



Voice, Agency and Integrity

A report on Beyond Tick Boxes:

A symposium on cultural diversity in the creative sector

October 2018



Diversity Arts
Australia

Voice, Agency and Integrity
A report on Beyond Tick
Boxes — a symposium on
cultural diversity in the arts



Diversity Arts
Australia



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Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) is Australia's key organisation promoting cultural diversity across the arts and screen sectors. DARTS works to build a creative sector that reflects Australia's true cultural diversity and believes creative expression is a fundamental human right, which strengthens and connects communities.

DARTS creates the conditions for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) artists to participate in all levels of the creative sector — leadership, content, audiences, representation and participation.

DARTS undertakes research and provides evidence about the value of cultural diversity. They act as a broker between artists, industry, educators and government, and commission content from CALD artists that articulates key issues and showcases best practice.

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on cultural diversity in the creative sector

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The people of NSW are our greatest State asset. We are diverse in background, perspective, ideology and culture. We foster a multitude of ideas, and a broad spectrum of creativity and opportunity. I am proud that Create NSW is committed to greater inclusion and diversity in the arts, screen and cultural sector in NSW. We recognise that supporting a diversity of creative voices only grows NSW as a bold, exciting innovator of culture.

We are pleased to have supported Diversity Arts Australia in the development of this report and to have participated in the symposium at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre. This report documents important discussions at this point in time, when a focus on inclusion and cultural diversity – across programming, audience and leadership – is key to our continuing success for a vibrant and sustainable arts, screen and culture sector.

Elizabeth W. Scott
Executive Director of Investment and Engagement
Create NSW



Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity is an invaluable asset which can – and must – enrich the vibrancy and innovation of Australian arts. We believe that every member of our diverse community of identities, faiths, individual differences and pursuits should have the opportunity to see themselves represented on our stages and screens, and in our songs, stories and great works of art. We also believe that every Australian should have the opportunity to engage with the arts in their daily lives, and that the arts provide unique opportunities for us to gain understanding of each other's differences. The arts engender empathy, connection and social cohesion.

DARTS brought the principles of dialogue, artistic excellence and inclusiveness to life at Beyond Tick Boxes, and have captured vital insights in this report. Listening to our artists is key to fostering the diversity of expressions at the heart of Australia's artistic vibrancy and cultural ambition. We commend DARTS on the achievement of Beyond Tick Boxes and look forward to continuing dialogue and collaboration. We are proud to have supported the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium and to have contributed to these discussions.

Tony Grybowski
Chief Executive Officer
Australia Council for the Arts

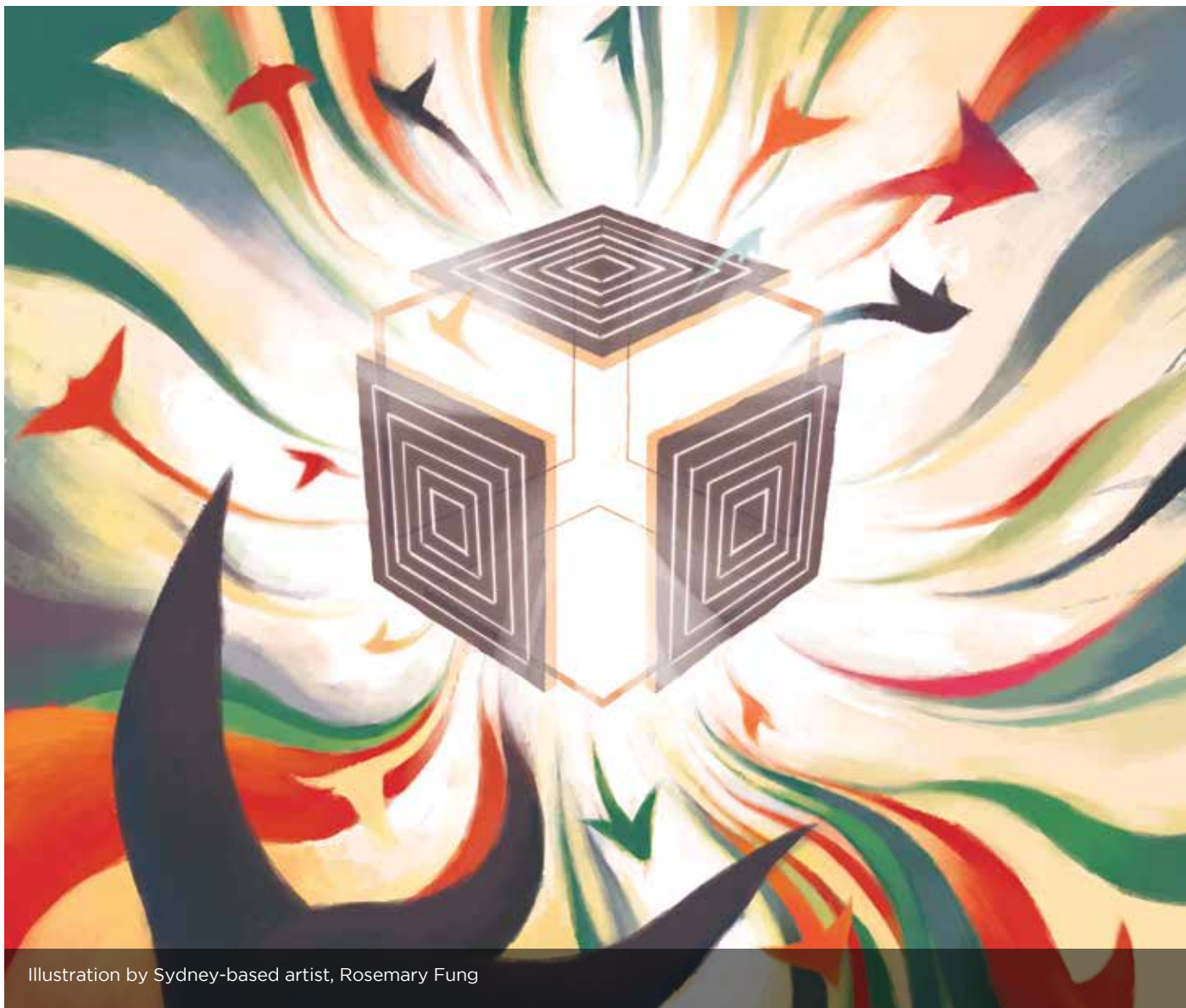


Illustration by Sydney-based artist, Rosemary Fung

From the Chair



The arts are the vehicle for telling our stories: they remind us of who we are, where we have come from and describe who we aspire to be.

The arts are at their most powerful when they act, not only as a mirror to who we are, but a lens into what we dream of becoming. But what happens when artforms exclude rather than include? Or when the artforms present stereotypes that marginalise entire sections of our community rather than include them?

This creates a disconnection – it excludes and creates tensions.

For if we are not included in the stories that define who we are, how can we ever feel we belong?

And this is why symposia like Beyond Tick Boxes are critical as platforms and space for discussions about cultural diversity in the arts – both locally and nationally.

It is only by providing spaces like this for the arts and screen sectors to reflect, be provoked, have discussion and share leading practices that we can work together to create an arts sector that reflects the true cultural diversity of Australia. It is through this that we can achieve what we aspire to be.

Professor James Arvanitakis
Chair, Diversity Arts Australia

From the Executive Director



The Beyond Tick Boxes symposium was a seminal event for the arts in Australia. A high-profile event, with representatives from all levels and areas of the creative sector, it tackled complex and thorny issues around inclusion and the lack of cultural diversity in the sector. Despite Australia's place as one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world, it was widely acknowledged that in many cases, our screens, stages, creative spaces and cultural institutions are failing to reflect the cultural realities of Australian audiences.

Some of the highlights of the symposium were the critical and honest panel discussions, the thoughtful group work, and the commissioned films which were designed to provoke conversations through storytelling. People shared leading practices, frustrations, optimism, insights and strategies. This event was underscored by a strong resolve among attendees that change needed to happen, and that now was the time for this change.

This report provides an overview of the day and encapsulates key discussions. Drawing on this, we have recommended a series of 'calls to action' for moving towards greater inclusivity and representation of cultural diversity across all areas of the sector.

While the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium generated significant participation nationally via the live stream and was also trending on social media on the day, it nevertheless highlighted the need for a significant national summit – a point that was repeated again and again in the attendee feedback, and something which Diversity Arts Australia is now working towards.

Lena Nahlous
Executive Director, Diversity Arts Australia



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1. Introduction



“We want to see a sector that actually represents the diversity of the Australian community. We want to do this through research, through supporting organisations, through supporting artists and through getting the word out there into the community about the importance of this kind of diversity and inclusion.”

— **Lena Nahlous, Executive Director, Diversity Arts Australia**

Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) held **Beyond Tick Boxes: a symposium on cultural diversity in the creative sector in Sydney** to facilitate dialogue between artists, companies, creators, producers and organisations. The aim of the symposium was to develop a comprehensive overview of the issues, common themes and proposed strategies for change. These approaches were developed alongside examples of best practice to promote and create spaces for CALD¹ artists, their work and their stories in the creative sector.

This report summarises the key themes and recommendations from Beyond Tick Boxes: a symposium on Cultural Diversity in the Creative Sector in Sydney. Comments and feedback from symposium participants have also been incorporated.

1.1 Background

DARTS advocates for a creative sector that reflects the true cultural diversity of Australia. Formerly known as Kultour, the organisation

underwent a rebranding, restructuring and relocation to Sydney in 2016.

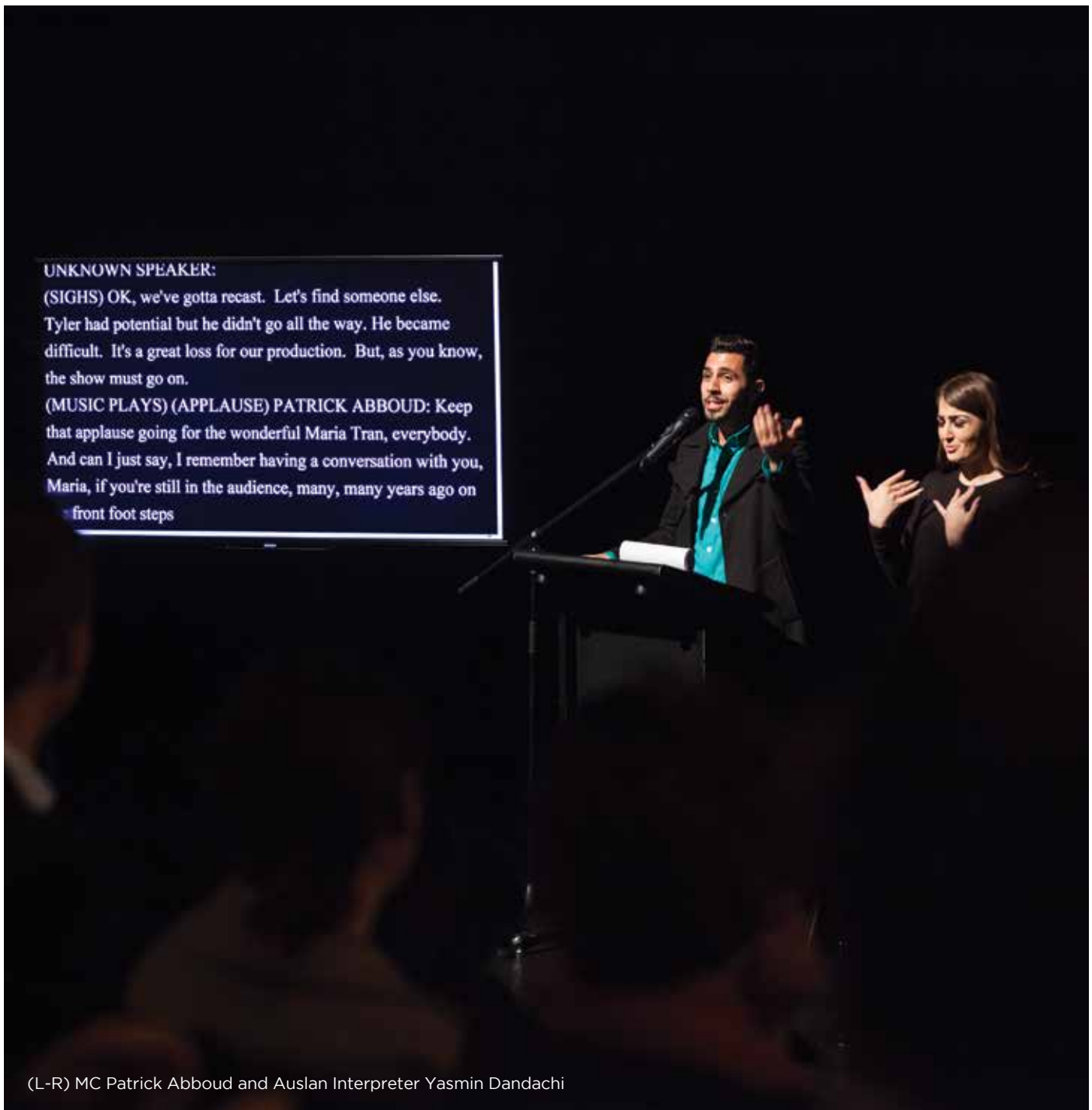
On Thursday 29 June 2017, DARTS hosted the day-long Beyond Tick Boxes symposium at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in Casula, Sydney. The Beyond Tick Boxes symposium was the final event in a series of Gatherings held by Kultour since 2013. Gatherings were held in Darwin, Brisbane, Cairns, Melbourne, Hobart, Canberra, Adelaide, Sydney and Perth with an estimated 250 artists, producers, creatives and industry representatives.

1.2 Aim of the Sydney Gathering

The aim of the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium was to support attendees and the sector to develop:

- a deeper understanding of cultural diversity in the arts and screen sectors
- a vision for Australia with a vibrant, diverse arts and culture
- the commitment, contacts and ideas to make this vision a reality.

¹For the purposes of this project the term Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) refers to people who are first, second or third generation migrants or members of ethnic communities. This includes Australian-born people who may self-identify or engage with the languages, customs and cultural specificities of ancestral heritages that differ from those of Anglo-Australians (as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics of the ‘English-speaking’ constituency).



1.3 Access and inclusion

The Beyond Tick Boxes symposium attracted more than 340 attendees from the arts and creative sectors. Of these, around 240 Sydney and NSW-based people were present at the event, with another 100 participating from across Australia via the live stream.

The event was designed for maximum inclusivity in content and process. For example:

- Diversity Arts Australia hosted a live stream of the event and Google Hangouts for off-site attendees
- the event was held in an accessible venue and live captioned and Auslan interpreted
- the event was also live sketched by Loribelle Spirovski
- the Twitter hashtag #DiversityArtsAu trended on the day
- citizen journalists² captured the stories from the day and have subsequently published articles in *The Guardian*, *Southern Crossings* and *ArtsHub*, while other coverage appeared on *SBS TV*, *Loud Mouth* and *Peril* magazine.
- filmmakers and audio producers captured discussions and conducted interviews that were produced into 10 mini films and 9 podcasts (Season 1 of *The Colour Cycle*).

² Citizen journalists included Tanya Ali, Sunil Badami, Felicity Castagna, Roanna Gonsalves and Kiriaki Koubaroulis

1.4 Attendees

DARTS implemented a strategic invitation process, as well as a call-out process, to ensure that attendees to the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium represented diversity in all its forms; not only ethno-cultural diversity, but also across art forms, sexualities, gender, disability and geography. The live stream enabled wider State and national participation across Australia.

Attendees were representatives from government agencies, local councils, peak bodies and small-to-medium arts organisations; leaders from funding bodies and major arts and cultural institutions; and artists and producers from areas across Sydney, particularly from the Western Sydney region. Representatives were from the Sydney Theatre Company, Information and Cultural Exchange, Create NSW, Australia Council for the Arts, the Australian Film, Television and Radio School, CuriousWorks, the Art Gallery of NSW, Screen Australia, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Opera Australia and the British Council².

Diversity Arts Australia undertook extensive consultation with government departments, arts organisations and individuals to ensure broad and equitable representation at the symposium. A call-out process was undertaken to invite additional individual artists to attend. DARTS' strategy recognised that artists and participants from under-represented groups must often be specifically and individually invited, as long and ingrained experiences of exclusion can discourage them from accessing opportunities.

The high response rate to the symposium saw over 240 people attending on the day, with 140 to the core symposium, plus another 100 to the **Diverse Screens South West Sydney** launch, and an additional 100 people tuning into the live stream of the symposium.

The day was facilitated by SBS journalist and media commentator Patrick Abboud. Speakers and panellists at the event were drawn from leaders across the arts and human rights sectors and included:

- Dr Tim Soutphommasane, Race Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission
- Lily Shearer, Co-Artistic Director, Moogahlin Performing Arts
- Magdalena Moreno, Executive Director, International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) and Board Member, Diversity Arts Australia
- Dr Paula Abood, Writer, Producer, Director and CACD practitioner
- Annette Shun Wah, Executive Producer, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance
- Grainne Brunson, Head of Strategy and Industry Development, Create NSW
- Lisa Walsh, Director, Research and Knowledge Management, Australia Council for the Arts
- Neil Peplow, CEO, Australian Film, Television and Radio School
- Craig Donarski, Director, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre

(For a full list of speakers and attendees, please see the Appendix 2.)

1.5 Program

The program covered a breadth of critical questions facing the Australian arts and creative sectors, including:

- the right to arts and creative diversity
- lessons from the diversity of First Nations peoples
- the state of play in cultural diversity and Sydney's creative sector
- social impact, innovation and diversity
- reflections on the symposium.

The Beyond Tick Boxes symposium also included:

- the launch and Q&A of **Diverse Screens South West Sydney**
- screenings of video interviews with First Nations Peoples' visual artist Blak Douglas; Indian-classical dance specialist in the style of Bharatanatyam, Aruna Gandhi; and Western Sydney parkour artist Ali Kadhim.
- the Australia Council for the Arts presentation of the Kirk Robson Award to Ali Kadhim for Community Arts and Cultural Development by Jeremy Smith, the Community, Emerging and Experimental Arts Program Director from the Australia Council for the Arts.

2. Panel Discussions



(L-R) Jackie Bailey, Sunil Badami and Roanna Gonsalves

“We must be able to take all kinds of selfies, not just visual, to tell our own stories, to self-represent on the page, on the canvas, on screen, on the airwaves. This means moving beyond the tired and condescending argument of ‘giving voice to the voiceless’ and actually creating pathways and access for diverse writers, artists, performers, storytellers to tell our own stories.” – Roanna Gonsalves, Citizen Journalist³

2.1 The Right to Arts and Creative Diversity

Dr Tim Soutphommasane, the Race Discrimination Commissioner from the Australian Human Rights Commission presented the keynote address. He spoke about the importance of being reflected in the nation’s media and culture:

“There is no human right, of course, for people to be reflected in the arts or in media. But we can all appreciate that someone’s dignity can be connected with how they – or, to be more specific, the group they belong to – are depicted in the public sphere. Where a group in society is invisible or demeaned, the message is clear. Those in that group are outsiders, second-class members, or even an ‘other’ against whom society defines itself.

“Because, if you’re someone who can see yourself, or someone like you, on screen or in our media, you’ve never had to ask questions about why people like you were left out. You’ve never known the feeling of looking into society’s mirror without seeing yourself reflected.”
– Dr Tim Soutphommasane

Magdalena Moreno, the Executive Director of IFACCA, reflected on cultural diversity in the arts from a global perspective. She shared the work of organisations all over the world to advance the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. She described the relevance of the arts in promoting human rights:

“I think we know that there is a lot of tension and conflict coming from a whole range of places, and, unfortunately, with these sorts of situations there seem[s] to be stronger border control, closing of borders, [a] sort of anxiety of looking towards our neighbours and other regions. This is a time when the arts really needs to be at the heart of our discussions, because it enables us to work together. It enables us to share in an experience coming from a different perspective.”

Putting cultural diversity in the arts in the context of human rights provided a strong framework with which to begin the symposium. Both Tim Soutphommasane and Magdalena Moreno discussed how under- and misrepresentation in the arts can serve to dehumanise entire groups of people. According to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, people have the fundamental right to express themselves creatively and celebrate their cultures, two things that are inextricably linked.

³ Roanna Gonsalves. (2017). *Some observations in three colours in ‘Beyond Tick Boxes. Southern Crossings*. 14.08.2017



(L-R) Ali Murphy-Oates, Lily Shearer and Colin Kinchela

2.2 Lessons from the diversity of First Nations Peoples

Lily Shearer, the Co-Artistic Director of Moogahlin Performing Arts, facilitated a conversation between herself, Ali Murphy-Oates, the Company Manager of Moogahlin Performing Arts; and Colin Kinchela, the First Nations Peoples Producer from ICE and Cope Street Collective. The panel explored how to connect with the diversity of First Nations Peoples. Visual artist Blak Douglas was unable to attend in person but DARTS undertook and screened a video interview with him.

The panel emphasised the three Rs of working with First Nations Peoples: Relationships, Respect and Reciprocity.

Relationships

The panel urged arts organisations and creative professionals to connect with First Nations Peoples in genuine ways:

*“What advice to give folk on how to connect with First [Nation] Peoples? **Have a yarn and a cup of tea.**”*
— Lily Shearer

Respect

The panel explained the importance of respecting the First Nations Peoples’ tens of thousands of years’ connection with the land and its role in culture:

*“You need to read the land to understand it, to tell that story ... **you’ve got to work with blackfellas to know that story.** We don’t own the land. The land owns us.”* – Lily Shearer

*“Break that [white] lens and **put on the real lens, our cultural lens, and refocus that.**”* – Colin Kinchela

*“There’s **no separation between everyday life and culture.**”* — Ali Murphy-Oates

*“**Being an artist is my dreaming, my songline, it goes all the way back.**”* — Lily Shearer

The panel discussed how engagement should come from a place of authentic respect for First Nations Peoples’ cultures. Engagement with First Nations Peoples should never be an afterthought or a way of getting permission for something that has already been planned or delivered. Engagement should be more than ‘ticking a box’. Arts organisations should also not assume that hiring a First Nations Peoples’ actor or arts worker is enough for First Nations Peoples’ engagement.

*“Don’t expect trained actors to also educate about their [First Nations Peoples’] culture. **They’re trained actors, not teachers!**”* — Lily Shearer

Reciprocity

The panel urged arts organisations and creative professionals to connect with First Nations Peoples in genuine ways:

*“**We’ll have the ‘natives’ set the table for dinner but we won’t have them to dinner... in the arts.**”*
— Blak Douglas

The panel explained that reciprocity is the key to good relationships. That is, if individuals or organisations ask something from First Nations Peoples, then they should be prepared to offer something meaningful in return. Too often, First Nations Peoples are asked to be generous with their culture and knowledge and then are exploited, either consciously or unconsciously, by an arts organisation.

2.3 The state of play in cultural diversity and Sydney's creative sector

Dr Paula Abood facilitated a panel discussion about the state of play in Sydney's cultural sector with the following attendees:

- Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad, Writer, Director, Sweatshop
- Grainne Brunsdon, Head of Strategy and Industry Development, Create NSW
- Tiffany Lee-Shoy, Manager, Cultural Development, Fairfield City Council
- Lisa Walsh, Director, Research and Knowledge Management, Australia Council for the Arts

Lisa Walsh from the Australia Council for the Arts reported that arts participation among culturally diverse populations is high. She conveyed that the latest national arts participation survey shows that 80% of Australians from culturally diverse backgrounds participate in the arts, compared to 72% of the mainstream Australian population.

Grainne Brunsdon from Create NSW described the impact of tying funding to quotas. She disclosed that in the 12 months since introducing the 50:50 by 2020 Gender Target, the NSW screen industry is on track to achieve gender parity across overall numbers in director, writer and producer roles by the end of the 2016/2017 financial year. Female directors are attached to 46% of projects (up from 28%), female writers are attached to 48% (up from 30%) and female producers are at 67% (up from 56%).

"If you make funding conditional, it does make a difference. We've seen it in the film sector."
— Grainne Brunsdon

Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad from Sweatshop also supported the need for affirmative action and quotas. He cited the Sweatshop initiative which supports culturally diverse writers and has led to an increase in publications of culturally diverse voices.

Grainne and Lisa urged artists from culturally diverse backgrounds to join the peer registers for Create NSW and the Australia Council for the Arts. These peers make the funding decisions for grant programs. Grainne also acknowledged that funding agencies need more diversity in their management structures.

"Australia Council for the Arts needs a greater diversity of peers, including younger peers."
— Lisa Walsh

Tiffany Lee-Shoy from Fairfield City Council explained that her council did not segregate multiculturalism from other streams of cultural activity:

"We don't 'do' multiculturalism at Fairfield City. We live it. It's our community."
— Tiffany Lee-Shoy

Tiffany urged arts workers from diverse backgrounds to apply for jobs in arts funding agencies and organisations if they want to effect change from within:

"Come on brown people! Let's apply for those jobs in those organisations which make policy and make change!" — Tiffany Lee-Shoy

All panel attendees agreed that there is a need for research and evidence which can be used to challenge gatekeepers and to mount arguments within their own organisations to target cultural diversity.



(L-R) Panellists Dr Paula Abood, Tiffany Lee-Shoy, Grainne Brunsdon, Lisa Walsh and Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad



(L-R) Filmmakers Pearl Tan, Maria Tran, Roxie Vuong, Thuy Nguyen and Ali Mousawi

2.4 Inviting artists to be advocates through Diverse Screens

In the lead-up to the symposium, Diversity Arts Australia commissioned four screen artists from South West Sydney to create new works tackling issues of cultural diversity, exclusion and inclusion in the creative sector. These films included a range of documentaries and mockumentaries which were designed to provoke, inspire and generate discussion.

The films tackled heavy-hitting themes such as refugee artist settlement and trauma, objectification and 'performing' your identity, the impact of not seeing people like yourself in areas of the arts, and how young people are designing their own creative futures.

The panel, opened by Craig Donarski (Director, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre) and chaired by Pearl Tan (Filmmaker and Actor), included filmmakers:

- Thuy Nguyen (*Against the Grain*)
- Roxie Vuong (*Act Now*)
- Maria Tran (*The Subtractor*)
- Ali Mousawi (*Beyond Christmas Island*)

After the screenings, the filmmakers discussed the inspiration behind their films and the barriers they have encountered in the industry. The panel discussion was followed by an audience Q&A.

Maria Tran discussed barriers she encountered that were not always obvious, but were deeply embedded in the film industry. Her mockumentary *The Subtractor* simultaneously raises these issues and pokes fun at them:

*"The concept came about through my experience in the industry. I was always faced with a certain barrier. But it's not like up-front racism. I wouldn't really label it as that. **But it's all these subtleties.**"*

Roxie Vuong noted the progress in the screen sector, particularly among streaming services such as Netflix. She describes her sense of hope:

*"But to be honest, from coming here today, I'm very hopeful. **I think the change is happening and it's actually happening much faster than it has ever been before.** I just want to continue telling stories, making short films, short films first, but hopefully more."*

2.5 Social impact, innovation and diversity

Annette Shun Wah, Executive Producer, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance, facilitated this panel with the following attendees:

- Paschal Daantos Berry, Program Coordinator, Blacktown Arts Centre
- Julieanne Campbell, General Manager, Urban Theatre Projects and Co-Convener, Western Sydney Arts and Cultural Lobby
- Neil Peplow, CEO, Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS)

The panel emphasised that cultural diversity can be viewed as a key driver of competitive advantage. In a global marketplace, culturally diverse content can reach a vast niche market of diasporic middle-class consumers.

“The commercial imperative is changing. We’re actually ahead of the game.”

— Julieanne Campbell

“Let’s speak from a position of power.

For some of us that’s a big shift.”

— Annette Shun Wah

Panel members also described how arts organisations must innovate in how they approach cultural diversity at every level.

“It’s about making safe spaces for people - right down to the minute detail of how we teach.”

— Neil Peplow

They urged institutions to make structural changes, rather than simply invest in one-off programs.

“[The sector] is suffering from ‘initiative-itis’; initiatives get set up but there is no long-term impact.”

— Neil Peplow

“What’s the most important change? The most important change is not having this conversation anymore.” — Paschal Daantos Berry



(L-R) Panellists Annette Shun Wah, Julieanne Campbell, Paschal Daantos Berry and Neil Peplow

3.1 Barriers

In your experience what are the main barriers that inhibit people from CALD backgrounds to meaningfully participate in the sector that you work in?

Attendees converged on a number of key barriers to CALD people meaningfully participating in the arts, screen and cultural sectors, both as creators and audiences:

- the professional Australian arts and cultural sectors exhibit systemic discrimination
- this leads to tokenism, misrepresentation and missed opportunities for building new audiences
- there are not enough CALD decision-makers
- CALD artists need mentoring and capacity-building and notions of leadership must expand to accommodate difference.

The professional Australian arts and cultural sectors exhibit systemic discrimination.

“The structural change of power within society is the change that needs to happen. Every system has a crack. We need to find the cracks and fill them with colour.”

— Dr Paula Abood

As noted earlier, the research into arts participation by the Australia Council for the Arts shows that 80% of Australians who identify as coming from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds attend the arts compared to 72% of the general Australian population. Fifty-two per cent of CALD Australians engage with arts from their own cultural background⁴.

Despite this high rate of arts participation, Australia’s most prominent arts companies and institutions continue to under-represent CALD artists. For example, 13% of the Australian population identify as first, second or third generation Asian Australian and 32% of the nation’s overseas-born population migrated from Asia. However, only one of the 61 plays staged by Major Performing Arts theatre companies in 2016 was written by a person of Asian descent⁵.

Attendees at the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium spoke from their own experiences, saying that systemic discrimination was at the heart of this mismatch between high CALD audience engagement with the arts and low mainstream institutional representation of CALD artists.

“My whole life over 30 years has been reassuring racist Australians not to be afraid of us, of me as a Muslim!”— Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad

The Australia Council for the Arts *Showcasing Creativity* report defines systemic discrimination as follows:

“Systemic discrimination can be difficult to identify, as there are always so many reasons to choose or not choose a particular work. The key sign that systemic discrimination is at play is if a programmer’s choice of works is based on an unexamined assumption that [European or Anglo-Australian] work aligns better with the culture of the organisation and its audiences, or that [non-European or Anglo-Australian] works do not. The programmer him/herself may not be ‘racist,’ but may be complying subconsciously with the dominant culture in which s/he lives and works. A programmer may also not be aware that they are operating within a dominant cultural paradigm which is affecting their decision-making...”

“Systemic discrimination can also be present in the ways minority groups are expected to communicate in the dominant cultural language and paradigm”⁵

Attendees at the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium repeatedly described experiences of systemic discrimination among the ‘gatekeepers’⁷ who control whether or not a culturally and linguistically diverse artist gets to communicate their work to an audience. As one attendee expressed it: “What is excellence? White.”

⁴ Australia Council for the Arts. (2017). The National Arts Participation Survey. Australia Council for the Arts: Sydney.

⁵ BYP Group. (2017). Asian Representation in MPA Theatre Productions. www.bypgroup.com

⁶ BYP Group. (2016). Showcasing Creativity: Programming and Presenting First Nations Performing Arts. Australia Council for the Arts: Sydney.

⁷ Gatekeepers can include anyone in a decision-making role, including funders, programmers, producers, publishers and curators.

Systemic discrimination leads to tokenism, misrepresentation and missed opportunities for building new audiences.

“The race politics of casting where white people are cast into non-white roles. Call it out!”

— Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad

In a system which is established and controlled by a dominant cultural perspective, every other type of artist or work is seen through this cultural prism, whether intentionally or not. This leads to tokenism and a misrepresentation of CALD arts and culture, even among the well-intentioned. CALD artists described how decision-makers pigeon-hole them, trying to fit their work into a narrow, ‘whitewashed’ niche.

One attendee explained: “There is an expectation that all CALD artists want to make political statements.” Another described how gatekeepers choose between ‘integration or segregation’, leaving no middle ground for the complex, exciting space of ‘difference’.

“Don’t get the Asian kid to make a film about Asian people ... let them make whatever film they want!”

— Patrick Abboud

Attendees described how even the terminology of ‘CALD’ allows or encourages decision-makers to stereotype ‘other’ CALD artists. “CALD” inspires in a decision-maker a sense of having to tick a box, instead of excitement at the potential of this unmined vein of Australian creative output.

*“There is stereotyping of what we can do creatively. **These labels are locking people in.**”* — Attendee

*“**Labels aren’t my identity.** They’ve been imposed on me.”* — Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad

Lazy acronyms like CALD make me angry ... It’s a technicalour tomorrow. How far we’ve come.”

— Craig Donarski

Systemic discrimination also leads to missed opportunities to build new audiences for Australian arts and culture. The research from the Australia Council for the Arts cited above indicates a strong potential audience base for culturally diverse work. Australian culturally diverse creators also have a potentially significant global diasporic audience for their work. YouTube sensations Mychonne and Superwog demonstrate the international appetite for content which speaks to the diasporic younger generation’s experience.

“[Arts companies] spend more time trying to reach their audience than actually working with or engaging with them.” — Attendee

Despite this evidence, attendees felt that the model for CALD representation remains tokenistic rather than a genuine engine to develop audiences, advance the art form and create economic value.

There are not enough CALD decision-makers

“So, there is evidence that culturally diverse communities are very engaged, interested in, and involved in arts, and cultural practice. The statistics tell us that despite the great diversity in Australia and the interest in the arts [by CALD communities], it’s not translating to greater engagement and participation by culturally diverse artists and makers; the content is not diverse enough and the people who are making the decisions are not diverse enough.” — Lena Nahlous

Attendees universally agreed that there were not enough culturally diverse people in positions of power in the Australian arts, screen and cultural sectors. As a result, arts organisations often have inadequate knowledge or networks of culturally diverse creative communities.

So much of the arts is about relationships. In 2009, the Australia Council for the Arts developed a relational model of the arts and its impact on society called the ‘Artistic Vibrancy Framework’, which explains art as a system of relationships with the art, art form, artist, organisations, audiences, communities, general public and society and culture.

Seen through this relational lens, it is easy to understand why so many decisions about what art gets funded and whose work is made boils down to relationships, for example, networks built on trust and reputation. At its best, this leads to a tight-knit, high-functioning group of arts decision-makers continually pushing each other towards excellence. At its worst, it is an ‘old boys’ club’, the door of which is closed to others.

Several attendees spoke about this sense of exclusion:

*“We don’t have the knowledge of the best opportunities and contacts. **We aren’t aware of the ‘access points.’**”* — Attendee

*“Job opportunities [in the arts] are not made known [more widely] ... **you have to know the right people. But how can you know the right people if you are never introduced to them, you don’t know anyone who knows them?**”* — Attendee

*“They say you don’t have enough experience to get the opportunity, **but you need the opportunity to get the experience!**”* — Attendee

Attendees explained how the funding system unintentionally excludes CALD artists at the practical level, through rules and a lack of translation:

*“[There are] **rules and regulations that exclude us, guidelines and eligibility and practices ... limited access to resources and opportunity and information... lack of funding for translation and transport ...**”* — Attendee

The lack of CALD decision-makers also means that ‘excellence’ in culturally diverse art forms is not understood by funders. This leads to internationally recognised artists, often those who have migrated as adults, being unrecognised or overlooked:

*“There is a lack of understanding amongst decision-makers about **what comprises excellence in culturally diverse practices.**”* — Attendee

Others described an abiding sense that the funding system ‘is not for them’:

*“We talk about the importance of funding for the arts, **but I certainly have never applied for funding ... and I am one of the ‘whiter’ shades of brown. Why would I? I would never think of this system as one for me. It’s just not.**”* — Attendee

CALD artists need mentoring and capacity-building and notions of leadership must expand to accommodate difference.

Attendees commonly described a need for CALD artists and arts workers to be mentored and nurtured into artistic leadership roles. At the same time, they felt that arts leadership models must be changed to accommodate difference. CALD leaders and decision-makers must not have to always ‘walk white and talk white’.

Attendees also called for mentorships and capacity building programs to be mutual, allowing for two-way learning and founded on respect for what CALD artists can offer.



Joanne Kee (centre) and attendees during a break-out session

3.2 Vision for the future

What would the arts and creative sector look like in 2030 if it represented the cultural diversity of Australia?

Attendees were asked to envisage a future arts and creative sector that is representative of cultural diversity. They imagined a sector in which:

“Leaders are diverse at all levels.”

“Award ceremonies require multiple translations.”

“Diverse artistic expression is more visible in festivals, theatre, public art.”

“Self-sustaining industry not reliant on bureaucracy.”

“Not tokenism — [cultural diversity] is part of regular programming.”

“Cultural participation is central to civic life.”

“Boards would be genuinely representative.”

“Arts professionals in Western Sydney forums in Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown.”

“It is irrelevant who you are. What’s more important is if your art is good.”

“Diverse cultural artists are being fought over!”

“Six billion fresh stories.”

“Intersectional diversity.”

“Diversity is something we take for granted”

“Better coordination of services in screen, in galleries, in literature, in jobs...”

“People of colour writing their own stories”

“Opening up roles to any actor.”

“Deliberately funded programs to develop diverse talent.”

“International stories which are successful.”

“Authenticity, not tokenism. Intersectionality. Change from the core.”



4. Conclusion: Call to Action

Attendees made a number of critical calls to action to improve CALD representation in the Australian arts and creative sectors:

- make CALD artists and creatives more visible
- measure diversity to increase diversity
- take affirmative action
- create an enabling environment
- support the role of DARTS
- 'Make our own door'.

Make CALD artists and creatives more visible

*"What is the mainstream? **The mainstream is us.**"*
— Annette Shun Wah

Attendees called on funders and decision-makers in the arts and creative sectors to showcase CALD art in mainstream public spaces — physical spaces, stages, books and screens.

They also urged funders and decision-makers to develop and showcase role models of culturally diverse arts and cultural leaders in their fields.

*"It's really important for us to **be framing ourselves rather than other people framing us.**"*
— Paschal Daantos Berry

*"We need role models – **[if you see it] then you can be it.**"* — Attendee

*"**You need to be supported** – curated, mentored, published, produced – by someone of similar cultural diversity as yourself." — Attendee*

*"**The Australian national imagination is quite white** when it's actually really quite diverse in reality." — Roanna Gonsalves*

Attendees also called on supporters of cultural diversity of all races to speak out.

*"Most of the time whatever is thrown at us we don't say much back - working in community I grew backbone. Being Asian we're not expected to be articulate ... so **over time I've learned to speak out!**" — Maria Tran*

Important observations

Writer and citizen journalist Roanna Gonsalves made some observations at the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium that she colour-coded: red, black and yellow. These were later published in an article in *Southern Crossings* magazine. Below is an extract of some of the main recommendations from her article⁸.

- a call to audiences to support diverse writers, artists, storytellers
- audience development programs to lower access barriers to engaging with the arts in Australia
- a call to organisations such as the Australia Council for the Arts, Create NSW, NSW Writers' Centre, Copyright Agency and so on ... to support individual diverse artists with funding to make stuff is what matters. But there was also a strong call to also 'Support the Supporters'
- long term funding for organisations to be sustainable
- the need for affirmative action and quotas because, as Michael Mohammed Ahmed noted, there is plenty of international and local evidence that quotas are needed and that they work
- access to support and mentors already established in the field; capacity building is important
- linking diversity to acceptable standards of creative production and setting standards, like the British Film Institute Diversity Standards
- people at the top of the organisation need to set standards for others in relation to diversity
- a more nuanced understanding of diversity, with a focus on intersectionality. For example: support for women must include not only white women but also women from minority communities.

⁸ Roanna Gonsalves (2017) "Some observations in three colours in 'Beyond Tick Boxes.'" *Southern Crossings*. 14.08.2017. www.southerncrossings.com.au/arts-and-culture/some-observations-in-three-colours-on-beyond-tick-boxes/

CALD artists and creatives to take action

Speakers at the symposium highlighted a number of ways that CALD artists and creatives can agitate for change from inside the system.

Actions include:

- joining arts funding agencies' peer registers
- measuring their outcomes and sharing their success stories
- recognising cultural diversity as a competitive advantage rather than a barrier, particularly in a global marketplace for arts and creative content.

Measure diversity to increase diversity

Attendees called for the current level of diversity to be measured. This would provide a benchmark for change. They acknowledged existing and emerging work in this field; for example, the work by Diversity Arts Australia, Screen Australia, Media Diversity Australia and the Human Rights Commission. They called for institutions to be held accountable to measures of how they are making CALD artists and communities more welcome and included.

Take affirmative action

Attendees at the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium, including representatives from arts agencies and organisations, urged funders and decision-makers to take affirmative action to increase cultural diversity across the arts and creative sectors. They recommended:

- compulsory initiatives which advance diversity and are linked to funding
- funding tied to priority areas.
For example, dedicated positions within the funded organisation, dedicated spaces for

CALD practitioners to access materials, mentors and resources

- funding tied to CALD quotas and targets. For example, CALD at all levels of a major institution to equal (at a minimum) the level of CALD representation in the general Australian population
- facilitated mentorships pairing emerging CALD with established artists
- targeted pathways for CALD artists
- major organisations to link with CALD practitioners in a professional development framework
- keep funding bodies accountable with their own targets and quotas.

Create an enabling environment

CALD artists, producers, directors and practitioners need a more enabling environment if they are to enter and remain in the creative sector. Attendees suggested a number of actions to remove barriers to entry and create an environment which encourages CALD Australians to enter into the creative professions, including:

- simplified funding application processes
- multilingual and multicultural marketing
- showcasing CALD creative leaders
- encouragement and role models at the school and family level for creative careers.

They talked about the support which existing institutions need to increase diversity and inclusion such as:

- how to articulate change to a wider audience
- how to avoid tokenism and surface level change
- how to change from the core





Support the role of Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS)

“Coming here I’m feeling hopeful - I think the change is happening... Australia will eventually catch up.”
— Roxie Vuong

Attendees universally urged funders to empower DARTS to:

- advocate and lobby for CALD artists and creatives
- showcase CALD practitioners
- deliver training about unconscious bias and racism.

“Agency, integrity, choice, voice. [We need] safer spaces where voices can be heard without fear of being labelled as ‘trouble’ or ‘difficult’” — Attendee

‘Make our own door’

“I’ve been decolonising this idea of being part of a canon. I can make my own canon.”
— Paschal Daantos Berry

As well as breaking down barriers to entry into existing arts and creative sectors, attendees talked about “making their own door” into the sector. This includes:

- taking grassroots action and recognising what is valuable at the local level and making art
- uniting to achieve economies of scale

and create safe and self-determined spaces for creation

- embracing and supporting the younger generation of CALD artists and creatives
- mobilising their support networks. For example, arrange to have allies in a foyer or opening night environment.

“Remember that the ‘major’ arts institutions weren’t always the ‘majors.’ Artists are the marginalised, the eccentrics, the outsiders and the mavericks. [For example] John Bell started out touring Shakespeare around regional Australia in a Combi van; The Australian Ballet started out with dance troupes touring to small country towns in a country which did not even know about the Ballet Russe style ... And then they became the ‘mainstream,’ and the ‘system,’ and then the next innovation comes along and shakes it up. You are that next innovation. Don’t wait.”— Jackie Bailey

“We don’t need permission to make our own art, to imagine our own world. [As artists] we create things. We shouldn’t be worried about if anyone’s going to let us in or even open the door. We should make our own.” — Sunil Badami

“We all talk and listen through different lenses. Some of us are talking and listening through the lens of the local and our connection. Some are doing that through our own cultural identity, some of us are doing that through intersectional identity that involves sexuality, cultural identity, our local identity.”
— Felicity Castagna

4.1 Immediate Impact of the Symposium

The Beyond Tick Boxes symposium led to the creation of *The Colour Cycle* podcast, which was shortlisted for an Australian Podcasting Award and was also featured on Virgin Inflight Entertainment in 2018. Season One of the podcast captures many of the panel discussions and undertakes follow-up interviews with some of the attendees and speakers. These conversations can be found at www.diversityarts.org.au/project/the-colour-cycle/

A series of mini films have also been created to complement this research and can be found at diversityarts.org.au

The symposium resulted in the following articles published by the symposium citizen journalists:

- *Some observations in three colours on 'Beyond Tick Boxes'* by Roanna Gonsalves in *Southern Crossings* magazine

- *Of all things qualifying us to make art, where we 'really' come from shouldn't define us* by Sunil Badami in *The Guardian*
- *Beyond Tick Boxes: a symposium on cultural diversity in the arts* by Tanya Ali in *Peril* magazine
- *From ticking boxes to thinking outside the square* by Felicity Castagna on *ArtsHub*
- *Cultural diversity in the creative sector: inching towards a more democratic culture* by Kiriaki Koubaroulis in *Loud Mouth*
- The event was also covered by local and mainstream media, including SBS TV.

The Diverse Screens films commissioned for the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium went on to be screened throughout Australia, including in Fairfield, Perth, Melbourne's Federation Square, the Adelaide Fringe Festival and in Vancouver, Canada. A brand new second series of Diverse Screens films has been launched and a third series is in production.



Acknowledgements

This report was commissioned by Diversity Arts Australia and prepared by BYP Group.

Co-authored by Jackie Bailey, BYP Group
and Diversity Arts Australia.

BYP Group is a specialist evaluation, research and strategy consulting firm in the public and social sectors. www.bypgroup.com

Beyond Tick Boxes Symposium Production Team:

Lena Nahlous, Executive Director & Creative Director, Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS)

Kevin Bathman, Producer - Projects & Events, DARTS

Sonia Mehrmand, Admin and Communications Officer, DARTS

Monique Choy, Strategic Initiatives and Content Producer, DARTS

Dr Paula Abood, Creative Consultant

Gary Paramanathan, Associate Producer

Sarah Moynihan and Norm Horton, Documentation and live stream, Feral Arts/Arts Front

Jackie Bailey, Researcher, BYP Group

Greg Appel, Filmmaker

Jennifer Macey, Podcast Producer

Rani Haywood, Marketing Consultant

Benythyn Oldfield, Publicist

Patrick Abboud, MC

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Thank you to the Diversity Arts Australia Board members and in particular to our Chair, Professor James Arvanitakis, and Board Members Magdalena Moreno and Louise Dunn, for their assistance with this event.

The Beyond Tick Boxes symposium received funding and support from the Australia Council for the Arts, Create NSW, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Liverpool City Council, Fairfield City Council, Feral Arts and Arts Front.

This report was funded by Create NSW.

Appendix 1: Beyond Tick Boxes symposium program June 2017

Event MC: Patrick Abboud

- 9.15am - 9.45am **Welcome:** Lena Nahlous, Executive Director, Diversity Arts Australia
Magdalena Moreno (Board Member, Diversity Arts and Executive Director
International Federation of Arts Councils & Cultural Agencies (IFACCA))
- Opening: The Right to Arts and Creative Diversity**
Dr Tim Soutphommasane (Race Discrimination Commissioner,
Australian Human Rights Commission)
- 9.45am - 10.45am **What we can Learn from the Diversity of First Nations Peoples**
Screening of video interview with Blak Douglas
- Lily Shearer (Panel Chair; Co-Artistic Director, Moogahlin Performing Arts),
Colin Kinchela (Member, Cope Street Collective & First Nations Producer, ICE)
Ali Murphy-Oates (Company Manager, Moogahlin; Board Director,
Blak Dance and Theatre Network NSW)
- 10.45am - 11.00am Morning Tea
- 11.00am - 12.00pm **Are We There Yet? The State of Play: Cultural Diversity
in Sydney's Creative Sector**
Screening of video interview with Aruna Gandhi
- Dr Paula Abood (Panel Chair & Provocateur)
Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad (Writer; Director, Sweatshop)
Grainne Brunsdon (Head of Strategy and Industry Development, Create NSW)
Tiffany Lee-Shoy (Manager Cultural Development, Social and Cultural
Development Division, Fairfield City Council)
Lisa Walsh (Director, Research and Knowledge Management,
Australia Council for the Arts)
- 12.00pm-1.00pm **Launch of Diverse Screens South West Sydney and Q&A with the Filmmakers**
Welcome by Craig Donarski, Acting Director, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre.
MC: Pearl Tan. Four edgy and provocative short films by Maria Tran,
Ali Mousawi, Roxie Vuong and Thuy Nguyen
- 1.00pm -1.45pm Lunch
- 1.45pm - 3.15pm **Break-out Sessions:**
Facilitators
Dr Paula Abood (Writer, Producer, Director & Community Cultural Worker)
Paschal Daantos Berry (Program Coordinator, Blacktown Arts Centre)
Rosie Dennis (Artistic Director, Urban Theatre Projects)
Sopa Enari (Writer and Playwright)
Tiffany Lee-Shoy (Manager Cultural Development, Fairfield City Council)
Patrick McIntyre (Executive Director, Sydney Theatre Company)
Magdalena Moreno (Deputy Director, IFACCA and DARTS Board)
Bali Padda (Creative Consultant)
S. Shakthidharan (Artistic Director, CuriousWorks)
Pearl Tan (Pearly Productions)
Imogen Yang (Insightful)

Appendix 1: Beyond Tick Boxes symposium program June 2017 continued

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| 3.15pm - 3.30pm | Afternoon Tea |
| 3.30pm - 4.30pm | Innovating for Change: Social Impact, Innovation and Diversity Annette Shun Wah (Panel Chair; Executive Producer, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance) Paschal Daantos Berry (Program Coordinator, Blacktown Arts Centre) Julieanne Campbell (General Manager, Urban Theatre Projects and Co-convenor, Western Sydney Arts and Cultural Lobby) Neil Peplow (CEO, AFTRS) |
| 4.30pm -5.00pm | Reflections on the symposium Citizen journalists, Sunil Badami, Felicity Castagna, and Roanna Gonsalves and researcher, Jackie Bailey report back on the proceedings of the day Acknowledgments: Lena Nahlous |
| 5.00pm - 5.30pm | Australia Council for the Arts presents the prestigious Kirk Robson Award to Ali Kadhim for Community Arts & Cultural Development Screening of Diversity Arts video interview with Ali Kadhim Award winner, Ali Kadhim (Parkour specialist, filmmaker, stunt performer and founder of Team 9Lives) Presented by Jeremy Smith (Arts Practice Director – Community, Emerging and Experimental Arts, Australia Council for the Arts) |
| 5.30pm - 6.00pm | Close and Networking |

Appendix 2: Attendance List from the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium on 29 June 2017

Adam Porter, Curator, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
Adrian Burnett, Arts Practice Director, Dance, Australia Council for the Arts
Ala'a Al Qaisi, Filmmaker, Golden Touch Production
Ali Mousawi, Filmmaker, Independent
Ali Murphy-Oates, Managing Director, Moogahlin Performing Arts
Alissar Chidiac, Creative Producer, CACD, Independent
Augusta Supple, Senior Manager - Engagement, Partnerships and Development, Create NSW
Ana Tiwary, Film Director, IndiVisual
Angela Nashaat, Community Artist, Independent
Anke Timm, Lead, Strategy & Arts Practice, Accessible Arts NSW
Anna Hay, Arts & Projects Manager, British Council, Australia
Annabel Davis, Partnerships Manager, CuriousWorks
Annette Innis, Artist and Project Officer, Arts on Prescription-HammondCare
Annette Shun Wah, Executive Producer, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance
Aroha Groves, Aboriginal Arts Development Officer, Blacktown Arts Centre
Aruna Gandhi, Dancer/Choreographer, Independent
Ayeesha Ash, Co-creative Director, Black Birds
Bali Padda, Chair, Diversity Committee, Media Entertainment Arts Alliance
Bethany Falzon, Community Project Officer, Fairfield City Museum
Caitlin Newton-Broad, Community Director, CuriousWorks
Carolina Triana, Arts & Culture Coordinator, Settlement Services International
Carmen Pratap, Producer, ABC
Cassandra Ng, Independent Artist,
Cayn Rosmarin, Public Programs and Edu Officer, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
Cecelia Cmielewski, Researcher, Institute for Culture and Society
Christina Alvarez, Engagement Manager, AFTRS
Claudia Chidiac, Creative Producer, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
Colin Kinchela, Member, First Nations Creative Producer, Cope ST Collective & Information & Cultural Exchange
Craig Donarski, Acting Director, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
Daniel Collins, Community Development, Liverpool City Council
David Everist, Manager, Engagement and Partnerships, Create NSW
Donita Hulme, Cultural Engagement Officer, Penrith City Council
Donna Mosford, Senior Manager, Multicultural NSW
Elizabeth Chang, Programs Officer, Parramatta Artists Studios
Eva Di Cesare, Creative Director Producer, Monkey Baa Theatre Company
Fadia Abboud, Director Screen / Co-Director Film Festival, Independent / Arab Film Festival Australia
Gary Paramanathan, Engagement Coordinator, AFTRS
Felicity Castagna, Writer & Academic, Independent
Gaele Sobott, Director, Outlandish Arts
Georgie McClean, Principal, The Gist
Grainne Brunsdon, Manager Stakeholder Relations, Create NSW
Guido Gonzalez, Filmmaker, CuriousWorks
Hanli Botha, Sessional Academic, Western Sydney University
Hannah Grant, Director, Socially Engaged Programs, Shopfront Theatre
Helen Salmon, Head of Arts and Partnership, British Council, Australia
Imogen Yang, Director, Insightful
Isabel Lo, Founder, Media Diversity Australia
Jackie Bailey, Principal / Researcher, BYP Group
Jackie Leewai, Community Engagement Adviser, SBS
Jane McCredie, Executive Director, NSW Writers' Centre
Jason Wing, Visual Artist, Independent
Jennifer Macey, Podcast Producer / Journalist, Independent
Jeremy Smith, Community & Emerging/Experimental Arts, Australia Council for the Arts
Jiva Parthipan, Cultural /Arts Coordinator, STARTTS
Joanne Kee, Executive Producer, National Theatre of Parramatta
Joe Martorana, Chief Operating Officer, Opera Australia
John Kirkman, Artistic Director, Information and Cultural Exchange
Jonathan Wilson, Community Programs Producer, Art Gallery of New South Wales
Julia Mendel, Producer, Digital Communication and Engagement, Information and Cultural Exchange
Julianne Campbell, General Manager, Urban Theatre Project
Juliet Rogers, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Society of Authors
Kate Hickey, Senior Manager, Strategic Policy, Create NSW
Keren Ruki, Artist, Curator, Creative Producer, Independent
Kevin Du Preez, Director Capacity Building, Australia Council for the Arts
Kiriaki Koubaroulis, Arts Administrator and Blogger, Cultural Omnivore
Laura Murdoch, Executive Producer, Music NSW
Laura Pike, Events and Professional Development Coordinator, National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)

Appendix 2: Attendance List from the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium on 29 June 2017 continued

Lina Kastoumis, Program Officer, Australia Council for the Arts
Lisa Walsh, Director - Research & Knowledge Management, Australia Council for the Arts
Liz Martin, Musician, Hack Sounds
Lizzy Marshall, Public Arts Officer, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
Lola Pinder, Front of House & Curatorial Assistant, Artspace
Louise Dunn, Executive Director, Nexus Arts
Louise Gough, Development Executive, Screen Australia
Lucy Wang, Creative Director, Experimentum
Magdalena Moreno, Deputy Director, IFACCA and DARTS Board
Mantej Singh, Program & Business Development Manager, Dlux Media Arts
Maria Tran, Filmmaker & Creative Producer, Phoenix Eye Pty Ltd
Marian Abboud, Artist, Independent
Matt Chun, Visual Artist, Independent
Megan Monte, Curator, Visual Arts, Campbelltown Arts Centre
Melodie Gibson, Engagement and Partnerships Lead, Create NSW
Mia Zahra, Community Development Coordinator, NSW Department of Family and Community Services
Michael Campbell, Director, Westwords
Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad, Director, Sweatshop
Michelle Kotevski, General Manager, Playwriting Australia
Michelle Rickerby, Producer, Westwords
Miriam Cabello, Artist & Curator, MLC Design & Gallery
Misty McPhail, General Manager, Made in the West Film Festival
Moreblessing Maturure, Actor / Creative Director, Folk Magazine
Morwenna Collett, Chief Executive Officer, Accessible Arts
Mouna Zaylah, Business Coordinator, Campbelltown Arts Centre
Neil Peplow, Chief Executive Officer, AFTRS
Nicholas Pickard, Director Membership & Stakeholder Engagement, Copyright Agency
Nikola Amanovic, Director, Sydney Story Factory
Norm Horton, Executive Director, Feral Arts
Paschal Berry, Program Coordinator, Blacktown Arts Centre
Patrick Abboud, Journalist & Presenter, SBS
Patrick May, Senior Manager, Policy Analyst, Screen Australia
Patrick McIntyre, Executive Director, Sydney Theatre Company
Dr Paula Abood, Writer, Producer & Community, Cultural Worker, Independent
Pearl Tan, Film Director & Producer, Pearly Productions
Peter Johnson, Assistant Curator, C3West, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia
Phillip Kane, Actor / Creative Producer, Phoenix Eye Pty Ltd
Renee Dixon, Multidisciplinary artist, Independent
Rhianne Ross, Community Engagement Officer, Multicultural NSW
Roanna Gonsalves, Writer & Academic, Independent
Robbi James, Creative Producer, Company of Rogues
Robert Love, Director, Riverside Theatre
Rosie Dennis, Artistic Director, Urban Theatre Project
Roxie Vuong, Filmmaker Independent
Roy Marchant, Producer Public Programs, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
Sam Wild, Senior Manager, Create NSW
Sarah Moynihan, Executive Director, Feral Arts
Shabnam Tavakol, Community Engagement Officer, Multicultural NSW
Shakthi Shakthidharan, Artistic Director, CuriousWorks
Sigrid Langker, Senior Grants Officer, Australia Council for the Arts
Sopa Enari, Playwright & Writer, Independent
Sophia Zachariou, Director Sector Investment, Create NSW
Sukhmani Korana, Co-Founder / Academic, Southern Crossing
Sunil Badami, Writer / Academic, Independent
Tamsin Salehian, Artist, Independent
Tanya Ali, Writer, Peril Magazine
Tara Morelos, Director, Dlux MediaArts
Tegan Richardson, Senior Grants Officer, Australia Council for the Arts
Tessa Mills, Senior Manager, Policy and Research, Screen Australia
Thuy Nguyen, Filmmaker, Independent
Tiffany Lee-Shoy, Senior Policy Adviser, Fairfield City Council
Dr Tim Soutphommasane, Race Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Right Commission
Vanessa Hyde, General Manager, CuriousWorks
Vicki Norton, Education Manager, Australian Chamber Orchestra
Wenona Bryne, Arts Practice Director - Literature Arts Practice, Australia Council for the Arts
Will Harvey, Associate Producer, Griffin Theatre Company
Yamane Fayed, Hubs Program Manager, Information and Cultural Exchange

Appendix 3: Social media discourse and media coverage



Pearl Tan

@PearlyProductns

"Who is the mainstream? The mainstream is us." Annette Shun Wah
[@CAAPerformance](#) [#DiversityArtsAu](#)

3:55 PM - 29 Jun 2017 from Sydney, New South Wales

2 LIKES



Jackie Leewai

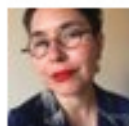
@Jacquiiitah



[@AFTRS](#) Neil Peplow thinks about students entering & providing safe spaces for all practices. Msg: Diversity is the focus! [#DiversityArtsAU](#)

3:51 PM - 29 Jun 2017

2 RETWEETS 4 LIKES



Esther Anatolitis

@_esther

Huge thanks to [@DiversityArtsAu](#) and everyone whose generosity and boldness has made today's [#DiversityArtsAu](#) so important. Big respect.

3:01 PM - 29 Jun 2017

1 RETWEET 2 LIKES



Wadwell_Initiatives

@WadwellWanders



'Speak from a position of power' is why it is important that these events reach next gen of cultural leaders. [#diversityartsau](#)

3:56 PM - 29 Jun 2017

1 RETWEET 3 LIKES

Appendix 3: Social media discourse and media coverage continued



Patrick Abboud ✓
@PatrickAbboud



Boom! Tie \$\$\$ to conditional quotas and we'll see more genuine diversity in arts
[#DiversityArtsAu](#) [twitter.com/culturalchamp/...](#)

12:11 PM - 29 Jun 2017

3 RETWEETS 4 LIKES



Misty McPhail
@mistyfest



Who decides who gets a foot in the door? Organisational diversity = diverse creative support [@Create_NSW](#) [@DiversityArtsAu](#) [#diversityartsau](#)

11:56 AM - 29 Jun 2017

2 RETWEETS 2 LIKES



Donita Hulme
@CulturalChamp

Dancer Aruna Gandhi: Collaborate for the sake of collaborating, do it organically not because you're forced to. [#DiversityArtsAU](#)

11:30 AM - 29 Jun 2017

2 RETWEETS 1 LIKE



Augusta Supple
@AugustaSupple

"If you want to work with us, you have to have the 4 Rs: RESPONSIBILITY, RESPECT, RECIPROCITY, RELATIONSHIPS"- [@Moogahlin](#) [#diversityartsau](#)

11:00 AM - 29 Jun 2017 from Sydney, New South Wales

2 RETWEETS 7 LIKES

Appendix 3: Social media discourse and media coverage continued



Pearl Tan

@PearlyProductns

Cultural appropriation occurs in theatre when the minority group is an afterthought as opposed to the originators [#DiversityArtsAu](#)

10:50 AM - 29 Jun 2017 from Sydney, New South Wales



Simone Whetton

@SimoneWhetton

WhatsOn [@abcsydney](#) talking about short films on cultural diversity in the arts [@DiversityArtsAu](#) [@CasulaArts](#) screening Thurs 29 June midday

7:04 AM - 24 Jun 2017

3 RETWEETS 2 LIKES



Cultural Omnivore

@CultchaOmnivore



[@UTProjects](#) "cultural consumption appetite is changing. We're ahead of the game" [@DiversityArtsAu](#) [#DiversityArtsAu](#)

4:01 PM - 29 Jun 2017

1 RETWEET 1 LIKE



Peril magazine

@PerilMag

"The Australian national imaginary is extremely white when in reality, Australia is quite diverse" - [@roannagonsalves](#) [#DiversityArtsAu](#)

4:44 PM - 29 Jun 2017

9 RETWEETS 15 LIKES

Appendix 3: Social media discourse and media coverage

Brianna Roberts 
 @BriannaNEWS 

Learning new moves with Aruna Gandhi, who tells stories through gestures and expressions @SBSNews #DiversityArtsAu pic.twitter.com/a67BwuhAPB
 7:00 PM - 29 Jun 2017 from Sydney, New South Wales



Sunil Badami
 @thatsunilbadami

Art starting breakout sessions .@DiversityArtsAu .@CasulaArts pic.twitter.com/teLBQOIsvH
 3:01 PM - 29 Jun 2017



Wenona Byrne
 @ByrneWenona

Amazing live iPhone drawing at #DiversityArtsAu pic.twitter.com/t54FvKI
 9:48 AM - 29 Jun 2017



Augusta Supple
 @AugustaSupple

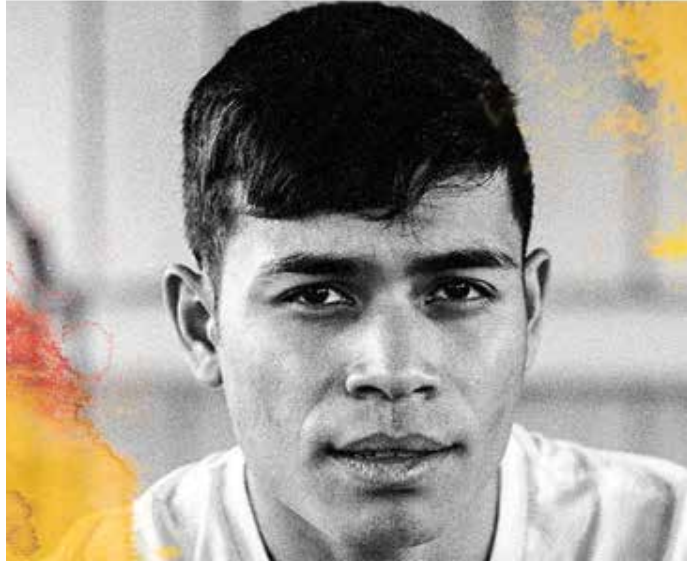
Lily Shearer displaces everyone through a kinship game (because where we are born, live and work shows we are all migrants) #diversityartsau pic.twitter.com/EXB46HO4op
 10:31 AM - 29 Jun 2017



Appendix 3: Social media discourse and media coverage

Australia Council @auscouncilarts

Heartfelt congratulations to Ali Kadhim @Team9Lives recipient of the 2017 Kirk Robson Award #diversityartsau photo: Helen tran pic.twitter.com/7dMJUrsmC
5:15 PM - 29 Jun 2017



Bali Padda @BaliPadda

Innovating for Change panel #AnnetteShunWah @CAAPerformance w/ @UTProjects @BlacktownArts @AFTRS #DiversityArtsAu pic.twitter.com/B1TyCCb25M
3:38 PM - 29 Jun 2017



Jeremy Smith @Jeremy_L_Smith

@auscouncilarts Director of Research & Knowledge Management Lisa Walsh shares the stage to talk 'The State of Play' #DiversityArtsAU pic.twitter.com/jvfUJo2rP5
11:40 AM - 29 Jun 2017



I.C.E. @ice_org_au

Fantastic panel with @kinchela + Lily Shearer and Ali Murphy-Oates from @Moogahlin at #DiversityArtsAu this morning pic.twitter.com/OiEoAXssiz
2:32 PM - 29 Jun 2017



Appendix 3: Social media discourse and media coverage



'Moving past stereotypes': Fresh calls for more diversity in the Australian arts



A recent review of Australia's professional arts scene shows it is less diverse than the rest of the Australian workforce.

Updated 2 July 2017

By Brianna Roberts

Share  

There are calls for new initiatives to increase cultural diversity in the Australian arts.

Short film 'The Subtractor' tells the story of a Hollywood director who comes to Australia to cast an Asian actor as the lead in a superhero film.

Director and producer Maria Tran said the film was a tongue-in-cheek look at

Appendix 4: Examples of Existing Support

In your experience, what current support exists for culturally diverse artists and for organisations who need support in this area? What examples are there of concrete initiatives, strategies or actions that have improved cultural diversity in the arts and creative sectors?

Attendees discussed and listed a number of existing initiatives which support cultural diversity in the Sydney arts and creative sectors. Examples were drawn from existing arts funding bodies and organisations.

Table 1: Sydney Examples of Support

Western Sydney Arts Fellowship

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Delivered by | Create NSW |
| Aim | Enable an artist or arts/cultural worker from Western Sydney to undertake a self-directed program of professional development. |
| Description | \$50,000 grant which can be used for travel, mentorships, internships, artist residencies, short-term courses or training, research and/or creation of new work. |
| URL | www.create.nsw.gov.au/funding-and-support/types-of-funding/western-sydney-arts-fellowship/ |

Western Sydney Making Spaces Initiative

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Delivered by | Create NSW |
| Aim | Enable professional artists and arts organisations to create their work in new studios, artists' residencies and rehearsal spaces in Western Sydney |
| Description | \$10,000 to \$60,000 per application. Professional artists, arts organisations, non-incorporated entities, community groups, NGOs, and government property managers based in NSW can apply. |
| URL | www.create.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Western-Sydney-Making-Spaces-Guidelines-2018.pdf |

CuriousWorks

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Delivered by | CuriousWorks |
| Aim | Tell stories about 'Another Australia' in film, theatre and online. |
| Description | Arts organisation that delivers a program of writing across art forms communities that are largely invisible in mainstream media, and delivers industry development programs to develop Western Sydney artists. |
| URL | www.curiousworks.com.au |

Social Change through Creativity Grants

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Delivered by | Fairfield City Council |
| Aim | Support initiatives which address a priority area: cultural heritage, cross-cultural understanding, intergenerational understanding, environmental issues, reconciliation, health and wellbeing, young people, people with disabilities. |
| Description | Up to \$5,000 per project. Incorporated or non-profit organisations and groups in Fairfield and/or serving residents in Fairfield. |
| URL | www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au |

Appendix 4: Examples of Existing Support continued

SBS Diversity Talent Escalator

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Delivered by | SBS and screen funding agencies |
| Aim | Secure genuine, flexible, on-the-job, paid learning and immersion for emerging screen practitioners from diverse backgrounds on all SBS commissioned programs including documentary, factual entertainment, food, comedy and/or drama programs. |
| Description | The scheme will provide practical training, networking, experience and credit, and increase the chance of securing further work. |
| URL | www.sbs.com.au/shows/commissionedcontent/about/page/i/5/h/Scripted/ |

HIGH/WAY 234: residency

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Delivered by | PYT Fairfield, PACT and The Q at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre |
| Aim | Strengthen creative communities across Greater Western Sydney and build capacity for next generation artists. |
| Description | Two artists or groups of artists are invited to complete a month-long residency, supported by a mentorship from the companies' artist directors and \$3,000 cash for artist fees and project costs. Selected artists present a work in progress showing at PACT. |
| URL | pyt.com.au/highway-234-residency |

PYT Fairfield

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Delivered by | PYT Fairfield |
| Aim | Create innovative and critical new performance works, engage with the diverse cultures of local community, develop next generation of outstanding artists from Western Sydney, create opportunities for social and cultural innovation, provide opportunities for young people of Western Sydney to engage in the performing arts. |
| Description | Youth theatre company in Fairfield which creates new, innovative and inclusive performing arts opportunities. Work is inspired by local community and engages with concepts of cultural diversity. |
| URL | pyt.com.au |



Audience engagement during the symposium

Appendix 4: Examples of Existing Support continued

Attendees also mentioned a number of leading practice examples of activity occurring internationally.

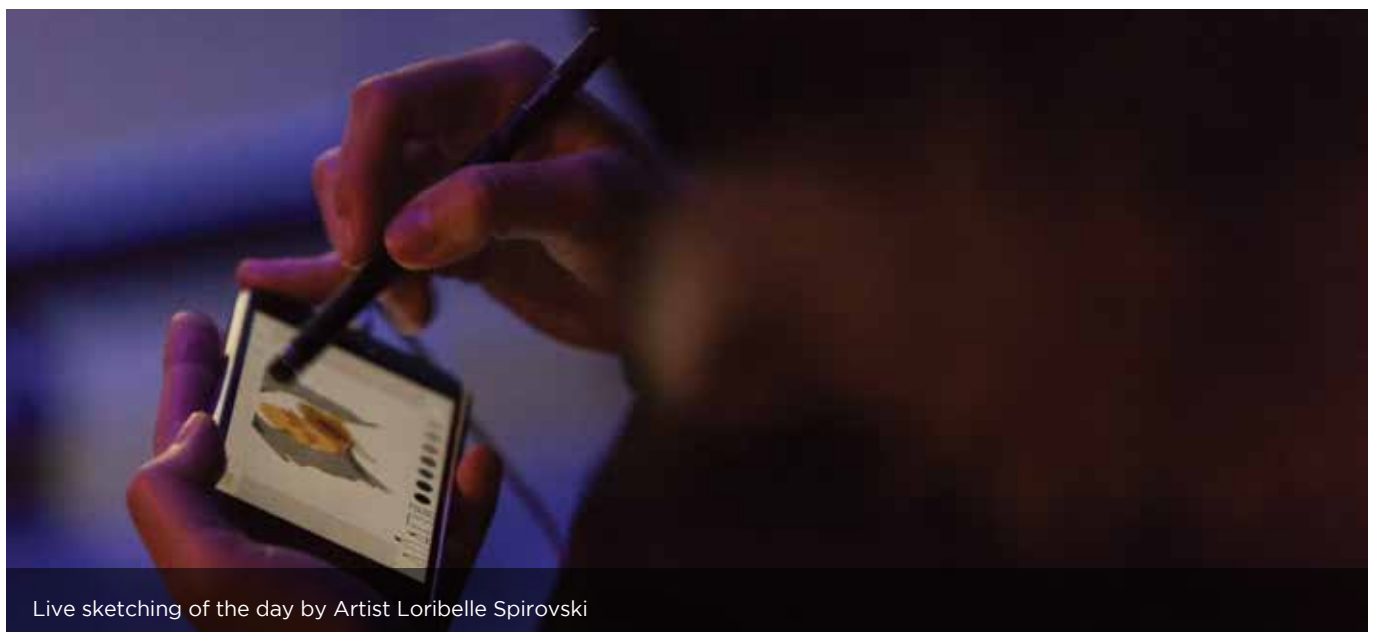
Table 2: International Examples of Support

British Film Institute Three Ticks

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Delivered by | British Film Institute |
| Aim | Support cultural diversity across all BFI Lottery funding for film, games, high end TV and animation projects. |
| Description | Applicants must demonstrate their commitment to diversity across three areas of their production, with at least one tick needed in a minimum of two areas for a project to be eligible for BFI funding: 1. On-screen diversity: diverse subject matter, at least one lead character positively reflecting diversity, at least 30% of supporting and background characters positively reflecting diversity 2. Off-screen diversity: diverse key creatives, at least 2 Heads of Department from diverse backgrounds, production crew and company staff (both with a range of targets across different diverse groups) 3. Creative opportunities and promoting social mobility: paid internships and employment opportunities for new entrants from diverse backgrounds, training placements for people from diverse backgrounds, demonstrable opportunities for former trainees or interns to progress within their careers. |
| URL | www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/announcements/bfi-obligates-supports-lottery-funding-recipients-reflect-diversity-uk BFI Diversity Standards: www.bfi.org.uk/sites/bfi.org.uk/files/downloads/bfi-diversity-standards |

BAFTA Awards

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Delivered by | British Academy of Film and TV Arts (BAFTA) |
| Aim | Support cultural diversity across all BFI Lottery funding for film, games, high end TV and animation projects. |
| Description | BFI Diversity Standards added to the eligibility criteria for the Outstanding British Film and Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer categories from 2019. |
| URL | www.bafta.org/about/mission/bafta-and-diversity |



Live sketching of the day by Artist Loribelle Spirovski

A photograph of Dr. Tim Soutphommasane, a man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. He is standing behind a black podium with a microphone, speaking. The background is dark.

Opening Address
Dr Tim Soutphommasane
Race Discrimination Commissioner
Australian Human Rights Commission

“If you’re someone who can see yourself, or someone like you, on screen or in our media, you’ve never had to ask questions about why people like you were left out. You’ve never known the feeling of looking into society’s mirror without seeing yourself reflected...

Here, then, is the connection between the arts and human rights. The idea of human rights is that of everyone being born equal in rights and dignity...

There is no human right, of course, for people to be reflected in the arts or in media. But we can all appreciate that someone’s dignity can be connected with how they – or, to be more specific, the group they belong to – are depicted in the public sphere. Where a group in society is invisible or demeaned, the message is clear. Those in that group are outsiders, second-class members, or even an ‘other’ against whom society defines itself.”

Read the rest of his speech:
**[humanrights.gov.au/news/speeches/
cultural-diversity-and-arts](https://humanrights.gov.au/news/speeches/cultural-diversity-and-arts)**



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diversityarts.org.au

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