

2016 NSW Aboriginal Arts Fellowship Assessment Meeting Report



Arts
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Assessment Meeting Report

NSW ABORIGINAL ARTS FELLOWSHIP

Closing Date: Monday, 25 July 2016

Panel Meeting Date: Thursday, 8 September 2016

The NSW Aboriginal Arts Fellowship is offered by the State Government to enable professional Aboriginal artists at any stage of their career to undertake a self-directed program of professional development.

The Fellowship is open to professional artists from all art forms, including dance, design, digital arts, history, Aboriginal arts, literature, music, theatre, screen, community arts, curatorial and the visual arts.

The purpose of the Fellowship is to assist Aboriginal artists in acquiring new skills, knowledge and networks, whether through facilitated formal or through informal learning opportunities. The Fellowship is not intended to be used solely for the development or delivery of work/s, but is a chance for artists to consider what activities and opportunities would support both personal development and career advancement at all stages of their career.

The value of the Fellowship is **\$30,000**.

ACTIVITIES

Types of activities funded

Activities could include a combination of:

- international or national travel
- mentorships or internships with recognised professional practitioners or organisations
- residencies at institutions or organisations
- an outstanding opportunity of significance to the applicant's practice
- short-term courses, workshops or other training at recognised institutions or organisations
- research and development
- creation of new work (the Fellowship is not available solely for the creation of new work).

Assessment Criteria

Applications are assessed by an Aboriginal peer panel against the following criteria:

- the demonstrated high artistic merit of the applicant's work
- the potential for the proposed program to significantly benefit the applicant's professional practice
- the program is well planned, achievable and has a budget that is realistic, accurate, and represents value for money.
- Each criterion is equally weighted.

ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

The assessment panel noted the diversity art forms and deep cultural knowledge amongst the applicants for the 2016 Aboriginal Arts Fellowship. Regional representation was also proportionately high.

The panel noted that, while it was encouraging to see an increase in the number of emerging artists applying to the fellowship, there were very few senior artists represented.

Many proposals were strongly rooted in cultural practice, featured a diverse mix of activities and the professional development outcomes included mentorships with experienced practitioners, residencies for learning and writing and travel for research and significant opportunities. Many applications also included an allowance for time to create new work.

The panel commented that the stronger applications included relevant support material, activities appropriate for stage of career, demonstrated good planning and clearly articulated the professional development benefits of their program.

Applicants are reminded to:

- Include only appropriate support material
- Letters of support in particular should be relevant to the project
- Clearly express the rationale for the project and seek assistance in developing a realistic budget. Many budgets lacked sufficient detail, were difficult to analyse and had not allocated an adequate percentage of the projected expenditure to the artists and/or the artistic process.
- Seek assistance in preparing their application from Arts NSW
- Seek assistance from local Regional Arts Organisations or other key sector organisations if appropriate
- Contact Arts NSW staff to discuss their application prior to submission.

FUNDING STATISTICS

GRANT CATEGORY	Fellowships
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	15 eligible applicants
SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS	1
HIGHLY COMMENDED	1
AMOUNT FUNDED	\$30,000

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT

2016 NSW ABORIGINAL ARTS FELLOWSHIP CATHY CRAIGIE

Biography

Cathy Craigie is a Gamilaroi and Anaiwon woman from Northern NSW. Cathy is a writer, administrator and arts leader with over thirty years of professional practice experience having held positions in Government and community sectors at local, state and national levels and internationally.

Cathy is the author of a number of significant women's stories including her first work 'Koori Love/Murri Love' 1993, produced by Belvoir Theatre followed by a production directed by Wesley Enoch.

Cathy also developed a one woman play, 'Forever' as part of a Sydney Festival production of women's plays (later produced for ABC radio) and has recently had two children's books published by Oxford Press.

Cathy will undertake research with local Gamilaroi community Elders on the story of the "Seven Sisters" a universal tale based on the observation of historical kin systems and protocols that maintain Indigenous values and social cohesion. She will then travel to New Zealand and New Mexico to work with First Nations writers on similar stories from their local contexts.

The Fellowship will enable Cathy to continue to work as an arts leader to develop her craft and create a significant manuscript on the story of the "Seven Sisters" and on the process of local and international artistic and cultural exchange.

Fellowship Proposal:

Cathy Craigie's proposed program includes self-directed research, involving visits to key collections in Australia and in the United States of America; participation in local and international conferences; attendance at writers' festivals to develop new literary and publishing networks; and creation of new work.

Panel Comments

The panel's commended Cathy Craigie's application for its high artistic merit and noted the innovation of her program and her extensive career to date. The panel commented that her proposed program will expand her skills as a writer/researcher and substantially increase her professional networks.

Cathy's program of international exchange will allow her to consolidate her career as an Aboriginal arts leader and extend her practice into the next phase of her career.