

29 June 2021

The Hon Dominic Perrottet MP
Treasurer
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

The Hon Stuart Ayres MP
Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Treasurer and Minister

Small Business COVID-19 Support Grant Threshold

I write to request a reduced threshold for the new Small Business COVID-19 Support Grants for creatives and arts industry workers whose earnings continue to be devastated by the pandemic.

I welcome the NSW Government's announcement of small business grants aimed at alleviating the financial stress resulting from restrictions to manage the current COVID outbreak. I am however concerned that this is only available to businesses and sole traders with a turnover of more than \$75,000 per annum.

Creatives and workers are commonly sole traders with earnings well under this threshold. The 2017 Australia Council report *Making Art Work* found that practising Australian professional artists earned an average gross income of \$48,400. This is well below the government's proposed threshold and the average wage in NSW.

The creative and cultural sectors have already suffered considerably, and people in these industries have struggled to survive pandemic enforced limits on their earning capacity since March 2020. Creative sole traders who have contacted me report that their pre-pandemic average earnings were below the \$75,000 threshold and they had earned significantly less in 2020-2021. These include actors, musicians, visual artists, DJs, dancers, comedians, sound and lighting technicians, stage crews, designers and support workers.

Many Arts workers live from gig to gig through freelance contracts, have no formal paid leave entitlements and cannot work from home. A stay-at-home order is a no-pay order.

Could you please reduce the threshold for COVID grants for small businesses and sole traders in the creative arts sector and inform me what action you will take?

Yours sincerely



Alex Greenwich
Member for Sydney

