

Arts

AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS ACTION PLAN ARTS ARTS AND SPORT

The Australian Democrats are the only party with a comprehensive plan for Australia's cultural direction in our *Australian Cultural Plan 2001* which focuses on the place of the arts and culture in shaping and reflecting our society.

It includes the need to respect and promote Indigenous art and culture. And it acknowledges that diversity, creativity and innovation are critical to our nation's future. We support a 'whole of life' approach to the arts, strengthening of artists' legal rights, and broadening of funding opportunities.

Under the Coalition, arts funding has been reduced and national cultural institutions have been under constant attack.

"The arts play a vital role in helping any society to examine its strengths and weaknesses."

Senator Andrew Bartlett
Spokesperson on the Arts

Law reform

The Democrats have a long held policy of introducing resale royalty rights (known as *droit de suite*) for all artists to ensure they can share in the increased value of their work over time and our work on this issue is ongoing. The Democrats have also a long history of working on the issue of Indigenous communal moral rights.

We have proposed amendments to the Copyright Act to

- protect traditional art and cultural heritage collectively owned by Indigenous communities;
- include fairer recognition of performer's rights to ensure that performers receive a fair rate for the commercial use of sound recordings; and,
- include a 'fair use' provision in copyright law so that reasonable personal usage is not criminalised.
- force the Coalition to implement a Cabinet decision to remove the cap commercial radio pays for its use of music recordings.

The Democrats have also called for tax reform to distinguish professional artists from amateurs, and for the abolition of the threshold for tax exemptions on artists' non-arts related income.

Funding

The Australia Council must be maintained and supported as the premier arts funding body. However, there must be taxation incentives to encourage corporate and philanthropic sectors to give more generously to the arts.

The Democrats say funding to the ABC and SBS should continue to be on a triennial basis, indexed in the intervening years and that there be greater recognition and resourcing for community radio and television services.



Other ACTION PLANS are available online at
www.democrats.org.au

Last updated 24/08/2007

Arts

Cultural integrity

Our culture is not a commodity that is up for sale or subject to negotiation. We opposed the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement on a number of grounds but especially regarding the impact on Australia's cultural integrity, on our local media content rules and on our intellectual property and copyright laws. Democrats again opposed recent legislative measures implementing obligations under the AUSFTA in relation to technological protection measures as it continues to favour US corporations.

We continue to advocate for regulated minimum levels of Australian program content for television and radio as well as for new digital services.

Greater support for working artists

Many Australian artists live on the verge of poverty and maintain 'day jobs' out of necessity.

The Democrats recognise and respect the arts as a legitimate field of employment and call for the creation of a 'living wage' for bona fide emerging artists, and extending unemployment programs and the Indigenous Community Development Employment Projects scheme to include training and employment in the arts for professional artists.

We support proposals for an Australian scheme similar to the New Zealand *Pathways to Arts and Cultural Employment* (PACE) program, which provides the option of work experience, training and apprenticeships in arts fields to artists on unemployment benefits.

Arts in education and society

The Democrats support greater arts education in schools and in society generally.

We also support the integration of cultural objectives into the design and construction of the built environment so we are creating 'liveable communities'.

The Australian Democrats value the important contribution made by artists and continue to protect and promote our artists and our culture.

We will continue to engage in ongoing debate and consultation with artists, their representative organisations, private sector companies and the broader community on the need for an Australian cultural policy and law reform.



CONTACT US

(03) 9416 1880

Lv 1, 62 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne VIC 3002

inquiries@democrats.org.au

Authorised by Jack Evans, 5 Poinciana Place, Wanneroo WA 6065
Printed by Senator Lyn Allison, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600