



## THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### **\$35 million additional support for arts workers and companies**

The Morrison Government is providing extra funding to two proven COVID-19 support measures for arts workers and arts companies, with an additional \$20 million to go to Support Act and an additional \$15 million to go to the Sustainability Fund.

This additional funding will enable Support Act to broaden beyond its current support of the music sector: it will now offer support to artists, creatives, production and technical crew across the arts sector.

A further \$15 million for the Sustainability Fund will assist in supporting significant Australian arts organisations to continue operating during this period of severe disruption. It takes the total size of the Fund to \$50 million, with just over \$20 million already allocated.

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said this funding comes during a particularly difficult period for the sector.

“The challenges faced by those in the arts and entertainment sector are affecting the mental health of many in the industry. That’s why charities like Support Act are crucial at this time,” Minister Fletcher said.

“This latest commitment brings our total funding provided to Support Act to \$40 million, to allow them to respond quickly and effectively to the continuing needs of live performance artists, crew and music workers including sound and lighting technicians, managers, booking agents, promoters, venue workers and roadies still affected by COVID-19.”

To the start of August, Support Act had provided 4,506 grants totalling \$10.939 million. They have also supported the sector through more than 1,700 counselling hours through the Wellbeing Helpline and provided other mental health support programs to industry.

To date, the Sustainability Fund has delivered support to ten leading arts organisations including Opera Australia, the Queensland Ballet and NIDA, to continue their activities and provide a pathway to their ongoing viability.

Creative Economy Taskforce member and opera singer, broadcaster and psychologist, Ms Greta Bradman, said this new funding for Support Act and the Sustainability Fund is welcome news at a difficult time.

“It will provide crucial mental wellbeing and financial support to enable Australian workers and organisations in the creative sector to continue contributing to the Australian community and economy,” Ms Bradman said.

With this additional lifeline, the Creative Economy COVID support package has increased to \$475 million, from an original \$250 million in 2020.

The Morrison Government is investing more than \$1 billion into the arts and creative sector in 2021-22.

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