



18 February 2026

Attn: Committee Secretariat

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, the Arts and Sport

Dear Standing Committee Members,

**Submission to Inquiry into Arts and Cultural Philanthropy
from Fletcher Jones Family Foundations**

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Inquiry into Arts and Cultural Philanthropy.

The Fletcher Jones Family Foundation is a small, place-based philanthropic foundation operating in Greater Warrnambool in regional Victoria. Our work focuses on supporting grassroots community initiatives, social change agents and entrepreneurial organisations that strengthen social and economic participation within our region.

While we are not a specialist arts funder, we regularly support community-led cultural and creative initiatives because in regional communities arts and culture are not peripheral activities. They are central to identity, connection, pride and participation. Cultural activity in regional Australia often functions as social infrastructure. It builds belonging, activates local economies and creates pathways for agency and voice.

From our perspective, several issues raised in this inquiry are particularly important.

First, regional equity. Arts philanthropy settings and incentives should recognise the distinct challenges facing regional and smaller organisations. These groups often operate with limited administrative capacity, rely heavily on volunteers and struggle to access deductible gift recipient status or philanthropic networks.

Current tax and regulatory settings can unintentionally disadvantage small, place-based organisations. Simplifying DGR pathways and strengthening incentives for giving outside capital cities would materially improve sustainability.

Second, organisational sustainability over project funding. Many small to medium arts organisations remain locked in short-term, project-based funding cycles. Philanthropy can play a critical role in providing multi-year, flexible support that builds leadership capability and organisational resilience. Policy settings that encourage longer-term, core support and matched funding arrangements would help shift the sector from survival to stability.

Third, collaboration and emerging models. We are increasingly interested in co-investment and place-based partnerships with government and other funders. Mechanisms such as matched funding pools, structured public-philanthropic partnerships and accessible digital fundraising platforms can be powerful, but they must be designed to work for regional communities, not only large, metropolitan institutions.

We encourage the Committee to consider arts and cultural philanthropy not only as a funding stream for creative output, but as a lever for community development, regional equity and civic participation.

Thank you for considering our perspective.

Yours sincerely,

Fletcher Jones Family Foundations

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