

MEDIA RELEASE**2 April 2019****Calling for the Federal Government to increase the Regional Arts Fund**

Regional Arts Australia, with support from Country Arts WA, has launched a new campaign, VOTE 1 REGIONAL ARTS, in the lead up to the federal election, calling for an increase to the Regional Arts Fund.

The Regional Arts Fund is one of the most successful cultural funding programs supporting arts and culture in regional, remote and rural Australia. Between 2012 and 2016 nationally, the Regional Arts Fund supported 1,458 projects; 3,979,899 participants; 843 professional development opportunities; 1,943 artists and arts workers and 3,015 partnerships.

Regional Arts Australia, with support from Country Arts WA, is calling for an increase of at least \$2 million per year for four years to the fund. This will restore the Regional Arts Fund to its pre-2010 value by lifting the total value of the fund to \$22.5 million over four years, beginning in July 2020.

Increasing funding to the Regional Arts Fund will enable more support, better outcomes and stronger communities across Australia. While funding has decreased in recent years, the demand for funding has increased with the number of unsuccessful funding applications for high quality cultural projects approaching 70% in various jurisdictions around Australia.

About the campaign, Regional Arts Australia's Executive Director Ros Abercrombie commented, 'Regional Arts Australia is proud to be advocating for regional, remote and rural artists and arts organisations nationally. Every day, we see the enormous impact that the Regional Arts Fund has on communities and individuals, and we believe that more artists and arts organisations deserve these opportunities'. A substantial increase in funds would facilitate an expansion of the RAF program with financial support, professional networks and institutional connections across art forms, creative industries and geographic locations.

Country Arts WA's Executive Director Paul MacPhail says, 'The Regional Arts Fund helps our regional artists and organisations deliver a range of world-class arts activities and events right across our State – yet we continue to receive many more worthy applications than we can support. An increase in the RAF will assist us to address this unmet need and increase the connectivity and creativity of regional Western Australia. I urge everyone to jump on the RAA website and have your voice heard!'

Regional Arts Australia is calling on the public to support their campaign in various ways in the lead up to the federal election. More information can be found on their website

<https://regionalarts.com.au/regional-arts-fund/vote-1-regional-arts>

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SUPPORT MATERIAL

About Country Arts WA

Country Arts WA is an independent not-for-profit organisation governed by regional membership. We are the only Western Australian arts body with a purely regional focus. We build the creativity, connection and capacity of regional communities to further develop WA's regional arts sector around key outcomes of diversity, sustainability, relevance, and celebration.

www.countryartswa.asn.au

About Regional Arts Australia

Regional Arts Australia proudly supports artists, arts organisations, audiences and communities in regional, remote and rural Australia through diverse projects and initiatives. Their key achievements include the successful staging of Artlands, a national biennial arts conference, additional events and programs across Australia, delivering the Regional Arts Fund on behalf of the Commonwealth Government, and developing integrated strategies and support services that enhance access to regional touring of performing arts companies.