



Arts to fight in political limbo

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THE Federal Election was a non-event for the arts in Australia, prompting arts industries groups to iron out a policy view.

Both Liberal and Labor were criticised for the lack of significant policy announcements by ArtsPeak, the national arts lobby group.

The policy vacuum has given the major performing arts industry bodies a chance to weigh in with their own policies, particularly because of the post-election confusion.

Australian Major Performing Arts Group, Live Performance Australia and the Australian Performing Arts Centres Association have called for

extra stimulus for new Australian works. The group says performing arts spending by the government sector is 1.5 cents a day per Australian but the sector has more than 30,500 jobs in an industry that generates more than \$1.1 billion, or a return of around 800 per cent on the government investment.

It calls for increased support for developing and presenting new Australian work with a fund of \$5 million a year, with no more than \$250,000 spent on individual development projects.

It wants to expand the support for regional and international touring. It argues that the Playing Australia touring fund of \$6.3 million is massively oversubscribed every

year and should be bolstered by a further \$2 million a year. The tiny international touring fund should be increased from \$500,000 a year to \$10 million over a three-year cycle.

It says Australia's performing arts venues are not achieving their potential because of a lack of skilled technical staff and proper resources, and it wants a Performing Arts Industry Training Force to work with government and the venues for a coordinated response.

Arts Industry Council of SA co-chairs Alison Dunn and Tricia Walton, said yesterday that with a hung Parliament, and the Greens in control in the Senate, the arts industry was in a good position to campaign for the policy changes.