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ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTS STAFF WITHIN PEAK NON-INDIGENOUS ORGANISATIONS

This document is written in response to questions asked of the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) by the members of the Senate Committee for the Inquiry into the Indigenous Arts Industry, during its public hearing in Sydney.

The National Association for the Visual Arts advances the professional interests of the Australian visual arts sector, of which Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders form a significant proportion. NAVA is the key national advocacy and service organisation which represents and promotes the collective interests of the visual arts industry, and services the needs of visual arts organisations and visual arts professionals. NAVA works collaboratively with a range of government departments, institutions, other cultural organisations and communities to further these aims.

In its submission to the 2007 Senate Committee Indigenous Art Inquiry NAVA made the following recommendation:

"1.2 Recommendation: that the Government funds strategically placed dedicated Indigenous staff positions within existing peak arts bodies and key service organisations.

This recommendation covers the need for funding for staff positions and adequate administration, travel and consultation costs. The recommendation correlates to that made in *Taking Action, Gaining Trust*¹ in which it is recommended that adequate support be provided for non government organisations to advocate for Indigenous consumers.

If such a group of appropriate national peak bodies each had Indigenous staff, Indigenous interests could be appropriately represented within a broader agenda and targeted work would be undertaken on behalf of Indigenous artists and communities. In addition the Indigenous staff could benefit from working within an established structure, and draw on the experience of other staff. These Indigenous staff could form their own network to collaborate with one another when appropriate and provide mutual support and cross referencing. Some organisations like Arts Law and Viscopy have been successful in securing short term funding for such positions, but others have not. These positions need to be long term, not just for one or two years.

¹ Taking Action, Gaining Trust - A National Indigenous Consumer Strategy: Action Plan 2005-2010

NAVA has been involved for many years in representing the interests of the Indigenous visual and craft sector. In much of its advocacy, lobbying and service provision work, NAVA includes the issues of concern to this sector. However, the positions taken are often generic, while Indigenous requirements would be better served when developed on the basis of specialised knowledge. NAVA's capacity and credibility is increased when the work is undertaken by an Indigenous person using his/her contacts and knowledge base. For example, having secured funding for an Indigenous Arts Officer from 1996 - 1998 NAVA was able to consolidate the National Indigenous Arts and Cultural Alliance (NIACA)². In two successive years, NIACA successfully campaigned to maintain ATSIC's funding commitment to the arts and cultural section of its portfolio in the face of funding cuts. However, the loss of the Indigenous Arts Officer position meant that NAVA was unable to continue to provide secretariat services to this group and it disbanded."

As well as reflecting these more general principles about the need for and role of Indigenous Arts Officer positions within organisations like ours, NAVA currently has a schedule of duties which would ideally be undertaken by such an Officer.

INDIGENOUS ARTS OFFICER - 2007 - 2009 DUTY STATEMENT

PURPOSE

The work required under this position is to advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interests and priorities within NAVA's policy development, advocacy, research and service provision activities. This would include:

- representing Indigenous interests within NAVA's work on influencing legislation, policy and other decision making
- management of Indigenous focused projects
- development of resource materials with an Indigenous focus
- representing NAVA on committees, at meetings, public occasions and conferences as required.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Advocacy

Work with NAVA's Executive Director on advocacy strategies and activities to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concerns.

1.1 Work on campaigns to influence pertinent legislation including:

- assisting NAVA in its ongoing lobbying for the introduction of an Artists' Resale Royalty Right
- working collaboratively with other art industry partners to secure Indigenous Communal Moral Rights legislation
- assessing the impact of the Senate Committee Inquiry into the Indigenous art industry and following up on issues recommended for progression by the Inquiry

1.2 Follow through on take up of the National Indigenous Art Commercial Code of Conduct (NIACCC) and its associated ethical trade strategies:

² The National Indigenous Arts & Cultural Alliance (NIACA) was constituted of representatives from every Indigenous arts organisation in Australia, as well as the Indigenous officers within non-Indigenous arts organisations

- secure endorsement from key stakeholder groups
- explain to the industry what the Code means and how it should be used by each stakeholder group (eg working with the Indigenous Art Trade Association and the Australian Commercial Galleries Association on their membership criteria, speaking with Indigenous artists about how to use the Code and encourage its use in the field)
- manage the *Sharing Our Culture* community specific codes project which will create templates for communities to adapt the NAICCC as appropriate for their own circumstances (assisted by a grant from the Sidney Myer Fund)

1.3 Advocate the application of Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property principles across the arts industry drawing on the outcomes of the CMC *Intellectual Property Toolkit* and the Australia Council's publication *Indigenous cultural and intellectual property: the main issues for the Indigenous arts industry in 2006*

1.4 Contribute to the development of pertinent regulation & policies including those relating to:

- accreditation of galleries and dealers
- registration of art centres
- authenticity labels or other mechanisms
- the relationships between the tourism industry, the Indigenous fine art market and the preservation and evolution of Indigenous cultures

1.5 Network with the Indigenous art industry to determine a proposal for the establishment of a national representative advocacy body for Indigenous arts and culture.

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2. Education

Develop appropriate information resources to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts organisations in response to demand and in line with NAVA's existing artists' professional development resources including:

- hard copy publications
- on-line information on NAVA's Visual Arts Net website.

2.1 Liaise with educational infrastructure to develop and deliver Indigenous educational material for the art industry on:

- artist gallery relationship and protocols
- authenticity and appropriation
- rights and responsibilities
- educational material for art centre managers

3. Networking & Information

3.1 Undertake research and information gathering to keep NAVA informed and up to date on current issues and priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and communities (including the work of the Australia Council's National Indigenous Arts Industry Reference Group).

3.2 Liaise with relevant government, community and other appropriate authorities about the work of NAVA in relation to Indigenous art, artists and communities.

3.3 Develop a regular and sustainable network of information exchange between NAVA and other organisations which serve the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists & arts organisations.

3.4 Work with other NAVA staff to encourage and provide culturally appropriate access to NAVA services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and practitioners. Provide information by direct advice, special publications, newsletter articles and referral to other agencies.

COST

To attract a person of the necessary seniority and experience it is considered that a salary range between \$60,000 - \$65,000 per annum would be required, plus superannuation and on costs would be a total cost of max \$75,000. In addition, due to the need for this person to consult and network widely, and the significant costs of travel when meeting with Indigenous artists and their communities outside of the main centres, a yearly travel budget of at least \$10,000 would be required.