



Media Release – For immediate release

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INDUSTRY LED SKILLS AND TRAINING VITAL TO NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY AMBITION

The Federal Budget reaffirms the Albanese Government's long-term vision for Australian arts, entertainment and creativity but still underplays the critical role of industry-led initiatives in rebuilding a workforce severely impacted by the pandemic.

The Budget includes a welcome commitment of new funding of \$9 million for the eight national training organisations, including those which support the performing arts. However, there is scope for industry to play a much larger role in rebuilding our creative workforce.

“Our industry is grappling with a critical shortage of skilled workers across the breadth of roles and occupations which bring live arts and entertainment to Australian audiences,” said Evelyn Richardson, Chief Executive of Live Performance Australia (LPA) which is the peak body for the live arts and entertainment industry.

‘We would like a much stronger commitment from the federal government to funding for both industry-led traineeships and grants to help attract, retrain and retain the skills that are needed to bring live performances to Australians in our cities, regions and country towns.

‘Initiatives such as the Commonwealth’s investment in fee-free TAFE courses are very welcome in building the future workforce over the medium to longer term.

‘However, there is no substitute for on the job and workplace-based learning and development. The fastest and most efficient way to rebuild our workforce is through industry led initiatives with government support,’ Ms Richardson said.

Ms Richardson said the National Cultural Policy, Revive, contained many positive initiatives, including the establishment of Creative Australia from 1 July 2023 and new investment in First Nations arts and culture, contemporary music and literature.

‘The restoration of funding to the Australia Council that was lost under the previous government is welcome, and we hope that flows through quickly to our performing arts organisations who have been doing it very tough over the past few years,’ Ms Richardson said.

Ms Richardson said many organisations and companies were still recovering from the devastating impact of the pandemic, rebuilding their capabilities, financial reserves and audiences.

‘We have come out of the pandemic into an equally challenging environment of soaring production and touring costs, workforce shortages and audiences under growing cost of living pressures.

‘Government will need to retain a strong focus on supporting the recovery of our live arts and entertainment industry in order to realise the vision that is set out in the national cultural policy and for our creative sector, which the Treasurer identified in his speech tonight as one of our strategic industries,’ Ms Richardson said.

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About LPA

LPA is the peak body for Australia's live performance industry. Established over 100 years ago in 1917 and registered as an employers' organisation under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*, LPA has over 400 Members nationally. We represent commercial producers, music promoters, major performing arts companies, small to medium companies, independent producers, major performing arts centres, metropolitan and regional venues, commercial theatres, stadiums and arenas, arts festivals, music festivals, and service providers such as ticketing companies and technical suppliers. Our membership spans from small-medium and not-for-profit organisations to large commercial entities. LPA has a clear mandate to advocate for and support policy decisions that ensure industry sustainability and future growth.