



- ARTS -

THE HEART OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Government and the Arts and Cultural Sector Working Together

Strategic Directions

for

South Australia

December 2003

FOREWORD

We are very pleased to release this initial directional response by the South Australian Government to the key issues raised at the Arts Summit in July 2003. Our thanks are extended to everyone who contributed their time and their thinking to the Summit itself, to the preceding focus groups, and to all those who wrote with comments and views before and after the Summit.

This document marks a milestone in the partnership between the Government and the arts and cultural sector – a partnership which was flagged when the Summit was announced.

The framework outlines a set of guiding principles that will be applied in policy development and to actions arising from the Arts Summit. The release of this document will be followed by further consultation with the sector, as we build on the partnership, form longer-term strategies, and plan our priorities for Government action and investment.

When the South Australian Tourism Commission – in partnership with Arts SA and key arts sector leaders – recently adopted ‘South Australia: Heart of the Arts’ as the theme to attract interstate visitors to our outstanding array of arts events, they reflected the unique nature of the arts in South Australia. Over many decades, with the support of successive Governments, South Australia has become renowned for the calibre of its artists, the sheer excellence of their work, the quality of its arts and cultural infrastructure and for the dynamism and artistic integrity of our events.

The overwhelming message from the Arts Summit is that investment in the creation of art should be at the core of the Government’s strategy for the arts. With such strong artists, companies, infrastructure and events, Adelaide has the potential to become a unique centre for contemporary arts practice within Australia. This means supporting work which takes risks and extends creative boundaries.

Engendering a culture of creativity requires investment in creativity, whether in industry, science or the arts. This is an accepted role of government. Also recognised is the obligation to extend opportunities for creative expression to individuals and to their communities, in order to build social and cultural, as well as economic capital.


The capacity of our community to reflect on itself through understanding the past underpins the role of our collecting institutions – libraries, museums and art galleries – and is vital to our cultural fabric and development of identity. Artists play a vital role in the development of our distinct identity and in the celebration of diversity through our many festivals.

Fostering creativity from an early age through involvement in arts activity creates an environment in which self-esteem and respect for the expression of others can flourish. Opening up these opportunities across the community is vital. We know that engagement in the arts increases children’s cognitive, social and personal competencies, and it is these skills, and the ability to innovate and generate new ideas, which provide the necessary foundation for what is fast becoming a knowledge-based economy.

The future is exciting. We look forward to building on the foundations of the Arts Summit to work in partnership with the arts and cultural sector in creating this future for South Australia.



Hon MIKE RANN MP
Premier and Minister for the Arts



Hon JOHN HILL MP
Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts

GOVERNMENT POLICY PRIORITIES

In 2013 South Australia will be a place of acknowledged national leadership in the arts and where artistic practice, the creative process and our cultural institutions are valued as an integral part of our society, accessible to all and recognised as a key driver of our economy.

This vision for the arts in South Australia is shared by the Government and the arts and cultural sector itself.

It complements the Government's overall priorities of Social Inclusion, Sustainability and Economic Development.

The Government's commitment to social inclusion is well served by our arts and cultural institutions: access to the works of art that tell our stories and introduce us to other cultures is free; access to our natural history and Indigenous culture is free; and access to repositories of knowledge to meet the information demands of the 21st century is free. Our performing arts companies are providing more and more low cost and family friendly entertainment. Special funding programs have been created to support the building of social capital and community capacity.

Our determination to build a sustainable South Australia involves not only the more obvious considerations of environmental sustainability and energy efficiency but also addresses the sustainability of communities and community life. Adelaide's arts and cultural services are at the core of the infrastructure that underpins life in this State – for residents, workers and visitors.

The creation of art by artists strengthens our capacity to explore our own identity and is central to the economic value of the arts. The Government's commitment to economic growth also recognises that building a culture of creativity will make a significant contribution to translating South Australia's underlying advantages into superior economic performance, through the generation of new ideas and the facilitation of innovation, experimentation and the creation of new products and services.

The Government believes that to promote the State the arts must be reinvigorated to be the flagship they once were, and so the Government will build South Australia into a place that invites experimentation, risk-taking, creativity and excellence.

We will achieve our vision for South Australia through six strategies:

- **Government investment in artists and the making of art**
- **Arts in education**
- **Investment in infrastructure and cultural heritage**
- **The creation of 'place'**
- **Partnerships and collaborations**
- **Recognition of the economic value of the creative industries**

The following guiding principles will inform the implementation of these strategies:

- **give priority to the creation of art**

Investment in the creation of art will be the core strategy underpinning arts funding.

- **listen to our young people**

A 'hip hub' culture and employment opportunities will attract to Adelaide young world travellers and encourage our talented, creative and energetic young people to stay in South Australia.

- **recognise and celebrate cultural diversity**

Communities of non-English speaking background and artists whose work speaks of their respective cultures and experiences are among South Australia's most valued assets.

- **value and promote Indigenous arts and cultures**

South Australia has rich traditions in its diverse Indigenous communities. Aboriginal people use traditional and contemporary art to tell their stories. Development support for Indigenous artists and their practice is vital to ensure that this important and unique aspect of South Australian culture is sustained and promoted.

- **support arts and heritage in regional SA**

Arts and cultural programs in regional South Australia provide support for regional artists, promote cultural festivals and events, and help to build communities and reduce isolation.

- **ensure that our arts and cultural heritage are accessible to people with disabilities, and that artists with disabilities are supported**

South Australia has a vibrant, creative and unique arts and disability sector. All arts organisations are committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have good access to their activities and events and a wide range of opportunities for artistic practice.

- **meet people's needs – matching the arts to working life and leisure time**

With an ageing population, and with many working parents, presenting the arts at appropriate times and in accessible places is becoming increasingly important.

- **build communities**

Across all spheres of endeavour, whether social, economic or in 'place making', the arts have relevance – leading to cross-fertilisation of ideas, engage new groups of people, and prompt new thinking.

- **work across State Government Agencies**

Around the world the arts have proved to be an effective means of delivering governments' core business and responsibilities: in health, education, economic development, social sustainability, and in the justice system. South Australia's arts and cultural agenda will work across all sectors of Government.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN ARTISTS AND THE MAKING OF ART

Investment in the creation of art will be the core strategy underpinning arts funding. In an increasingly interconnected and globalised world it is only the development of an authentic sense of identity which will differentiate us as a creative state.

Excellence in the arts is driven by the work of artists and arts organisations, seeking to explore new territory and push new boundaries. Research and development is the dynamic creative 'engine' of the arts.

All artists aspire to excellence. Whether in opera or in community cultural development, it is excellence that makes art a unique experience for audiences; and it is the pursuit of excellence that takes artists to the height of their creative powers.

Intrinsic and important parts of the arts ecology are the broader cultural and heritage sectors. These are vital to the State's cultural infrastructure – and are a source of creativity and innovation.

There will never be enough public funding to wholly subsidise the making of art. Government has to arrive at a view of how best to provide support to individual artists and arts and cultural organisations. Public funding should assist the making of art in strategically useful ways, and assist it to best find its audience. Culture is fluid, and the sector's institutional structure should not expect to, nor be expected to, remain the same forever.

Research and development is at the heart of the creative industries, particularly the knowledge-based industries, including screen-based and emerging audio-visual research and development. South Australia will be a dynamic and innovative leader in the creation of art and in the creative industries, with Adelaide a city renowned for supporting contemporary arts practice, for our innovative education system, and our 21st century knowledge-based institutions such as the South Australian Museum, the State Library and our excellent network of public libraries.

Funding for risk, experimentation, creativity and excellence

It is rare for a career in any sphere of human endeavour to follow a simple path of success building on success. Science, for example, is built on experimentation, and it can take many attempts and false leads before accurate deductions can be made and theories proven. Research and development is as necessary in the arts as it is in science and in the commercial world.

All artists want to see their work or their project succeed, but some attempts to extend boundaries, take risks and break new ground may not always hit the mark. Artists need the freedom to extend their practice by embarking on new challenges, and have funding bodies accept that with risk there is the chance of failure – but also the chance of enormous reward.

While endeavouring to support success as well as innovation, the Government acknowledges that risk and experimentation exist as part of the development of an artist's practice.

The Government's Arts and Cultural Policy will support R&D and innovative arts practice and ensure that in its funding programs the making of art is a priority outcome.

Peer assessment and artform development

Peer assessment is the approach used by most of Arts SA's Industry Development programs to ensure that decision making with respect to funding recommendations is at arm's length from Government and the bureaucracy. Members of peer assessment panels are appointed to assess applications rigorously against the criteria for each program and to share knowledge of artform practice.

The principle of peer assessment is endorsed by both the Government and the arts sector.

While the Government encourages collaboration and innovation across artforms, it recognises that different artforms have different developmental needs and expectations. The Government through Arts SA will provide various means to strengthen artform practice, such as through the provision of additional specialist expertise in the assessment process and the provision of developmental opportunities such as forums, seminars and mentorships.

The Government's Arts and Cultural Policy will create opportunities for strategic development in various artforms.

ARTS IN EDUCATION

Exposure to the arts in childhood enhances all aspects of learning, and for most people creates a lifelong interest and engagement in the arts, whether as practitioner or as audience.

Research shows that participating in the arts from an early age through a structured arts education program increases school retention rates and enhances academic and social outcomes and life skills of young people.

The Government's ARTS*smart* arts education strategy aims to secure a central role for the arts in the intellectual and cultural development of our young people. The strategy addresses two audiences: arts educators with learners from birth to year 12 in schools and preschools; and the performers, creators and administrators who contribute to the arts in South Australia.

ARTS*smart* will achieve

- continuing engagement of children and young people in arts education
- partnerships between arts educators and arts practitioners
- arts experiences for lifelong learning.

Education and training is also important for our young people, both urban and regional, seeking to develop sustainable careers as artists and arts administrators and for our Indigenous artists in remote communities as they develop their arts centres as viable businesses.

In its tertiary arts education and management programs Adelaide has the right ingredients to become an international centre for arts and arts management learning, a creative 'hub' or laboratory, which fosters skills development as well as producing graduates with the ability to either get or create jobs.

Arts SA has initiated an Indigenous story-telling project with the Department of Education and Children's Services to enhance literacy amongst Indigenous children; a new cultural awareness theatre project; and a new Indigenous Arts Alliance in association with AusDance, each of which will make a significant contribution to both the reconciliation process and to improved social outcomes for young Indigenous South Australians.

The Government's Arts and Cultural Policy will ensure that:

- ***The opportunity for participation in and access to the arts as a part of every child's school experience***
- ***The arts are part of life long learning for South Australians***
- ***The arts can make a contribution to the improvement of school retention rates, particularly for Indigenous children***
- ***More artists can achieve sustainable careers.***

INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The infrastructure which underpins arts and cultural activity in South Australia includes talented and committed people; vibrant organisations; a wide variety of buildings, spaces and venues; a pool of equipment; and museum collections which together with their heritage buildings, are South Australia's treasure house and most valuable single asset.

Our cultural institutions, offering as they do free access to our human cultural heritage, play a vital role in a socially inclusive society. This is greatly enhanced by South Australia having the National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Tandanya, as a focus for Indigenous arts and culture together with the Australian Aboriginal Cultures Gallery at the South Australian Museum.

South Australia's successes in the arts heritage sector include the quality and national significance of the collections at the Art Gallery of South Australia and the South Australian Museum; a State Library for the 21st century; outstanding Directors; Artlab Australia's export initiatives; the diversity of the History Trust's museums; and the conservation of colonial building stock.

Our cultural heritage is a key component of the State's tourism industry.

Organisations ranging from the South Australian Film Corporation and Country Arts SA to the Australian String Quartet and the Contemporary Art Society also contribute to the breadth and depth of the infrastructure that enables us to:

- initiate and present special events such as the Adelaide Festival of Ideas, the Adelaide Film Festival, FUSE (Music Business Adelaide) and The Ring Cycle
- retain in Adelaide international and national events such as WOMAD and the Australian Performing Arts Market
- provide free access to world class art, natural history, ethnographic, social history and reference collections
- present a diversity of live performance – in music of all kinds, dance and drama
- provide heritage conservation services nationally and internationally.

Included in this infrastructure are the significant numbers of arts producers, presenters, private galleries and businesses that generate opportunities and income for South Australian artists.

South Australia has a major investment in its cultural infrastructure, which will be preserved and enhanced for the benefit of all South Australians.

The Government's Arts and Cultural Policy will

Address the maintenance of the State's arts and cultural infrastructure

Strengthen the role of the heritage services sector in the State's economic framework.

THE CREATION OF 'PLACE'

Urban and regional development

Contemporary art can play a key role in telling a community's stories, and in the 'creation of place', adding layers of meaning and aesthetic interest for local residents and for visitors. Good design contributes to sustainable communities with their own unique identity, places which are accessible and user friendly, and integrated with the transport system.

Public art

Public art enhances the quality and visual appeal of South Australia's urban and regional environments, builds community pride and involvement in public infrastructure and the natural environment, and creates positive and interesting experiences for visitors, tourists, business travellers and residents alike. For Adelaide, it enhances our reputation as a sophisticated, creative, welcoming and interesting city.

Local councils, developers and urban planners are increasingly recognising that public art projects play a key role in community building. Recent projects at Westwood and Mawson Lakes developments exemplify these positive social outcomes.

The Government's Arts and Cultural Policy will support the integration of high quality design principles into government strategies and charters and facilitate the development of public art in South Australian communities.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

The Government's relationship with the arts and cultural sector overall is one of partnership and collaboration.

The arts and cultural sector is invaluable to South Australia in the contribution its people, institutions and services make to our economy, to making South Australia a socially inclusive society and to creating a stimulating environment.

In turn, the Government invests in the sector's people and institutions so that they can create art, stimulate innovation and deliver excellence.

Within the sector itself partnerships across artforms produce exciting outcomes.

Other valuable partnerships are:

Across all levels of Government

Investment in the creation of art, in the delivery of arts and culture by arts organisations, and in cultural infrastructure, is made in different ways by each of the three levels of Government in South Australia – Commonwealth, State and Local. Increasingly, each level perceives its involvement as a partnership not just with the artist/s, or arts organisation, but with each other.

Local Government and the arts

A new level of collaboration has been created between the Local Government Association (LGA) and Arts SA. Both organisations, together with Country Arts SA and representatives from a number of councils (collectively known as the Creative Communities Network), have jointly funded the development of an arts and cultural policy for the LGA, together with guidelines for local Councils throughout the State on how to develop their own policies, and set up 'best practice' arts projects.

The Government is keen to see increased opportunities for participation in the arts at a local level, and notes that councils have increased their level of funding for arts and cultural projects in the past few years. New opportunities for Local Government to engage with local human services, artists and communities have been created through the new Partnerships for Healthy Communities initiative funded through Arts SA.

Arts and tourism

South Australia's unique calendar of festivals and major events is a great drawcard for tourists and visitors, and this is well recognised in the support given by the SA Tourism Commission (SATC) to so many of these events. The SATC actively promotes our arts and cultural festivals in interstate markets as well as internationally, using the theme 'South Australia: Heart of the Arts', in recognition of the fact that South Australia leads the way in so many areas of the arts, as well as being renowned for our artistic quality and leadership.

This partnership has already produced outcomes such as the Hip Guide to Adelaide – to promote Adelaide's attractions to young people – and the SA Discovery Card, which offers 'behind the scenes' tours and experiences at key South Australian cultural and lifestyle attractions.

Through the further development of this partnership, Arts SA will contribute to a new cultural tourism strategy for the State.

Arts and sustainability

Sustainability is a term that has most commonly been used in relation to the natural and built environment and economic development. However in recent years there has been a growing recognition that human development and the creation of social and cultural capital are vital to the well-being of a society and as such should be supported to achieve sustainability.

Artists endeavour to create sustainable careers in the arts. Public funds can be applied strategically to provide support at key points in career development. Artists, too, need to develop audiences and markets for their work, often in collaboration with producers and presenters such as gallery directors, visual arts organisations, performing arts producers and companies, and publishers.

Employment opportunities, especially for graduates, are needed in the arts and cultural sector. Jobs can be generated by building new markets and new audiences for South Australian work, and through the initiative of artists and the wider arts sector in establishing themselves as businesses, however small.

The Government's Arts and Cultural Policy will facilitate partnerships which utilise the arts in delivering the core business of government in areas such as health, education, correctional services, and social inclusion; and which in turn will assist in building a sustainable arts sector.

RECOGNITION OF THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

South Australia already has an international reputation as a 'creative place' and as a centre for the arts.

We will retain and enhance this reputation, and the competitive advantage it gives us, by facilitating the growth of our creative industries – those industries in which creativity is the business enterprise.

People attracted to work in creative industries generate diversity and, in turn, attract other creative people to work in knowledge intensive industries.

The creative industries include music, literature and publishing, visual and performing arts, multimedia, film production, design, architecture, advertising and fashion. Like any other successful industry, they create jobs and create wealth.

South Australia's Framework for Economic Development recognises the value of creativity:

No amount of R&D or education will suffice unless there is a creative and responsive culture.

Creativity is also recognised as providing vibrancy and encouraging young people to remain in, or go to a particular location.

The Government's Arts and Cultural Policy will promote recognition of the economic value of the creative industries, and will strategically target investments to optimise the growth of creative enterprises.