.

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Outcome: 4 **Question No:** 157
Output: 4.1
Division/Agency: Australia Council
Topic: Australia Council – Special accounts
Hansard Page ECITA: Written Question on Notice

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What special accounts does the Australia Council currently hold? How much is in these accounts?
2. Does the Australia Council use the interest from these funds to fund ongoing operations?
3. Has the Razor Gang Mark II given any indication about the future of these special accounts?

Answers:

1. The Council has a 'Donations Account' which was established pursuant to the Register of Cultural Organisations (ROCO) guidelines. It allows the Australia Council to receive tax deductible gifts and donations in support of the arts. The balance of this account as at 31 October 2008 was \$432,355.
2. No.
3. The Australia Council has not had any discussions with the Department of Finance and Deregulation or the Expenditure Review Taskforce concerning these accounts.

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Outcome: 4 **Question No:** 158
Output: 4.1
Division/Agency: Australia Council
Topic: Australia Council - Underspending
Hansard Page ECITA: Written Question on Notice

Senator Birmingham asked:

9. How many programs were underspent in 07-08 financial year?
10. What requests have been made to roll-over underspends to 2008-09?
11. Were these requests successful?

Answers:

1. The Australia Council routinely rolls over funding from one year to the next due to timing differences between commitment of funds and expenditure of funds. In 2007/08 the Australia Council recorded a deficit of \$1.871 million.
2. Under the Budget Process Operational Rules, agencies must seek prior approval of the Finance Minister to budget for an operating loss for any financial year. The Australia Council received the Minister for Finance and Deregulation's approval for an operating loss in 2007/08.
- 3.
4. Yes.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates, October 2008

Outcome: 4 **Question No:** 159
Output: 4.1
Division/Agency: Australia Council
Topic: Australia Council – Media monitoring and communications
Hansard Page ECITA: Written Question on Notice

Senator Birmingham asked:

12. How much has been spent on media monitoring to date this year?
13. What communications programs has the Australia Council undertaken, or are planning to undertake?
14. For each program, what is the total spend?
15. Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event.

Answers:

1. The Australia Council has spent \$20,922 on media monitoring from 1 July – 13 November 2008.
2. In 2007-08 the Australia Council undertook the following communications programs; the 2008 grant information program which involves the production and printing of the 2008 Arts Funding Guide and development of website content; the Books Alive 2008 promotional campaign to promote books and reading, including project management, publishing, publicity and advertising costs; the 2007 Venice Biennale involving promotion and publicity at a major contemporary art exhibition that takes place in alternate years in Venice, Italy.
3. In 2007-08 total program spend for 2008 grant information program - \$49,834; Books Alive 2008 - \$555,932; and 2007 Venice Biennale - \$28,433
4. Refer to parts 2 and 3 above

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Outcome: 4 **Question No:** 160
Output: 4.1
Division/Agency: Australia Council
Topic: Australia Council - FOI
Hansard Page ECITA: Written Question on Notice

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. Has the Australia Council received any advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
2. How many FOI requests has the Australia Council received?
3. How many have been granted or denied?
4. How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests?

Answers:

1. No
2. One during 2007-08.
3. One FOI request was granted during 2007-08.
4. None

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Outcome:	4	Question No:	161
Output:	4.1		
Division/Agency:	Australia Council		
Topic:	Australia Council - Reviews		
Hansard Page ECITA:	Written Question on Notice		

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How many Reviews are currently being undertaken in the Australia Council?
2. When will each of these reviews be concluded?
3. Which Reviews have been completed since Budget Estimates?
4. When will the Government be responding to the respective reviews that have been completed?

Answers:

1. Four.
The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board (ATSIAB) is reviewing its key organisations funded on a triennial basis.
The Literature Board is reviewing key organisations funded on a triennial basis.
The Major Performing Arts Board is conducting the third review of the Major Performing Arts Inquiry (MPAI) Funding Model.
The Australia Council's Arts Development division is reviewing the Major Festivals Initiative in association with members of the Confederation of Australian International Arts Festivals.
2. The ATSIAB's key organisations review will be finalised by the end of 2008.
The findings of the review of literature infrastructure funding will be presented to the Literature Board in November 2008. The Literature Board will continue to consult with the sector with a view to the arrangements for literature to be in place by the end of 2010.
The third review of the MPAI funding model will be completed by mid 2009.
The review of the Major Festivals Initiative will be completed by mid 2009.
3. The music, dance and theatre boards' reviews of small-to-medium organisations funded on a triennial basis.
The Australia Council's review of its internal operations from February to April 2008. The outcomes of this review were put in place from 1 July 2008.
The Major Performing Arts Board's Evaluation of the Orchestras Review Funding Package.
The Arts Development division has reviewed the 2007 Books Alive campaign.

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4. Music, dance and theatre: the Australian Government has been advised of the outcomes of the reviews. The Australian Government is not required to respond. Third review of MPAI funding model: it is expected the review results will be considered by the Australian and State Governments in the second half of 2009. Books Alive: The Australian Government is yet to be advised of the outcomes of the review.