

Ableton

Thursday 20 July 2023

To whom it may concern,

I write this letter to provide support for Arts & Cultural Exchange's (ACE) application for Australia Council for the Arts, Four Year Investment for Organisations (Stage 2). This application is in support of the continuing revitalising of young people's interest in school through alternative creative education and supporting young students to become artists at a timely moment for Western Sydney – there is a severe shortage of creative opportunities currently, especially for students who are disengaged.

I am the Brand Manager for Australia and New Zealand for global music software company Ableton and previously I was the editor of Happy Mag, an independent music, arts and culture publication where I was working directly with the most exciting people in Australian music for six years.

Ableton develops music production software and hardware instruments for creative expression. Our company is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive music industry, providing support to people and initiatives that push the boundaries of how technology can be used in modern art.

Ableton has worked closely with and provided support for ACE on a number of past programs including Club Weld, New Age Noise, Sonic Souls Syndicate and more; programs focussed on providing creative development opportunities to underrepresented groups. Through these programs they have found special and consistent success in supporting development for women in music as well as creating opportunities for differently abled creatives.

We have provided this support before and I am writing this letter because, from my vantage point, as an individual who regularly works with high calibre artists from all over the world, ACE are worth investing in and will deliver on a high quality experience that will provide immense benefit for people in Western Sydney and beyond.

Kind regards,

Tom Cameron
Brand Manager – Australia & New Zealand
Ableton KK



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25/07/2023

ATT: Arts & Cultural Exchange

To Whom it May Concern,

Accessible Diversity Services Initiative Limited (ADSi) has worked collaboratively with Arts & Cultural Exchange (ACE) for more than 5 years. Over this period, we have developed excellent relationships with ACE team, specifically Producer Yamane Fayed, and have run several incredible partnership programs notably through the Multicultural Women's Hub and the Family Creative Hub. I have personally worked closely with Yamane Fayed on various impactful projects she produced in partnership with our organization. Some of the successful programs include:

- *Auburn Blouse Making Hub*, which supported the development of sewing and traditional embroidery businesses for migrant and refugee women from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Iraq living in the Cumberland Council area by providing free, accessible employability skills and sewing skills.
- *Auburn Digital Pods* which provided accessible and free creative based digital training for migrant and refugee women from CALD backgrounds living in Auburn
- *Sweet Auburn Tweets* engaged mothers and children from CALD backgrounds in creating a picture book based on arts and crafts while sharing stories, lullabies, and poems reflective of their culture and traditions.
- *My Little Business*, a sewing program supporting women from CALD backgrounds learn and acquire tailoring and alteration sewing skills to start their own small home business.

Based on the positive feedback we received from our participants, ADSi is always keen to provide support for ACE projects by partnering with them to provide creative and innovative training and projects to our communities. Many participants have expressed their happiness in joining the *Auburn Blouse Making Hub* and have learnt a valuable set of skills in traditional blouse making and in hand embroidery. Other participants in *My Little Business* found the program amazing and highly beneficial in terms of professional development in sewing and alteration skills. They always look forward to similar workshops and constantly ask for further iteration of the programs. Yamane has built strong relationships with the groups by being welcoming, attentive, and caring while providing resourceful information.

It has been such a great pleasure working in partnership with Yamane and participants have greatly benefitted from the various workshops that she ran in Auburn. We have found that every project was unique, tailored to our group's needs, inclusive and highly efficient. The programs ACE have offered always engage our program participants in experiential/immersive creative based learning which help build their confidence, inclusion, and connectedness.

For all these reasons, Accessible Diversity Services Initiative Limited is proud to support the Australian Council for the Arts Four Year Funding application put forward by Arts & Cultural Exchange.

Best regards,

Sher Banu Oomatia
Family Worker

Australia Council for the Arts

Letter of Support for ACE Multi-Year Funding Application

Dear Australia Council Funding Assessment Panel,

I am writing this letter to express my strong support for the funding application submitted by the Arts and Cultural Exchange (ACE).

Being on the Board, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the incredible work that they've been doing in Western Sydney, particularly in fostering inclusion in film and television and supporting the next generation of talent. No other organisation has the same reach and impact that they do in the communities they serve.

I am also a Commissioning Editor at SBS, in Scripted drama and have worked in the film and television industry for over 15 years. The talent that ACE are fostering now at grassroots stage, are the talent that we want to see develop shows with us in the future. Some ACE alumni already have shows with us at SBS – Andrew 'Undi' Lee who wrote and directed NIGHT BLOOMERS (due to screen in late 2023) and Taofia Pelesasa who is writing MONI (in active development).

In my role at SBS, I want to see stories told about communities by those communities. It sounds simple, but without the talent, this will not happen. We find that craft skills take years to develop, and it's the nurturing of these talents by ACE, at the grassroots stage, which provide the future security for this kind of storytelling integrity. Or those stories risk not being told at all.

We all know the mainstream film and television industry still has a problem with inclusion – everyone seems to agree it is a problem, but change is slow. There is also the problem of people encountering unsafe spaces once they enter the industry, and then unfortunately deciding not to pursue a career. This is an issue for sustainability. ACE works at the coalface of inclusion who can provide guidance, training, and a safe space for people to enter this industry. They are a key part of the solution.

Through being on the Board, I have seen how every dollar spent is carefully considered and spent with the community's interests in front of mind. Anne Loxley, Barry Gamba, and the staff are all people who genuinely care about the communities and the people they work with. It's not just a job to them.

By providing multiyear financial support, ACE can expand their reach, deepen their impact, and empower even more aspiring storytellers to share their stories and voices with the world. I wholeheartedly urge the funding body to consider ACE's application favourably.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you require any further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,
Donna Chang

Board Member, Arts and Cultural Exchange
30 July 2023



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25th July 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Arts & Cultural Exchange's application to the Australia Council for multi-year funding

I work as a Support Coordinator and Plan Manager for participants funded by the NDIS.

Part of my role is to find supports and services for people with disabilities and connect them to programs and organisations that can explore their skills, strengths, and creative talents in the hope that they can become contributing and valued members of our community, either through employment or creative endeavours.

ACE is one of the most incredible organisations that I have come across, not just in the past 7 years working in my current capacity, but essentially since beginning my career working alongside people with disabilities more than 35 years ago.

ACE has much to teach every disability organisation and employment service in Australia. The team demonstrate inclusion in practice and the results are astounding.

Through its long running Club Weld program, ACE supports neurodiverse musicians (and facilitators) to explore, develop and showcase Australian talent that otherwise would remain hidden. It provides a safe and engaging creative environment, where people with disabilities work alongside musical mentors to write and produce music that is unique and that stands apart from the often, formulaic process of mainstream popular song writing. LPs and music videos are produced; live performances are supported from pubs in Newtown and music festivals to AGNSW and the Opera House; new and exciting music is played on radio and television...and people's lives are changed.

ACE has created communities of practice for neurodiverse citizens and fosters an environment in which each person is not segregated and treated according to their disability but where each person is valued for their creative artistry and stand equal among their musical peers.

I could not be more insistent about the worthiness of ACE's application for Australia Council multi-year funding. Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information relating to this recommendation if needed.

Yours sincerely,

Donna Rhall

Partner



*Creative and
Performing Arts*

Nepean Creative & Performing Arts High School

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Tuesday 17 July 2023

Subject: Letter of support for ACE Still Growing Project

Dear Funding Panel,

We are writing to express the full support of Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School for the ACE Still Growing Project. Aboriginal Cultural Engagement (ACE) is an organisation dedicated to nurturing the creative potential of emerging and professional First Nation artists. We believe the Still Growing project holds immense value, particularly in providing exemplary First Nations programs for our students who aspire artistic heights.

Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School has witnessed the positive impact arts programs have on our students, fostering their creativity, personal growth, and aspirations. The ACE Still Growing Project aligns perfectly with our mission to advance and inspire the next generation of contemporary First Nation artists within our learning landscape.

We recognise the importance of exemplary programs that celebrate and promote Indigenous art and culture. By incorporating a specific focus on First Nations art and artists, the ACE Still Growing Project fosters cultural pride and connection for our Indigenous students, while also creating a more inclusive arts community.

Investing in the artistic talents of our First Nations students, is an investment in the future of our community. We are eager to support the ACE Still Growing Project in any way we can, be it through volunteer efforts, promotion, resource sharing, workshops and the Deadly Arts program.

In conclusion, we wholeheartedly endorse the ACE Still Growing Project and its commitment to supporting exemplary First Nations programs. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of young artists, celebrate Indigenous art, and culture, and create a vibrant and inclusive arts community.

Thank you for considering our endorsement of this valuable project. Should you require any further information or support, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Prudence Rowston, Head Teacher of Creative Arts, at prudence.rowston@det.nsw.edu.au or via phone on 0407069387.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Rowston

Mrs Prudence Rowston
Head Teacher of Creative Arts
Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School

Mrs Tania Irons
Principal
Nepean Creative & Performing Arts High School

This letter is written on behalf of Sweatshop Literacy Movement in support of Arts & Cultural Exchange's application to the Australia Council to deliver their ongoing list of culturally significant programs.

Since 1984, ACE has been a foundational community-based contemporary arts organisation. In alignment with Sweatshop's core values, they have shown strong engagement with local artists of various disciplines to address identified needs, build community capacity and enhance cultural vibrancy in Western Sydney.

In 2018, Sweatshop entered into a formal partnership with ACE which granted us a permanent office, as well as workshop and performance spaces within their headquarters. I cannot over-emphasise how valuable this opportunity has been in supporting our trajectory as a grassroots literacy movement striving towards literary excellence. Our partnership with ACE has provided affordable, safe and accessible spaces and resources in a central location to hundreds of emerging and established Western Sydney-based writers from Indigenous and CaLD backgrounds, many of whom have gone on to receive astounding critical acclaim. The inspiring cohort of diverse local writers who have congregated, researched, collaborated and created under the ACE roof include award-winning authors such as Amani Haydar, Sara Saleh, Randa Abdel-Fattah, Jazz Money, Peter Polites and even this year's Miles Franklin Award recipient, Shankari Chandran.

As is well-known to the Australia Council, Sweatshop is devoted to empowering culturally and linguistically diverse communities through reading, writing and critical thinking. Since ACE became our home, we have successfully incorporated into a not-for-profit arts organisation, secured funding from multiple government and philanthropic sources, established two ongoing writers' collectives, published a boundary-pushing catalogue of literary anthologies and single-authored texts, and delivered numerous on-site performances, lectures and research seminars. This could only have been achieved through the structural support provided by ACE as a springboard for our annual program of literary initiatives.

Over the past six years, Sweatshop has organically moulded into the vibrant and eclectic arts community at ACE, complimenting their tremendous capacity to deliver a wide range of cutting-edge community arts programs by some of Western Sydney's finest practitioners. As the founding director of Sweatshop, and as an author and editor who has lived and worked in Western Sydney my entire life, I am incredibly humbled to recognise the intergenerational and pastoral care that ACE has provided my community. Sweatshop offers its full support to this application and to the continuation of ACE for many years to come.



Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad

Founding Director | 27 July 2023