



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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NEW INITIATIVES FOR A CREATIVE AUSTRALIA

Creating opportunities for young and emerging Australian artists and an 'artists in residence' program for schools and universities are new arts measures in the 2008-09 Budget, Minister for the Arts, Peter Garrett, said today.

Mr Garrett said these significant investments would expand the opportunities for young people to experience the arts and create new opportunities for the next generation of visual artists, composers, choreographers, playwrights and performing artists.

"The Australian Government will provide \$11.8 million over four years to the Australia Council for two new initiatives to increase creative opportunities for young Australians to engage in the arts.

"These measures demonstrate the Rudd Labor Government's commitment to a creative and innovative future for Australia.

"This includes \$6.6 million over four years from existing funding to increase opportunities for young and emerging artists. The package will provide support for:

- performing arts companies to present work created by and featuring young and emerging artists;
- projects that develop the professional skills and expertise of young and emerging artists, or help them build their professional connections and networks; and
- projects that engage young artists and audiences, particularly in demonstrating best practice in the areas of youth arts and new technologies.

"The funding commitment will help work by young and emerging artists to gain a national profile, build artists' reputations, and assist companies to present an exciting and diverse cultural program to Australian audiences," Mr Garrett said.

"A further \$5.2 million will be provided over four years for a new initiative where professional artists will participate as 'artists in residence' in schools and as sessional staff in universities to improve young people's access to quality arts education programs.

"Allowing artists and teachers to work together to develop innovative teaching methods and new opportunities for young people to work with professional artists implements the government's commitment for such an initiative. It was also one of the ideas coming out of the Creative Australia stream at the recent Australia 2020 Summit," Mr Garrett said.

"This is an exciting initiative, giving artists an opportunity to broaden their experiences and share their skills, while providing Australian school and university students with greater exposure to the benefits of creative practice."

The 'artists in residence' program will be delivered through grants administered by the Australia Council, in consultation with state and territory arts and education agencies. It will fund a combination of residencies in schools and universities across Australia for which individual practicing professional artists and arts organisations can apply.

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