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MEDIA RELEASE

Guidelines released for new arts fund

20 November 2015

The Government has today released final guidelines for a new arts program *Catalyst - Australian Arts and Culture Fund* (Catalyst).

The purpose of Catalyst is to support Australian arts and culture by complementing existing mechanisms. The Commonwealth Government provides substantial support to the arts through programs delivered by:

- The Australia Council - the Australian Government's principal arts funding body supports excellence in the arts through grants and initiatives for individual artists, groups and small, medium and large arts organisations;
- Creative Partnerships Australia - the Government's body for encouraging private sector support for the arts from business and the philanthropic sector, administering Australian Cultural Fund grants to individuals and organisations, sourced from philanthropic donations, together with matched funding programs; and
- The Ministry for the Arts - the Australian Government's principal source of arts and culture advice, administers a range of programs promoting access to arts and cultural activities, supporting Indigenous arts and culture, Australian screen production and performing arts training, and protecting Australia's movable cultural heritage.

Catalyst is intended to support innovative ideas from arts and cultural organisations that may find it difficult to access funding for such projects from other sources and could include gallery, library, archive, museum, arts education and infrastructure projects.

The program aims to forge new creative partnerships and stimulate novel ways to build participation by Australians in our cultural life. It will enable access to high quality arts experiences in regional communities and international activities that achieve cultural diplomacy objectives, and recognises the essential role of small to medium arts organisations.

Catalyst will be administered by the Ministry for the Arts and will work in a complementary way with the Australia Council, Creative Partnerships Australia and other programs.

As a result of consultations and feedback on the draft guidelines for the proposed National Program of Excellence (which Catalyst will be in the place of), the Government has decided to repurpose \$32 million over the forward estimates to the Australia Council. This will take the total Australia Council funding to \$783 million over the four years.

The rebalancing of funds will provide the Australia Council with greater capacity to meet the needs of small and medium organisations and is also in recognition of its role as the Commonwealth's vehicle for supporting individual artists.

There will be \$12 million annually available through Catalyst.

Catalyst funding will be available from three streams: partnerships and collaborations; innovation and participation; and international and cultural diplomacy.

The new Catalyst fund is open to small, medium and large arts organisations at a national, regional and community level. It will support projects that demonstrate innovation, increase access and participation in the regions and enhance our international reputation. Funding can also be used to help attract further private sector support to arts projects including infrastructure.

Applications will be assessed with the assistance of independent assessors. More than 300 assessors are registered with the Ministry for the Arts including artists, curators, philanthropists and audience members.

The guidelines and information on application opening dates are available on the Ministry for the Arts website at arts.gov.au/catalyst