

INVESTING IN THE ARTS

A FUTURE
FOR ALL OF US



INVESTING IN THE ARTS ▲

Building a state of creativity

WA's creative industries employ around 53,000 Western Australians and contribute \$3.3 billion to our state's economy each year¹, forming the bedrock of who we are.

But despite the immeasurable value the arts add to our lives, the WA State Government invests less than 0.5% of its overall budget into the arts² and has failed to ensure the sector's sustainability. The result is low pay and poor job security for artists and arts workers, who are being left behind and hit particularly hard by the economic impacts of COVID-19.

The Greens recognise the creative sector's substantial economic and social contribution to our state – as well as the profound crisis it currently faces – and have a plan to build a state of creativity by investing strategically in the sector.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Future-proof the WA arts and culture sector**
- ▲ **Establish WA as a hub for creativity and the arts**
- ▲ **Increase opportunities for and visibility of First Nations art and culture**
- ▲ **Increase investment and opportunity in regional and remote arts**
- ▲ **Develop a suite of arts and mental health initiatives**

FUTURE-PROOF THE WA ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR

The WA arts industry has been underfunded and undervalued for years, and COVID-19 has exposed just how vulnerable it is.

The arts and recreation sector has been among the hardest hit economically, losing around 23% of jobs and \$48 million in value between March and May 2020 alone³.

While these impacts have been felt most deeply by those directly employed in the arts, all Western Australians will feel these losses for many years to come.

Stable and reflexive funding is critical to safeguarding the sector's future. But current funding mechanisms undermine the sector's sustainability and its ability to undertake long-term planning. The WA arts job market has already shrunk by 3.8% a year compared to 3.2% growth nationally⁴.

By investing in arts research, innovation and education, the Greens will safeguard the future of the arts sector and improve its resilience to outside impacts.

We will work in tandem with local governments and other relevant bodies to ensure our creative industries rebuild, thrive and continue to grow.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Allocate \$3 million per year to support long-term planning** and a financially stable and sustainable arts sector to offset the decreasing Lotterywest dividend
- ▲ **Directly invest \$25 million per annum⁵ into arts sector job creation**
- ▲ **Increase funding for research, development and artistic innovation by \$4 million⁶**
- ▲ **Commit \$1.5 million⁷ to embedding arts-based learning in all schools**
- ▲ **Strategically increase community arts participation**, particularly for outer metro and CALD populations, by investing \$4 million over four years⁸
- ▲ **Invest \$200,000⁹ to develop creative partnerships with local government** to restore WA art and culture programs

ESTABLISH WA AS A HUB FOR CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS

Western Australia has a rich, vibrant and distinctive arts scene, boasting a multitude of talented artists, world-class performances and innovative festivals.

But WA is frequently overlooked as a genuine cultural destination, and the lack of opportunities force many artists to leave the state.

The arts represent just 2.5% of total employment in WA, while the sector's national rate is considerably higher at 3.7%¹⁰. It's clear that successive state governments have failed to invest enough in creative initiatives to develop our industry and enhance our state's profile.

We need to do more to attract creative projects to WA, and strategically communicate the achievements of our arts sector to a wider audience.

The Greens will establish WA as an incubator for arts and culture, creating much-needed opportunities and sharing the incredible fruits of our industry with the world.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Invest \$400,000¹¹ to promote WA arts** to the rest of Australia and the world
- ▲ **Create more opportunities for young and emerging artists**
- ▲ **Strategically attract more arts projects to WA**, including the investment of an initial \$3 million¹² into a WA screen production hub
- ▲ **Support local residency and masterclass programs**



INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND VISIBILITY OF FIRST NATIONS ART AND CULTURE

First Nations art and culture is a rich tapestry of heritage, storytelling and connection to country. It's also critical to the social fabric of First Nations communities, playing a significant part in cultural identity, healing and wellbeing.

But opportunities for First Nations peoples in the arts are limited, with just 0.8% of people employed within WA creative industries identifying as Indigenous¹³. On top of this, WA's current public art and education initiatives fail to adequately safeguard and centre First Nations culture and practices – a failure on the part of the WA Government, which invests less than 2% of its arts budget into First Nations art¹⁴.

Through a dedicated First Nations arts and culture strategy, **the Greens will introduce a suite of transformative artist and community-led initiatives to strengthen First Nations arts practice and cultural expression in Western Australia.**

We will ensure the future sustainability of ancient stories and practices, and increase access to professional and market development for First Nations practitioners and their work.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Commit to a feasibility process for an Aboriginal Arts Centre in WA**
 - ▲ **Increase participation and access for First Nations artists and people**, and improve professional development opportunities
 - ▲ **Embed First Nations culture and art into the school curriculum**, prioritising Indigenous youth arts development strategies
 - ▲ **Create more community-led and designed opportunities for Western Australians to connect to First Nations arts and culture**
 - ▲ **Implement 'forever funding' models to provide artists with secure, long-term funding** they can rely on to flourish, particularly for regional and remote communities
 - ▲ **Improve artist connections, opportunities and self-determination** by working with individuals, organisations and communities to develop regional and state-wide arts networks that work in their interests
- ▲ **Invest \$4 million¹⁵ in a First Nations arts and culture strategy** to promote arts, language and culture practice and visibility in WA

INCREASE INVESTMENT AND OPPORTUNITY IN REGIONAL AND REMOTE ARTS

Arts and cultural programs play a key part in the livelihoods of regional areas, where more than a fifth of WA's population live¹⁶. But access to the arts is significantly lower for those living regionally than it is for metropolitan audiences¹⁷, and current government investment doesn't focus enough on regional projects created by regional people told from a regional perspective¹⁸.

As a result, regional and remote areas suffer from low arts participation and a lack of opportunity for emerging and established artists. It's clear the State Government has failed to sufficiently consider the unique challenges faced by these communities when it comes to the arts.

The Greens have a plan to stimulate arts activity and investment in regional WA. We will empower local governments to engage with their communities and provide opportunities for local artists to thrive at home – enlivening the regions, strengthening local economies and improving social cohesion.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Commit \$19 million¹⁹ over four years to improve regional and remote access to the arts**
- ▲ **Generate better arts employment opportunities in regional areas**
- ▲ **Provide opportunities for regional residency programs**
- ▲ **Partner with regional local governments to establish creative and community-building initiatives**



DEVELOP A SUITE OF ARTS AND MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

In the midst of a pandemic and a recession, the mental health of many Western Australians has taken a significant hit. Isolation and uncertainty have led to an increase in depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions, with the effects projected to last well beyond the COVID-19 crisis itself.

Research shows engagement with arts and culture has significant mental health benefits. But the State Government has failed to acknowledge this in any of its mental health initiatives, with little collaboration between the health and cultural sector, and not enough dedicated funding for arts programs that support community mental health outcomes.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Provide employment for hundreds of arts workers** in innovative and impactful health programs
- ▲ **Fast-track the arts sector's recovery** and ensure its long-term future
- ▲ **Make a real difference for West Australians dealing with depression, anxiety and other mental health issues**

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