



THE HON MICHAEL McCORMACK MP
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

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

MEDIA RELEASE

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Targeted Support for Indigenous Arts, Regional Arts and respected charity Support Act

To help the Arts sector deal with the devastating impact of COVID-19, which has seen performances cancelled, venues closed and many performers and crew hit by the loss of gigs, the Morrison McCormack Government is committing \$27 million in targeted support across three particularly vulnerable areas of specific need.

In regional Australia, many artists and venues have been hit hard by the COVID-19 driven shutdown, coming as it does after the devastating summer bushfires.

The Government is providing \$10 million to help regional artists and organisations develop new work and explore new delivery models. The funding will be delivered through Regional Arts Australia's Regional Arts Fund.

In remote Australia, self-isolation due to COVID-19 means Indigenous arts centres are unable to receive visitors, and the income that many artists rely on to support themselves and their families has dried up.

To support Indigenous artists and arts centres, the Government is providing \$7 million in additional funding. The funding will be delivered under the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program.

At this difficult time, well respected industry charity Support Act is doing important work providing financial support and counselling to artists and crew who have seen their work and livelihoods dry up overnight.

The Government is providing \$10 million to Support Act, to enable it to extend its important work across the arts sector.

These targeted measures come on top of the Government's JobKeeper initiative and expanded JobSeeker payment.

JobKeeper is expected to deliver support worth billions of dollars to arts organisations, allowing them to

keep workers on the payroll and connected with the organisation. The coronavirus supplement to the JobSeeker payment means arts sector workers who have lost their income are eligible to receive \$550 a week, with a removal of the usual assets test and waiting period.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack said the package would focus on regional and Indigenous communities reliant on arts and culture to drive local tourism.

“The Federal Government is doing everything possible to save lives and livelihoods – this is further support we are providing to industries and communities hardest hit by this pandemic,” Mr McCormack said.

“Regional Australians are resilient and we will get to the other side of this crisis together.”

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said this package will support the important work of Indigenous, regional and music industry artists, workers and organisations, helping them continue to operate and contribute to Australia’s creative and cultural sector once the COVID-19 crisis passes.

“Indigenous art centres and fairs are often major drawcards for tourism and local economies, and without this activity many communities have been severely affected. Artists and regional arts organisations are feeling this pain too and we know that this additional relief is needed. The funding available through the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program and Regional Arts Fund will help support artists and creative and cultural activity over the coming months,” Minister Fletcher said.

“Our live performance industry has also felt the impact of closures and cancelled performances. The charity Support Act will receive funding to immediately bolster its incredible work providing crisis relief to artists, crew and arts workers across the arts sector who have been affected by cancellation of gigs and performances across the country. We have chosen to back Support Act, and I hope that others consider contributing to this worthy cause too – if they are able – to help extend the important work it does even further.

“I would like to thank the cultural and creative sector leaders for their ongoing and close engagement with myself, my office and the Office for the Arts. The many views from across the arts sector have helped inform these specific relief measures announced today and the tailored support being provided.”

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

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