
Challenges facing the contemporary music industry in Australia

The Australian contemporary music industry is comprised of those people and companies engaged in the creation, recording and/or performance of popular/contemporary music.

Between 2001 and 2003 the Australia Council for the Arts sponsored a series of roundtable meetings which brought much of the contemporary music industry together to debate the challenges and opportunities facing it.

A range of challenges and their possible solutions were identified relating to:

- funding — by providing tax incentives or through financially assisting the industry in order to encourage investment and participation in the industry;
- industry skills — assisting individuals and organisations develop skills to develop Australian music;
- information — by improving the information available about the music industry from the collation of robust statistics in order to allow more informed decisions;
- market access and distribution — by raising the exposure the Australian music through local content on Australian radio; and supporting live music venues. Assisting Australian music reach overseas markets through export initiatives were also seen as opportunities for greater market access and distribution;
- cultural — identifying, protecting and developing music that is culturally significant to Australia, including indigenous music; and
- intellectual property — protecting Australian music by using existing laws and actively seeking changes.

When considered as a whole, it appears that the majority of the challenges originated from, or were compounded by, difficulties of integration or cooperation within the industry:

- *integrated communication within the industry;*
- *integrated and representational communication outside the industry* (to government and the community, both nationally and internationally);
- *integrated information* (particularly in terms of local industry statistics); and
- *integrated planning* (particularly in terms of setting industry goals and developing a vision).

Seeking stakeholder comments

1. *Are the challenges identified above representative of the challenges still facing the industry? Are there challenges that have not been identified above?*
2. *What is the relative importance of each of these challenges to you and/or the industry?*
3. *Without some form of intervention, are these challenges likely to continue into the foreseeable future?*
4. *What are the particular barriers to greater coordination and integration?*
5. *To what extent is funding impeding the development of the other challenges of the industry?*
6. *To what extent do each of the tiers of government — Commonwealth, State and local — contribute to the development of the industry?*

Stakeholders are invited to respond to these questions, or to any related issues/concerns. This can be done:

- interactively at http://www.allenconsult.com.au/contemporary_music or
- by emailing comments to contemporary_music@allenconsult.com.au