

ITEM NO: 23

SUBJECT: **RESPONSE TO QUESTION WITH NOTICE – BLUE MOUNTAINS
CULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM**

FILE NO: F04617 – 09/28236

Recommendations:

1. *That the Council receives and notes this report.*
 2. *That the Council write to the State Member requesting representation be made to the Premier and Minister for the Arts, expressing the Council's strong concern regarding the impact of the decision of Arts NSW not to fund the Cultural Partnerships Program in the 2009 funding round.*
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Report by Group Manager, Community and Corporate:

Background

This report addresses the Questions with Notice from Councillor Hamilton adopted by the Council at the Ordinary Meeting of the 27 January 2009, regarding the Blue Mountains Cultural Partnerships Program.

Report

1. *Is it correct that we have received no funding under this program?*

Yes, the Council received correspondence from Arts NSW on 12 January 2009 which stated:

“Your application for funding under the 2009 Arts Funding Program has been carefully considered by the Assessment Panel.

Unfortunately, it was not possible on this occasion to provide assistance to the Blue Mountains City Council towards 2009 program funding.”

The correspondence from Arts NSW advised that the closing dates and guidelines for the 2010 Arts Funding Program would be available in mid 2009.

Advice is currently being sought from Arts NSW as to the reasons why the 2009 Blue Mountains Cultural Partnership Program funding submission was unsuccessful.

2. *Which Councils did receive funding and how much?*

In the 2009 Arts Funding Program, Arts NSW awarded over \$16 million to Arts Organisations and Local Government Agencies throughout New South Wales with over \$2.7 million directly to 32 Local Councils. A number of Council's received multiple grants resulting in a total of 59 grants being awarded to Local Councils. Of the 59 Councils funded, 27 received funding for capital upgrades, programs and events for major galleries, theatres and museums. A list of organisations including Councils receiving funding is available on the Arts NSW website - <http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/>.

3. *What is the impact on Blue Mountains cultural services if they do not receive funding under this program?*

Under the Cultural Partnerships Program the Council has been able to form strong partnerships with local Cultural Organisations and fund a variety of major projects and festivals. With the withdrawal of funding support from Arts NSW, the 2009 program will not be in a position to support such a diverse range of projects and develop the capacity of cultural organisations. In 2009-2010 the Cultural Partnerships Program is proposed to have an allocation of only \$50,000 from the Council and will not be receiving the matching \$50,000 from Arts NSW previously provided on an annual basis from 2003-2004 to 2007-2008.

The Cultural Partnerships Program was established under the Council's Cultural Strategy 1999-2003. The aim of the program is to provide support to the cultural sector in accordance with the Council's long-term strategic objectives and the needs of the community in relation to cultural development. This is expressed in the Map for Action 2000-2025 as:

Strategic Objective 5.1.2: The Blue Mountains is a centre of culture and creativity.

Priority Action Area 5.1.2: Promote existing and support new creative and cultural initiatives and industries.

The Council's Cultural Strategy 2006-2016 identifies the Cultural Partnerships Program as an avenue for the developing and showcasing of creative work:

Outcome 2: 3.3.1: Support development of innovative art, literature and performance relevant to the Blue Mountains ethos and identity through the Cultural Partnerships Program and other funding avenues.

Funding received from Arts NSW since the inception of the Cultural Partnerships Program in 2002/2003 is as follows:

Partnership Year	Arts NSW Contribution	BMCC Contribution	Total Funding
2002/2003	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$75,000.00
2004/2005	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000.00
2005/2006	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000.00
2006/2007	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000.00
2007/2008	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000.00
2008/2009	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$75,000.00
2009/2010	0	\$50,000	\$50,000
TOTAL	\$262,500.00	\$337,500.00	\$600,000.00

Projects receiving funding over the last 3 years are attached.

In 2008 the Minister for the Arts reviewed Arts NSW funding programs. The key points from the review were that the Arts Funding Program would fund projects and cultural organisations that address the following criteria:

- Develop cultural organisations capacity;
- Improve infrastructure;
- Develop a more strategic alignment with the State Plan, Priority E8: “more people participating in the arts and cultural activity;
- Develop audiences; and
- Foster innovation.

The Blue Mountains Cultural Partnerships Program addresses all the key elements of the Arts NSW review.

The Arts NSW decision to not fund the Cultural Partnerships Program in 2009 effectively reduces funding from \$100,000 to \$50,000 (assuming the Council adopts the allocation proposed in the 2009-2010 Management Plan).

4. *Is it possible for Council to write to the Member for the Blue Mountains, Mr Phil Koperberg, requesting that he make representations to the Premier and Minister for the Arts, the Hon Nathan Rees, regarding the Blue Mountains Cultural Partnerships Program?*

This report recommends that Council write to the State Member, requesting representation be made to the Premier and Minister for the Arts regarding Arts NSW decision not to fund the Cultural Partnerships Program in 2009.

Sustainability Assessment (Triple Bottom Line Reporting):

The impacts of the decision by Arts NSW not to fund the Cultural Partnerships Program in 2009 are listed in the table below.

Effects	Positive	Negative
Environmental	None	The reduced capacity to fund the development of cultural projects that engage the community on environmental issues.
Social	None	The development of cultural projects, events and festivals will be adversely affected. It will also negatively impact on the sustainability of cultural organisations.
Economic	None	No funding will be received from Arts NSW for 2009. This will impact on local arts and cultural organisations and audiences. There will be a reduced capacity to support local programs, events and festivals. This will have a negative impact on income generated through local cultural partnerships.

Financial implications for the Council

The Council has allocated \$50,000 in the 2008-2009 budget for the Cultural Partnerships Program.

Legal and risk management issues for the Council

There are no legal and risk management implications.

Conclusion

It is recommended that the Council request the State Member to make representations to the Premier and Minister for the Arts, regarding the decision by Arts NSW not to fund the Cultural Partnerships Program in 2009.

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Attachment

Recipients and partnership projects funded over the last 3 years are listed in the tables below.

2008 Cultural Partnerships Program Recipients

	Partner	Project Title	Amount Funded
1.	Varuna - The Writer's House (The Eleanor Dark Foundation)	Building on Partnerships	\$7,000.00
2.	Upper Blue Mountains Circus Art Project Inc.	Circus Central	\$10,000.00
3.	Shiny Pictures	Shiny Pictures	\$10,000.00
4.	Ruby Bloomers Women's Circus	Ruby Bloomers Women's Circus Eco Show	\$10,000.00
5.	The Women's Room	Living Art Project	\$10,000.00
6.	Academy Singers Inc	Connect	\$10,000.00
7.	Blue Mountains Concert Society Inc.	Young Performer Program	\$10,000.00
8.	Refabricating Networks for Textile Artists Inc.	Refabricating Environments	\$8,000.00
TOTAL			\$75,000.00

2007 Cultural Partnerships Program Recipients

	Partner	Project Title	Amount Funded
1.	Varuna - The Writer's House (The Eleanor Dark Foundation)	Varuna Community Program 2007	\$8,000.00
2.	Upper Blue Mountains Circus Art Projects	Springboard	\$7,500.00
3.	Winter Magic Festival Inc.	Katoomba - 'Falling, Shining Water'	\$7,500.00
4.	Shiny Pictures	Shiny Pictures	\$5,000.00
5.	Weatherboard Theatre Company	Weatherboard / Greenroom Play readings	\$7,500.00
6.	Absolutely Ancient	Blue Mountains Absolutely Ancient Egyptian Dance Project	\$8,000.00
7.	Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre	Community Cultural Development Worker for the 9th One Van International Festival of Puppetry	\$7,500.00
8.	Blue Mountains Chamber Concerts Inc.	2007 Blackheath House Concert Subscription Series	\$6,500.00
9.	Lotus Foot Music	Songs to Ra	\$6,000.00
10.	The Women's Room	WeCan - Women's Cultural Arts Network	\$8,000.00
11.	Academy Singers Inc	Connect	\$8,000.00
12.	Hands, Heart and Feet	Ancient Loves	\$8,000.00
13.	Blue Mountains Aboriginal and Cultural Resources Centre	Aboriginal Artists Group	\$7,500.00
14.	Blue Mountains Public Broadcasting Society - BluFM	Blue Mountains Music Week and Music Awards	\$5,000.00
TOTAL			\$100,000.00

2006 Cultural Partnerships Program Recipients

	Partner	Project Title	Amount Funded
1.	Refabricating Networks for Textile Artists Inc.	Refabricating Difference: an exhibition of contemporary textile art	\$5,000.00
2.	Winter Magic Festival Inc.	Artstreet 2006 & Winter Magic Festival Development	\$8,500.00
3.	Absolutely Ancient	Blue Mountains Absolutely Ancient Egyptian Dance Project	\$9,500.00
4.	Varuna - The Writer's House (The Eleanor Dark Foundation)	Varuna Community Program	\$14,000.00
5.	Academy Singers Inc	Connect	\$6,000.00
6.	Blue Mountains Public Broadcasting Society - BluFM	Blue Mountains Music Week and Music Awards Showcase	\$5,500.00
7.	Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute	Rock Art Lives On!	\$8,500.00
8.	Earth Partners Inc.	Earth Journeys Sculptural Tree Kits	\$3,000.00
9.	Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre	Puppet Festival Coordination / BM Festivals Network Facilitation	\$5,500.00
10.	Upper Blue Mountains Circus Art Projects	Cirquinox	\$7,500.00
11.	Blue Mountains Chamber Concerts Inc.	Blue Mountains Chamber Concerts 2006 Series	\$8,000.00
12.	Songlines Festival	The Songlines Project	\$10,000.00
13.	Everglades, National Trust of Australia (NSW)	Interactive Solstice Arts Project	\$7,500.00
14.	Shiny Pictures	Shiny Pictures	\$5,000.00
TOTAL			\$103,500.00

