

## REGIONAL ARTS FUND IMPACT STATEMENT

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### \$1.2m INVESTED IN NATIONAL PROJECT GRANTS + FELLOWSHIPS

#### BRINGING DIVERSE CREATIVITY TO LIFE

Regional Arts Australia is proud to announce that the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund has invested \$1.2m through the latest round of Project Grants and Fellowships. Managed by Regional Arts Australia in collaboration with state and territory organisations, the Regional Arts Fund continues to nurture diverse creativity, unlock extraordinary talents and elevate the cultural contributions of Australia's regional, remote, and rural communities.

#### PROJECT GRANTS: EMPOWERING CREATIVE COMMUNITIES

In the latest round of Project Grants, we are happy to announce that 52 projects have been funded, with a total investment of \$1.1 million.

This round marks a notable increase in successful applications from remote communities, representing 31% of all funded projects - a remarkable 23% rise from the previous round. This achievement underscores our commitment to supporting artists in the most isolated areas of the country.

Some stand out initiatives and projects include:

- *Open Decks*, a pilot program empowering Darwin-based women, trans, and non-binary beginner DJs to rehearse and present public sets for free under the mentorship of experienced local DJs
- *Kuku Bakal Kaykayanda* (Giving Words to All the Children), a series of participatory creative programs developed with children and young people from across the three Shires of Far North Queensland severely impacted by Tropical Cyclone Jasper
- *Tumbleweed Community Film Project*, a new comedy western film produced by Yankalilla Youth Theatre, featuring local community members
- *MELT*, a new physical theatre work for artists with disabilities and regional arts workers produced by *(it's no) drama* in collaboration with local artists and designers
- *FLOW*, a community-engaged dance work celebrating dance's ability to foster community connection and celebrate the cultural landscape.

Notably, 31% of the projects identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the primary beneficiaries, followed by artists and arts workers at 29%. Furthermore, 63% of successful applicants identified as belonging to a diverse community, a 15% increase from the previous round. This includes 31% identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, 27% as LGBTQIA+, 17% as culturally and linguistically diverse, 17% as living with a disability, and 12% as young people (under 25).

Australian Government Minister for the Arts, Tony Burke, congratulated the recipients and their contributions to Australia's arts scene.

*"The Regional Arts Fund not only helps ground-breaking arts projects come to life across Australia, but also helps generate employment in the arts – with this round to create over 500 employment opportunities for artists and arts workers in communities from Alice Springs to Longreach.*

*"A thriving cultural and creative arts sector is vital for the one third of Australians who live in our regions. We want more Australians to be able to experience and engage with the arts, wherever they live."*

## NATIONAL REGIONAL ARTS FELLOWSHIP: NURTURING ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

The National Regional Arts Fellowships is a strategic project supported by the Regional Arts Fund and delivered by Regional Arts Australia on behalf of the Australian Government, providing guaranteed income for regional artists and arts workers to develop work, skills, networks, or research.

Six Fellows were awarded a total of \$100,000, providing critical support for sustainable professional or practice development opportunities. The majority of expressions of interest (EOIs) came from NSW, followed by VIC and QLD. A diverse range of applicants emerged, with 39% from small rural towns, and 69% identifying as women. Additionally, 58% of applicants identified with a diverse community group.

Australian Government Minister for the Arts, Tony Burke, congratulated the recipients.

*"Artists work everywhere in Australia, in our cities and towns, and throughout our regions and some of the most remote places on earth. This funding gives regional artists a vital boost to kickstart or advance their career – allowing them the freedom to continue to create and interpret unique Australian stories. Congratulations to all successful recipients."*

Regional Arts Australia's Executive Director, Ros Abercrombie, added her congratulations to the 2024 cohort.

*"Investing in creative practice and professional development not only enriches individual artists but also strengthens our cultural fabric. With the support of the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund, these Fellowships empower regional and remote artists to cultivate their talents, build crucial networks, and conduct vital research. Here's to nurturing sustainable artistic growth that resonates across communities and beyond."*

You can learn more about the 6 Fellows and their projects here:

<https://regionalarts.com.au/programs/national-regional-arts-fellowship/2024-25-national-regional-arts-fellows>

## APPLICATION PROCESS: CULTIVATING SUCCESS BY SIMPLIFYING ACCESS

This year, Regional Arts Australia introduced a new two-stage application process for the National Regional Arts Fellowship to reduce the administrative burden on applicants.

The initial expression of interest (EOI) stage, assessed primarily on the potential impact of the applicant's practice, did not require detailed budgets or confirmed partnerships. Shortlisted applicants were then invited to submit a more detailed proposal. This streamlined approach aimed to enhance the chances of success for shortlisted applicants.

Reflecting Regional Arts Australia's commitment to equity, at least 50% of the fellowships were allocated to underrepresented groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and d/Deaf and/or disabled artists.

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Join us in celebrating the extraordinary talents and vital cultural contributions of Australia's regional, remote, and rural communities, made possible through the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund.

### Media Inquiries

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