



Media release

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New initiatives to invest in First Nations art and culture shaped by community voices

Creative Australia has launched the first round of First Nations First industry development initiatives, informed by extensive community consultation on the sector's priorities and needs.

The new programs include a range of opportunities for young people. There is also investment in creative business development, music and a suite of new awards to recognise and celebrate First Nations artists and creatives.

The programs have been developed in response to community consultation on pillar one of the National Cultural Policy, *Revive*, First Nations First.

Executive Director First Nations Arts and Culture Franchesca Cubillo said:

"The initiatives directly respond to the priorities shared by our communities and the sector during our extensive conversations with artists, elders and cultural leaders across the country. We heard the calls for opportunities that strengthen business capabilities, create pathways for our young people and ensure the transfer of intergenerational knowledge.

By enhancing our current programs and introducing new ones, we continue to build on the proud 50-year legacy of First Nations leadership and investment at Creative Australia."

The new initiatives include:

Young People: First Nations Arts and Culture Project Fund – Grants from \$10,000 to \$20,000 available to build the capacity of First Nations young people's skills development, career pathways, marketing and audience development to maintain and elevate their practice and engagement in the arts and cultural sectors.

Creative Business: First Nations Development Fund – providing grants from \$10,000 to \$50,000 to build sustainable business practices and support economic and social development opportunities.

Space to Create First Nations Music Residency – building on the success of the existing program, it will be expanded to a two-week residency. The residency opportunity is open to emerging through to established First Nations musicians, artists, songwriters, audio engineers, producers and those employed in the music industry.

First Nations Arts and Culture Awards

There will be more opportunities to recognise and celebrate the contribution of First Nations artists and leaders, with updates to the First Nations Arts and Culture Awards, delivered every year on 27 May, the anniversary of the 1967 referendum

In 2025, the prestigious [Red Ochre Award for Lifetime Achievement](#) will be expanded to recognise senior artists for their achievement in advocacy and leadership, including:

- Red Ochre Award for Lifetime Achievement in Artistic Excellence

Two awarded at \$60,000 for outstanding lifetime achievement in artistic practice.

- Red Ochre Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cultural Advocacy and Leadership

Two awarded at \$60,000 for outstanding lifetime achievement in cultural advocacy and leadership for a senior Australian First Nations arts leader or arts and cultural worker.

Other new awards being offered for the first time in 2025 include:

- [Established Artist of the Year](#) for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts (\$25,000)
- [Youth Award for Achievement in the Arts](#) (18-35 years of Age) (\$25,000)
- [First Nations Arts and Culture Business Innovation Award](#) (\$25,000)

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More information:

The establishment of [First Nations Arts](#), as a new part of Creative Australia, took place with the passing of legislation in Parliament in June, recognising the crucial place of First Nations stories at the centre of Australia's arts and culture.

The First Nations Board [was appointed](#) in September and is due to meet for the first time later this year. These initiatives are designed to ensure investment to First Nations artists begins as soon as possible.

More information about [First Nations Arts](#) can be found on our website.