

Five artists awarded Regional Arts Fund National Fellowships

Support for regional artists and art workers continues through the Regional Arts Fund.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP has announced support for five regional artists to undertake projects that provide professional growth opportunities and elevate their creative practice. The Fellowships represent a direct financial investment in the professional development of regional artists to the value of \$80,000.

The National Fellowships program is a Regional Arts Fund initiative to address a gap in career pathways, income security and professional development opportunities for emerging and established artists in regional Australia. Under the program, each artist will pursue a project that considers the impact of drought and bushfires within their geographic location, demonstrating the strengths of regional arts practice and the strong ties to the physical environment.

Regional Arts Australia's Executive Director, Ros Abercrombie says of the new initiative, *Each artist will be supported to design their fellowship to the needs of their contemporary practice and be provided the opportunity for professional development that values the local, alongside national and international experience.*

The successful applicants in each category are:

Fellowship Category	Successful Applicant	Applicant location
Creative Development	Kristina Chan	Red Head, NSW
First Nations Creative Development	Jack Sheppard	Bungalow, QLD
Arts Worker Professional Development	Alex Wisser	Kandos, NSW
First Timer – Creative or Professional Development	Bethany Reece	Margate, TAS
First Timer – Creative or Professional Development	Vanessa Keenan	Tumbarumba, NSW

Jack Sheppard who received the First Nations fellowship to undergo development of his new play 'Serpent Waters', said of the project: "The show in itself is a chance for the first Nations community and the broader community to talk, problem solve, unite, and encourage self-reflection; the result would be a way to bring Indigenous artists and arts workers together professionally; to explore our own lived experiences and how they relate to water and drought in a cultural and political context".

For Kristina Chan who received the Creative Development Fellowship, this project will be integral in a transitional point in her career, "Since moving to regional NSW, I need to introduce myself and my practice to a new community while rethinking how I would like to move forward in my art-form. It is a reinvention of myself as a regional artist. I want to take the skills and experience that I already have behind me and channel them into creating positive action in the community around me. I believe this fellowship will give me the vital steps to be able to make connections between where I have arrived as an artist over the past 21 years, and the future I am now stepping into".

For a description of each project please see the [Fellowships Recipient List](#).

National Regional Arts Fellowships are offered by Regional Arts Australia and is made possible by the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund, which supports the arts in regional and remote Australia.

For more information visit: www.regionalarts.com.au

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