



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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JobKeeper payment to keep the spotlights shining in the arts sector

Support available to the cultural and creative sector under the JobKeeper payment could be worth billions, the Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said today.

“We know COVID-19 is having unprecedented effects on our artists, arts workers and the entire sector. This measure protects jobs, supports individuals and hands a lifeline to organisations during this challenging period,” Minister Fletcher said.

“An arts organisation’s most important asset is its people – actors, musicians, singers, dancers, stage crew, front of house workers including ushers and security guards and box office staff, roadies and many others.”

The JobKeeper payment provides organisations with \$1,500 a fortnight, per eligible employee, for six months. It will support many arts organisations to keep their people on the books while normal operations are suspended – ready to bounce back quickly when theatres, live music venues, museums and cultural institutions reopen their doors.

More than 600,000 Australians are employed in the cultural and creative sector. Preliminary modelling by the Bureau of Communications and Arts Research shows that total support to the sector could be in the billions, depending on how many organisations are eligible and choose to take it up, and how many eligible employees they have.

Most organisations in the arts sector are expected to meet the eligibility requirement of revenue having fallen by 30 per cent or more, given that performances have been suspended and venues closed.

Modelling by the Australia Council estimates that the JobKeeper payment will make available in excess of \$100 million of additional funding for arts organisations funded under the National Partnership Agreement or that receive Four Year Funding.

“I have been in close contact with cultural and creative sector leaders and they have shared with me the challenges faced by many across the sector. I thank them for their passionate advocacy. With the Office for the Arts and the Australia Council, we will continue to work together with the sector as this measure is implemented.” Minister Fletcher said.

The JobKeeper Payment commences immediately, will be backdated to 1 March and the first payment will be received by employers in the first week of May.

Eligible employers include arts organisations structured as companies, partnerships, trusts, sole traders, not-for profits and charities. Eligible employees include full time, part time, casuals employed for more

than 12 months and self-employed.

I encourage all eligible companies in the arts and creative sector to register their interest in the Jobseeker payment on the Australian Taxation Office website. <https://www.ato.gov.au/general/gen/JobKeeper-payment/>

For more information about COVID-19 and arts support visit: www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update

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