

# A New Approach (ANA)

MEDIA RELEASE

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## INVESTING IN ARTS, CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

A new report from arts and culture think tank A New Approach (ANA) demonstrates the interest of governments across jurisdictions and portfolios in harnessing the benefits of cultural and creative activity, estimating that \$7.2 billion was spent on arts, culture and creativity (excluding COVID-19 support funding) across up to 100 federal, state and territory, and local government departments in 2020-21.

The report, *The Big Picture 3: Expenditure on Artistic, Cultural and Creative activity by governments in Australia in 2007–08 to 2020–21* is the third in ANA's series, analyses Australia's latest *Cultural Funding by Government (CFG) 2020-21 Survey*, the most comprehensive data on cultural investments by all three levels of government.

ANA CEO Kate Fielding highlighted the priority for transparent, targeted and coordinated expenditure by governments to ensure all Australians can access the benefits of cultural participation, particularly in a challenging economic environment.

"As we have said before, it's not about nice to have; we know arts, culture and creativity enrich our lives, unite our communities, and ignite our economies," she said.

"The Australian public, policy makers, industry leaders, business, philanthropists and creators all have a stake in discussing what and how we want public investment in arts and culture to benefit our communities."

Key among the report's six recommendations is piloting a partnership framework for investment, targeting a public policy area shared across levels of government. Themes could include a particular health outcome; a specific city, region or town; or the goal of increased national productivity.

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The report also recommends establishing a multi-decadal plan and funding envelope, ideally underpinned by advice and performance reporting from the Australian Government's independent research and advisory body, the Productivity Commission.

Covering the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, ANA's analysis also found that in 2020–21 an additional \$8.1 billion was invested in the broader cultural and creative industries through 'targeted' and 'wider economy' COVID-19 support. Ms Fielding said examining these temporary COVID-19 investments was critical to harness the experience and expenditure of the last two years for future crisis planning.

Ms Fielding noted that Australia ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> out of 31 OECD countries in 2020 when government expenditure on 'recreation, culture and religion' was compared.

"To keep pace with population growth and reach our potential as a cultural powerhouse we need to make the best use of government investment as well as growing other types of financial inflows such as household consumption, commercial investment and philanthropic support.

"All Australians, whoever they are and wherever they live, should have opportunities to access the benefits of cultural participation, and this requires an even bigger picture approach," she said.

Read *The Big Picture 3: Expenditure on Artistic, Cultural and Creative activity by governments in Australia in 2007–08 to 2020–21* [here](#).

Find out more about A New Approach (ANA) [here](#) or sign up for regular [updates](#)

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