



YOUNG AND EMERGING ARTISTS BETWEEN A ROCK AND AN ART PLACE

The Greens' plan to help creative young Australians forge lifelong careers

The Greens want to ease the pressures on musicians, writers and artists to earn a living wage from their work. After all, creativity enriches everyone's lives. The Greens have a plan to reward those creative Australians who reward all of us.

In our music industry which saw 42 million attendances (outside major ticketed events), where \$1.2 billion was spent, the normal annual wage for a musician is a mere \$8,100.ⁱ Meanwhile the average visual artist will work 42 hours a week for \$35,000 a year.ⁱⁱ

Many artists are forced into poverty and have a hard time juggling their artistic endeavours with the need to supplement their income through other work. Such pressures mean they might give up their artistic aspirations altogether.

The Greens want another option: plentiful, viable careers in music, design, photography, craft, sculpture, paint, illustration, dance, performance and literature.

> ENDURING CAREERS

Having a strong, creative arts sector will spill over into all areas of Australian society. After all, creative thinkers are the ones who challenge the standard way of doing things; they are the ones who discover new ways of doing things better.

In a globalised world where original innovations are what will propel a nation forward, we need to foster Australia's creative talent who are essential for our society and economy to thrive. By supporting them, we are supporting us all.

The Greens want our young and emerging artists to have greater opportunities to forge a lifelong career in their area of passion.

To support young and emerging artists to earn a living wage the Greens will:

- **Allow artistic activities that provide community benefits to be eligible for Centrelink mutual obligation requirements. This policy has been independently costed at \$12m a year.**
- **Establish a \$3 million scheme to enable payments for artists performing, exhibiting or speaking about their works.**

- **Invest an additional \$3 million into the ArtStart program that provides business training and financial support to those just starting out in their artistic trade.**
- **Restore the Parliament's arts procurement policy to require preference for point of sale acquisitions from young and emerging Australian artists.**
- **Encourage creative Australians to start their own small business by additional tax breaks.**



> ARTISTS' INCOME SECURITY

Back in 2002, the *Myer Report on Contemporary Visual Arts and Craft* proposed to the government that artistic endeavours be recognised in the social security system.ⁱⁱⁱ Before it was elected in 2007, Labor promised, but never delivered a policy to change the relationship between social security and the arts.

Given the unpredictability of income from creative work and the lack of job stability, the Greens understand that many artists need income support to survive at various times in their careers. The *"Don't give up your day job"* report found that while around a third of artists face periods of unemployment, of those around 44% do not apply for income support.^{iv} Just like a business, artists invest their own money to cover materials, running a vehicle and acquiring work spaces. This reality isn't acknowledged by our social security system.



At an annual cost of \$12 million, artists actively engaged in recognised art programs or work that will enhance their employment prospects will be recognised as part of the mutual obligation requirements by Centrelink.

This will help supplement artist's incomes at those crucial times when an artist is establishing their trade or in between projects.

> ARTIST FEES

Despite the high value of art, rarely does it provide a high income. Many artists would just be happy to break even after spending their money on equipment, materials, transport and venue hire. The Greens want to take the pressures off artists by making it easier to earn a living wage from their work.

To promote creativity and employment around the country, the Greens have set aside a \$3 million a year fund to pay artist's fees for their public art works. This could be when an artist lends their work for a non-selling exhibition or when a local shop gets local artists to play music or display art works.

These payments would be made in recognition of the value provided to the broader public, without the artist themselves having to solely bear the costs. Payments would be made on the basis of labour, material and services used, helping emerging artists to establish their work in the community.

> TURNING TRAINING INTO A CAREER

If you want to establish a lifetime career in the creative industries, the odds are well and truly stacked against you. Artists need greater access to programs that support them at those crucial times when they are transitioning out of education and finding their feet in the professional community.

To address the business skills gap that can be a barrier to many artists creating life-long employment through freelancing or an entrepreneurial project, the Greens want to see a further \$3 million invested in the ArtStart program over three years to help new arts graduates learn business skills to transform their passion into a career.

The government's recent cultural policy announcement did not do enough to transform arts training into arts careers. The Greens believe that the services and support offered through the ArtStart program should be enhanced. An extra million dollars a year will do so much to help new artists acquire the skills, resources and equipment necessary to forge their own sustainable career. The Greens want our country to share in the benefits that self-sustaining artistic careers provide for us all.

> RECREATING PARLIAMENT

The Parliament of Australia is a significant purchaser of artworks with over \$300,000 spent each year on new acquisitions.^v The Greens see the Parliament in a unique position to be a giver of opportunity for young and emerging Australian artists

The Greens want to reinstate the Australian Parliament's procurement guidelines to acquire artworks from young and emerging visual artists. Before the guidelines were changed in 2004, the policy required preference to be made for point of sale acquisitions from new and emerging Australian artists. We want this procurement policy restored.

The change came about because some - more conservative - Members of Parliament thought the collection was 'modern mish-mash'.^{vi} However, the Greens know that it is those artworks that sit ahead of the curve that will hold the most value in the future. This policy will have no additional cost as it is simply a reprioritising of existing resources.

> SMALL CREATIVE BUSINESSES

Many artists or those immersed in the arts industry use small businesses as the vehicle in which to trade. The Greens policy to cut the tax rate for small companies and increase the instant asset write off will promote the vitality of art businesses and the innovations they provide.

Our policies will free up extra income, promote further investment in clever artistic business and enable them to reach new audiences.^{vii}

The Greens believe innovation is central to the development of the economy and we recognise that small businesses perch themselves on the cutting edge, especially in digital and design sectors. Small businesses account for about a third of research in high-tech industries and are more agile in innovating and improving efficiency.^{viii} Supporting small creative businesses as trailblazers allows the wider economy innovate and develop.

Image provided courtesy of Damian Cazaly

ⁱ The Australia Council *Artfacts – Music*. Note adjusted 2007 income to 2011 music sale statistics.

<http://artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/industry#post-548>

ⁱⁱ The Australia Council *Artfacts – Visual Arts*.

ⁱⁱⁱ Rupert Myer *Report of the Visual Arts and Craft Inquiry* 2002 pp. 114-119.

^{iv} David Throsby & Virginia Hollister *Don't give up your day job: an economic study of professional artists in Australia* 2003 p.43

^v Department Parliamentary Services *11-12 Annual Report* p.48

^{vi} Betty Churcher *Review of Parliament House Art Collection* 2013.

Attachment C.

^{vii} <http://www.greens.org.au/small-business>

^{viii} Ellis Connelly, David Norman and Tim West, 'Small business: an economic overview', Reserve Bank of Australia, 2012, pp 3-4.