

**Submission
No 15**

**INQUIRY INTO ARTS AND MUSIC EDUCATION AND
TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: Australian Music Centre

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**Australian Music Centre (AMC)
Inquiry into arts and music education training in NSW Submission**

1. Who we are:

Australian Music Centre (AMC) is a national, serviced based, not for profit institution based in NSW that exists to support, advocate, and celebrate the art music community, increasing visibility, viability, and sustainability for independent creators throughout contemporary classical, jazz/improvised, sound art/experimental, media and global music spheres.

We have a culturally significant catalogue of over 40,000 Australian works and resources which are accessed by people around the world. The organisation is supported by the Creative Australia, APRA (Australasian Performing Rights Association) and financial members who identify as musicians, composers, educators, performers, and music lovers.

Our enduring vision is to ensure that Australian art music is heard, valued, and celebrated. We currently represent the works of 850 creators and our central purpose is to support them to become agile and adaptable to evolve their creative practice, participation, and community engagement.

2. The AMC and Music Education

Music Education is a key factor within the [AMC's Strategic Plan](#) for 2023-2025.

Music Education falls under the following pillars:

Innovation:

Member Support · to create resources that reflect best practice

Digital · Further develop digital initiatives to access, search for, promulgate and represent music.

Engagement

Collaboration & Partnership · Create deeper engagement with the education sector.

3. We are responding to the following Terms of Reference:

- a. iv. The role of arts organisations and creative professionals in education and the development of creative skills across the arts
- b. v. The efficacy of the current primary and secondary school curriculum in delivering learning outcomes in music related subjects.



4. What we are responding to

i. **The role of the AMC and its artists in music education:** how can we assist music educators in the classroom and co-curricular space?

- By building Professional Learning Communities through a connection with Australian Music.
- By connection to the future.

ii. **The role of the AMC in its delivery of relevant resources for music educators in the primary and secondary curriculums:** how do the resources produced by AMC assist educators in their practice?

- Promoting Student-Centred Learning
- Building Teacher Knowledge.

5. Supporting information

- **Build Professional Learning Communities through a connection with Australian Music**
Australian music is imperative to our cultural practice and plays a significant role in the ACARA national music curriculum and in the NSW music curriculum. It is the role of the AMC to provide support to music educators in the understanding and practice of Australian music within the instrumental and classroom contexts.

A student's education can be improved if educators consider how they can improve their practice through improving their own understanding of process and pedagogy (Bryk, 2015). Bryk (2015) not only highlights the importance of Professional Learning Communities such as the Australian Music Centre but emphasises the value of Evidence Based Practice (p468-9). The AMC provides the opportunity for educators to mix with their professional learning community through interaction with each other and with Australian creator. Discussion of the creative process and sharing their own approaches to teaching the intricacies of composition and music construct by the composers through professional development opportunities gives educators the opportunity to build on their own practice. This approach is connected to Kennedy (2016) and the application of knowledge.



- **Connection to the future** - The future of and Australian music culture is reliant on the real-life music experiences offered to school students. Students should see the possibility of being an arts practitioner, thus creating pathways for future artists which in turn may influence the development of an infrastructure to support artists to work with students within the school sector. Connection to artists also allows students and educators to understand the importance of our Australian music culture and promotes engagement with these artists in their practice outside of the school infrastructure.
- **Promoting Student-Centred Learning** - White (2021) promotes the importance of the 'authentic learning' experience for both students and teachers. The sharing of knowledge and the connection to Australian music and its composers provides an authentic learning experience for educators which can be transferred directly to student learning within the classroom experience. The interaction with the composers via NESA accredited professional development webinars enhances this 'authentic learning' experience for the educators. This approach will encourage student centred learning activities and thus creating an authentic learning experience for the students (White, 2021).
- **Building Teacher Knowledge** - The intention of the AMC is to build on the knowledge of teachers in Australian music (Covay Minor et al, 2016). Minor et al (2016) emphasise the point that to enhance student learning, building teacher knowledge in 'meaningful ways' is an important step (p3). Building content knowledge occurs through the release by the AMC of relevant educational resources, NESA accredited professional development webinar, carefully curated repertoire lists suitable for student performance at all levels.

6. AMC Initiatives

How have these actions been implemented.

- i. **The release of educational resources for educators:** The AMC creates resources to assist music educators with the study and analysis of Australian music. These resources have been produced for music educators in both the primary and secondary schools celebrating and featuring the works by a diverse range of creators. The study of this repertoire brings our Australian music culture at the forefront of music education in the classroom and in the co-curricular space. The information provided by these resources is directly transferred and shared with their students.

<https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/guides/teachers>



- ii. **Professional Development webinars:** the AMC provides opportunity for teacher professional learning through NESAs accredited webinars which give educators the opportunity to see and hear composers talk about their music and creative process providing 'authentic' learning experiences. These learning ideas provided by the AMC have enabled teachers to encourage 'inquiry learning' (White, 2021, p161) and in these webinars, teachers are presented with opportunities to connect and explore ideas.
- iii. **Curated repertoire lists:** the AMC creates repertoire lists for both solo instrument and ensemble performance at all levels. This provides classroom music educators, instrumental tutors and conductors with information to program Australian music for performance examinations, rehearsals and concerts.
- iv. **Music Education conferences:** the AMC is represented at music education conferences and workshops throughout the country to promote the cultural significance of Australian music and how this repertoire may be embedded into curriculum and co-curricular contexts.

7. Where should the NSW Government focus the greatest effort and resources?

An emphasis should be placed on increased access to opportunities for music creation and skills building for independent creators in under-represented practices. This would manifest in accessing increased, siloed funding to connect with new audiences and become more self-sufficient. The Art Music Community is broad and on the forefront of innovation in music creation from augmented reality to applications for music in unexpected and non-traditional settings. The AMC together with strong music education programs in schools and educational institutions in NSW will be able to create music resources specifically with NSW based creators and composers. This will benefit the creators by increasing their income sustainability as well as building audience development and. The value of diverse forms of musical creation and of broader cultural understanding will develop audiences for our music for generations to come.

How can this be solved:

- **Residency Programs** - The development of a residency programme for musical creators in primary and secondary schools, connecting them with future audiences and building school age students. In particular, First Nations and culturally diverse Australian stories into the learning.



- **Music Education Specialist in every school:** Every primary school should have a music education specialist providing 'quality music education' experiences and offering equal socio-economic access. Currently there are limited opportunities for primary aged students to learn music in the public sector. There are more opportunities for Australian musical stories and experiences to be shared if taught by a teacher with music education training. In the 2005 report (reference), it was suggested that 2 hours a week of music learning for every primary school student would enable them to develop music literacy skills. A music specialist can be devoted to training students to understand music. Music can be linked to all core subjects and allow students to develop creative thinking which is a transferable skill.
- **Every child to learn a musical instrument:** There should be opportunities to for students to learn music both in the classroom but also in a practical environment such as choir, recorder, ukulele. Instrumental music should be taught in the primary school. This is a practice that has worked in the public sector for the education departments in Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia. From these experiences students will develop skills to make music, improvise and compose music.
- **Provide better connections for Regional Centres:** More resources are required to assist educators in regional centres to provide 'quality music learning' experiences for all students at all levels. There should be more funding available to assist educators in their own professional development as well as provide opportunities for Australian creatives to work with schools and educators in regional areas.
- **More Funding and Time Allocation for Teacher Learning:** There needs to be more funding and time for primary music educators to study music for more hours than is currently allocated in the tertiary sector. At the moment in NSW, primary teachers study music as part of a 6 week focus on the arts. This is barely enough time for teachers to learn the skills necessary to offer quality music education experiences to primary aged students. In addition, teachers with this limited experience will not develop an understanding Australian art music and their associated creatives or even how to teach this music in the primary context.

The AMC are proud to participate and submit alongside our broad and diverse collection of community counterparts.

We are determined to support our musical creators to facilitate connections with audiences.

The more music that is heard, seen, or documented increases our artists visibility and ability to have a long-term sustainable career.

The AMC are expanding on productive partnerships with many different creative organisations based in NSW and beyond, to build our infrastructure for musical creators that bring tangible outcomes. We will continue to work in association with partners in industry and community. We will invest in new developments increasing our reach while measuring the needs of our community as they evolve. We want to provide pathways and options for new revenue for Australian art music.

We will be a part of creating a new culture which promotes individual sustainability, with the creator as central to this, enabling them to build compelling narratives feeling empowered to build stronger avenues for their works to be played and heard in domestic and international contexts.

References

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