

**SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE
CONSIDERING THE FUNCTIONS OF THE AUSTRALIA COUNCIL**

As a cultural worker with forty years experience, fifteen of them in regional Queensland, I want to add my voice to the current submission to the Senate Committee considering the Bill in relation to the role of the Australia Council. I reinforce the request that the 'Functions' of the Australia Council be amended to include:

The Council has the following functions:

- a) to recognise, respect and celebrate the centrality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to the uniqueness of Australian identity*
- b) to provide support to the arts that reflects the diversity of Australia*
- c) to encourage community participation in arts practice and the shaping of our cultural identity and its expression*
- d) to uphold and promote the right of persons to freedom in the practice of the arts*

(and thereafter the clauses as written in the draft Bill)

I have worked with Indigenous communities, obtained funding for Multicultural and Community Festivals and managed the Regional Arts Development Fund for Queensland State Government, which forms partnerships with Local Government and distributes funds locally. Through my years of experience on the ground I know that it is imperative that these functions be clearly articulated in the Bill relating to the Australia Council.

The inclusion of these 'Functions' in the Bill means that they will become the basis of effective policy development at all levels of government, with implications in turn for successful project development in and with communities. Their absence from the final draft of the Bill will disempower both cultural workers and a wide range of diverse communities and individuals.

I strongly support this amendment.

Dr Judith Pippen