

# Submission: Inquiry into the Cultural and Creative Industries in Victoria

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Live Performance Australia (LPA) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee's [Inquiry into the Cultural and Creative Industries in Victoria](#). LPA is the peak body for Australia's live arts and entertainment industry. Established over 100 years ago in 1917 and registered as an employers' organisation under the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009, LPA has approximately 400 Members nationally.

We represent commercial and independent producers, music promoters, performing arts companies, venues (performing arts centres, commercial theatres, stadiums and arenas), arts festivals, music festivals and service providers (such as ticketing companies and technical suppliers). Our membership spans small-medium and not-for-profit organisations to large commercial entities.

Recognising that the Commonwealth Government is best placed to provide data on Victoria's share of national arts and cultural spending, this submission provides:

- An overview of Victoria's performing arts industry in the context of LPA's annual Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report data, and
- A summary of the additional policy mechanisms and investments needed at the national and state level to support Victoria's cultural and creative sector.

## 2. VICTORIA'S INDUSTRY CONTEXT

Since 2004, LPA has monitored overall industry trends and economic contributions via our [Annual Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report](#) (the Report).

In 2023, there were 30.1 million ticketed attendances at live performance events across Australia, generating \$3.1 billion in ticket revenue – the highest ever recorded in the Report's 19-year history.<sup>1</sup>

Within this, Victoria represents **one of Australia's largest live arts and entertainment industry markets**, contributing **\$984.7 million** in revenue and **9.2 million** of total ticketed attendances in 2023.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ernst & Young (2024), *Live Performance Industry in Australia: 2023 Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report*, for Live Performance Australia, October 2024, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ernst & Young (2024), *2023 Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report*, p. 35.

Victoria tied with NSW for the largest market-share of industry attendance (30.6%) and recorded the second-largest market share for industry revenue (31.4 %) in 2023, making Victoria the **only state whose total market share was significantly larger than their share of the national population** (25.6%).<sup>3</sup>

At the individual level, Victorians also **spend more than their state and territory counterparts** generating the highest per capita spend at \$142.58 in 2023 (\$26 more than the national average).<sup>4</sup>

At a genre level, Victoria leads the nation in a diverse range of categories, and in 2023 was:

- **the largest market for Theatre**, generating 49.2% of revenue and 42.4% of attendance
- **the largest market for Comedy**, generating 34.7% of revenue and 46.9% of attendance
- **the second-largest market** across a significant number of categories, most notably in **Contemporary Music**, generating 32.6% of revenue and 32.1% of attendance, and **Musical Theatre**, generating 32.7% of revenue and 32.2% of attendance.<sup>5</sup>

Regionally, in 2023 Victoria accounted for the highest market share in revenue (47.4%) and in attendance (34.7%), reporting a regional revenue of \$23.8m and 0.3m in attendance.<sup>6</sup>

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER INVESTMENT

Victoria is well-recognised for the depth and breadth of its arts and cultural activity. It is home to many of our leading national performing arts organisations, commercial and independent theatre producers, arts and music festivals and major events. Victorian organisations, producers and presenters tour regularly and are internationally recognised for the quality and diversity of their works.

While ticketed attendance and revenue has returned to pre-pandemic levels, the process of recovery is ongoing and uneven across the industry. Many performing arts organisations remain financially vulnerable, having run down their financial reserves during the pandemic. Critical skills have been lost in the industry, particularly in production and technical areas.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, new challenges have arisen. Producers and promoters are grappling with significant increases in production and business costs (up 30-50%) and higher employment costs.

Amid uncertainty and rising cost of living audience behaviour has also changed, with flagship arts organisations, like the Arts Centre Melbourne, continuing to report audiences purchasing tickets at the last minute and less frequently.<sup>8</sup> Emergent social, technological and environmental issues, such as the impacts of climate change on the viability of outdoor events, also compound these trends, adding further complexity to challenges.

In this context, the Federal Government's *National Cultural Policy – Revive (Revive)* represented a strong foundation from which to further develop strategic investments in Australia's creative and cultural sector.

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<sup>3</sup> Ernst & Young (2024), *2023 Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report*, p. 25 & 35.

<sup>4</sup> Ernst & Young (2024), *2023 Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report*, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Ernst & Young (2024), *2023 Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report*, p. 89, p. 68, p.71, & p.80.

<sup>6</sup> Ernst & Young (2024), *2023 Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report*, p. 91.

<sup>7</sup> Jobs and Skills Australia (2024), [Occupation Shortage List](#).

<sup>8</sup> Victorian Arts Centre Trust (2024), *Annual Report 2023-24*, p. 29.

However, to fully realise the ambitions of *Revive* at this critical time, **additional targeted policy mechanisms and investments are needed at both the national and state level.**

In August 2024, [LPA made a submission](#) as part of the Victorian Government's public consultation process for Victoria's next creative industries strategy, *Creative State*.

The submission identified a range of state and federal policy and investment mechanisms to support the sustainability and growth of Victoria's live arts and entertainment industry, including:

- targeted incentives for new investment in Victorian creative product and performing arts organisations
- increased support for national and international touring
- strategies for audience engagement, and
- initiatives to foster sustainable creative careers.

A summary of LPA's proposals to the Victorian Government is provided below. These recommendations also align [with LPA's 2025-26 Pre-Budget Submission](#) to Treasury's 2025-2026 budget consultation process.

LPA respectfully asks that the Committee consider both submissions in full to inform its recommendations on the right level of resourcing for Victoria's creative and cultural industries.

Should you have any queries regarding the information provided, please do not hesitate to contact Kim Tran ([ktran@liveperformance.com.au](mailto:ktran@liveperformance.com.au)) via email or telephone.

Yours sincerely,







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# Summary of LPA recommendations to Creative Victoria

 <p><b>Home Grown, World Class</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation 1: Live Theatre Tax incentives</b> Stimulate world class productions by supporting the introduction of a 40 % Live Theatre Tax Offsets scheme at the federal level.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 2: New and diverse works</b> Establish a development fund to commission new and diverse stories.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 3: International engagement</b> Support Victorian companies on the world stage with investment to bring Victorian content to international audiences and to foster international collaborations and new markets.</p>
 <p><b>A Creative Society for all Victorians</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation 4: Audience engagement</b> In partnership with local government and Commonwealth, introduce a Regional Audience Engagement Fund to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>venue capability, maintenance and accessibility</li> <li>programming, marketing and presenting cultural product to regional audiences.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation 5: Arts access</b> Improve arts access and remove barriers to audience participation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reviewing touring models to regional and outer urban areas</li> <li>introducing a 'Live Experience' voucher program for young people</li> <li>embedding music and performing arts in schools.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Innovative &amp; Thriving Creative Organisations &amp; Businesses</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation 6: Business innovation</b> Establish a Business Innovation and Sustainability Fund to provide stability and support development of new business models.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 7: Financial sustainability</b> Support a Reserves Rebuild Fund with matched funding from the Federal Government.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 8: Red tape reduction</b> Improve operational efficiency and reduce regulatory burden for live events by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reviewing OHS requirements for live events</li> <li>reviewing security ratios</li> <li>timely reform of regulations relating to Place of Public Entertainment Permits (POPE) temporary structures, and</li> <li>incentivising local governments to reduce red tape and improve processes associated with live event permits</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Sustainable Creative Careers</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation 9: Workforce strategy</b> Develop a strategy to ensure there is a skilled workforce that meets the future needs of the live arts and entertainment industry.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 10: Skills capacity building</b> Support industry-led and industry-delivered traineeships across the career lifecycle for both artists and industry professionals</p>