# MEDIA Release

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### 2015-16 Australia Council for the Arts Annual Report

The 2015-16 Australia Council for the Arts Annual Report has been tabled in the Federal Parliament. It delivers the first full year of activity under its Strategic Plan, *A Culturally Ambitious Nation* and provides details of a significant and challenging year for the Council.

Australia Council Chair Rupert Myer AO said the Council had supported an extraordinarily diverse and thought-provoking range of artistic projects during 2015-16, through grants and strategic initiatives for 716 individual artists and 650 arts organisations.

In the Report Mr Myer said that the Australia Council had focused on maximising all available resources and invested nearly 90 per cent of the budget directly into the arts sector, with the remaining funds supporting the sector through strategic advice, specialist knowledge and high quality program delivery.

“Although the Australia Council is the principal distributor of Commonwealth funding to the arts, we see our approach broadly as a key advocate for, and an investor in, Australia’s artistic and cultural future and our agenda includes supporting arts organisations to respond to the very challenging economic and social environment by generating new pathways and new business models,” Mr Myer said.

CEO Tony Grybowski said 2015-16 saw an unprecedented level of transformation in the national arts landscape just as the Australia Council’s new strategy and reformed grants model were implemented, and there had been remarkable achievements by Australian artists in a changing and dynamic environment.

“The Council embraces its national leadership role and takes a holistic, evidence-based and long term approach to investing in and championing the arts sector,” Mr Grybowski said.

* 1. Annual Report summary:
* $173.8 million invested in grants and initiatives for artists and arts organisations ($14.6 million in individual artists and $159.2 million in arts organisations) and an additional $15 million in the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy (VACS) and other government initiatives.
* The Australia Council supported 716 individual artists, 650 organisations and 7,234 new artistic works.
* 20% of successful applicants to the Council’s grants program were new applicants.
* 175 organisations supported by multi-year funding through the Key Organisations program and the Major Performing Arts framework and more than 400 artists and organisations supported to work internationally in over 50 countries, enhancing Australia’s profile and developing global markets.
* More than $50 million invested in individual artists and small to medium organisations through grants programs and strategic development initiatives and more than $100 million invested through the Major Performing Arts (MPA) framework.
* $25.8 million invested in regional Australian artists to foster artistic vibrancy and access to the arts, enriching the lives of 1.9 million people through attendance at performances, exhibitions, school activities or workshops.
* Audience attendances reached 15.7 million (12.8 million nationally and 2.9 million internationally) which supported the work of individual Australian artists and organisations, with many projects finding new markets and audiences.

Copies of the full [annual report](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/_aca_annual_report_2015-16-58058c6e60676.pdf)  and [factsheets](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/_ar_2015-16_factsheet-58058ee0e52fe.pdf)  are available for downloading. Hard copies are available on request.

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