



The Hon Simon Crean MP

**Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government
Minister for the Arts**

Monday, 19 December, 2011

ARTS SUPPORT REVIEW TO SECURE NEW AUDIENCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Arts Minister Simon Crean today announced an independent review of the Australia Council for the Arts ahead of the development of the nation's first National Cultural Policy in almost 20 years.

Mr Crean said the Australia Council had a proud record of helping local artists develop their talent and connect with national and international audiences.

"The new National Cultural Policy will set the framework for Australian Government support for the arts, culture and the creative industries for the next decade," he said.

"In line with the broader conversation about Australia's future cultural policy, we have an opportunity to look closely at what aspects of the current model can be improved.

"There has been a huge response from artists, audiences and community groups to the discussion paper on the National Cultural Policy.

"As part of this work, we must have responsive, timely and expert agencies to deliver support to artists and arts organisations as they respond to new audiences and opportunities including those opening up with emerging art forms and technologies.

"That is why I am pleased to announce that Mr Angus James and Ms Gabrielle Trainor will review the Australia Council for the Arts and its links with other arts support organisations and agencies.

"The Australian Government is strongly committed to the independent peer assessment process to assess and award grants to artists.

"Through the broader consultation on the National Cultural Policy, stakeholders also told us there were areas of arts support delivery that needed to change to deal with a vastly changed cultural landscape and an increasing convergence of art forms.

"This is the first major review of the work of the Council and other agencies since the 1980s. The reviewers will consider the feedback and work closely with the Australia Council and its Executive and the outcomes of their independent review will be considered as part of the National Cultural Policy."

Mr Crean said Mr James and Ms Trainor had extensive experience in corporate change and governance in both the public and private sector.

Angus James is a Principal Partner of Aquasia, an independent corporate advisory partnership which he founded in late 2009.

Mr James is also a board member of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, and the Deputy Chairman of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. He was previously Chief Executive of ABN AMRO Australia and New Zealand, and a member of ABN AMRO's Asian Management Team, which oversaw all of its retail, investment banking and asset management activities across 17 countries in Asia Pacific. He is also past Non-Executive Director of the Business Council of Australia.

Gabrielle Trainor is a company director and former lawyer, journalist and public sector executive. She was a founding partner in John Connolly and Partners, a firm which advises large listed companies on the management of difficult issues.

Over the past 15 years, Ms Trainor has been a director of a range of public, private and not for profit entities. Of particular relevance to the review is her experience as a director of organisations including Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Youth Orchestra and Cape York Partnerships.

Ms Trainor was a member of the Victorian Government's Aboriginal Economic Development Group which reported last year. She is an honorary associate in the Graduate School of Government at Sydney University.

Minister Crean said a Reference Group would now provide expert advice on the development of the National Cultural Policy in 2012.

More information about the policy is at www.culture.arts.gov.au

Media contact: Angela Dorizas 0408 685 557 / Glen Atwell 0403 949 599