

Best Practice for Artists and Publicly Funded Galleries

SECTION A: MAPPING THE SECTOR

SECTION A.1 INTRODUCTION

A.1.1 Overview

Best Practice for Artists and Publicly Funded Galleries is a joint initiative of the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) and Museums Australia, funded by the Gordon Darling Foundation. The consultant undertaking the project is Virginia Hollister.

The aims of the project are:

- for artists - to provide a comprehensive picture of the not for profit publicly funded galleries section of the industry and the relationship parameters that may be offered, assisting artists to negotiate fair returns and conditions within the marketplace
- for galleries: to provide not for profit publicly funded galleries and their governing bodies with benchmarks for acceptable practice in their dealings with living Australian professional artists.

For this project, the term “publicly funded galleries” includes: state and national galleries and museums/galleries of contemporary art, regional galleries and regional art centres (not Indigenous Art Centres), members of the Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC), and members of the Contemporary Art Spaces (CAOs).

The documents are divided into the following sections:

Section A – Mapping the sector

- A.1 Introduction
- A.2 Types of publicly funded galleries
- A.3 Types of exhibitions in publicly funded galleries.

Section B – Proposed Codes and explanatory texts

- B.1 Key terms
- B.2 Best practice for exhibitions in publicly funded galleries
- B.3 Best practice for selling art and craft in publicly funded galleries
- B.4 Code of Ethics for publicly funded galleries.

A.1.2 Industry relevance of the project

The draft best practice guidelines for exhibiting and selling in Publicly Funded Galleries (Section B) will be used to develop the next edition of the NAVA *Code of Practice for the Australian Visual Arts and Craft Sector* and as such will influence the expectations of artists and arts administrators in the future. Your feedback on these, and the issues arising, is particularly important.

A.1.3 Context

Most artists and craft practitioners, at some stage in their exhibiting career, will show work in a not for profit gallery that derives its primary funding from federal, state or local government sources, or a mix of these. These galleries as a group are the focus of this report, and are referred to as Publicly Funded Galleries (PFG).

The purpose of this report is to investigate the nature of the relationship between artists and craft practitioners and publicly funded galleries in order to:

- articulate the various sectors of the PFGs
- articulate the many different types of exhibitions and sales opportunities that take place in these venues

- explore what best practice might be for the payment of artist fees in PFG for different types of exhibitions
- identify best practice for other kinds of services provided by artists and craft practitioners (screenings, performances, lecturers, workshops, supplying retail goods for gallery shops etc)
- strengthen conflict of interest guidelines to guide artists, craft practitioners, venue staff and their Boards regarding circumstances to be avoided or managed appropriately
- identify conflict of interest issues between PFGs and the commercial sector including unfair commercial competition.

The resulting best practice recommendations will be for Australian artists and craft practitioners and Australian PFG and should be viewed as minimum standards.

In the relationships between overseas artists and Australian PFG it would be hoped that these best practice principles would also be applied.

It should also be noted that the recommendations in this report are not aimed at the relationship between Indigenous artists and the art and craft centres that support the creation, marketing and promotion of some Indigenous art. Likewise a PFG covered under this project will need to be mindful of protocol for the display, handling and sale of work by Indigenous artists that fall outside of the scope of this project, but which have been outlined in the *Indigenous Australian Art Commercial Code of Conduct*¹ and *Continuous Culture, Ongoing Responsibilities*.²

*Comments on these documents should be forwarded to NAVA
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¹ A joint project of NAVA / Desart / ANKAAA, 2007.

² Museums Australia, 2003.