



NSW Government Response to the Joint Select Committee on Arts and Music Education and Training in NSW

March 2025

Introduction

The NSW Government welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Joint Select Committee on Arts and Music Education and Training in NSW.

On 12 December 2023, the NSW Government released *Creative Communities*, an inclusive arts, culture and creative industries policy that both supports the traditional arts sector and cultural institutions and expands to include the broader creative industries in the state.

Creative Communities is a 10-year, whole-of-government policy with the goal of sustainably growing the depth and breadth of creative industries throughout NSW, and enabling creative individuals, organisations, and communities throughout the state to reach their potential. At the heart of the policy is people, ensuring all NSW citizens have the opportunity to contribute to, and experience, arts and culture; and that there is equitable access to sustainable career pathways, and employment opportunities for NSW creative practitioners

One of the NSW Government priorities in implementing *Creative Communities* is education and training reform.

Under its first objective of 'People' the policy "recognises the need to support sustainable careers by reforming arts education and creative industries training. This will give young people, career-changers and creative workers access to the skills needed to grow creative businesses across NSW". (*Creative Communities* p.69)

As part of policy implementation, sector-specific strategies and geographic plans are being developed, with several released in the past year. This includes the *NSW Contemporary Music Strategy: 2025-2035*, released in December 2024, a ten-year plan to strengthen the NSW contemporary music industry through upskilling, partnership and collaboration, improving conditions and championing NSW talent.

Driven by priority areas focused on building a more viable music industry, growing audiences for NSW music and strengthening our communities with music, the *Contemporary Music Strategy* highlights commitments to increase the opportunities available to access music education, training and pathways. Key actions include supporting programs and initiatives that increase the presence of contemporary music in schools to strengthen the value placed on music education and the benefits of early exposure to music.

It also includes the *NSW Screen and Digital Games Strategy 2025-2027*, released in October 2024, which provides a framework for NSW Government to work with screen and digital games production businesses to seize the opportunities that have arisen from the recent changes to federal incentive programs, and growing consumer demand at an international level. Longer-term, the strategy sets the course for future generations living and creating in NSW to tell Australian stories and choose fulfilling and future-proofed careers.

As the NSW Government noted in its submission to the inquiry, research has shown that children and young people who engage with artistic and creative activities are more likely to do well at school, and experience positive social and emotional development. It is therefore vital to maintain creative learning, including the arts, creative industries and music, in the primary and secondary curriculum.

The NSW Creative Arts Kindergarten – Year 12 syllabuses provide opportunities for students to learn about the significant role the arts play in society and in engaging, inspiring, enriching and transforming peoples' lives.

The syllabuses enable students to investigate the role of the arts in defining and representing their ideas and interests, identities, shaping and commenting on community values in global cultures and histories, as well as exploring social and cultural values, beliefs and expression.

The syllabuses also provide opportunities for personal expression, enjoyment, creativity, imagination, emotional response, aesthetic pleasure and the creation of shared meanings.

The NSW Government has recently published a new Creative Arts K-6 syllabus with mandatory implementation from 2027. New syllabuses for Dance 7-10, Music 7-10 and Drama 7-10 were released in 2023 and will be implemented in schools in 2026. A new syllabus for Visual Arts 7-10 was released in September 2024 and other elective 7-10 syllabuses are currently being reviewed. New syllabuses for 11-12 Dance, Drama and Music are expected to be released in 2025 and Visual Arts released in 2026.

Comprehensive teacher support is being developed to implement the new syllabuses through professional learning and curriculum resources.

The Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport and the NSW Department of Education will continue to collaborate to support the future skills requirements to enable a vibrant, sustainable creative industries sector.

Report findings

The NSW Government recognises the value of creative arts education to children's developmental wellbeing. Exposure to music, art and creativity through early childhood education is foundational to children's developmental wellbeing and in the formation of socialisation skills, critical thinking, fine and gross motor skills and comprehension. Every child deserves to receive these benefits through the NSW education system.

The *Creative Communities* policy recognises the need to support sustainable careers by reforming arts education and creative industries training. This will give young people, career-changers and creative workers access to the skills needed to grow creative businesses across NSW (p. 69).

The NSW Government also recognises the need to improve the working conditions and the business environment for creative practitioners, to advocate for industrial relations reform, fair remuneration, gender equity and industry standards. It will also incentivise the creation of safe and inclusive workplaces (p. 34).

The policy also committed the NSW Government to safeguarding and modernising workplace conditions for artists by requiring individuals and organisations receiving NSW Government funding to commit to safe workplace standards (p. 34).

Through the *NSW Contemporary Music Strategy 2025-2034*, the NSW Government has committed to advocating to the Australian Government for the establishment of a national tertiary education institution for contemporary music artists and industry professionals in NSW (p. 10).

Work is also underway through the implementation of the *NSW Screen and Digital Games Strategy* to address skills shortages and career pathways for the sector.

Recommendation 1

That the NSW Government explore opportunities to build further partnerships between artists and musicians and external arts organisations and schools.

Supported

Work is underway on arts, music and education partnerships following successful consultation and engagement across NSW departments on the *Creative Communities 2024 – 2033* policy. This is a key priority and indicative of government’s ecosystem approach to sustainably growing the creative industries.

Create NSW and Sound NSW will work with the NSW Department of Education to explore programs and partnership frameworks that support the objective of this recommendation, including connecting with industry and community. The NSW Government notes the Committee’s commentary around exploring partnership models to enhance the delivery of creative arts education while also supporting artists and musicians.

Through the *NSW Contemporary Music Strategy 2025-2034*, the NSW Government has committed to supporting programs and initiatives that increase the presence of contemporary music education in schools (p. 10).

Recommendation 2

That the NSW Government require initial teacher education to include at least two units of mandatory study in Visual Arts, Music, Drama and Dance education.

Noted

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) accredits initial teacher education (ITE) programs where they meet both national ITE accreditation Standards and Procedures and NSW-specific requirements.

All primary ITE programs must include study in each of the learning areas of the primary school curriculum to equip teachers to teach across the years of primary schooling. As Creative Arts is a Key Learning Area (KLA) of the primary school curriculum, all accredited primary ITE programs in NSW must include study in Creative Arts. NESA’s existing Subject Content Knowledge policy sets out these requirements for ITE providers and recommends a minimum of 2 units (0.25 equivalent full-time student load) for study in the Creative Arts KLA.

Undergraduate ITE secondary programs must provide a sound breadth of both discipline and discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical knowledge, appropriate to the teaching area(s) the graduate intends to teach. This includes at least a major study in one teaching area and at least a minor study in one teaching area.

NESA’s subject content knowledge requirements for secondary ITE programs in the subjects of Visual Arts, Music, Drama and Dance (which are also the 4 focus areas of the Primary K-6 Creative Arts syllabus), require graduates to understand the continuum of learning in Creative Arts K-12, including a particular understanding of the links between Stage 3 and Stage 4. This supports specialist, secondary-trained, teachers to effectively teach creative arts subjects across K-12 settings.

Recommendation 3

That the NSW Government explore introducing arts and music as areas of primary specialisation in initial teacher education courses to allow primary teachers to specialise in individual creative arts subjects and strengthen employment pathways for specialist music teachers.

Supported in principle

NESA's Primary Specialisations Policy aims to reflect and support the realities of how school systems and schools manage their teacher workforce to meet the needs of students. Where ITE providers, schools and school systems in NSW advise NESA that a change to include creative arts subject specialisation was purposeful for their workforces, NESA would accommodate that in the policy.

Recommendation 4

That the NSW Government consider introducing a teaching area code for primary music teachers to assist with the long-term employment of music teachers in primary schools.

Noted

Teaching area codes are not a requirement of accreditation and are designed only to assist workforce decisions by employers. In NSW, employers already have the flexibility to employ secondary music teachers in a primary school setting and are responsible for allocating teaching responsibilities.

Recommendation 5

That the NSW Government increase incentives and support including teacher release provisions for relevant professional development in the creative arts.

Noted

The NSW Government acknowledges the importance of professional development in supporting teachers to deliver high-quality creative arts education. Teachers are already provided with release time to support the implementation of new syllabuses, including the Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus, as part of the NSW Curriculum Reform. Teachers are also supported through professional learning and curriculum resources.

To assist with the effective implementation of new syllabuses, public schools receive additional curriculum release time allocations, including:

- **Classroom teachers:** Public schools provide additional curriculum release for teachers each term to focus on planning, professional learning, and resource development for the new syllabuses.
- **Primary school executive staff:** Centrally funded release time also provided.

In addition, school staff have access to school development days including time set as teacher determined to enable teachers to do their own or collaborative planning and preparation. This can include preparing teaching and learning resources, individual professional learning and other activities.

These allocations are in addition to existing release from face-to-face entitlements.

Additionally, the extended reform timeline provides a two-year planning and preparation window before mandatory implementation. This ensures schools have sufficient time to engage with new syllabuses and prioritise teacher professional learning, including in the creative arts.

Recommendation 6

That the NSW Government fund and expand arts and music professional development programs to enhance teachers' confidence to teach music in primary schools.

Noted

NESA's professional development requirements for teacher accreditation do not mandate professional development in specific areas. Teachers need to complete at least 100 hours of professional development over 5 years and keep a record of those hours. This approach enables

teachers to select professional development that is most appropriate to their specific learning needs and development goals, the learning needs of their students and their school context.

Employers are responsible for supporting teachers to maintain their accreditation by providing and ensuring access to appropriate high quality professional learning opportunities suited to their needs and contexts.

Recommendation 7

That the NSW Government consider opportunities to increase dedicated funding for organisations that deliver arts and music education and training, with additional consideration of those providing specialist programs to vulnerable cohorts of young people including youth-at-risk, young people from low-socio-economic backgrounds, young people with disability, those living in regional and rural areas and First Nations young people.

Supported in principle

The NSW Government recognises that opportunities to access arts and music education, training and pathways to music industry roles are reduced for those who live regionally and/or come from First Nations or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds, identify as gender diverse, are d/Deaf or are people with disability. The NSW Government is committed to supporting programs to make the arts, culture and creative industries, including the contemporary music industry, a fairer, more diverse and inclusive place to work and participate.

As a commitment of *Creative Communities*, NSW Government is establishing a Creative Youth Network to ensure the next generation of cultural leaders are at the decision-making table, including advising the Minister for the Arts directly.

The NSW Government will consider the feasibility of additional support for both organisations that deliver arts and music education and to priority and equity cohorts.

Recommendation 8

That the NSW Government develop an engagement framework for organisations delivering arts and music educational programs that streamlines processes and includes evaluation measures.

Supported in principle

NSW Government supports this recommendation in principle, noting that the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport (DCITHS) will explore the scope and viability of this recommendation and engage with relevant industry stakeholders.

Recommendation 9

That the NSW Government conduct a state-wide audit or assessment to identify areas where arts and music programs are not being delivered.

Supported in principle

NSW Government supports this recommendation in principle, noting that the geographic distribution of arts and music programs across the state is an important focus for government. The NSW Government will incorporate feedback from stakeholders and the community when considering the distribution of programs and opportunities across the State.

Recommendation 10

That the NSW Government seek to work with the Music Teachers' Association of NSW to consider opportunities to provide adequate regulation of the industry, including that the standards of regulation should take into consideration the ability of non-accredited tutors to deliver basic music tuition where appropriate.

Noted

NESA accredits NSW teachers in accordance with the nationally agreed Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the *Teacher Accreditation Act (NSW) 2004*.

Neither the *Teacher Accreditation Act (NSW) 2004*, nor other legislation applicable to NESA, provide the basis for NESA to regulate individuals who are not teachers.

Recommendation 11

That the NSW Government fast track the development of training and guidance materials for primary school teachers to facilitate the effective delivery of the new K-6 Creative Arts Syllabus.

Noted

The NSW Government recognises the importance of equipping primary school teachers with the training and resources needed to implement the new NSW Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus (2024).

This syllabus is one of four within the CHPS group— Creative Arts, Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE), Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE), and Science and Technology—introduced under the NSW Curriculum Reform and scheduled for mandatory implementation in all NSW primary schools by 2027.

NESA has developed teaching advice for every focus area in the new Creative Arts syllabus to support teachers' planning and preparation ahead of implementation. These resources are now available on the NSW Curriculum website.

In 2024, the NSW Department of Education commenced delivery of key support to schools for the K-6 Creative Arts syllabus, including:

- **Syllabus information for school leaders:** An overview of key updates, the evidence base, timelines, and whole-school considerations.
- **School leader drop-in sessions:** Online sessions to support preparation and share implementation strategies.
- **Syllabus information videos:** Short videos highlighting key content and major changes.
Syllabus familiarisation videos: Longer clips with practical activities to assist teacher planning.

From Term 1 2025, a comprehensive teacher support package will be published for NSW public schools, including online training courses, advice, sample units, and resources to help teachers prepare for the 2027 implementation. This phased approach provides a structured and timely approach to resource development, balancing quality with teacher workload.

Recommendation 12

That the NSW Government consider developing a Music Education Plan for New South Wales to support the delivery of quality, sequential and ongoing music education in New South Wales primary schools, but is not limited to:

- *setting an explicit standard as to what constitutes quality, sequential and ongoing music education*
- *mandating a minimum amount of music education per week up to Stage 4 with a teacher (generalist or specialist) confident and capable of delivering quality music learning*
- *setting ambitious targets for statewide access to primary music education*
- *mandatory reporting and data collection of the delivery of music education*
- *mandatory biennial reporting on progress in implementing the quality music education plan.*

Supported in principle

The Department of Education will develop a 10-year music education plan to build on the high-quality offerings of the public education system and to ensure all students in public schools receive a quality music education.

The NSW Government acknowledges the importance of quality, sequential, and ongoing music education in fostering students' cognitive, emotional, and social development. In 2024, NESA published a new Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus and Music 7– 10 Syllabus. The Creative Arts K–6 Music focus area builds the foundational understandings, which are further developed in 7– 10.

In K– 6, students engage in performing, listening and composing as interrelated practices in Music, developing deeper knowledge, understanding and skills as they apply their learning to inform and enrich their music experiences. Both syllabuses provide a sequence of learning that builds on prior understanding and lays the foundations for further acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills. The syllabuses focus on essential content, which identifies the core skills and knowledge necessary for developing teaching and learning programs, including music education. This content is necessary for students to progress in their learning and is part of students' learning entitlement – the knowledge and skills that every student should have an opportunity to learn.

Under the NSW Curriculum Reform, the new Creative Arts K–6 Syllabus (2024) is scheduled for mandatory implementation by 2027. The Creative Arts 7-10 Syllabuses for Dance, Drama and Music are scheduled for implementation by 2026. The Creative Arts 7-10 Syllabus for Visual Arts is scheduled for implementation by 2027.

The NSW Government's priority is to implement the Creative Arts K–6 Syllabus effectively, providing teachers with professional development and resources, an approach which will allow for an evaluation of the syllabus's impact.

Recommendation 13

That the NSW Government work with University Admissions Centre to develop a 'myth-busting' awareness campaign targeted at students, parents and schools to provide accurate information about HSC creative arts subjects in relation to the ATAR and scaling.

Supported

NESA is working closely with the Universities Admissions Centre on a range of matters relating to the Higher School Certificate (HSC) and the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), including addressing misconceptions. As part of this work, NESA will incorporate the development of initiatives that provide the public with clear and accurate information on all HSC subjects, including creative arts subjects.

Recommendation 14

That the NSW Government explore funding the Intensive Studio Study course at the National Art School to allow students the opportunity to expand and enhance their skills in visual arts.

Noted

The NSW Government provides funding to the National Art School and future funding will be considered through normal NSW Government budget processes.

Recommendation 15

That the NSW Education Standards Authority consider the reintroduction of Visual Arts Extension in their upcoming review of the Stage 6 Visual Arts curriculum.

Supported

NESA began reviewing the Year 11 and 12 Visual Arts syllabuses in 2024 as part of the NSW Curriculum Reform. The priority under the Curriculum Reform program is reviewing and revising all

68 existing Stage 6 syllabuses. The NESA Board is scheduled to consider the suite of Stage 6 courses on offer, and the need for and benefit of adjusting that offering.

Recommendation 16

That the NSW Government explore opportunities to incorporate the VET Music Industry course, particularly its music creation and sound production components, into the Stage 6 Music 1 and Music 2 courses.

Noted

NESA supports students in Stage 6 being able to study music creation and sound production as well as other parts of the VET Music Industry course. Students studying VET as part of Stage 6 can count these studies towards their HSC. Studying VET courses enables students to work simultaneously towards the HSC and an additional, industry-endorsed vocational qualification.

NESA's VET Board Endorsed Courses (BECs), such as the Music Industry course, are partial or full VET qualifications on the Australian Qualifications Framework that are endorsed by NESA for credit towards an HSC pattern of study. More than 100 Stage 6 VET BECs are endorsed and available for study in 2025, including Music Industry. Additional VET BECs are added regularly based on school and student needs. Students are encouraged to consider VET BECs as part of their Stage 6 studies, such as Music Industry, alongside Music 1 or Music 2.

NESA continues to explore opportunities in collaboration with stakeholders to support the study of industry-recognised content in Stage 6 for the purpose of attainment of the HSC and of relevant vocational qualifications.

Recommendation 17

That the NSW Government look for ways to further integrate Media Arts into the existing curriculum.

Supported

NESA is currently reviewing the Photographic and Digital Media and Visual Design 7–10 elective syllabuses. Content from the Australian Curriculum Media Arts (Years 9 and 10) will be adopted and adapted for inclusion in the draft elective Photographic and Digital Media syllabus. This syllabus will be released for a public 'Have Your Say' period in Term 1 2025.

Recommendation 18

That during curriculum reviews and reforms, the NSW Education Standards Authority:

- *publish all public submissions*
- *provide detailed reasoning when releasing second drafts for consultation.*

Noted

NESA receives a large volume and variety of submissions as part of the syllabus development process. Individuals or organisations are free to publish their submissions. NESA publishes an Engagement Report that summarises all the feedback received during the consultation process, and details what NESA did in response, including providing a rationale if suggested changes were not adopted.

The number and duration of public consultation 'Have Your Say' periods vary based on the expected scope of redevelopment in each specific syllabus. NESA uses the feedback from the 'Have Your Say' periods and further targeted consultations to refine the draft and inform revisions. Every draft syllabus undergoes revisions based on the feedback received.

Recommendation 19

That the NSW Government and the NSW Education Standards Authority ensures the Stage 6 Drama and Music syllabuses are reflective of community expectations and incorporates the feedback provided by community members of the Technical Advisory Groups, Targeted Assessment Consultations and the wider public through the Have Your Say period.

Supported

All syllabuses developed as part of the NSW Curriculum Reform, including Stage 6 Drama and Music syllabuses, align with the NSW Government Response to the NSW Curriculum Review. The NSW Curriculum Review was the first comprehensive review of the NSW curriculum in 30 years and its direction was shaped by feedback from stakeholders, particularly consultation with teachers, as part of a comprehensive community engagement process to seek the diversity of views in the community.

NESA's syllabus development process is highly consultative and recognises that the NSW curriculum belongs to the entire community and must clearly and transparently represent what the community expects young people to learn. All feedback received throughout public 'Have Your Say' periods and targeted consultation sessions is thoroughly considered when developing and revising syllabus documents. NESA publishes an Engagement Report that summarises all the feedback received during the consultation process, and details what NESA did in response, including providing a rationale if suggested changes were not adopted.

The 'Have Your Say' period for the Stage 6 Drama and Music syllabuses closed on 20 December 2024. NESA is currently reviewing the feedback received and considering necessary revisions to the draft syllabuses. Every draft syllabus undergoes revisions based on the feedback received.

Recommendation 20

That the NSW Government fund industry-based placements and traineeships including for school experience placements to help performing arts organisations address current skills shortages and build their future workforce.

Noted

The NSW Government recognises the value and positive impact that this recommendation could bring to the sector, noting that the *Creative Communities* policy states that the "NSW Government's commitment to reviewing arts education aims to help ensure that young people who want to pursue these areas, have access to appropriate education, training and mentoring" (p. 34). The NSW Government will explore this recommendation through cross-departmental collaboration, including Create NSW, Screen NSW and Sound NSW engagement with industry.

NSW Government also notes that work is underway in the implementation of both Contemporary Music and Screen and Digital Games strategies to address the current skills shortages impacting both industries.

The NSW Skills Plan 2024-28 identifies 6 Critical Skills Areas (CSAs) that will guide skills investment and prioritise the development of industry, workforce and place-based skilling responses. The CSAs represent NSW Government priorities and national priorities under the National Skills Agreement, covering industries with chronic and persistent shortages and those undergoing significant structural changes. The CSAs are: construction – housing and infrastructure, Net Zero and energy transition, digital and cyber, care and support economy, agriculture and agrifood, and advanced manufacturing.

While the focus is on CSAs, the NSW Skills Plan also recognises the significance of other sectors such as the 24-hour economy (which includes the Creative Arts industry), Visitor Economy, and transport and logistics. These additional sectors play a valuable role in the broader NSW economic landscape, and we will continue to support their ongoing development.

The NSW Department of Education, Catholic Schools NSW and the Association of Independent Schools NSW jointly fund Work Placement Service Providers to place VET school students with employers to do the NESA mandated work placement component of their VET course.

Work placement is a planned opportunity in a quality host workplace that enables senior school students studying particular industry-based courses to practise and develop industry competencies and employability skills in a real work context.

Work placement is a NESA mandated component of industry-based VET courses that students can choose as part of their studies for the HSC.

Work Placement Service Providers work with local schools with secondary enrolments, Registered Training Organisations, and employers to coordinate HSC VET work placements for all eligible students.

The VET course that aligns to this Inquiry report is Entertainment, with almost 3,000 students placed with employers annually for their work placement.

There are also a range of VET courses on the NSW Skills List (e.g. Cert III in Music, Cert III in Screen and Media, Cert III in Visual Arts) that attract traineeship entitlements.

Recommendation 21

That the NSW Government make representations to the Australian Government to address the cuts to university courses in the arts and music and increase HESC-HELP and FEE-HELP support for students studying courses in these areas.

Supported in principle

As autonomous institutions, universities are responsible for their course offerings. The NSW Government will share this recommendation with the NSW Vice Chancellors' Committee for its consideration.

The NSW Government will continue to make representations to the Australian Government to expand access to tertiary education, including through improvements to course and fee settings.

NSW continues to advocate for a new national higher education funding model that provides for fairer student contributions, and supports student choice, as outlined in the NSW Government's submission to the Australian Universities Accord Discussion paper. This includes advocacy to reverse the Job-Ready Graduates package.

Introduced in January 2021, Job-Ready Graduates changed student contributions, making some disciplines (particularly those in the arts) more expensive, and others (such as nursing, teaching, computer programming and engineering) less expensive. These changes mean some students are now accumulating much larger HECS-HELP debts.

Reversing Job-Ready Graduates would be of greater benefit than the Australian Government increasing HECS-HELP and FEE-HELP support for students, which could lead to larger student debts, and therefore exacerbate equitable access issues.

Recommendation 22

That the NSW Government review the courses on the NSW Smart & Skilled List and reduce the course fees in the Vocational Education and Training sector for courses in arts and music, including consideration of expanding access to courses with a focus on building business and financial skills relevant to a career in the creative industries.

Noted

The NSW Skills List outlines the qualifications eligible for government subsidies under the Smart and Skilled program. It is developed through labour market analysis and industry consultation. Funded qualifications must meet the following criteria: industry demand, strong student outcomes, supports training participation by disadvantaged student cohorts.

Stakeholders may propose qualifications to be added to or removed from the NSW Skills List through the annual Skills List Review process, in which qualifications are assessed on the above criteria using quantitative data and qualitative stakeholder consultation. Changes to the Skills List are approved by the Minister for Skills, TAFE, and Tertiary Education.

The 2024 NSW VET Review and the NSW Skills Plan included a recommendation to review funding priorities and qualification prices and fees. The NSW Government is currently considering its response to the recommendation.

The NSW Government currently funds fee-free traineeships (including for related music and arts industry traineeships) through the Smart and Skilled program, for students commencing training with a Smart and Skilled Provider up until 30 June 2025.

Recommendation 23

That the NSW Government explore opportunities for exemplary private providers, such as the National Art School, National Institute of Dramatic Art and the Australian Film Television and Radio School, to be considered for core operational and per-head support, as part of a broader strategy towards lowering fees for students.

Noted

NSW Government notes that the *Creative Communities* policy commits to:

“Recognising the importance of the state’s universities, the National Art School, the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) and the Australian Film TV and Radio School (AFTRS) to our cultural ecosystem and strengthening partnerships with them” (p. 31).

Work is underway to develop educational and training institution partnerships, including identifying education and training institution sponsors for each strategy that is being developed following the publication of *Creative Communities*. For example, Screen NSW is currently developing strategic partnerships with AFTRS, NIDA and TAFE to fast-track programs to fill skills shortages for that sector.

Recommendation 24

That the NSW Government establish a working group of a diverse range of relevant stakeholders, including young people, on flexible arts learning including micro-credits, badging and online learning for practical courses.

Supported

The NSW Department of Education and the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport will coordinate a forum discussion with relevant stakeholders (including young people representatives from the arts, screen and contemporary music communities) in 2025 to discuss flexible arts learning and will share findings of this consultation. Create NSW will also engage with members of the Creative Communities Council and the new Creative Youth Taskforce on this matter.

Recommendation 25

That the NSW Government consider opportunities to subsidise accommodation for Sydney-based arts training organisations to alleviate the pressures on these students.

Supported in principle

The NSW Government has committed to a suite of reforms to housing and rental reform policy.

The NSW Government is delivering on these commitments, including through changes to make it easier and faster to increase housing supply near existing infrastructure, critical to delivering thousands of much needed homes for young people, families and workers.

The NSW Government is reforming the planning system to deliver more market and affordable housing across NSW because everyone having access to a home – either to rent or buy – is a foundation of social and economic participation.

Recommendation 26

That the NSW Government increase funding to regional conservatoriums and review key performance measures and service gaps, especially around engagement with schools, under the Regional Conservatorium Grants Program, to ensure sustainable future growth.

Noted

The NSW Department of Education administers the Regional Conservatorium Grants Program, a 3-year partnership agreement with each of the current 17 Regional Conservatoriums that qualify.

In preparation for the 2025-2028 triennium agreements, the department, on behalf of the NSW Government, is undertaking a review of the key performance indicators and school engagement requirements, in discussion with the conservatoriums.

Recommendation 27

That the NSW Government formalise and strengthen the partnership between the NSW Department of Education and regional conservatoriums and establish innovative models to support and enhance the role of regional conservatoriums, including in conjunction with Create NSW and the NSW Department of Education.

Noted

The NSW Department of Education currently chairs a quarterly meeting with the Association of NSW Regional Conservatoriums, which represents the 17 current conservatoriums receiving funding through the Regional Conservatorium Grants Program. This Association meeting allows for the exploration of emerging trends in music education, and supports partnership with the department's Arts Unit, as well as showcasing innovation across regional conservatoriums.

Recommendation 28

That the NSW Government implement targeted funding programs to small and medium arts and music organisations to deliver training and mentorship programs that will build a vibrant and skilled creative arts sector in Western Sydney.

Supported in principle

Through *Creative Communities*, the NSW Government has committed to delivering a strategic plan for the arts, culture and creative industries in Western Sydney. Development of the Western Sydney Plan is underway and expected to be completed in early 2025.

Work is also underway through Sound NSW to support small and medium music organisations to deliver programs, including training and mentorship programs, that will build a vibrant and skilled creative sector in Western Sydney. The requirement to provide opportunities for mentorships or career development for arts and culture workers is currently built into all funding agreements with multi-year clients of Create NSW.

In Western Sydney, the Department of Education will strengthen the local arts and music sector by exploring potential partnerships with Initial Teacher Education providers that supports both students and the future supply of well-prepared teachers.

Recommendation 29

That the NSW Government explore opening a Music Hub in Western Sydney, based on the conservatorium model, to provide culturally diverse music education in the region.

Supported

NSW Government will explore the feasibility of establishing a music hub in Western Sydney in partnership with the sector, including a conservatorium model, to provide culturally diverse music education in the region.

Recommendation 30

That the NSW Government review ways in which First Nations music can be embedded in the New South Wales Curriculum and provide funding and incentives to schools to connect with First Nations creative artists to provide music education in schools.

Supported

Content that addresses Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander priorities, developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, has been included in all new NSW syllabuses delivered under the Curriculum Reform.

Students engage with music by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists beginning in Early Stage 1 through the Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus (2024).

The Music 7-10 Syllabus (2024) ensures students explore and experience Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music and the diversity of Australian music through mandatory repertoire and essential content.

For Years 11-12, Music 1, Music 2 and Music Life Skills syllabuses are currently in development as part of Curriculum Reform. In the draft syllabuses, repertoire selected for study must now include the study of musical works created, composed, co-composed or performed by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.