



Northern  
Territory  
Government

DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT, THE ARTS AND SPORT

# 12 Month Funding 2009

Assessment Report

# ARTS NT

## 12 MONTH FUNDING 2009 ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Introduction:**

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This report provides general comments and statistical information relating to the 12 month program funding Round for 2010.

### **Background:**

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The NT Arts Grants Program has been in review during 2009 including the Funding Framework for Key Arts Organisations.

On 12 November 2009, the Director Arts NT wrote to Chairs and Managers of arts organisations which receive funding support from the Northern Territory Arts Grant Program through an annual, triennial or multi-year organisation funding agreement. The letter requested that organisations without a continuing agreement submit a draft program and budget for consideration by the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

Sixteen applications were received requesting funding for 2010 and one application for a 3 month extension of an existing agreement. Due to extenuating circumstances, a further three applications were negotiated for acceptance early in 2010.

Under this approach, arts organisations are being supported on a transitional basis for year 2010, and funding recommendations were based primarily on 2009 commitments and strategic needs for arts services and programs across the Northern Territory in 2010.

2009 marked a shift in focus after a period of relative consistency. The transitional nature of arrangements urged a stronger reliance on organisations for self definition of artistic priorities rather than responses to program priorities defined by Government.

It is acknowledged that the changes in Government policy, particularly the conclusion of the six year NT Indigenous Arts Strategy *Building Strong Arts Business* at 30 June 2009, were challenging for organisations to address.

Most organisations presented compelling cases for investment in defined outcomes; however some relied heavily on Arts NT staff knowledge of their programs and deliverables. It was noted that it was unlikely that this second group would have been successful under a peer assessment process. Brokers will continue to assist organisations during 2010 to position strongly for 2011 funding applications.

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## **Assessment Process:**

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Peer assessment remains fundamental to the NT Arts Grants Program and the Regional Arts Fund Program. However, due to the transitional state of the 12 Month funding program for 2010 an assessment panel of senior departmental Arts NT staff was convened.

The panel, comprising the Director, Business Systems Manager and Senior Arts brokers for the Top End and Central Australia met on Thursday 17 December 2009 to assess applications and make recommendations on funding levels within the allocated budget.

Pre-assessment was completed by respective Arts Brokers summarising key deliverables, past performance against funding agreements and priorities within a policy context as well as any known challenges facing the organisation.

Following assessment, Arts NT prepared recommendations for consideration by the Minister for Arts and Museums, the Hon Gerry McCarthy. Approval of recommendations was advised by the Minister in letters to applicant organisations on 13 January 2010.

## **Outcomes:**

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Funding commitments for arts organisations are made on a calendar year and bridge two Arts financial years. The total available funding for organisations' funding is \$3M annually. This includes the previously approved funding for triennial and multi year agreements and partnered agreements with the Australia Council. Funding for this round, taking into account provisions for outstanding applications, totalled \$690,000 within the allocated budget for 2009-2010. 12 month funding commitments to a total of \$1.38M were therefore within budget.

Three applications included requests for funding from the NT Festivals Fund. In addition, due to not holding an October 2009 Project Funding Round, consideration was given to 'one off' projects which strongly aligned with Northern Territory Government priorities for early 2010.

The total amount requested through the 17 applications received was **\$2,196,507**. Applications from organisations were acknowledged as including activities falling into Core, Festival and Project categories and demonstrate the diverse program of activities that arts organisations fulfil in the Territory.

The total amount of funding awarded was \$1,789, 500 comprising:

- 12 month core and program funding totalling \$1,379,500
- Festivals funding totalling \$220,000
- 2010 project funding of \$190,000. *This amount is committed in addition to the increased budget allocation for Project Rounds.*

The majority of organisations received the same or increased funding from 2009. One organisation was a first time applicant and one organisation was placed on notice. Overall funding awarded increased by **\$219,790**.

A complete list of funding distribution for the 12 month funding assessment Round for 2010 is available at the end of this report.

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## **General Comments:**

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The following general comments were noted during the assessment process. Individual feedback is limited to the general operations of the organisation and is available from your Arts Brokers located in Darwin or Alice Springs. Written feedback against published criteria will not be provided for the 2010 Round.

### **Growing Partnerships with the wider community and non arts organisations**

It was noted that a number of organisations were diversifying audiences, participation and funding through a broader range of partners which is positioning the arts in the NT towards more sustained, long term growth. A strong and viable sector is a key objective of Arts NT.

### **Education, training and professional development**

It was noted that a number of organisations demonstrated a need for further training, education and professional development across several managerial and artistic areas.

Maintenance of skills relevant to work roles within the arts sector involves industry structures and operations; employment obligations and opportunities; industry trends and emerging technologies as well as evolving industry laws and regulations. Two areas highlighted to address in 2010 are:

- **Governance**

Organisations' boards and committees were noted as having relatively limited governance knowledge, processes and resources. This was seen as being related to issues such as staff retention and burnout of staff. The growth of a strong and viable sector and the strengthening of governance knowledge and processes were noted as a key objective for Arts NT in 2010.

It was also noted that many boards and committees are comprised of senior staff from other arts organisations indicating a potential for conflict of interest; strong tendency for introspectively within the sector; and a high reliance on a small number of key individuals. Organisations are urged to address this in forthcoming AGM elections and to seek advice and support of brokers as needed.

- **Professional Development**

It was noted organisations continue to face challenges in maintaining skills in order to continue the development and positioning of organisations within a developing national arts context. It was also noted that professional development needed to be maintained in an organisation through succession planning, staff retention and skills transfer.

### **Change management**

It was noted that a number of organisations were experiencing difficulties around managing change and implementing successful transition phases. This includes organisations with new discrete national funding arrangements and, those facing organisational mergers, separations and re-structures.. Arts NT recognises that supporting organisational changes for organisations to grow and become leading arts organisations is essential within an overall direction to grow regional ownership and increased regionalised arts service distribution.

Initiatives to support change management within organisations and a Territory-wide craft and design strategy were both noted as priorities for implementation by Arts NT in 2010, resources permitting.

### **Strategic Planning**

It was clearly noticeable that those organisations with strategic plans demonstrated a greater ability to present coherent proposals for development, delivery and growth of programs.

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## 12 Month funding Round 2010

Organisation	2010	2010 Approvals			2010 TOTAL
	Requested	Core	Festivals	Projects	Approved
Ausdance NT	\$80,000	\$70,000	-	\$10,000	\$80,000
Brown's Mart Venue	\$21,500*	\$21,500			\$21,500
Central Craft	\$65,000	\$45,000	-	-	\$45,000
Corrugated Iron Youth Arts	\$166,210	\$130,000	-	-	\$130,000
Darwin Community Arts	\$160,000	\$100,000	-	\$10,000	\$110,000
Darwin Symphony Orchestra	\$220,000	\$210,000	-	-	\$210,000
Darwin Visual Arts	\$24,000	\$24,000	-	-	\$24,000
Desart Inc	\$150,000	\$150,000	-	-	\$150,000
Happy Yess	\$25,000	\$25,000	-	-	\$25,000
Incite Youth Arts	\$75,000	\$60,000	-	\$10,000	\$70,000
Katherine Craft	\$64,367	\$25,000	-		\$25,000
Music NT	\$335,000	\$190,000	-	\$30,000	\$320,000
MNT – Indigenous Music Awards	\$100 000	-	-	\$100,000	
NT Writers Centre	\$149,000	\$119,000	-	\$30,000	\$189,000
NTWC – Wordstorm 2010	\$40,000	NA	\$40,000		
RedHot Arts Central Australia	\$240 000	\$20,000	-		\$200,000
RHACA – Alice Desert Festival		-	\$180,000		
Territory Craft - Top End	\$50,000	\$50,000	-		\$50,000
Top End Arts Marketing	\$150,000	\$80,000	-		\$80,000
Watch This Space	\$81,430	\$60,000	-		\$60,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,196,507</b>	<b>\$1,379,500</b>	<b>\$220,000</b>	<b>\$190,000</b>	<b>\$1,789,500<sup>#</sup></b>

