

# **SCOPE**

## **For Theatre Network NSW**

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## Purpose

The purpose of this scope is to investigate the possible creation of a theatre network in NSW. It endeavors to:

- consult a wide range of stakeholders in the sector and to note issues of concern
- determine the possible shape and structure that an organisation of this nature might have, including a determination of its primary focus
- discover the realistic level of financial and in-kind support that could be expected from the NSW Theatre Community
- produce a report that offers the stakeholders an overview with a historical context
- provide recommendations on an outcome that might best serve the sector

## Methodology

Desktop research of available reports and corporate documents was undertaken in order to consider a range of alternative 'representative body' organisations, considering national and international models. This study included the history of the relevant models. One of the challenges inherent in the process of interrogating the history of past organisations, is that very little archival evidence remains that can be properly examined.

Qualitative and quantitative research and consultation was undertaken to ensure that a broad range of voices were heard and that the maximum level of industry support can be achieved.

An online survey was circulated on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June to the widest possible group of individuals and companies from the NSW theatre sector. (The survey outcomes appear in the **Appendix One**).

Four focus groups were conducted as well as a range of interviews in order to discuss key concerns and views. (A summary of the stakeholders who were consulted appears in the **Appendix Two**).

A Discussion paper was created as the basis for a theatre sector meeting that was held at *Carriageworks* on Sunday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July. (A summary of those who attended appears in the **Appendix Three**).

After the July meeting, further research of significance was undertaken and a final report was delivered to the management committee during mid-August, 2011.

A draft report was created and presented to the working committee.

The final report was created and presented in a mutually agreed format.

## Executive Summary

The aim of this scoping study is to determine if there is a need for a body that would be known as the *NSW Theatre Network* and to ascertain the nature of that entity. Despite the obvious challenges of limited funding and the high costs that are associated for professionals who are living in Sydney, there is a flourishing theatre scene that might benefit from a formal network.

What is reportedly missing from the theatrical landscape in New South Wales is *a sense of connection*. Sydney is a sprawling city where theatre ‘hubs’ are few and small. In regional New South Wales, there are a handful of professional theatre companies and artists spread thinly and unevenly about the state. Unlike the other performing art form areas of Dance and Music, there isn’t a state based network or service organisation for theatre. Over the past year or so, there has been a growing concern from the theatre community to address this deficit.

There have been no serious attempts to establish a Theatre Network in NSW on previous occasions. Whilst a number of non-theatre specific service organisations have come and gone over the years, they have faded away as funding initiatives have run their course. It is useful to look at what the various organisations have achieved in the past, rather than to note that they eventually dissolved.

Using a highly consultative approach, this study has initiated a survey with the theatre sector, conducted a series of focus groups and disseminated a Discussion Paper. Feedback has been sought from the community and integrated carefully into the findings. The outcome strongly suggests that the majority of those who were contacted are in favour of establishing a formal NSW Theatre Network.

The organisation should serve the professional theatre community and in particular, the independent and small-to-medium sector. It is the independent theatre practitioner who experiences the highest level of isolation and who currently feels disconnected from information and resources.

One of the main aims of *Theatre Network NSW* is to focus on networking on behalf of the professional theatre industry. The representation of the sector’s strengths and issues in the context of the wider community has also been identified as a key additional need. There is currently no specific organisation in NSW for the theatre industry and its practitioners that can represent its constituency when it comes to policy development and other decision-making bodies.

The development of a network in NSW is part of a broader drive that sees similar movements in other states and the beginnings of some form of national network being established. In Victoria, a theatre network was established in 2009 and this is an ideal model for NSW to consider and pursue. It was originally staffed by a part-time Director and housed in another arts organisation to keep its administrative and infrastructure costs down. It does not charge for membership and receives an annual grant for *Arts Victoria*. Once *Theatre Network NSW* has been established, it would make good sense to work closely with *Theatre Network Victoria* to support the professional theatre community in NSW.

Communities and networks are vital to theatre practitioners. They facilitate access to sources of validation, material resources, professional development and the dissemination

of information and artists' work. They provide support for people pursuing a profession that, for many, often has little status within the wider community. The creation of *Theatre Network NSW* is essential in giving the sector an empowered voice.

## Recommendations

Through a consultative process with the NSW theatre community, the following recommendations are proposed for adoption. They are quite pragmatic in their approach, so as to create an efficient networking organisation for the NSW Theatre Sector.

- 1: That a *Theatre Network NSW* be created with an acronym of *TNN*.
- 2: That no membership fee be imposed to join *Theatre Network NSW*. By signing up to the email list of *Theatre Network NSW* and agreeing to support the mission of the organisation, you become a subscriber.
- 3: That a review be made of the membership, subscription and fee policy 24 months after creation of the Network.
- 4: That *Theatre Network NSW* be formed with a specific focus on networking on behalf of the professional theatre industry and representing the sector's strengths and issues to the broader community.
- 5: That the organisation should serve the professional theatre industry, particularly the independent and small-to-medium sector of the theatre community.
- 6: Theatre Network NSW will maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the major theatre sector.
- 7: That an application will be made to *Arts NSW* as soon as possible, for the purpose of securing funds to establish the entity for an initial 18-24 month period, commencing from January 2012.
- 8: That a Steering Committee be created that is comprised of representation from a range of producing organisations and individuals, including regional representation.
- 9: That a part-time position of Director, *Theatre Network NSW* be advertised and appointed.
- 10: That upon the commencement of formal activity:
  - a forum is held to determine the critical priority areas for the first year of operation.
  - a Manifesto for *Theatre Network NSW* be created.
- 11: That *Theatre Network NSW* develops a partnership with *Theatre Network Victoria* to share resources and work collaboratively for the benefit of their respective states.
- 12: That a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be developed between *Theatre Network NSW*, *Theatre Network Victoria* and other theatre networks as they emerge.
- 13: That *Theatre Network NSW* actively participates in supporting an Australian Theatre Network.
- 14: That *Theatre Network NSW* gathers and disseminates information on national and international opportunities for theatre practitioners.

15: That negotiations be entered into with a suitable organisation to house *Theatre Network NSW* to secure: a dedicated desk, dedicated phone, access to the internet, postage and financial management.

16: That a decision be made from the outset to determine what resources should be directed towards the establishment and maintenance of a website for *Theatre Network NSW*.

17: That *Theatre Network NSW* maintains contact with organisations that support regional touring and exchange opportunities, including *Regional Arts NSW* (in particular the Regional Arts Development Officers), *Arts on Tour NSW*, *Critical Stages*, *INAPAC – Performing Arts Centres of NSW and ACT*, *Performing Arts Touring Alliance*, the *Australian Performing Arts Centres' Association (APACA)* and *Youth Performing Arts Australia (YPAA)*.

18: That regular contact be maintained by *Theatre Network NSW* with the ACT based theatre network.

## Background

Gatherings of NSW theatre workers have indicated that there are a lack of formal opportunities for *whole-of-sector* networking and advocacy. This concern was clearly articulated within the small to medium theatre sector forum that was hosted by former NSW Minister for the Arts, Virginia Judge, in March 2010.

David Williams (from *version 1.0*) and Nathan Bennett (formerly *Griffin Theatre Company*) began a conversation to learn how a Theatre Network in NSW might be established. They considered the specific purpose that it might serve and whose interests it might represent.

In order to explore the questions around the establishment of a NSW Theatre network more comprehensively, David and Nathan hosted a consultative meeting at *Carriageworks* in February 2011. They canvassed opinions about setting up a Theatre Network in NSW. 33 representatives of 22 NSW independent/independent artists attended that meeting. It was then agreed that a scoping study should be initiated and undertaken. A management committee for the process was formed and this group included: John Baylis; Nathan Bennett (later replaced by Simon Wellington); Gareth Boylan; Claudia Chidiac; Luke Cowling; Kate Gaul; Tim McGarry; Anne-Louise Rentell; Viv Rosman and David Williams.

Kim Hanna, because of his knowledge of the national theatre sector, was subsequently engaged in a consultancy capacity to undertake the scoping project, with the assistance of modest funding support from *Arts NSW*.

This current focus on a *Theatre Network NSW* is timely. The groundswell of community interest has created an opportunity to build on that energy and to link a NSW-based network with a potential national body, *Theatre Network Australia*. The Australia Council, Theatre Board is currently supporting *Theatre Network Victoria* to establish a national network with a representative from each state.

## Introduction

Other art form sectors have developed service organisations that are designed to provide for their specific needs, within a broad area of practice. Examples include:

- *Ausdance* for Dance;
- *Playwriting Australia* and *Australian Writers' Guild* for Playwrights;
- *Music Council of Australia* for Music; and the
- *National Association for the Visual Arts* for visual artists.

Some genres of theatre such as *Youth Arts* and *Circus* and *Physical Theatre* have established their own unique service organisations (e.g.; *Youth Performing Arts Australia* and *Australian Circus and Physical Theatre Association* respectively). Major performing arts companies have a representative body, the *Australian Major Performing Arts Group*. However, the absence of a nationally networked theatre service organisation or even a state based body in NSW, is significant.

Reports from the *Australia Council for the Arts* have advocated for the increased support and greater linkages for the Performing Arts Sector. *Make it New #1 (2006)*<sup>1</sup> recognised that the performing arts landscape has become very complex. Yet, it has few vantage points from which the entire landscape can be viewed, in order to provide a clear picture of and for the whole sector. *Love Your Work (2008)*<sup>2</sup> asked:

“How can the theatre sector’s connections be strengthened to support and manage risk-taking ... and provide benefit for both the small-to-medium *and* large companies?”

The majority of respondents who had been surveyed and/or interviewed, agreed that some sort of theatre network should exist in NSW. It is the biggest state with the biggest working population of artists<sup>3</sup>, as well as the state that makes the most significant contribution to national theatre production.

## Context

In the past, various arts organisations operating specifically for the purpose of national advocacy have existed, for brief periods of time. These organisations have never been theatre specific nor have they endured. Examples of these organisations are: *Arts Research Training and Support*, *Confederation of Australian Professional Performing Arts (CAPPA)* (See **Appendix Eleven** for further information), *Arts Action* and *National Campaign for the Arts*. During the times when these organisations operated on behalf of sectors, there were great

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<sup>1</sup> Theatre Board, Australia Council, *Make It New Communique 1*, Australia Council, Sydney, October 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Australia Council, *Love Your Work: Training, Retraining and Connecting Artists in Theatre*, Australia Council, Sydney, November 2008

<sup>3</sup> Stuart Cunningham, Peter Higgs, Simon Freebody and Peter Anderson (2010), *What's your other job? A census analysis of arts employment in Australia*, The Australia Council for the Arts, Sydney

benefits for the arts industry. These organisations were able to unify arguments and make representations for the benefit of the entire sector.

Given the benefits, one might ask why these organisations did not endure. The reasons for the demise of these kinds of organisations can be encapsulated by three key weaknesses. They indicate:

- An inability to build up a critical mass of members in order to fund their ongoing operations.
- Government subsidy being withdrawn, or not granted.
- The membership of the organisation being too divergent (or the stated aims of the organisation being too diverse), resulting in too much energy and effort going into arbitrating disputes.

In NSW a number of significant networking structures that previously operated effectively, no longer exist. In the 1980's there was a *Community Theatre Network* for professional artists. The *Youth Theatres Association of NSW* folded in the early 90's but its membership is broadly served today by the national entity YPAA. Since the mid 1970's the annual *National Playwright's Conference* essentially served the purpose of bringing a section of the theatre sector together. Being for the most part based in Canberra, this event generally saw a strong attendance from NSW practitioners.

One of the main challenges for NSW, is that in the past, national organisations have often been established in Sydney. One of these significant organisations was the *International Theatre Institute (ITI)* that operated up until the late 1990's from Sydney office. This state, interstate and international networking agency has never been fully replaced as a conduit of theatre information, despite the rise of online access.

One formal networking entity that exists is the *Sydney Arts Management Advisory Group (SAMAG)*, although this is not theatre or even performing arts specific. SAMAG hold 8-9 arts issue related seminars per year. (A case study appears in the **Appendix Twelve.**)

Arts NSW currently provides grants to a number of service organisations. The funding body recognises that: 'Peak and service organisations play important roles in the areas of advocacy, capacity building, communications and support.'<sup>4</sup>

Current organisations in support of funds include: *Ausdance NSW*; *Music NSW*; *National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)*; and *PlayWriting Australia*. (A full list appears in the **Appendix Four.**) A representative body for the theatre sector is absent from the list.

There are variations in the genesis of networking bodies. Yet, even though the foundation of these organisations is highly variable, they generally come into being because of an identified need that arises from the community. Sometimes a particular crisis or circumstance may provide an opportunity for network building. These specifically focused efforts are generally not sustained in the long term. Once the crisis or issue has been resolved, the need to coalesce becomes less crucial. Whilst it is true that the artistic landscape is littered with carcasses of peak bodies and service organisations, it is also evident that many organisations have flourished and grown stronger.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/index.php/arts-in-nsw/peak-and-service-organisations/>

## The Survey

A central part of the methodology was the creation and circulation of a survey. This survey was sent to an active email list of 220 organisations, groups and individuals in NSW. Those receiving the email survey were asked to forward it to their own networks. The survey took place in June 2011 and consisted of both multiple choice questions and free responses. There were 176 responses and this is definitely a strong reply from the sector. It is not possible to determine what the actual response rate was though, due to the active social networking that took place.

### Profile of the respondents

The first four questions of the survey gathered information about the respondents themselves.

- 42% of respondents were independent artists
- 35% of respondents were either an independent or small to medium producing company
- At least 61% were practicing artists
- 47% of respondents were not affiliated with any professional body
- 69% of respondents were from metropolitan areas
- 29% of respondents were from regional NSW

### Need for a Network

Question 5 asked the respondents to rate the need for a network in the state.

- 8.4% of respondents rated this as being Unimportant/Slightly Important
- 25.1% of respondents rated this as being Important
- 66.4% of respondents rated this as being Very Important/Critical

### Membership fees

Three questions related to membership fees and how much individuals and organisations would be prepared to pay.

- 61% of respondents were in favour of an annual membership charge
- Individuals' suggested amount (average) \$57 per annum
- Organisations' suggested amount (average) \$176 per annum

## Preferred focus of the organisation ranked in order of priority

Respondents were asked: What were the most useful initiatives that a network could undertake? The top five priorities, in order, were:

- Critical - Lobbying for increased local, state and federal government funding for theatre
- Critical - Representation of issues affecting the NSW theatre sector to government and funding bodies
- Critical - Advocacy with regard to funding bodies, the media and the public
- Very Important - Networking and information sharing amongst members
- Very Important - Encourage positive community attitudes to theatre

The lowest five priorities were:

- Critical - Facilitate professional development opportunities
- Very Important - Providing service and advice to members
- Important - Producing public reports on sector needs
- Important - Initiation of forums
- Important - Develop sector standards, code of conduct etc

## S.W.O.T.

During this study a number of observations were made by those consulted in focus groups and interviews. Useful summaries of these comments have been set out in a standard SWOT format.

<p><b>Strengths</b> Theatre Network NSW can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be a lean and nimble organisation</li><li>• Unify the sector</li><li>• Act as a focus point for sector issues</li><li>• Allow 'everyone to be in the room at once'</li><li>• Follow up on sector identified needs by facilitating a paid person to undertake this work</li></ul>	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Variety of membership services</li><li>• Residing within another organisation can have good synergy</li><li>• Link to a national theatre network and connecting to peers nationally</li><li>• Collaboration with other service organisations e.g. AMPAG and TNV</li><li>• Cross fertilisation</li><li>• Bench mark statistics</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist with cross-sector communication</li> <li>• Support individual artists and the independent sector</li> <li>• Provide a reference point and resource collection point – it is an information hub.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could organise income-generating events</li> </ul>
<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A part-time staff member with limited resources may not be able to deliver a great deal</li> <li>• Lack of financial clout</li> <li>• The possible lack of commitment of <i>MPAB</i> companies</li> <li>• The diversity within the sector might not give rise to a unified voice.</li> <li>• Being perceived as another <i>Sydneycentric</i> entity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If Theatre Network NSW is a lobbying peak body then no government financial support is likely</li> <li>• The question of sustainability?</li> <li>• The person in the Director role being the key to success.</li> <li>• Political apathy because of broader imperatives.</li> </ul>

There was general consensus that there was a need for a theatre network in the state, but there were some unanswered questions. This suggested a fear of the unknown rather than a rejection of what might be possible.

## Discussion of Results

### Need for a Network

From the survey, 66.4% of respondents rated the need for a Theatre Network as being Very Important/Critical. Given that 47% of respondents were not affiliated with any professional body this strengthens the need for an organisation that can provide for the theatre sector in NSW.

#### **Recommendation 1:**

**That a *Theatre Network NSW* be created with an acronym of *TNN*.**

### Membership Fees

Community feedback has indicated that the sector appears to support an annual

membership fee in order to join the organisation.

- There could be a possible annual membership fee of \$57 for individuals.
- A sliding scale of \$100/\$150/\$300 for organisations, based upon financial turnover is possible for organisations.

Such fees are in-keeping with the fee structures of other similar service organisations. (See **Appendix Five**.)

However this fee structure may create a false economy. Annual income from such modest membership fees is likely to be slight and in the range of \$8-10K per annum. Taking into consideration the time and effort involved in processing and updating memberships, is it really worth charging for a membership? Unless it was automated, most of the revenue would be chewed up by administration.

Another concern is that some artists within the sector are multidisciplinary in the way that they work and may already be committed to being financial members of more than one other service organisation. It is not fair or practical to expect them to join another body.

Membership is important but it does not need to be measured through a specific financial commitment. For example, the endorsement of a manifesto through an email subscription could suffice as a membership.

An argument for the payment of membership is that it demonstrates a commitment on the part of the sector member. There can be a greater sense of ownership and expectation from the membership as well.

At the theatre forum in July held at *Carriageworks*, it was agreed at that there should not be a membership fee imposed at this time.

**Recommendation 2:**

**That no membership fee be imposed to join *Theatre Network NSW*. By signing up to the email list of *Theatre Network NSW* and agreeing to support the mission of the organisation, you become a subscriber.**

**Recommendation 3:**

**That a review be made of the membership, subscription and fee policy 24 months after creation of the Network.**

## Focus of the Organisation

Based on the current snapshot, it is unlikely that a networked organisation will ever be able to be all things to all people. It is thought, that a broadly-based agreement can be reached, with regard to the focus and purpose of such an organisation. Theatre is a broad church and the *Theatre Network NSW* must be inclusive and yet still define whom it serves. In essence, it will serve:

- The professional theatre industry

*and in particular*

- the independent and small-to-medium sector of the theatre community.

Several of the comments offered to the survey suggested that individuals view *Theatre Network NSW* as being a potential 'agent'. Frustrations that people may have with being unrepresented or being represented already by an entity that cannot provide adequately for them, appears to inform *some* of the comments. Some practitioners would view the need to join differently if *Theatre Network NSW* could offer something very specific to their individual needs. (This is to be understood as being distinct from being part of something that will give to the sector as a whole.)

Data indicates that there is a sense of isolation in the Independent Theatre sector in the state. A tension exists between concepts of *risk and sustainability* and *diversity and shared experiences*.<sup>5</sup> A network organisation that offers *connectivity* would be welcomed by the independents.

## Options

A number of possible options were considered with regard to the establishment of *Theatre Network NSW*.

### *Option One*

This organisation will focus on networking on behalf of the professional theatre industry and representing the sector's strengths and issues to the broader community.

In this model, the Director will provide access to information for practitioners and the wider community to result in a direct benefit to the theatre sector in NSW. Collaborations will be encouraged and coalitions built. There will be an increase in sector awareness and public education. There will be a component of research and analysis undertaken to support a degree of advocacy. The entity will become a 'one stop shop' for the sector, offering opportunities for collaborative learning. It will become the key representative body for Theatre in NSW.

The current working group should create a Steering Committee for *Theatre Network NSW*. This Committee will be representative of several different art forms and audience focuses including: youth theatre; contemporary performance; a regionally based company; a major performing arts company and an independent company. Representatives should have some ability to provide resources for the project and must be producing organisations.

Funds need to be secured to employ a Director in a part-time (0.6) capacity. Additional funds to cover travel and some administration costs will need to be part of the budget. Funds should be secured to enable an appointment of a staff member for an initial 18-24 months. This should be done in order to attract a person of a high calibre to take on the role and to reduce the amount of time given to application preparation. This is essential, so that more time can be spent on implementation of key goals.

Based upon funding levels for other service organisations supported by *Arts NSW*, (A full list

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<sup>5</sup> Jane Kreis, (2011), *Together Alone: Conditions for sustainability in Australian independent theatre*, unpublished thesis.

appears in the **Appendix Four**), a request in the range of \$65,000 -75,000 per annum would appear to be reasonable.

In order to keep operating costs to a minimum it is recommended that *Theatre Network NSW* be housed within an existing organisation. This would save costs such as an annual audit and insurances and funds should be administered by this entity. In this scenario, the Board of this entity would ultimately have responsibility for *Theatre Network NSW*, but a delegation could be made to a *Theatre Network NSW* committee.

**Recommendation 4:**

**That *Theatre Network NSW* be formed with a specific focus on networking on behalf of the professional theatre industry and representing the sector's strengths and issues to the broader community.**

**Recommendation 5:**

**That the organisation should serve the professional theatre industry, particularly the independent and small-to-medium sector of the theatre community.**

**Recommendation 6:**

**That Theatre Network NSW will maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the major theatre sector.**

**Recommendation 7:**

**That an application will be made to *Arts NSW* as soon as possible, for the purpose of securing funds to establish the entity for an initial 18-24 month period, commencing from January 2012.**

**Recommendation 8:**

**That a Steering Committee be created that is comprised of representation from a range of producing organisations and individuals, including regional representation.**

**Recommendation 9:**

**That a part-time position of Director, *Theatre Network NSW* be advertised and appointed.**

**Recommendation 10:**

**That upon the commencement of formal activity:**

- a forum is held to determine the critical priority areas for the first year of operation.
- a Manifesto for *Theatre Network NSW* be created.

*Option Two*

This organisation is created to *advocate* and *lobby* for the professional theatre industry.

In this option, the organisation aims to influence public policy and the allocation of resources to protect and support the NSW Theatre Sector. The Director of the organisation will have a focus on advocacy and policy-related action and represent theatre artists and arts organisations to government bodies.

Political monitoring and identification of issues affecting the theatre sector is crucial to the

role. The Director of such an organisation will need to challenge government actions, policies and decisions, as appropriate. The Director will seek to exploit opportunities and to gain resources for the sector at large. The role of the Director will extend to support philanthropic opportunities and would work closely with *Artsupport* and *the Australian Business and the Arts Foundation*. There will be some provision of membership services required, otherwise the Director would be working in isolation.

An entity such as this one is not likely to receive funding support from the government, nor should it, if it is to remain independent and be capable of operating without dependence on such funding. However, membership fees would clearly be insufficient to cover the cost of employing a person in any meaningful capacity, even in a part-time role. It would then fall to a volunteer group of individuals to manage and drive the network.

This option was rejected at the *Carriageworks* theatre sector forum held in July 2011.

**This option is not preferred, as it does not ensure longevity of a network.**

### *Option Three*

(A) The idea of a formal organisation is abandoned altogether, but that regular theatre sector forums are held for the purpose of information sharing and networking. This option would rely upon the commitment of an individual or small group to drive the agenda and activities of the group.

A core group of individuals who are committed to the idea of a theatre network in NSW exists. However, most of these people are engaged with other projects and responsibilities and are unlikely to have the necessarily time available to continue to facilitate an informal network.

Without a paid person in role whose responsibility it is to action issues arising from sector consultation, this option is not viable in the long run.

**This option is not preferred as it does not ensure longevity of a network.**

(B) A variation on Option One, is to create an entity similar to *SAMAG* but with a stronger focus on the independent sector and the needs of the theatre practitioner in NSW. This would require an active and engaged committee of approximately a dozen individuals to ensure that there is a momentum of activity and an equitable division of the work involved. Membership fees would need to be charged: Individual \$50, Organisation \$175. This might generate around \$7,000 per annum. This would be enough to establish and maintain a simple website and to cover operating costs. The network could operate in a similar way to *SAMAG* with a commitment to holding monthly sessions. It might focus more on issues relating to professional development, validation, inward connections to other artists and people in the cultural sector. Also, it might focus on outward connections to people who are not primarily in the cultural sector. Such an organisation would have a reasonably discreet reach.

**This option is certainly possible if Option One cannot be pursued because funding cannot be secured.**

## Comparative Analysis

### Australian Examples

In Australia, *Theatre Network Victoria (TNV)* was created in 2009 and as well as operating as a network for that state, it is currently driving the development of a national theatre network. (See **Appendix Eight** for further information.) It is the most useful comparison for *Theatre Network NSW*. Similar in scale and scope the entity provides a 'best practice' model for development in NSW.

The *Theatre Council of Tasmania* has been created and has recently filled the role of a part-time Manager, funded by *Arts Tasmania*.

*TNV* is currently running a leadership project across the country, to establish an *Australian Theatre Network*.

The creation of a *NSW Theatre Network* will strengthen the states representation and participation in national discussions.

*Ausdance NSW* has been operating since 1986 and is a relatively well-resourced service organisation. (See **Appendix Nine** for further information.) *Ausdance* is a unique arts sector model in Australia. At its simplest, the State offices are service organisations tailored to the particular needs of each state dance community while the National office in Canberra is primarily advocacy and (national) issues-based projects/outcomes and also acts as a unifying effect to the network of State offices. The model appears to work for the dance sector but is it the most effective use of resources? The theatre sector has the opportunity to create something new and lean, utilising the experience of *TNV*.

The *Australian Performing Arts Centre Association (APACA)* is a national advocacy network that is supported by a strong financial commitment from its members. (See **Appendix Ten** for further information) The *APACA* model is a useful to consider in terms of a full-time staff member and assistant, driving the objectives of an organisation. Rick Heath is the current convener (WA based) and Christine Dunstan was the former convener.

### Overseas Examples

The *Independent Theatre Council (ITC)* in the UK is a significant organisation that provides for over 600 members. (See **Appendix Six** for further information.) The scale of ITC is possible given the amount of performing arts activity in the UK. The organisation has an impressive professional development program, which depending upon the needs of the NSW theatre sector, could be a useful reference.

*Theatre Without Borders (TWB)* ([www.theatrewithoutborders.com](http://www.theatrewithoutborders.com)) began in 2004, and is American-centric. It is an informal, volunteer, virtual community that shares information and builds connections between individuals and institutions interested in international theatre exchange. It operates on a volunteer basis without funding or membership fees. It is the sort of reference that could be looked at in more detail if a network in NSW was unable to secure funds. (Option Three above.)

*Theatre Communications Group* began in 1961 and is a large arts organisation when viewed

in the context of Australian standards. (See **Appendix Seven** for further information.) It is difficult to compare given its size and placement within the American theatre sector. Nevertheless, there are programs that could be investigated by *Theatre Network NSW*. Some of its programs have created useful tools and resources that could be adapted for the Australian landscape.

*International Theatre Institute* (ITI), [www.iti-worldwide.org](http://www.iti-worldwide.org)

ITI was created in 1948 as an initiative of *UNESCO*. Today it provides a useful exchange of information in the domain of the performing arts. Many countries have their own offices and the Australian branch operated effectively for many years before being wound up in the late 1990's after being unsuccessful in securing ongoing funding from the *Australia Council for the Arts*. In Australia, it was significant in disseminating information about workshop and training activities for theatre practitioners. A theatre network in NSW could today play a role in disseminating such information to the sector.

### **Examples of Organisations from the Non-Arts Sector**

*Tourism Council WA* (TCWA) is the peak body for the tourism industry in Western Australia. (See **Appendix Thirteen** for further information.) It is a not-for-profit organisation, representing the interests of its members. It actively promotes tourism in the state and manages the annual Tourism WA awards. It is a significant in lobbying on behalf of the needs of its members. Networking plays a minor role. It generates income from its' large membership fees and sponsorship. It does not rely upon government funding and thus is able to lobby effectively.

There was formerly a national body, *Tourism Council Australia* (TCA) that was comprised of state representation. This is not dissimilar to the *Ausdance* model. When TCA folded in 2000 because of financial problems, most of its state branches continued to operate. This study shows the benefit of not having only one peak body organisation. If that single entity goes under, then all knowledge and resources disappear with the sinking ship. The demise of this national peak body did not result in the state representative bodies collapsing as well, which is a good thing.

*Shopping Centre Council of Australia* represents investors in, and managers of, shopping centres. (See **Appendix Fourteen** for further information.) It is an influential lobbying body for the commercial sector.

It is true to say that most non-arts peak bodies and service organisations that are not reliant upon government subsidy. They have a significant lobbying and advocacy focus to their operations. Such operations are beyond the scope and reach of *Theatre Network NSW*.

#### **Recommendation 11:**

**That *Theatre Network NSW* develops a partnership with *Theatre Network Victoria* to share resources and work collaboratively for the benefit of their respective states.**

#### **Recommendation 12:**

**That a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be developed between *Theatre Network NSW*, *Theatre Network Victoria* and other theatre networks as they emerge.**

**Recommendation 13:**

**That *Theatre Network NSW* actively participates in supporting an Australian Theatre Network.**

**Recommendation 14:**

**That *Theatre Network NSW* gathers and disseminates information on national and international opportunities for theatre practitioners.**

## Resources for Theatre Network NSW

*Performance Space* has stated that it is prepared to auspice funds and to house an individual that could head the network, in order to minimise overhead costs for the organisation. *Performance Space* is an attractive option given its cross-artform focus and its geographical position, alongside a number of small to medium sized arts organisations. This is a generous offer on the part of *Performance Space*. Other options for a home may be pursued in order to increase the network's ability to be seen as being more 'broadly representative'.

Additional resources offered at this stage by the theatre sector include the Sydney Opera House providing facilities for meetings and a one-day forum in 2012. This is an excellent offer and opportunity.

Conversations with cultural staff from the *City of Sydney* have suggested that funding support for the first year of operation is likely to be secured.

Finally, the establishment of the *Australian Theatre Network* will establish a national website with a dedicated page for each state. In the first instance, information about how to gain access to *Theatre Network NSW* can be found here.

**Recommendation 15:**

**That negotiations be entered into with a suitable organisation to house *Theatre Network NSW* to secure: a dedicated desk, dedicated phone, access to the internet, postage and financial management.**

**Recommendation 16:**

**That a decision be made from the outset to determine what resources should be directed towards the establishment and maintenance of a website for *Theatre Network NSW*.**

## A Regional Voice

As the response to the survey was so significant from regional NSW, a summary sorted from regional respondents follows.

### Profile of the regional respondents

The first four questions of the survey gathered information about the respondents themselves.

- 28% of respondents were a performing arts centre/presenter
- 19% of respondents were an independent artists and 19% were Artistic Directors

- 40% of respondents were not affiliated with any professional body and 38 % were represented by Regional Arts NSW
- 29% of respondents were from regional NSW

Unsurprisingly, there were more respondents from performing arts centres, than from Sydney-based independent artists.

### Need for a Network (regional perspective)

Question 5 asked the respondents to rate the need for a network in the state.

- 12% of respondents rated this as being Unimportant/Slightly Important
- 32% of respondents rated this as being Important
- 56% of respondents rated this as being Very Important/Critical

The perceived need for a Network was slightly less for regional respondents than respondents who were based in metropolitan areas.

### Membership fees (regional perspective)

Three questions related to membership fees and how much individuals and organisations would be prepared to pay.

- 67% of respondents were in favour of an annual membership charge

A similar response came from those based in metropolitan areas.

### Preferred focus of the organisation ranked in order of priority (regional perspective)

Respondents were asked: *What were the most useful initiatives a network could undertake?*  
The top five priorities, in order, were:

- Critical - Lobbying for increased local, state and federal government funding for theatre
- Critical - Representation of issues affecting the NSW theatre sector to government and funding bodies
- Critical - Advocacy with regard to funding bodies, the media and the public
- *Critical - Facilitate professional development opportunities*
- Very Important - Networking and information sharing amongst members

The lowest five priorities were:

- Very Important - Encourage positive community attitudes to theatre
- Very Important - Providing service and advice to members
- Important - Producing public reports on sector needs
- Important - Initiation of forums
- Important - Develop sector standards, code of conduct etc

The key difference between the regional and metropolitan respondents who participated in the survey process, was that the regional respondents expressed a greater need for professional development opportunities. This is not surprising given the relative isolation experienced by many of the respondents based in rural NSW.

Focus group discussions with the Regional Arts Development Officers highlighted the need to create and strengthen the networking that goes on between artists and small, semi-professional theatre organisations. It was thought that through this kind of development, the provision of low-cost, accessible theatre tours to regional NSW could flow.

Developing and maintaining links with regional NSW artists will be an important challenge for *Theatre Network NSW*. Whilst the need to be directly involved in touring issues should be beyond the scope of *Theatre Network NSW*, there is a role to play in ensuring that all of the key representatives are engaged.

**Recommendation 17:**

**That *Theatre Network NSW* maintains contact with organisations that support regional touring and exchange opportunities, including *Regional Arts NSW* (in particular the Regional Arts Development Officers), *Arts on Tour NSW*, *Critical Stages*, *INAPAC – Performing Arts Centres of NSW and ACT*, *Performing Arts Touring Alliance*, the *Australian Performing Arts Centres’ Association (APACA)* and *Youth Performing Arts Australia (YPAA)*.**

## Australian Capital Territory

The Survey drew three ACT responses, an appropriate number given the size of the theatre activity in the territory. Given the small number of responses, it is difficult to apply a great deal of analysis to this survey. The key points of note are that:

- Two respondents identified as a funded small to medium company/producer
- 100% of respondents viewed the need for a NSW Theatre Network as very important/critical
- Most of the suggested initiatives that a NSW Theatre Network might undertake were rated as critical with slightly less weight given to: the need to develop sector standards, code of conduct etc; Initiation of forums and; Producing reports on sector needs.
- The highest rated suggested initiative was to represent issues to government and funding bodies.
- Other items were generally in line with the overall results of the survey.

It is not surprising that there was a slight expression away from forums for the sector, given the strong networking opportunities that already exist for the theatre community in Canberra. It is also understandable that the sector would desire more representation of issues to funding bodies, in particular with regard to the *Australia Council for the Arts*. Canberra/ACT has seen very little peer representation on the *Theatre Board* for some years.

Communication was undertaken with the staff of *Arts ACT*. They are generally supportive of a *Theatre Network NSW* and how it might work for performing artists in and around Canberra. It is unlikely that any financial support would be available for a Sydney-based network. A meeting of ACT arts practitioners made it clear that they do not wish to be subsumed by a NSW-based entity. Rather, they will endeavor to develop their own network and liaise with NSW.

**Recommendation 18:**

**That regular contact be maintained by *Theatre Network NSW* with the ACT based theatre network.**

## Conclusion

The purpose of this report is to investigate and report on the potential value of creating a theatre network in NSW. There was broad consultation with the sector, through research, an online survey, focus groups and the circulation of a Discussion Paper.

Results indicate that there is broad industry support for a *Theatre Network NSW*. Given the variety of voices with whom the survey consulted, the expectations of such a network are varied. Underpinning many comments drawn from the independent sector, is the desire for empowerment that only unification can bring. It can as one person suggested, let 'everyone be in the room at once'.

*Theatre Network NSW* should primarily look to support the professional independent and small-to-medium sector of the theatre community. The specific purpose of the organisation should have the twin focus of networking and representing the sector's strengths and issues, to the broader community.

At this stage, a part-time Director role housed within a host organisation to reduce overheads is recommended. Given the success of *Theatre Network Victoria*, it makes sense to closely model *Theatre Network NSW* on its structure and plan.

2011 sees an alignment between various arms of the theatre sector and with the support and goodwill of *Arts NSW*, the time is appropriate for an investment in the establishment of *Theatre Network NSW*.

## Appendices

### Appendix One: The Survey

#### 1. Please select one of the following. I am:

• <b>An independent artist</b>	<b>42.3%</b>
• A funded small to medium company/producer	19.6%
• A non-funded performing arts company/producer	15.3%
• A performing arts centre/presenter	11.7%
• A major performing arts company	2.5%
• A service organisation	3.7%
• A government agency	3.1%
• An organisation that is affiliated with a university or an educational institution of some kind	1.8%
• Other – including: Independent performing arts training; Arts consultant; Local Government; Independent arts commentator; Independent theatre researcher; provider of software solutions to theatre industry; Theatrical agent; Regional Arts board; Policy developer; and combinations	26 responses

#### 2. Which of the following best describes your position or role? (Select one)

• <b>Independent Artist</b>	<b>44.0%</b>
• Board Chair/Board Member	3.8%
• Executive Director/CEO	8.8%
• General Manager	7.5%
• Artistic Director	17.0%
• Producer	10.7%
• Associate/Staff	5.7%
• Assistant/Administrative Staff	2.5%
• Other – including: Arts consultant; Cultural Development Officer; Venue Manager; Mayor; Artist Representative; Regional Arts Development Officer; Arts advocate	22 responses

#### 3. I am currently represented by\*:

• Australian Major Performing Arts Group (AMPAG)	1.8%
• Youth Performing Arts Australia (YPAA)	7.1%
• Australian Circus and Physical Theatre Association (ACAPTA)	3.0%
• Performing Arts Touring Alliance (PATA)	4.2%
• Australian Performing Arts Centres' Association (APACA)	11.9%
• Regional Arts NSW	10.7%
• Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA)	13.7%
• Live Performance Australia (LPA)	8.9%
• Australian Writers Guild (AWG)	7.7%
• <b>I am not affiliated with any professional body</b>	<b>47.0%</b>
• Other – including: INAPAC; ANAT; Australian Society of Authors	11 responses

\*Respondents could choose more than one option.

**4. Please select one of the following. I am located:**

• In a NSW Metropolitan area	69.3%
• In a NSW Regional area	29.0%
• In the ACT	1.7%

**5. Please rate the need for a NSW Theatre Network organisation on a scale from 1 to 5.**

1 Unimportant	2 Slightly important	3 Important	4 Very Important	5 Critical	Rating Average
0.6%	7.8%	25.1%	<b>37.1%</b>	29.3%	3.87

**6. What are the main initiatives that a NSW Theatre Network organisation could initiate or undertake in full, that you think would be most useful to you and your colleagues? Please rate each suggestion on a scale from 1 to 5.**

	1 Unimportant	2 Slightly important	3 Important	4 Very Important	5 Critical	Rating Average
Develop sector standards, code of conduct etc	6.9%	23.1%	<b>40.5%</b>	19.1%	10.4%	3.03
Encourage positive community attitudes to theatre	2.9%	8.0%	17.2%	<b>42.5%</b>	29.3%	3.87
Initiation of forums	2.3%	19.5%	<b>37.4%</b>	29.3%	11.5%	3.28
Lobbying for increased government funding for theatre	0.0%	3.4%	13.8%	28.7%	<b>54.0%</b>	4.33
Networking and information sharing amongst members	1.1%	5.1%	21.6%	<b>36.9%</b>	35.2%	4.00
Providing service and advice to members	1.1%	7.4%	25.0%	<b>42.6%</b>	23.9%	3.81
Representing issues to government and funding bodies	0.6%	4.5%	9.7%	37.5%	<b>47.7%</b>	4.27
Facilitate professional development opportunities	2.3%	8.6%	25.1%	31.4%	<b>32.6%</b>	3.83
Producing public reports on sector needs	2.3%	12.6%	<b>36.6%</b>	30.3%	18.3%	3.5
Advocacy with regard to funding bodies, the media and the public.	1.2%	19.2%	19.2%	36.0%	<b>37.2%</b>	4.02
Other (14 comments) – see below, with repetition removed						

Other:

- Information on global trends
- Providing subsidised space
- Facilitation of touring opportunities between regions
- Sharing training opportunities
- Should act as local networker between locales and feed into national system rather than be a different network
- Directory of services, artists and organisations
- Work in collaboration with the lobbying and professional development work of other service organisations
- Lobbying about the importance of theatre culture in the attraction of overseas visitors
- Lobby theatre companies for higher Australian content
- Facilitate all kinds of performance being represented across the sector and input into education and the arts
- Create a Public Liability Insurance umbrella for independent theatre productions
- Affect change in cross cultural and multicultural casting

**7. In addition to support from arts funding bodies, there are several ways in which such an organisation could be financially supported by its field of related practitioners. Please select one of the following:**

• A one-off membership fee that is scaled accordingly, based upon the financial turnover of an organisation (or a smaller fee for individuals)	18.2%
• <b>An annual membership fee that is scaled accordingly, based upon the financial turnover of an organisation (or a smaller fee for individuals)</b>	<b>60.8%</b>
• No membership fee	21.0%

**8. If there was a one-off membership fee charge, how much would you be prepared to pay? Please consider the membership fee questions in light of how ambitious you might be for this organisation.**

<b>Response Average</b>	<b>\$235.06</b>
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(Suggestions ranged from \$0 to \$1,500)

**9. If there was an annual membership fee charge, how much would you be prepared to pay? Please consider the membership fee questions in light of how ambitious you might be for this organisation.**

<b>Response Average</b>	<b>\$134.54</b>
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(Suggestions ranged from \$10 to \$2,000)

**10. If you have additional thoughts and comments that you would like to share about a NSW Theatre Network, please enter them here.**

- Isolation is the biggest contributing factor to a lack of cohesion and momentum within the arts. Having a network we belong to and share in is critical.
- We have a lot of information data and suggestions that could be useful to the Network - advocacy, consolidation and networking are critical functions.
- My concern would be that an organisation such as this would simply maintain the status quo: a small group of high profile independent artists taking all the

opportunities because they know each other. I think a central part of the mission statement of such a group would need to be the development of opportunities for new artists (not necessarily young) and the ongoing mentorship of their work via production and administrative advice and support

- I would hope that the NSW Theatre Network would support all practitioners equitably regardless of what performance degree they have graduated from. I would also hope that there is a focus on increasing our theatre audiences, by producing new works that relate to our generation. Finally, a focus on reinitiating theatre in Western Sydney and rural areas of NSW. Theatre Nepean went out like a light without making a sound. New initiatives like Bankstown Arts Centre need to be supported and encouraged. We need to remind the Australian community why theatre is so important and unique.
- Developing audiences through schools education and community cultural development projects with young people, children and seniors
- One-off membership fees do not fit with our funding model of annual budgets and cannot easily be accommodated. A one-off fee also represents a risk with regard to the network's ability to deliver outcomes. Value needs to be seen on an ongoing basis to stimulate membership.
- There is already thriving communication between theatre groups in the regions through our own informal and formal networks, and also Australia wide through [www.theatre.asn.au](http://www.theatre.asn.au) and the Association of Community Theatre [www.showline.com.au](http://www.showline.com.au) - we would not want to pay another subscription for little return. Adding another network might simply distill the good networks that are already in place, however I do see a need in the regional area for making connections / mentorships with professional companies. It would be great if we could use videoconferencing or webinars to tap into acting / directing / technical classes in larger centres for example.
- We really need something like this. Moral is dying, amongst artists and audiences alike. Sure it's still working in places, but I have contact with a LOT of people in theatre... where is the 'stuff' for people aged above 25... but still trying to establish their name and career?
- Think it's a wonderful idea and much needed!
- As some venues are actually theatres and others are multipurpose facilities presenting theatre a few times per year you might want to consider having associate memberships at a lower rate to encourage engagement from those second type of venues. If there is a significant fee to join this new group, I probably wouldn't join. But for a modest fee I'd be interested in an associate membership with less rights and benefits etc.
- There are a number of bodies already fulfilling many of these needs and fee for service being paid. I would have some concerns over duplication. Perhaps the other major representative bodies such as APACA / INAPAC etc need to be engaged in this discussion at an organisational level
- A state based network is a waste of time. The issues that affect theatre are national and international. I would rather see state funds support a national network instead of resources being sucked up by an impotent one-person state network. The steering group should look closely at other ineffective groups such as the entire CAN network, the NACA group and previous attempts at theatre agencies for the evidence. Also, I do not think a state based network can lobby anyone better than company's themselves can.
- My position as an unfunded freelance artist means I would only join and pay a fee if such a network could, through its networking and resources, lead to procuring

- employment.
- My only concern is "another" organisation and needs to sit along side of all the above organisations as "who" is it representing as it seems as if the aim is to represent everyone and the cant be in conflict to LPA or APACA or MEAA. So maybe it's more about a network of sharing info/seminars etc and not so much an advocacy organisation.
  - The membership fee would depend on how helpful this organisation would be to me and my small theatre company.
  - I'm 59. I create community theatre as a volunteer. I'm not interested in CAREER (been there done that), just having fun and facilitating adventures with my community.
  - It is essential that in rural areas small theatres have the capacity to provide opportunities for young people interested in theatre, whether it be as a performer or behind the scenes. It is also important to attract travelling theatre groups to smaller rural and regional areas.
  - This could be developed more cost effectively as a section of the Australian Theatre Network and through an online system that does not require a lot of cost. Obviously there are costs in managing this but perhaps could be developed through partnership/collaboration rather than membership fees given that it is not certain, at this stage, how the network may or may not evolve.
  - Not having been privy to the talks that lead to this survey and having no real experience or knowledge of any other Theatre Networks it was difficult to answer these questions and to know what such an organisation does or could do.
  - I think having a membership fee proves value to members and encourages active involvement. It could be totally feasible to have a free membership but with additional benefits for paid members, though.
  - Do.
  - A one off membership only helps with start up. To continue to function, an annual fee is extremely important, along with government funding and private sector support. Would NSW TN perhaps have a major naming rights sponsor?
  - It is imperative that theatre practitioners (especially independent producers) within NSW begin to share resources, knowledge and seek out professional development. This is something that my colleagues and I have been discussing for some time now, and I'm glad that someone has finally acted on this need.
  - Particularly for regional theatre orgs, having access to advice and services and possibly a representative who works with the community would make the idea feasible and useful. A genuine NSW theatre network would be as available to the regions as to the met centres. Really, the membership fee would depend on what service the network provides so the figures are difficult to confirm. Thanks for the opportunity.
  - I'm not convinced that there's a need for a NSW Theatre Network. This survey makes it feel like it would largely be an amalgamation of various unions and alliances and I don't know that they achieve that much as it is.
  - This would be a welcome initiative particularly for independent artists and creative producers to feel more supported by the sector at large, and to feel connected to the wider performing arts community. I recently had some issues with the code of conduct from a producer of an arts organisation and had no where to go to for support - this is a fantastic idea to set up a network for this and so many other reasons. Let me know if there is anything further I can do to help.
  - I believe there are other active theatre groups out there in other states such DATA in Melbourne who are diverse artists theatre assoc. They are also lobbying for a voice for cultural diversity in theatre this us needed too it's time groups joined forces for whatever they are fighting for - it is all ultimately critical for the sustainability of the

art form. Thanks

- It would be nice to think this concept is being supported, researched and built by a broad cross section of the industry with individuals representing all sectors. I would be extremely disappointed to hear it's the same group of people pushing their own agenda's once again.
- Re the membership fee. If you are doing a one off most groups would barely be able to afford more than 350. But it should be strictly user pays with minimal funding
- This is an excellent plan especially for the regionally isolated theatre companies/venues that exist for regional arts workers dependant on box office for survival
- I would find it more helpful, being in a remote rural area, 9 hours from Sydney, to have a regional network. Consequently I'm not sure how relevant the NSW as a state option would be to us.
- I wasn't aware of the meeting that took place at the Performance Space but would have liked to have come.
- Must represent the widest range of genres within the performing arts sector and indeed cross-fertilisation & dialogue between "independent", mainstage, contemporary performance. Should lobby for changes to equity and diversity represented on stage - ie crucial issues rather than just \$ and networks
- I would hope it would be energetic and vibrant and not just recirculate old ideas and arguments.
- I think the sliding scale of any fees has to really take into account how poorly paid most theatre artists are - it's great to think that lobbying etc will be done, it does seem a shame that we have to pay for it ourselves somehow. Surely by now there is some understanding in government that theatre is valid and culturally extremely significant, even if only because it comments on what we are now. To have greater visibility and greater equality within that industry should be something that is not paid for by the artists themselves who already give over so much for nothing
- It is critical that women artists are equally represented in opportunities for professional development.
- This country has a negative attitude to theatre, to the arts on the whole, compared to (esp.) northern European countries, where the major newspapers have a 10page arts and culture section EVERY DAY. SMH has three-quarter of a page as a standard. Arts and culture are not seen as vital to the growth and thriving of Australia by those who rule and by the media, so the public don't think they are either.
- This org could never have an effective impact on "Encourage positive community attitudes to theatre" because this requires a huge cash investment, however the other initiatives are achievable. While I believe this is an extremely important initiative for the industry, it's not all that important for this organisation.
- It is critical that funding for this organisation is not devolved from funding for artists. It needs to come from a separate pool. Further, I believe that, broadly, the sector is well catered for in terms of professional development opportunities and opportunities for connection points between artists and co's (forums/seminars etc). The big needs, as I see it (particularly for NSW) is twofold: Providing a network of resources and information for members (ultimately a relatively easy task of bringing together what already exists) and secondly, (major task) lobbying government aggressively for the sector in an environment which is tough for the arts - particularly in NSW which currently has limited resources.
- Encourage change at Arts NSW, get them to fund advocacy
- It's hard to respond to the questions without a greater understanding of how this body/network/person/body may operate. For instance in Q6. some of these things

are very important but I'm not 100% convinced that a new organisation is best placed to deliver them. Therefore some questions about the type of organisational model (and its scale and ambition) would have been helpful. From my point of view, there needs to be a 'body' (and I think it's quite a small 'body') which can: ensure NSW theatre is connected to national issues; network the key theatre orgs and companies in NSW with a focus on connectivity and sharing of expertise and knowledge; provide opportunities for professional development; and avoid duplication with existing providers.

- If this proposed organisation becomes reality it must align itself with the performing arts centres associations. There is good work being done amongst those people that could be used.
- Good luck!
- I'm skeptical of something supported by governments.
- The Network would need some real resources and must be headed by a person with credibility within the industry/profession but also as a public advocate in the media and with political decision makers.
- Do we really need this? Hard to say, without knowing its potential for genuine effectiveness. An industry advocate for government - yes. Another forum-building, networking environment - no, plenty of that already. Also, asking artists to pay for it either directly or through the reallocation of funds that could otherwise go to funding work is my main concern. What if its just another big body that does little to actually impact on the lives and well-being of theatre artists? I wouldn't want to pay for that.
- I think we really do need one but I think it can be in absolutely no way, exclusive.
- Clearly there is need for an advocacy theatre body in NSW, particularly in lieu of the appalling per capita funding Arts NSW puts into its local arts community. For too long NSW has relied on its position on the world stage, with its world city Sydney, to fulfill the cultural needs of its community. The appalling precedent has now been set up where NSW artists compete with the whole country for opportunities on the coveted Sydney stage, whilst enduring a diffident funding and support model. Other state based independent artists and arts groups are supported and grow into fully fledged professional careers whilst Sydney artists struggle with rising costs, lack of venues, and lack of systemic support from councils and state governments. Anything that could help stem the tide would be appreciated.
- Go, go!!
- There are a number of self-producing theatre directors that require resources and funding that may help to provide ongoing support to entire production teams
- More multicultural artists and multicultural productions should be emphasised as these are very much under represented and not realistic with community reality
- This shouldn't cost money. None of us make enough money to be paying extra fees for anything. We pay our agents 15% of our earnings as it is.
- The monetary figure above is an ideal, I suppose? I feel that the fees I pay to MEAA/Alliance are incredibly steep seeing as every issue I have come to them with they have said they are not able to help me with. I would much rather be a part of this proposed NSW Theatre Network, and if it was a network that was beneficial to me as an emerging artist who is sometimes individual, sometimes part of a collective, and always seeking new work and funding, then I would be prepared to pay more than the amount I have stipulated.
- A Theatre Network is a great idea in terms of developing industry standards. I'd be concerned, though, to double up on the excellent work that Playwriting Australia does as a professional development organisation. An advocacy group is needed for

funding and standards, not a professional development organisation.

- It is impossible to know what kind of membership fee I would be prepared to pay for an organisation that has no track record. Especially when annual income is at maximum \$ 17K pa in a good year and I'm an artist who works regularly with a funded organisation. The field in NSW and Sydney in particular is very dispersed with great diversity. I suppose I wonder whether it might be able to represent the independent sector who are involved with experimenting with what theatre can be effectively in these conditions and would not become more related to the interests of the more established and larger theatre organisations where divisions of creative labour are also more usual.

## Appendix Two: Consultations

Focus groups and interviews to discuss key concerns and views.

Nicole Beyer (Theatre Network Victoria)

Daniel Brine (Performance Space)

Elizabeth Brown (Southern Tableland Arts)

Tracey Callinen (Arts OutWest)

Ange Ceco (Arts NSW)

Julie Clark (Arts Northern Rivers)

Fraser Corfield (Australian Theatre for Young People)

Rosie Dennis (Independent Artist)

Sue Donnelly (AMPAG)

Alyce Fisher (South West Arts)

Andrew Gray (South East Arts)

Eddy Harris (West Darling Arts)

Sam Hawker (Arts Radar)

Rachel Healy (City of Sydney)

Simon Hinton (Merrigong Theatre)

Jamie-Lea Hodges (Orana Arts)

Scott Howie (Eastern Riverina Arts)

Vanessa Keenan (Murray Arts)

Jane Kreis (Arts North West)

Alica Leggett (Orana Arts)

Chris Mead (PlayWriting Australia)

Anna Messariti (ABC, Radio Drama)

Robert Piani (Arts ACT)

Greg Pritchard (Western Riverina Arts)

Elizabeth Rodgers (Regional Arts NSW)

Alan Schacher (Gravity Feed)

Jane Sommersby (Arts Upper Hunter)

Kim Spinks (Arts NSW)

Kelly Stoner (Arts Mid North Coast)

Alicia Talbot (Urban Theatre Projects)

Glenn Terry (Darlinghurst Theatre)

Lyn Wallis (Australia Council, Theatre Board)

### Appendix Three: Forum attendees

Attendees at the theatre sector meeting that was held at Carriageworks on Sunday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July.

John Baylis (Independent Artist)

Sally Blackwood (Jigsaw Theatre Company)

Julieanne Campbell (Performance Space)

Luke Cowling (Critical Stages)

Rosie Dennis (Independent Artist)

Kim Hanna [chair]

Suzanne Hauser (Outback Theatre for Young People)

Lisa Havilah (Carriageworks)

Tim McGarry (Monkey Baa)

Gemma Pepper (Independent Artist)

Stuart Slough (Wyong Shire Council)

Christopher Tooher (Bell Shakespeare)

Bridgette van Leuven (Sydney Opera House)

Simon Wellington (Griffin Theatre Company)

Stephen Wilkinson (Independent Artist)

David Williams (Version 1.0)

## Appendix Four: NSW funded peak bodies and service organisations

Arts NSW provides funding to peak bodies and service organisations to provide these specialist services in NSW. These include:

<b>Organisations</b>	<b>Arts NSW Funding 09/10</b>
<a href="#">Accessible Arts</a>	\$235,000 Yr 2 triennial funding (09-11)
<a href="#">Arts Law Centre of Australia</a>	\$120,000 Yr1 triennial funding (10-12)
<a href="#">Arts on Tour NSW Ltd</a> (AOT)	\$510,000 Yr 2 triennial funding (09-11)
<a href="#">Ausdance NSW</a>	\$180,000 Yr 2 triennial funding (09-11)
<a href="#">Australian Music Centre</a> (AMC)	\$22,000 Yr 2 triennial funding (09-11)
<a href="#">History Council of NSW</a>	\$73,000 Yr 3 triennial funding (08-10)
<a href="#">Museums and Galleries NSW</a> (M&G NSW)	\$1,099,000 Yr 2 triennial funding (09-11)
<a href="#">MusicNSW</a>	\$122,000 Yr 2 triennial funding (09-11)
<a href="#">National Association for the Visual Arts</a> (NAVA)	\$66,000 Devolved grants program 2010
<a href="#">PlayWriting Australia</a>	\$70,000 2010 Program
<a href="#">Regional Arts NSW</a>	\$530,000 Yr 2 triennial funding (09-11)
<a href="#">Royal Australian Historical Society</a> (RAHS)	\$23,000 Small devolved grants program 2010
<a href="#">Local Government and Shires Association of NSW</a>	\$80,000 2010 Program

## Appendix Five: Comparison of service organisations membership fees

Comparison table of Australian arts service organisations membership fees:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Concession</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
<i>Arts Law Centre of Australia</i>	\$120	\$120	\$250
<i>Audance NSW</i>	\$33	\$66	\$100
<i>Australian Circus and Physical Theatre Association</i>	\$30	\$60	\$125/\$250
<i>Australian Society of Authors</i>	\$110	\$170	\$350
<i>Australian Writer's Guild</i>	\$85	Emerging \$190 (plus one-off fee \$120) Established \$295-\$750 (plus one-off fee \$185)	n/a
<i>Media and Entertainment Alliance</i>	\$292	\$584 - \$1112	n/a
<i>Music Council of Australia</i>	\$45	\$60	\$99/\$165/\$319
<i>Music NSW</i>	nil	nil	nil
<i>National Association for the Visual Arts</i>	\$45	\$60	\$99/\$165/\$319
<i>Theatre Network Victoria</i>	nil	nil	nil
<i>Youth Performing Arts Australia</i>	n/a	\$77	\$165/\$275/\$550

## Appendix Six: Case Study One: Independent Theatre Council

### Independent Theatre Council – UK (founded 1974)

[www.itc-arts.org](http://www.itc-arts.org)

*Independent Theatre Council UK* (ITC) performs a facilitating role for the performing arts encouraging and sustaining practitioners and organisations by:

- providing business advice and support services.
- providing a voice for the UK performing arts sector – raising its profile and representing its interests with policy makers.
- uniting a community of performing arts professionals where sharing of good practice and peer-learning can take place  
*and*
- Empowering, educating and energising arts professionals through professional development suitable to all stages of their careers

Around 600 touring companies, venues, individual managers and producers currently gain access to the following membership benefits:

- Free legal and management advice, including copyright, employment, contracts, tax, business planning, organisational structure and staff development;
- Discounted rates on a programme of courses and professional development opportunities;
- Industrial relations and contracts service;
- Criminal records disclosure service;
- Discounted insurance packages with Performers Insurance;
- National and regional networking events and industry conferences;
- Regular newsletter and access to members' only area of the website;
- Incorporation and charitable status service;
- Lobbying and advocacy

The organisation has a staff of 5 workers.

Membership costs an individual £175 pounds and an organisation: £175-1,000.

Membership numbers: Individuals 63, Organisations 517. Total: 570

ITC gains a significant amount of its income stream from running a programme of courses and professional development opportunities. In addition membership fees generate well over £100,000

## Appendix Seven: Case Study Two: Theatre Communications Group

### Theatre Communications Group – USA (founded 1961)

[www.tcg.org](http://www.tcg.org)

#### Mission

To strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre.

TCG offers its members networking and knowledge-building opportunities through conferences, events, research and communications; grants approximately \$2 million per year to theatre companies and individual artists; advocates on the federal level and serves as the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute, connecting its constituents to the global theatre community.

TCG is the nation's largest independent publisher of dramatic literature; it also publishes the *American Theatre* magazine.

TCG seeks to increase the organisational efficiency of its member theatres, cultivate and celebrate the artistic talent and achievements of the field and promote a larger public understanding of, and appreciation for, the theatre.

The organisation has a staff of 52 workers.

Membership costs a Student \$20 Individual \$35 and an organisation: \$550 - \$15,000

Membership numbers: Individuals 12,000, Organisations 650. Total: 12,700

#### 2010 Income:

Grants: \$1,942,384

Publications: \$3,052,952

Membership: \$1,534,947

Other Income: \$764,614

## Appendix Eight: Case Study Three: Theatre Network Victoria

### Theatre Network Victoria (founded 2009)

[www.tnv.net.au](http://www.tnv.net.au)

*Theatre Network Victoria* (TVN) aims to strengthen the small-to-medium and independent performing arts sector in Victoria. It undertakes research, identifies professional development needs and works to build capacity and sustainability.

*TNV* aims to represent the sector through ongoing consultation, partnership development, research, active engagement and networking, and an open-door attitude.

*TNV* was initiated by a group of Artistic Directors and General Managers, who saw the need for a project to strengthen the small to medium performing arts sector in Victoria. Funding was secured from Arts Victoria for 18 months for a dedicated Manager (0.6EFT) and costs. Due to the success of the project, *TNV* received approval of annual funding for 2011. Initially housed at *Chamber Made Opera* with support from *Arena Theatre Company*, it incorporated as an association in March 2011.

The *Theatre Network Victoria* strategic aims for 2011 are:

- Advocacy: to provide an influential, respected, political voice for the sector;
- Capacity Building: to build internal capacity within the theatre sector through connection with programs focused on sector development, professional development and theatre art-form development;
- Action Research: to gain and share evidence and understanding of sector issues nation-wide;
- Creating Connection: to facilitate networking, information sharing and connection in the theatre sector and the broader arts industry.

Staff of 2 – part-time

Membership costs: No fee

Membership Numbers: *TNV* has no financial membership – theatre workers simply join *TNV* by filling in an online form – and they then receive a monthly e-news and other industry information as relevant, including invitations to events. The current membership is 702 people, 503 of them Victorian. Of those, 333 are from an organisation and the remainder (270) are primarily independent theatre practitioners.

2011 Victorian Income\*:

Grants: \$50,000 Arts Vic

Membership: nil

Earned Income: \$4,000

\* Also receives some additional funding for national activity but these funds have been excluded as they are project specific.)

## Appendix Nine: Case Study Four: Ausdance NSW

### Ausdance NSW (founded 1986)

[www.ausdancensw.com.au](http://www.ausdancensw.com.au)

#### Mission:

To create, support and promote opportunities for Dance in NSW and to invest in its ongoing development.

*Ausdance NSW* is the peak body for dance in NSW and committed to raising the profile and building capacity for the dance sector within the state.

*Ausdance* was formed as a national organisation in 1977 to provide a united voice for dance in Australia. It is a national network made up of *Ausdance* State and Territory organisations and *Ausdance National*.

Each *Ausdance* organisation is independently incorporated with its own Constitution, mission, aims and key priority activities and adheres to a Memorandum of Understanding as a national network. Each office is branded as *Ausdance* with its own State or Territory designation. The Chair of *Ausdance NSW* is a member of the *Ausdance National Executive*.

The identified key priority areas for the 2009 -11 triennium are:

- Enhancing NSW Professional Dance Practice and Innovation
- Developing NSW Regional and Indigenous Dance
- Increasing the Profile of Dance in NSW and Audience Development

Staff of 3 (1 part-time)

Membership: Concession \$33, Individual \$66, Organisation \$100 (set nationally)

Membership numbers: Concession 22, Individual 102, Organisation 31. Total: 155

2009 Income:

Grants: \$184,500 Arts NSW

Membership: \$11,514

Earned Income: approximately \$22,000

## Appendix Ten: Case Study Five: APACA

### **Australian Performing Arts Centres Association (founded 1987)**

*Australian Performing Arts Centres Association* (APACA) is a national advocacy network that provides leadership for the development of performing arts organisations and advocates for the proper resourcing of performing arts and in particular for presenters, facilitators and venues for all Australian communities.

The strategic direction for 2009 – 2014 are:

- To encourage and promote excellence in the presentation of performing arts across Australia.
- To effectively maintain and develop the *APACA* network in collaboration with state-based presenter organisations.
- To position *APACA* as a peak national body for performing arts presenters and align the organisation with key national partners.
- To provide valued services to a growing membership.

For many years a strong source of income come from *Arts Services Australia Pty Ltd* (ASA), a joint venture between *APACA* and *Regional Arts Australia* (RAA). *ASA*'s only purpose was to manage a property investment in Canberra called Arts House. *ASA*'s interest represented roughly 10% of the entire building. The share of the building was recently sold and \$100,00 was evenly distributed between *APACA* and *RAA*.

Staff of 2 (1 part-time) with a national management committee of 10

Membership: Associate \$370 or Full \$540

Total members: over 150

2010 Income:

Total earned Income: approximately \$250,000

## Appendix Eleven: Case Study Five: CAPP

### Confederation of Professional Performing Arts (CAPP) Founded mid 1980's – defunct<sup>6</sup>

CAPP emerged in the mid eighties to provide a national advocacy body for performing arts organisations. Chairperson was Tony Staley, Minister in the Fraser cabinet and board member of the *Playbox Theatre Company*. Executive Director was Justin Macdonnell. CAPP existed as a small secretariat which then coordinated voluntary state branches. The intention was that state branches would feed state issues and concerns to the federal body in Sydney.

Membership of CAPP was very broad encompassing the *Australian Opera* at one end and the community theatre movement at the other. Membership fees were graded according to income with the *Australian Opera* paying \$10,000 and a small company \$200 to \$1,000.

Early meetings of CAPP were interesting with many representatives from a vast array of companies. This vast array of companies was in fact the reason that CAPP collapsed. The politics of theatre at the time centred around the ceiling funding debate. Smaller companies argued that they needed more funds to exist, (or any funds to begin operations) and that the larger companies were monopolising the funds. A decision was made by the Theatre Board of the Australia Council to put a ceiling on funds for the larger companies so as to free up money for the smaller ones. This led to heated debate, a lot of which spilled over into CAPP.

CAPP fell apart as it was unable to manage this debate within the membership. The difficulty for CAPP was that the small companies had the numbers but the large companies paid the bills.

The significant achievement of CAPP was that it brought together a broad cross section of the performing arts community. While it was ascendant companies joined as members and participated in the state and federal meetings.

CAPP failed because it was caught up in the debate between large and small companies over relative funding levels. The organisation existed on the assumption that all companies had common interests. This was not the case, especially around the time of the Ceiling funding debate, as CAPP's constituents were actively competing with each other. As a result all the attention was focused inward which meant that members were getting no real benefits.

Ultimately it all ended when the large organisations dropped out. Without their membership fees CAPP became uneconomic.

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<sup>6</sup> Extract from - Australian Institute of Arts Management, *An Examination of Models of Networking and Advocacy which may be useful in the development of National Advocacy about the value of the Arts in Australia*, October 1998

## Appendix Twelve: Case Study Six: SAMAG

### **Sydney Arts Management Advisory Group (SAMAG) (Formed early 1990's)**

A not-for-profit organisation that was formed by a number of arts professionals to provide a forum to:

- Create awareness, sensitivity, knowledge and skills required of Directors and Managers of arts organisations through the presentation of seminars by arts and business people
- Ensure the seminar topics cover a broad range, including metropolitan and rural issues and areas of interest
- Create a forum where arts practitioners and managers can meet, share information and network.

*SAMAG's* aim is to provide a forum for discussion and to raise awareness of current arts issues. At the same time, *SAMAG* provides professional development for arts managers to improve their knowledge and skills. This is achieved through the presentation of monthly seminars, over nine months, which address topics and issues of interest to arts and cultural workers. Seminars are generally held on the last Monday of the month.

Staff – A part-time Convener (32-40 hours per month) and a volunteer committee of up to 13.

Membership: Individual \$50, Organisation \$125

Membership numbers: Total: 200

Income:

Grants: approx \$20,000 per annum from *Arts NSW* and *City of Sydney*

Membership: over \$10,000

## Appendix Thirteen: Case Study Seven: Tourism Council WA

### Tourism Council WA (TCWA)

[www.tourismcouncilwa.com.au](http://www.tourismcouncilwa.com.au)

Is the peak body for the tourism industry in Western Australia. It is a not for profit organisation.

*Tourism Council WA's* (TCWA) objectives are to:

- Represent the tourism industry as the peak body in Western Australia.
- Promote tourism as a major industry that contributes substantially to the economic and social well being of the State.
- Pursue policies that no single industry sector, association, region or member could be expected to advance on its own and provide advocacy support on key sector issues.
- Promote the development and delivery of quality experiences for visitors in Western Australia through the Australia Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP) and the WA Tourism Awards.
- Pursue with government, programs and policies that are responsive to the needs of tourism.
- Promote and facilitate special attention to the particular needs of tourism in regional areas.
- Spearhead environmental and indigenous tourism as key platforms for the future sustainability of Western Australian tourism.
- Offer a range of events that provide the opportunity to promote the tourism industry in WA, enable industry consultation and feedback and networking opportunities.

These events include:

- Round Table Forum with the Premier/Government Ministers
- Corporate Partner Forums - Bringing together major industry stakeholders to discuss industry related issues.
- Breakfast with the Premier/Minister for Tourism
- Parliament House Function - An annual event held in the courtyard of Parliament House and attended by members of all political parties.
- Industry Forums - Opportunity for members to hear from, and discuss issues relevant to, the tourism industry with leading industry figures.
- Networking Functions - The perfect opportunity for members to meet and network in an informal and relaxed setting. Offered in both metropolitan and regional WA.

Staff of 9

Membership: Individuals \$160, Organisations \$399 to \$12,000

Membership numbers: Total 980

Income

Membership: \$556,269

Sponsorship: Unknown

## Appendix Fourteen: Case Study Eight: Shopping Centre Council of Australia

### Shopping Centre Council of Australia

[www.scca.org.au](http://www.scca.org.au)

The *Shopping Centre Council of Australia* represents investors in, and managers of, shopping centres.

The mission is to be an effective advocate for these investors and managers and to promote a better understanding of the significant contribution that shopping centres make to economic growth – through employment, retail sales, investment returns and as a platform for small and medium-sized businesses.

The focus of the advocacy is any regulation that affects shopping centres such as legislation governing retail leasing, retail property management, retail trading hours, land use planning and building standards.

A key objective is to achieve a regulatory environment that enables shopping centres to grow and expand, to operate efficiently, and to provide greater certainty for investment decisions on shopping centre developments and redevelopments.

Staff of 2

Membership numbers: Total 22 (such as Mirvac, Westfield, Stockland)

Income

Unknown

## **Addendum – Australian Theatre Forum 2011**

Notes from the Australian Theatre Forum, 14-16 September, Brisbane 2011

### **Present from NSW at The Australian Theatre Forum 2011 :**

Arts North West, NSW – **Jane Kreis & Heidi Ford**  
Australia Council for the Arts (Theatre Board) – **Tony Grybowski, Antonietta Morgillo, Lyn Wallis, Tija Lodins, Tory Loudon, Collette Brennan, Sue Broadway**  
Australian Major Performing Arts Group, NSW – **Sue Donnelly**  
Australian Theatre for Young People, NSW – **Fraser Corfield**  
Australian Writers Guild (Playwriting Committee), NSW – **Lachlan Philpott**  
Bell Shakespeare, NSW – **Christopher Tooher**  
Belvoir, NSW – **Brenna Hobson**  
Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW – **Annemaree Dalziel**  
Erth Visual and Physical Inc., NSW – **Anna Young**  
Flying Fruit Fly Circus, NSW – **Markus Michalowski**  
Griffin Theatre Company, NSW – **Sam Strong & Simon Wellington**  
Legs On The Wall, NSW – **Sally Ebert & Simone O'Brien**  
Local Stages at BMEC, NSW – **Kylie Shead**  
Manic Productions, TAS – **Joe Pickett**  
MAPS NSW – **Viv Rosman**  
Marguerite Pepper Productions, NSW – **Marguerite Pepper**  
**Tonks**  
Merrigong Theatre Company, NSW – **TBA**  
Monkey Baa, NSW – **Sandie Eldridge**  
My Darling Patricia, NSW – **Halcyon Macleod**  
PACT centre for emerging artists, NSW – **Cat Jones**  
Penrith Performing & Visual Arts, NSW – **Katrina Douglas**  
Performance Space, NSW – **Daniel Brine & Julieanne Campbell**  
Performing Lines, NSW – **Harley Stumm**  
Playwriting Australia, NSW – **Chris Mead**  
Shopfront Theatre for Young People, NSW – **Kevin Ng**  
Stalker Theatre, NSW – **Rachael Swain**  
Sydney Theatre Company, NSW – **Polly Rowe**  
Tamarama Rock Surfers Theatre Company, NSW – **Leland Kean**  
Urban Theatre Projects, NSW – **Bibi Serafim & Annelies Crowe**  
Version 1.0 Inc., NSW – **David Williams**

### **Independents**

*NSW*

John Baylis  
Naomi Edwards  
Mish Grigor  
Kim Hanna  
Sam Hawker  
Stephen Lloyd Helper  
Colin Kinchela  
Frank Mainoo

Luke Mullins  
Gemma Pepper  
Greg Pritchard  
Ahilan Ratnamohan  
Joey Ruigrok van der Werven  
Laura Scrivano  
Anna Tregloan

**ATF team:**

Fiona Winning, Curator

**Blogger:**

Augusta Supple

Australian Theatre Network Lunchtime Meeting

Representatives from each state and territory outlined the pertinent developments that have taken place in their respective locations.

In addition to an update on activity in NSW provided by David Williams, the following was noted:

ACT: Four years ago a small group of local professionals started to meet on an ad hoc basis. Today it is a core group of eight who meet 3-4 times a year. The group is currently developing a statement of purpose. As there is currently no financial support for this group, the initiative is voluntary.

NT: In the Northern Territory, there is a skills shortage. There is no fully professional company that has an ongoing program of activities. There is no training institution that is relevant for theatre makers. *Long Paddock* is a bi-annual event that brings together presenters and producers from all around Australia to generate national tours. In 2012 it will be held in Darwin and this is an opportunity to harness some of the local energy. Currently, no formal regular network exists.

WA: A local group of artists who meet on an irregular basis, has discussed the possibilities for an ongoing WA Theatre Network. It could exist as a sub-group of the *Chamber of Arts and Culture WA*. The *Department of Culture and the Arts – WA* has made it clear to the group that there is no immediate prospect of funding to support such a theatre network.

SA: Annual theatre sector meetings were held in Adelaide during 2009 and 2010. At this stage, it is intended that the sector will hold an annual meeting every two years - in the alternative year to *The Australian Theatre Forum*. There is no immediate prospect of funding support from *Arts SA* to support this venture.

Qld: Qld artists created a theatre sector network some time ago called *Theatre Arts Network Queensland* (TANQ). Formed in 1999, TANQ was an amalgamation of the *Queensland Theatre Industry Alliance* (QTIA) and the *Brisbane Association of Collaborative Theatre* (ACT). TANQ published a number of editions of a magazine, but without ongoing funding support from *Arts Qld*, the activity ceased. Since then, there have been irregular meetings of General Managers and Artistic Directors held in Brisbane to discuss matters affecting the sector.

Vic: *Theatre Network Victoria* TNV is operating effectively. It is a role model for other states and arguably other state funding bodies. In addition to the TNV there are still regular meetings of General Managers and Artistic Directors that are held in the offices of *Arts Victoria* on a regular basis.

Tas: A newly established *Theatre Council of Tasmania* has been established, with Jane Longhurst as its inaugural Manager. It has received \$30,000 from *Arts Tasmania*. An additional sum of \$84 829 has been quarantined for future theatre initiatives, specifically for the development and benefit of the entire theatre sector in Tasmania. This development is a great surprise as *Arts Tasmania* has recently chosen *not* to support the local *Tasmanian Theatre Company*. A release from the Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board states:

*“While it is always a difficult decision to defund an organisation, the Board’s support of the Theatre Council will ensure the theatre sector continues to grow in new directions and with it, new opportunities for talented people who have a long-standing commitment to theatre in Tasmania. The Board believes this is a positive and strategic investment in developing the future of theatre in Tasmania.”<sup>7</sup>*

This message demonstrates a clear commitment from the Tasmanian state government to support the *Theatre Council of Tasmania* network as an entity.

Overview: The state summaries that were provided in the context of the *Australian Theatre Forum* made it clear that without ongoing state funding, a locally-based network or service organisation for the theatre sector is unlikely to be viable.

The consultant also held a separate meeting with Gail Kelly, *Director of Australian Circus and Physical Theatre Association (ACAPTA)*. As an organisation, it has been operating under several guises for 21 years. A period inactivity occurred when there was no funding support. Currently the organisation is in need of ongoing funding to ensure its longevity, but its options for support are very limited.

Final page of the report.

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[http://www.arts.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/48161/TAAB\\_special\\_update\\_organisations\\_12\\_Sept\\_2011.pdf](http://www.arts.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/48161/TAAB_special_update_organisations_12_Sept_2011.pdf)