

Precarious Movements National Cultural Policy submission 2022

Precarious Movements: Choreography and the Museum – introduction:

Precarious Movements: Choreography and the Museum is a project that aims to bring artists, researchers and institutions into dialogue about best practice to support the choreographer and the museum, and to sustain momentum in theory and practice around dance and the visual arts.

Against the backdrop of intermedial experiments in the mid-20th century, the 21st century has seen dance and choreography appear more frequently in art galleries and museums. This is forecast to accelerate, propelled by curatorial inquiries and critical developments associated with a reinvention of the museum. However, processes and protocols concerning performance conditions specific to choreography, curatorial practices, acquisitions, collection, conservation and theory have lagged behind.

The project addresses this problem and its principal aims are to:

- Articulate best practice in the life cycle of choreographic work when it enters the museum and gallery.
- Model best practice in commissioning, curating, conserving, presenting and interpreting choreographic work in the museum and gallery context.
- Develop new critical understandings of dance and the art institution to support further development in the field.

Precarious Movements puts artists and creative practice at the centre of its inquiry, engaging their knowledge and experience as primary research, and supports dancers and choreographers as important end users.

The project was awarded a Linkage Grant of nearly \$400,000 over three years from 2021 to 2024 worth double this amount including in-kind support from partner organisations University New South Wales (UNSW), National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), TATE UK, Art Gallery New South Wales (AGNSW) and Monash University Museum of Art (MUMA) and independent artist Shelley Lasica.

What Precarious Movements would like to see in the National Cultural Policy:

1. The centrality of artists and their creative collaborators:

There are two ways of being paid as an artist and/or performer in Australia: as an employee or as an independent contractor. Most opportunities provided to artists and performers fall under independent contractor, which provides limited workplace protections and benefits unavailable to these sole traders. For an in-depth account of the structural problems with the sole trader model for artist see [here](#).

In support of the third pillar of the Policy, we advocate for:

- More opportunities to provide more long-term or ongoing structured financial support for independent practitioners. Suggestions include: an artist living wage; significantly more fellowship opportunities; longer investment in development periods without the pressures of presentation. These will

reduce the constant pressure and precarity on artists applying and reapplying for project funding.

- Legislation to ensure compulsory superannuation for all artists and arts workers.
- Legislation to ensure compulsory Workcover for all contracted artists and arts workers (beyond employees).

Other suggestions:

- Increase the Live Performance Award wage for dancers and performers to be equivalent to musicians (current discrepancy with unions for musicians).
- Creation of a mandated award rate for all artists that is comparable across disciplines, including hourly and a commissioning rate to protect the development of Intellectual Property. All organisations should be funded to fulfill these rates and fees.
- Creation of dance specific preservation and transmission collecting policies, including government funded initiatives for artists to assist with collection preparation and archiving mechanisms for live performance practices.
- Government funded training initiatives and opportunities for financial support for independent producers who can provide additional support for artists and choreographers outside the institution and/or in the absence of galleries or agents.
- More paid professional development opportunities for artists to diversify their skill set and work opportunities

2. Strategic investment in First Nations artists and self-determination:

Supporting the first pillar of the cultural policy framework, Precarious Movements strongly advocates for dedicated investment in First Nations artists and cultural producers, as well as strategies to ensure First Nations self-determination, artistic expression and cultural leadership. We support targeted government investment and uplift of funding for the following outcomes:

Targeted support to increase self-determined First Nations artistic expression.

- Financially supported First Nations positions at organisations and institutions across the sector (from emerging, to positions of leadership).
- Institutional prioritisation of repatriation and reconciliation through practices of cultural and heritage preservation to support the active continuation of First Nations culture and cultural practice.
- Financial supported opportunities for consultation and collaboration with First Nations voices at institutions and small-medium organisations.

3. Strategic investment in the Australia Council and other governmental funded arts bodies:

Precarious Movements strongly supports our peers calls for increased funding to the Australia Council to sustain and increase capacity and sustainability across the sector. In support of both strong institutions and reaching of audiences, we support the following outcomes:

- Restore Australia Council funding *to at least* its 2013 level to support both independent artists and small to medium organisations, which will support alternative voices and emerging artforms.
- Increased funding for national and international touring initiatives to bring existing work to new audiences.

- Uplift in investment for institutionally partnered ARC projects that focus on artistic research and creation.
- Opportunities to support co-commissioning and touring of interdisciplinary works with state-run institutions and a network of regional and rural organisations.
- More support for a diverse range of artists beyond metro centres via uplifted support for regional and rural organisations and institutions.

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Confirmation of whether or not your submission can be made public (published) or kept confidential: Submission can be made public