

Friday, 24 April 2020

## COVID-19 support for NSW small-medium arts and screen sector

Create NSW has today announced new funding initiatives and the repurposing of existing funding totalling \$6.34 million to support independent artists and small to medium arts, screen and cultural organisations impacted by COVID-19.

Executive Director Chris Keely said that the sector has been an unavoidable casualty of restrictions aimed at ensuring the safety of the community, but Create NSW is working proactively to protect the livelihood of our sector.

“As soon as the impacts emerged, we acted to convene Roundtables for close consultation with both the sector and our representative Artform Boards, and these measures follow on from flexibility for funded recipients which have already been communicated to the sector,” Mr Keely said.

“Today we are announcing accommodation assistance, new support for creatives to engage with online platforms, and a suite of new initiatives that provide employment and development opportunities, and new audience engagement and skill-sharing for arts, screen and cultural organisations and individuals across the State.

“As we continue to look at further support across the sector, we are repurposing as much as we can within existing means to focus our attention on supporting the thousands of individuals and smaller organisations during this unprecedented time,” Mr Keely said.

### Key elements of the COVID-19 measures announced today include:

- **Over \$1 million for accommodation assistance** – through a six-month rent and outgoings waiver that will immediately support 38 arts organisations housed across the Create NSW arts property portfolio of buildings.
- **\$450,000 for new COVID-19 Support Round** – a new arts funding program specifically targeted at those impacted by COVID-19. Funding is available across four program categories (*Digitise*, *Creative Koori Digital*, *Health and Well-being* and *Regenerate events*) to digitally deliver support for community and audience engagement outcomes in the immediate and long term – including new events that will premiere once restrictions are lifted.
- **\$700,000 for new Screen Slate Development Fund** – NSW production companies and producers can apply for a maximum of \$100,000 to develop a slate of three or more projects for TV Drama, Factual, Features and Online.
- **\$350,000 funding increase to Small Project Grants** – this quick response grant mechanism offers grants from \$500 to \$5,000 towards projects. Allocated funding has been increased, and the program re-aligned to address those coping with COVID-19 impacts on artistic careers.
- **\$180,000 for new rounds of Creative Leadership** – six new fellowship opportunities (each valued at \$30,000) will be offered for individual artists and groups to experience digital residency programs, professional virtual placements and professional development provided by leading NSW organisations including the Art Gallery of NSW, the State Library of NSW, Sydney Youth Orchestra, Hayes Musical Theatre and Byron Writers’ Festival.

- **Further arts industry support – Over \$2 million** in funding for Round 2 of Create NSW's *Annual Organisations*, *Creative Koori Projects* and *Projects* will proceed, plus the *Independent Arts and Cultural Organisations (Multi-year)* and *Local Government Arts and Cultural Programs* will also continue.
- **Further screen industry support – Over \$1.5 million** delivered over coming months through existing Early and Advanced Development Funding, Production Finance, PDV Rebate, Screen Industry and Audience Development and Strategic Opportunities rounds of screen funding programs.
- **Webinars, factsheets and how-to videos** – to support well-being and facilitate skills development for arts, screen and cultural workers during self-isolation, Create NSW will produce a range of webinars, factsheets and how-to videos to demystify digital platforms for performances, exhibitions and event presentations, and explain digital meeting and information platforms.

Create NSW has also partnered with the Australia Council, other state funding bodies and independent research consultants Patternmakers and WolfBrown to fund a research project investigating impacts of COVID-19 on the arts and cultural sectors. The study's findings will be shared with the sector to help inform response and recovery.

Create NSW continues to consult with the sector and will communicate further updates and roundtable opportunities at [www.create.nsw.gov.au](http://www.create.nsw.gov.au). **Further details of the support measures are outlined at** <https://www.create.nsw.gov.au/funding-and-support/covid-19-initiatives/covid-19-support-for-small-medium-arts-and-screen-sector/>.

---