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National Day of Action for the Arts

In Australia, the arts employ more people than agriculture, construction or mining and the creative industries generate \$50 billion for the Australian economy.

Independent artists and organisations are the backbone of arts in Australia, generating new ideas and new talent. Artists are the innovators of our nation.

The Australia Council for the Arts (Australia Council) is the primary funding body for creative arts research in Australia and funds a large proportion of the non-traditional research outputs in Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (ASSH) disciplines that contribute to Excellence for Research in Australia (ERA) evaluation.

On May 13 this year, funding was not renewed for 50% of previously supported small to medium arts organisations as a result of government cuts to the Australia Council announced last year. DASSH is particularly concerned about the impact that these cuts will have on existing collaborations between universities and arts organisations and the arts industry, and the effect of the cuts on key cultural journals that publish research such as *Meanjin*.

These cuts will result in job losses, reducing opportunities for graduates and will have flow on effects across our cultural industries, educational institutions, and the research and commercial sectors.

DASSH encourages both sides of government to reconsider these cuts. To ensure the health of the whole Australian arts sector, the Government needs to find new funds to support the arts, return funding to the Australia Council for the Arts and develop a national arts and cultural policy that demonstrates a strong commitment to Australia's innovative future.

For media enquiries contact:

Susan Dodds

President, Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities

T: 02 9385 4858 E: president@dassh.edu.au

About DASSH

The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH) represents the Deans with responsibility for governance and management of research, teaching and learning for the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (ASSH) in Australian and New Zealand universities.