

\$27 million for arts organisations in new targeted support package



By [Nathanael Cooper](#)

The federal government is tipping \$17 million into providing additional support for Indigenous and regional arts during the coronavirus pandemic and an additional \$10 million to support people in the music industry.

Arts Minister Paul Fletcher said the targeted support is to help organisations stay afloat through the crisis and funnel money to some of the most-needed areas.



Arts Minister Paul Fletcher. *CREDIT: ALEX ELLINGHAUSEN*

"We understand the big impact this is having on them if performances have been called off, if venues are closed or if museums and art galleries are closed and you can't do what is your core business," Mr Fletcher said.

"What we are announcing today is specifically targeted measures where we think we can provide support to the arts sector."

Of the funding, \$7 million will be delivered under the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program and \$10 million will be delivered through Regional Arts Australia's regional arts fund to assist artists and organisations in creating work and exploring new delivery methods.

Support Act, the charity that provides financial support and counselling to people in the music industry, will receive \$10 million. The organisation helps musicians, touring crew and others in the music industry through financial means, such as paying bills, but also operates a telephone counselling service. Earlier this week they reported a 400 per cent increase in calls since the industry shut down due to social distancing measures.

Live Performance Australia, the advocacy body for the live performing industry, and a coalition of live music promoters have called on the government for a \$850 million support and stimulus package for the industry.

The government has come under persistent criticism from members of the arts community who believe the industry is on the brink of a crisis and needs a financial lifeline. Labor amendments to the JobKeeper subsidy bill, including one targeting the arts and entertainment sector, failed on Wednesday.

The JobKeeper and JobSeeker allowances have gone some way to solving some issues, and Mr Fletcher said the work would continue.

"I have no doubt that there will be continued advocacy and that engagement is absolutely going to continue," he said.