

# Cultural Funding by Government—2020–21

## Overview

In 2020–21, the estimate of total expenditure on cultural activities, funded by the three tiers of government, was **$7,708.0m**. This amount includes **$514.4m** of targeted COVID support funding for cultural and creative organisations and infrastructure, businesses, individuals, support programs and initiatives.

The Australian Government targeted COVID support funding was $232.6m, and State and territory government targeted COVID support funding was $281.8m.

The $7,708.0m in funding for cultural activities from the three tiers of government comprised:

* $2,967.0m (39% of total) from the Australian Government
* $2,955.2m (38%) from state and territory governments
* $1,785.8m (23%) from local governments.

Figure 1. Cultural expenditure, by level of government

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A column graph compares the cultural expenditure between the financial years of 2017-18, 2019-20, and 2020-21 across the three tiers of government, Australian Government, State and territory government and Local government.
2017-18: Australian Government $2674.9m, State & territory government $2,390.6m, Local government $1,797.5m.
2019-20: Australian Government $2743.8m, State & territory government $2,681.3m, Local government $1,840.5m.
2020-21: Australian Government $2967.0m, State & territory government $2,955.2m Local government $1,785.8m.

Total expenditure rose 6% (or $442.3m) from 2019–20. Expenditure increased for Australian Government and State and territory government and decreased for Local government (↑8%, ↑10% and ↓3% respectively).

Table 1. Total Government cultural expenditure, 2017–18 to 2020–21[[1]](#footnote-2)

| **2017–18** | **2019–20[[2]](#footnote-3)** | **2020–21[[3]](#footnote-4)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| $6,863.0m | $7,265.7m ↑6% | $7,708.0m ↑6% |

Total recurrent expenditure rose 8% (or $463.6m) to $6,488.7m and accounted for 84% of total funded cultural expenditure. Australian Government recurrent expenditure was $2,709.5m, the highest dollar amount of the three levels of government and represented 42% of total recurrent expenditure.

Total capital expenditure by all levels of government was $1,219.3m in 2020–21, a decrease of 2% (or $21.3m) from 2019–20.

* Most capital expenditure was funded by State and territory government with $658.2m (54% of total capital expenditure).

Figure 2. Cultural expenditure, recurrent and capital, by level of government—2020–21

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A column graph compares the cultural expenditure, recurrent and capital for the financial year 2020-21 across the three tiers of government, Australian Government, State and territory government and Local government.
Australian Government: Recurrent $2,709.5m, Capital $257.5m
State & territory government: Recurrent $2,297.1m, Capital $658.2m
Local government: Recurrent $1,482.2m, Capital $303.6m

The Australian Government allocated more than double the funding to *Arts* activities, compared to *Heritage* activities (72% and 28% respectively). The five categories with the highest expenditure by the Australian Government in 2020–21 was:

1. *Radio and television services*—$1,418.1m
2. *Other museums and cultural heritage*—$482.9m
3. *Film and video production and distribution*—$159.8m
4. *Archives*—$140.7m
5. *Music*—$132.4m.

The five categories with the highest expenditure by State and territory government in 2020–21 was:

1. *Performing arts venues*—$510.9m
2. *Other museums and cultural heritage*—$505.5m
3. *Libraries*—$451.6m
4. *Art museums*—$414.0m
5. *Arts education*—$176.2m.

The jurisdiction with the highest expenditure by Local government in 2020–21 was New South Wales ($536.0m), followed by Victoria ($509.0m), and the highest per person funding by Local government was South Australia ($96.84).

The estimate of per person cultural funding by the three tiers of government was $300.11 with:

* Australian Government—$115.52
* State and territory government—$115.06
* Local government—$69.53.

Table 2. Per Person cultural expenditure, by level of government

|  | **Australian** | **State & territory** | **Local** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Heritage | $32.55 | $55.69 | NA |
| Arts | $82.97 | $59.31 | NA |
| Total | $115.52 | $115.06 | $69.53 |

1. *Cultural Funding by Government* survey not conducted for 2018–19. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Includes $76.9m targeted cultural and creative sector COVID support funding, reported in Total only. Data has been revised. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Includes $514.4m targeted cultural and creative sector COVID support funding, reported across categories and totals. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)