



**THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP**  
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

**MEDIA RELEASE**

16 June 2020

**New fellowships to cultivate emerging talent in regional Australia**

Five regional artists and arts workers have been awarded a National Regional Arts Fellowship to support their arts practice in their local regions.

The 2020 Fellowships centre on themes of bushfire and drought, and artists living in affected areas were encouraged to apply. Fellowships have been awarded to recipients in regional New South Wales, Far North Queensland and Tasmania.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, congratulated this year's Fellowship recipients who will receive a financial boost of up to \$20,000 enabling them to further develop their craft and contribute to cultural initiatives in their communities.

“Drought and bushfires have had a devastating impact in our regions. The Fellowship grants will allow these five talented recipients the opportunity to interpret their experience of living in a bushfire or drought affected area, explore the struggles and resilience of impacted communities, and share those stories through art,” said Minister Fletcher.

The successful recipients are:

- **Kristina Chan (Red Head, NSW)** – to undertake a mentorship in community cultural development, and lead creative workshops mentoring young people in drought and bushfire affected areas, culminating in a new performance work.
- **Jack Sheppard (Far North Queensland)** – to undertake creative development of his play *Serpent Waters* with a small team, including members of the First Nations and arts community in Cairns.
- **Alex Wisser (mid-Western NSW)** – to explore socially engaged arts practice with communities living in drought affected areas and the contribution culture can have on wellbeing and resilience.
- **Bethany Reece (Tasmania)** – to work with a mentor, composer and another dancer to develop her first independent dance work reflecting on the impact of human life on the climate over history.
- **Vanessa Keenan (Snowy Mountains, NSW)** – to work with five professional artists directly impacted by the fires to develop an outdoor arts experience.

The National Regional Arts Fellowships are offered through the [Regional Arts Fund](#), an Australian Government funding program that supports sustainable cultural development in the regions.

**ENDS**

**Media contact:**

Brad Hatch | 0448 162 679 | [Brad.Hatch@communications.gov.au](mailto:Brad.Hatch@communications.gov.au)

Rebecca Papillo | 0439 892 771 | [Rebecca.Papillo@communications.gov.au](mailto:Rebecca.Papillo@communications.gov.au)