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Shadow Minister for Tourism, the Arts, Youth and Sport

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## **REAL ACTION TO SUPPORT THE ARTS**

The Coalition is committed to the arts and is determined to ensure all regions of Australia can enjoy the cultural and economic benefits of a strong and secure arts sector.

We are determined to build a thriving, innovative, unique and prosperous arts and cultural sector, and will implement a practical and affordable plan to help the arts sector flourish.

An elected Abbott Government will support the development of the arts in regional areas, support local film production and support Australia's budding musicians.

Specifically, the Coalition will:

### **1. Introduce a temporary film production fund**

An elected Abbott Government will establish a \$60 million temporary film production fund to boost investment in new films and refocus Australian film production on commercial outcomes.

The fund will provide matching loans to distributors of eligible Australian films with production budgets between \$7 million and \$30 million. The fund will match dollar-for-dollar the financial commitments made by film distributors, with a minimum loan of \$2 million and a maximum loan of \$10 million.

Loan funds will be drawn down in parallel with the distributor's advance to meet the cost of production. Loan funds will be recouped by the Commonwealth in line with the industry's standard recoupment schedule. The fund and the distributor will recoup their advances side by side.

The fund will operate for five years before being wound up, including three operational years and an additional two recoupment years. Modelling by the Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPAA) found such a fund will generate up to 1100 full-time jobs and the production of up to 18 films worth \$270 million over three years.

Under the expected case scenario modelled by SPAA, 73 per cent of the funds invested will be returned to the Commonwealth over five years. The cost of this fund is therefore estimated to be \$31.9 million by 2014. Administration of the fund will be from the existing resources of Screen Australia.

### **2. Promote the development of the arts in regional areas**

The Coalition will restore regional arts funding to support arts projects and skills development in regional communities.

In addition, there will be an increase in funding for the Playing Australia and Visions of Australia programmes to help meet the higher costs associated with arts tours to small, isolated and

remote communities.

The Coalition will provide \$3.85 million over four years towards the Regional Arts Fund, \$6 million over four years towards the Visions of Australia programme and \$3.8 million over four years towards the Playing Australia programme.

### **3. Provide a new acquisition fund for regional art galleries**

The Coalition will provide \$10.7 million over three years to support the growth of regional art gallery collections. This new funding will provide a fixed grant of \$100,000 to Australia's regional galleries to be used for acquiring the work of an Australian artist to enhance existing permanent collections.

There are an estimated 100 recognised regional art galleries in Australia developing important collections of regional and national significance often on a small annual budget. This new acquisition fund recognises the cultural needs of regional audiences.

### **4. Further support local film production**

The Producer Offset was introduced by the Coalition in 2007 to increase production and help the Australian industry grow by developing sustainable businesses. The Coalition will better target the Producer Offset at supporting cash flow for production by allowing interim assessments, meaning the offset can be applied before the end of the financial year.

### **5. Introduce a musical instruments loan scheme**

This scheme will be available to students of specified learning and development institutions, including the Australian Youth Orchestra and the Australian National Academy of Music.

The scheme has a notional cap of 360 places for loans of up to 50 per cent of the instrument purchase price, with loans to be capped at \$35,000 per instrument, with an expected average of \$20,000. The scheme will commence from 1 July 2011, for instruments for the 2012 school year. Repayments will be made in similar manner to the HECS scheme.

The Coalition will provide \$14.4 million over four years towards this initiative, of which \$7.2 million would be allocated in the first year and \$3.6 million per year thereafter.

The Coalition's additional support to the arts sector is in stark contrast to the Rudd/Gillard Government's neglect which has made it harder for the promotion, development and enjoyment of the arts.

While Labor said it would increase support for the arts, in its first budget it applied an 'efficiency dividend' to government expenditure on the arts which adversely affected the level of grants funding rather than just being confined to the department's operating budget.

The Labor Government has been too focused on only providing access to the arts for those people who live in major cities. Labor slashed funding for the Regional Arts Fund by 29 per cent.

Labor's attempt to close down the Australian National Academy of Music in 2008 without notice or explanation left the careers of young talented musicians in limbo. Months later, after pressure from the Coalition, Arts Minister Peter Garrett reversed his decision.