**Sustain: Organisations Fund 2017 - 2020 Recovery Support**

**Introduction**

In June 2020, the Queensland Government announced an Arts and Cultural Recovery Package of $22.5 million over two years to stabilise Queensland’s arts companies, secure employment for artists and arts workers and deliver COVID-safe cultural experiences for Queensland audiences.

This program is part of this suite of initiatives and recognises the significant challenges currently faced by small-to-medium arts organisations and the importance of a strong recovery to ensure the continued vibrancy of the arts and cultural ecosystem into the future.

The Queensland Government acknowledges the importance of enabling continued access to arts and cultural activities in a way that is compatible with health considerations and that limits the spread of COVID-19.

**What is Sustain: Organisations Fund 2017 - 2020 Recovery Support?**
Through *Sustain: Organisations Fund 2017 - 2020 Recovery Support* (Organisations Recovery), we will provide one-off grants to organisations funded through the Organisations Fund 2017 – 2020 to stabilise businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Program’s objectives are to:

* Stabilisefunded arts organisations to support future sustainability
* Encourage organisational innovation and adaptability in a changing environment.
* Support employment opportunities for artists and arts workers in 2021 following a significant period of disruption
* Enable the continued delivery of arts and cultural activities in a way that is compatible with health considerations and that limits the spread of COVID-19

**Queensland Government commitments**

Arts Queensland is committed to realising the ambitions of the *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Economic Participation Framework*, the *Queensland Cultural Diversity Policy, the Queensland Youth Strategy* and The *National Arts and Disability Strategy*.

Applications which include the following target groups as creators, participants or audiences will strengthen the implementation of Queensland Government commitments:

* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
* people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, including Australian South Sea Islanders
* older people (over 55 years old)
* young people
* people with disability\*.

\*Note that funding recipients are expected to meet legal obligations in relation to accessibility including access to web content.

Applicants are encouraged to explore how they might direct their activities to these specific target groups as well as to regional Queenslanders where appropriate.

**Who can apply?**
Organisations Recovery funding is designed to support the current portfolio of small-to-medium arts organisations that receive operational funding under AQ’s Organisations Fund 2017 – 2020. Other organisations that receive multiyear operational funding from AQ may be approved to apply at the discretion of the Deputy Director-General, AQ.

Please note it is anticipated that Organisations Recovery funding will be highly contestable, and organisations demonstrating significant COVID-19 impact are encouraged to apply.

To be eligible, applicants must:

* be in receipt of operational funding from AQ under Organisations Fund 2017 – 2020 at the time of application, or have multi-year operational funding and approval to apply from the Deputy Director-General, AQ.
* can demonstrate, through Board-endorsed budgets and financial projections, a significant financial impact as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated social distancing restrictions.
* have satisfied the complete reporting requirements of any previous AQ funding, including those of the Organisations Fund 2017-2020.

Applications will be deemed **ineligible** if they do not satisfy the above eligibility criteria or:

* they are incomplete or do not contain all compulsory support material.
* they are not submitted via SmartyGrants by the advertised deadline. Note, extensions to the deadline will not be granted under any circumstances.
* they include requests for infrastructure projects, routine maintenance or to acquire assets or equipment

**What you can apply for**Applicants can apply for funding support up to a maximum of $100,000.

When preparing your application, you should consider the following Assessment Criteria:

**Sustainability:**

* How will the additional funding support and strengthen the organisation’s business model and support future sustainability?
* Is there evidence of new ideas and innovative approaches to programming and operations that support adaptability and agility within the COVID-19 environment?
* What assumptions have been made in your case for sustainability in 2021?

**Impact:**

* How does the proposed program of activities rebuild audience engagement?
* What are the employment impacts of additional funding support?
* How does the application strengthen capacity for arts and cultural programming into the future?

**Viability:**

* Does the application demonstrate a significant financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the organisation’s capacity for own source revenue and its current operational position?
* Is there clear evidence of expenditure management and where appropriate the use of reserves to continue operations?
* Does the application demonstrate value for money and potential for on-going activities and employment opportunities for staff, arts workers and artists?

Applications that include a consideration of innovative business model changes are encouraged.

Funding applications that include requests for infrastructure projects, routine maintenance or to acquire assets or equipment will be ineligible.

**How to apply**

Applications for funding under the Organisations Recovery program will be available as part of standard (October 2020) operational funding reporting requirements. This is to streamline the application process by minimising any duplication of information.

Arts Queensland will request additional information in support of the funding requests aligned to the Assessment Criteria.

Applicants must submit an application via SmartyGrants by **9.00am,** **2 November 2020**.

*Mandatory Support Material*

You must attach a signed letter from the Chair of your Board, or equivalent, confirming support for the application, as well as an acknowledgement that the Organisations Recovery funding program is highly contestable.

It is AQ’s expectation that all applicants will have a Board-endorsed budget and forward plan excluding this funding opportunity.

Your submission in Smartygrants must include your completed application form and all support material.

**How will your application be assessed?**
AQ will assess your application against the Assessment Criteria. Assessment outcomes will be provided to the Minister for the Arts for consideration and approval.

In addition to the Assessment Criteria, priority will be given to applicants that:

* face immediate solvency challenges as a result of COVID-19 related impacts
* will significantly reduce cash reserves (compared to year-end 2019 levels) to continue operations in 2021 (assuming current COVID-19 restrictions)
* have considerable impacts of COVID-19 restrictions on earned and other own source revenue
* demonstrate strong capacity for adaptability in the current environment and a commitment to sustainable future operations.

Assessment will be informed by:

* Historical financial information held by AQ including budgeting and forecasting accuracy
* A balanced P&L assessment inclusive of
	+ 2020 Q1 and 2020 Q3 forecast results, offset against the budgeted 2021 result.
	+ Consideration of the positive budget impacts of federal government subsidies or change programming activity.
* Consideration of COVID-19 impacts (this will be determined after consideration of any previous board approved deficit in 2020).
* Consideration of other AQ support, including funding approved through the various Arts and Cultural Recovery Package programs, rental subsidies and ongoing subsidised rental agreements.
* A consideration of the level of working capital available to an organisation to self-fund operations in 2021.

Applications may be independently verified for financial accuracy and to audit AQ’s recommendations.

Applications meeting the Assessment Criteria may be reviewed in consultation with other relevant Queensland Government agencies, or with the Australia Council for the Arts where relevant.

Applicants may be approved at a value below the requested amount. The decisions made by the Minister for the Arts are firm and final. There is no avenue for appeal of decisions in this fund.

**What are the acquittal and reporting requirements?**

Funding recipients will be required to submit an outcome report to AQ. The outcome report collects information about outputs and outcomes, including artistic, cultural, social and economic returns on investment.

Funding acknowledgement must be clear and separately identified within independently audited financial statements.

**Where can I find support in preparing my application?**

Applicants are encouraged to call your client manager to discuss this funding opportunity.