

MEDIA RELEASE

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First Nations artists and ambitious projects shine in highly competitive Australia Council grants round

The Australia Council will deliver \$6.6 million to support almost 200 ambitious artistic projects including career development, regional touring and international opportunities for Australian artists.

The latest grants round included strong projects led by First Nations artists and First Nations-led organisations across all art forms, in addition to those funded through the dedicated [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts](#) panel.

While 183 projects were funded, a further 271 projects were assessed by peers as being of high merit and deserving support but could not be funded within the scope of the budget. Australia Council Executive Director of Grants and Engagement Frank Panucci said this demonstrates an opportunity to further invest in Australia's creative potential.

"We continue to receive more high quality applications than we are currently able to support, which highlights the incredible opportunity that exists to invest in Australia's rich creative talent and the development of our nation."

"The Australia Council will continue to advocate for increased investment in the arts throughout 2019 and beyond, recognising the crucial role of the arts in contributing to Australia's rapidly growing creative economy, as well as the social and cultural success of our nation. Our [research](#) shows the arts help promote empathy and socially cohesive communities, in addition to enriching the lives of all who experience them," Mr Panucci said.

The Australia Council received a total of 1,353 applications for funding across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts, Community Arts and Cultural Development, Dance, Emerging and Experimental Arts, Literature, Multi-art form, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts.

Among the diverse activity funded, the grants will support:

- The creation of new work, exhibitions and career development opportunities for individual artists including SJ Norman, Faye d'Evie, Guy Ben-Ary, Allan Giddy, Vyvienne Abla, Jay Emmanuel and Lauren Berkowitz.
- International career development and touring opportunities for Australian musicians and producers including Julia Jacklin, Gang of Youths and Nina Las Vegas.
- Organisations and groups including BalletLab, Force Majeure, Aphids, THE RABBLE, Safe Theatres Australia, Gravity and Other Myths, and Backbone Youth Arts.

- A range of festivals including NEXT WAVE, National Young Writers Festival, Queensland Poetry Festival and the 2019 Scribblers Festival (children's literature).

Media contact:

Brianna Roberts, Media Manager

Australia Council for the Arts

Phone: (02) 9215 9030

Email: b.roberts@australiacouncil.gov.au