

ARTS INDUSTRY COUNCIL OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

*an independent
voice for the arts*

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The Hon Andrea Michaels MP

Minister for Arts

GPO Box 464
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Thursday 30 May 2024

Dear Minister,

cc. Mr Joel Wemmer, Chief of Staff, Minister for the Arts

I am writing on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Arts Industry Council of South Australia, following our Annual General Meeting held on 16 May 2024.

At the AGM, our members engaged in a discussion regarding sector concerns about arts and culture policy development processes currently underway by the South Australian Government.

While AICSA appreciates the intentions and commitments behind these processes – the development of the new State Cultural Policy and the Artists at Work Taskforce – we have heard widespread concern from our members, and we believe now is a timely opportunity for the Government to listen and review, to ensure these policy processes are undertaken with deeper sector involvement and support.

As per the motion adopted by the AGM, we seek to make a time as soon as possible to meet with you to discuss this further. We will seek to include a range of members of our newly elected Executive Committee in this meeting. We look forward to a helpful and considered discussion with you.

In addition, I take this opportunity to inform you that we have not received a response from the SA Government regarding our letter about indexation policy addressed to the Treasurer on 1 May 2024.

The following is the motion passed by members.

“The Annual General Meeting of the Arts Industry Council of South Australia expresses the following concerns around policy making processes underway by the South Australian Government and directs the AICSA Executive Committee to communicate these concerns to Hon. Andrea Michaels MP, Minister for the Arts.

1) State Cultural Policy: The AICSA AGM notes concerns about:

- A) The methodology of the policy's consultation process including a lack of diversity, inclusion, transparency, and care for the sector.
- B) The questions driving the process, that haven't adequately allowed for exploration of the crises facing the sector, such as artists and workers' rights, workforce retention, reductions in the value of funding, the difficult conditions and costs of making artworks in South Australia, and burnout and mental health.
- C) The lack of attention to the previous consultation processes undertaken with the sector, including utilising and building on the pillars of the National Cultural Policy, *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*; and understanding the history of policy and initiatives in South Australia.
- D) The possibility the State Cultural Policy may become more like a parochial cultural tourism statement than an advocacy tool for the sector itself and its public and social democratic value.
- E) The SA Government's commitment to fund the implementation of its "landmark" cultural policy.

2) Artists at Work Taskforce: The AICSA AGM notes concerns about:

- A) The limited diversity of the Taskforce, in areas such as disability, First Nations, independent and emerging artists, and young people's representation.
- B) Whether the Taskforce will include a broader sector consultation strategy, which may go some way in addressing this concern.
- C) The SA Government's commitment to fund the implementation of recommendations from the Taskforce.

3) Addressing sector concerns: The AICSA AGM asks that Hon. Andrea Michaels MP, Minister for the Arts, undertakes to:

- A) Address these concerns through a timely, midway evaluation of the processes underway, with a commitment to adjust processes if required.
- B) Urgently meets with the AICSA Executive Committee to discuss these concerns.
- C) Reconsiders the timetable for these policy processes to ensure they are undertaken with integrity, care, and deeper sector involvement and support."

We look forward to hearing back from you and coordinating a meeting with the AICSA Executive Committee at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards,



Ruth Weldon
Acting Chair AICSA
On behalf of the Executive Committee