



ADVANCING THE  
PERFORMING ARTS

**Theatre  
Network  
Australia**

# **STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 – 2025**

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## Acknowledgement of Country

**As a national organisation, TNA acknowledges the traditional custodians of the unceded lands on which we meet, gather, and work, especially the people of the Kulin nation where our office is based. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.**

## A Safe, Healthy and Relevant Performing Arts Sector

Theatre Network Australia believes in the central role that creativity plays in a society. We want a more diverse and fairer performing arts sector, which puts First Nations people first. We value independent artists, small to medium companies and large organisations, and we want greater interconnections between them. We believe in life-long learning. We support different models of working, and we value flexibility. We want fair pay and conditions for our sector. We know that risk and experimentation are important. And we want ongoing, respectful but challenging conversations that connect us, open new ideas, and lead to a stronger sector.



**A large conference room with dozens of people talking around tables. TNA's Neighbourhood Melbourne, APAM @ AsiaTOPA, Feb 2020. Photo Sarah Walker.**

# 1. Executive Summary

This strategic plan is based on genuine and extensive consultation undertaken as a part of our core work. As a peak body, Theatre Network Australia (TNA) engages with artists and companies on a daily basis, and with partners, funding bodies, government and media at least weekly. We gather data and insight at forums and meetings, through research and surveys, and from one-on-one liaison. We document extensively and use evidence to inform all our work.

TNA's ten-year vision is for a safe, healthy, and relevant performing arts sector. In our Overview (page 5) we summarise the ethos and activities of TNA and position our Equity Action Plan as the foundation for everything we do. The Strategic Plan on a Page (pages 6-7) is a key part of this document, and details the goals, objectives, and strategies that allow us to work responsively to the changing needs of the sector.

To deal with a very uncertain future, we have included a Responsive COVID-19 Framework (page 9); three different scenarios over 2021-2025 with predicted government and societal response to those scenarios. We have used this to map out how TNA's work over the next five years might change accordingly.

Our Organisational Context (page 11) provides a detailed sector analysis, using evidence and research to identify current key sector issues. Our internal analysis clarifies our position within the sector, and a member analysis highlights how strongly TNA is connected to the sector through its large and diverse member base of 180 companies and 360 individuals.

The Five-Year Activity Plan (page 19) expands on our core strategies and gives an overview of the elements of our program. Further details for each year's program can be found in our Annual Program documents.

TNA's KPIs and metrics for success can be found in Measuring Success (page 24), highlighting how our goals lead to positive systemic change in the sector.

The Finances section (page 25) details our robust financial systems, recent growth, and history of securing diverse income streams. We have a well-considered plan for financial sustainability and growth, leveraging our efforts and success with private donations. A five-year forecast is included, with reference to our financial reserve goals.

Governance and Staffing (page 27) demonstrates TNA's excellent governance procedures, led by our diverse, industry-based Board. TNA secures ongoing industry advice from several advisory committees. TNA is managed by a lean but talented team, and we have considered diversity, equity, and sustainability at all levels of succession planning and employment policy.

## 2. Overview

### Our Vision

A safe, healthy, and relevant performing arts sector.

### About TNA

Theatre Network Australia (TNA) is the leading industry development and advocacy organisation for small to medium and independent performing arts, working nationally, with a dedicated Victorian program. TNA services a wide range of performing arts – performance for, with and by young people; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theatre; visual theatre and puppetry; text-based work; music theatre; comedy; theatre made by artists with disabilities; cabaret; theatre made with and by communities; dance; circus; physical theatre; live art and hybrid work.

TNA strengthens artists and arts organisations, influences cultural policy at three levels of government, facilitates critical debate, and advocates for a more robust, interconnected, and innovative sector.

In practical terms this means TNA:

- Drives advocacy campaigns in partnership with other peak bodies and the sector
- Promotes and models best practice equity and justice approaches
- Provides wellbeing support and financial assistance to the sector
- Runs networking forums and gatherings
- Delivers workshops and peer-learning on current issues for the sector
- Undertakes and promotes research and benchmarking
- Provides advice to industry, the education sector and government
- Provides information and resources through our respected E-News and an online resource library.

We design our work to address the gaps, and our approach is underpinned by a spirit of care, deep listening, and trust in the sector's own capacity to make progress.

### Equity Action Plan

TNA's Equity Action Plan (EQAP) was created as part of the organisation's participation in Diversity Arts Australia's Fair Play Program in 2019 and 2020. The plan is based on the knowledge that we must embed transformational change and pursue genuine equity within all areas of our work, including governance, staffing, programming, and engagement.

Based on our knowledge of the performing arts sector in Australia currently, this Equity Action Plan pays particular attention to First Peoples, People of Colour, Deaf and disabled people and those based regionally. We also acknowledge that as a service organisation that represents the subsidised performing arts sector, there is work to be done in diversifying this sector. As such, we have both top-down and bottom-up approaches in this EQAP plan and our strategic plan.



The EQAP is a living and publicly available document, which we report against, and it ensures that we remain transparent and inclusive at every turn. We have an ongoing system for feedback, we have an annual evaluation, and we share our successes and challenges with the sector.

## Strategic Plan on a Page

The table on the following page is our ‘theory of change’ for how we will achieve our vision for a *safe, healthy, and relevant performing arts sector*. Our three goals address this vision.

Our nine objectives are ambitious – but each of them is essential. The first five are about justice, fairness, and addressing inequities for the people in our sector – inequities which have been highlighted during COVID-19. Along with our Equity Action Plan, these objectives explicitly guide TNA’s work over the next five-year period. The last four objectives are what we need to rebuild jobs and skills, strengthen our networks, and restore sustainable and fair funding.

The way we will achieve these objectives (and through them our goals and our vision), are through a series of strategies and specific focus areas.

This Strategic Plan includes an outline of the actions we will take under each of the strategies across the four-year period (see Five-Year Activity Plan), with detailed annual programs developed every year. More than ever, a responsive annual program is needed to ensure that we consider the rapid changes that the pandemic has inflicted upon the sector.



Three people looking intently at one person speaking around a colourful table. International Roundtables at TNA’s Neighbourhood Melbourne, APAM @ AsiaTOPA, Feb 2020. Photo Sarah Walker.

# Ten Year Vision - A Safe, Healthy And Relevant Performing Arts Sector

Goals	Objectives	Strategies
<b>Stronger Artists And Companies</b>  Strengthen, support and connect independent performing artists and producers, small to medium organisations and larger performing arts organisations.	<b>First Nations First:</b> Self-determination and leadership roles for First Nations artists and arts workers, and greater First Nations cultural awareness amongst the wider sector.	<b>1. Advocacy</b> Public policy influence within three levels of government, arts agencies and related agencies.
	<b>Justice and Diversity:</b> A more equitable distribution of resources, opportunities and power. A welcoming, accountable, accessible and inclusive performing arts sector, which promotes the creative benefits of diversity.	<b>2. Gatherings</b> A series of state and national gatherings that are responsive to our Objectives and adaptable to changes in restrictions due to COVID.
	<b>Safer Spaces:</b> Within an intersectional framework, safe workplaces for all, free from harassment, bullying and other behaviours that create unsafe workplaces. Mental health is prioritised.	<b>3. Sector Development</b> Building sector capacity, filling gaps, advocating internally in the sector for our Objectives.
	<b>Access and Inclusion:</b> Contributing to systemic change, through the pillars of physical access, employment, participation, and attitudes, for people with disabilities.	<b>4. Communications</b> Telling the story of the sector, sourcing and crystallising information to empower the sector and effect change.
<b>Stronger Arts Sector</b>  Achieve progressive change in the arts industry and drive evidence-based, people-centred cultural policy.	<b>Gender Equity:</b> Gender Equity, including equity for Trans and non-binary people, in the performing arts, especially in artistic leadership roles, and safer more inclusive environments for LGBTIQ+ people.	<b>5. Artist Development and Promotion</b> Providing specific advice, awards, bursaries and mentoring for artists; supporting independents to take on leadership roles and to take control of a different future.
	<b>Growing Arts Funding:</b> An increase in arts funding for the whole arts sector – with an urgent effort to address the underfunding of independent artists and small to medium companies.	<b>6. Research and Evidence</b> Undertaking primary research alone and in partnership. Providing analysis and user-friendly summaries of relevant research.
	<b>Strong Ecology:</b> A stronger and healthier ecology of independents and small, medium and large companies, with greater unity, supported by new policy and funding structures.	<b>7. ASSITEJ Network – Performance with/for/by young people</b> Connecting and maintaining an international presence, even while borders remain closed. Advocating for more funding support and greater visibility. Providing networking and advice.
<b>Stronger Organisation</b>  Theatre Network Australia is recognised for its effective leadership in the performing arts and galvanises an extensive, broad and diverse membership in Victoria and across Australia.	<b>Artists Central:</b> Better conditions and pay for artists and their collaborators, in creation, development, markets, presentation and touring.	<b>8. CaPT Strategy – Circus and Physical Theatre</b> Contribute to a diverse, thriving, and sustainable CaPT sector: Deeply engage, support knowledge development, and connect people with opportunities and networks.
	<b>Networks:</b> Deeper and more connections between various artforms, geographically, across portfolios and between the sector and the wider society.	<b>9. International and Digital Strategy and APAM Partnership</b> Co-located with the Australian Performing Arts Market [APAM], connecting the Australian sector internationally, promoting investment in digital capacity, and providing sector and curatorial insight to the APAM work.
		<b>10. Victorian Independent Producers Initiative (VIPI)</b> Strengthening the careers of independent performing arts producers, upskilling the artists and companies who work with them, and diversifying the producing sector.
		<b>11. Governance and Management</b> Modest organisational growth, strengthening our governance, and diverse leadership succession.

Strategies (Tools)

Focus Areas

## Features of 2021-2025 Program

- A new Wellbeing Fund, providing financial support to the under-employed, independents, contractors, and freelancers to access “re-charge leave,” and to finance professional mental health support.
- An Associate Executive Collective - empowering the next generation of decision makers, creating a diverse cohort for companies to recruit from, utilising Diversity Arts Australia principles. Supporting organisations to take affirmative action to shift the power balance in their organisations to reflect our diverse population, and honour self-determination. TNA will create a new Associate Director role as part of the Cohort.
- A revised strategy to embed ‘Safer Spaces’ initiatives into all TNA programs, that reflect an expanded and intersectional view of workplace safety. This includes a leading role on Creative Victoria’s Respectful Workplaces Group.
- A partnership with Blak & Bright Festival to support an emerging First Nations producer to work locally with Independent Indigenous artists, culturally supported by Blak & Bright.
- Revised and expanded Circus and Physical Theatre initiatives, which increase engagement with the sector and the rigorous folding of these into our sector-wide programs and advocacy.
- An adapted ASSITEJ Network strategy to utilise online exchange to connect and represent the Australian Performance with/for/by young people sector to 70 other member countries.
- Delivering the final two years of the inaugural Victorian Independent Producers Initiative (VIPI): paid mentorships targeted to diverse groups; multi-year grants for established independent producers; and a series of salons and coaching for artists. Reviewing program and working with Creative Victoria on ongoing programs to benefit the independent sector.
- Australian Theatre Forum 2023, the seventh national gathering and the first fully in person gathering for the sector since COVID hit. Held in Melbourne alongside the Australian Performing Arts Market (APAM). As per our Responsive COVID-19 Framework adapt as needed.
- A continuation of our federal advocacy, with a long-term view for an ambitious, united vision and a cohesive Arts, Culture and Creativity Plan 2030.
- Running an expanded version of *Champions for Arts and Culture*, a pilot program building the skills of interested TNA members in undertaking political advocacy in their local electorates, towards the Federal election, the Victorian State election, and other state elections in partnership with local peak bodies.
- Undertake the biennial survey of independents for THIS IS HOW WE DO IT 2022: TNA’s report on the working trends of independent creatives in the performing arts.
- Continue working with Support Act to ensure support for all performing arts workers.

### 3. Responsive COVID-19 Framework

TNA has always been a responsive organisation, operating within a strong and clear strategic plan but re-designing and adapting advocacy and programs to sector, government, and societal changes as needed. COVID-19 has shown us that we need to be even more nimble and adaptive to ongoing and emerging crises for 2021-2025. Along with COVID-19, the impact of climate change on our sector will worsen, periodically limiting touring and interstate exchange, and so digital and other adaptation will need to be a key feature of the performing arts.

For TNA's strategic plan, we have painted three different scenarios over 2021-2025 (using publicly available information from various experts) and predicted some government and societal response to those scenarios. We have then mapped out how TNA's work might change accordingly. While our Five-Year Activity Plan (page 19) assumes Scenario 1, we will continue to carry forward other options so that we are ready to adapt as needed. This scenario planning gives us some tools and guidance to do that adaption successfully.

During 2020 and the first half of 2021, TNA ran sessions and provided resources for members to help develop adaptive thinking. This included hosting scenario planning and adaptive thinking experts, and hosting peer learning sessions so members could learn from each other. For 2021-2025, we will continue to play a key role in supporting our sector to build the capacity needed to operate in such a changeable environment.

**Scenario 1.** High vaccination rates and high efficacy against new variants; successful suppression of COVID-19 outbreaks, especially in NSW and Victoria, however still some transmission; high vaccination in many other countries Australia engages with; mechanisms for allowing targeted mobility such as vaccine/health passports, rapid testing, and high compliance with QR check-in.

Government and Societal Response	TNA Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large gatherings are allowed with 100% capacity allowed in venues.</li><li>• Minimal lockdowns.</li><li>• Opening of interstate borders in year 1 and opening of international borders in year 2.</li><li>• Mobility regionally, nationally and internationally is easy and reasonably priced.</li><li>• Digital access is enhanced and remains a key part of communication and exchange.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gatherings can be national, large, and in person; digital access remains a feature.</li><li>• TNA advocates for a substantial funded digital strategy based on an equity framework, and insurance or risk share schemes.</li><li>• Domestic touring returns and TNA plays a role enhancing opportunities for independents and S2M orgs. TNA continues to advocate for longer, slower touring.</li><li>• International touring returns and TNA can play a role connecting Australians internationally, through ASSITEJ, CaPT, and APAM partnership.</li><li>• TNA assists with sector rebuilding, skill development, and recruiting people back to the industry.</li></ul>



**Scenario 2.** Good vaccination rates; mostly successful suppression of COVID-19 but with new variants causing outbreaks; varied levels of vaccination in countries Australia engages with; medium efficacy of mechanisms for allowing targeted mobility such as vaccine/health passports, rapid testing, compliance with QR check-in.

Government and Societal Response	TNA Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrictions chopping and changing, including venue capacity limits.</li> <li>• Sporadic lockdowns, eroding confidence of programmers and audiences.</li> <li>• Interstate borders mostly open but interrupted.</li> <li>• International touring greatly curtailed until 2025, except with bubble countries.</li> <li>• Mobility regionally, nationally, and internationally is costly.</li> <li>• Digital access is varied but remains a big part of communication and exchange.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National gatherings remain hybrid or 'deconstructed' across states and seasons. TNA runs larger gatherings in Victoria only.</li> <li>• Domestic touring is possible but difficult and TNA advocates for changes in grant conditions, for insurance or risk share schemes, and for better contracting processes and conditions.</li> <li>• TNA focuses on online international opportunities.</li> <li>• TNA takes a lead in peer connection across states and artforms – primarily online.</li> <li>• TNA continues to support the sector to build capacity to manage change.</li> <li>• TNA assists with sector maintenance and rebuilding, and recruiting people back to the industry.</li> </ul>

**Scenario 3.** Medium vaccination rates, or efficacy fades; largely unsuccessful suppression of COVID-19 because of new variants causing outbreaks; poor levels of vaccination in other countries Australia engages with; poor economic outcomes causing widespread hardship.

Government and Societal Response	TNA Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrictions remain at a high level across the country.</li> <li>• Lockdowns have caused loss of critical companies, jobs, and skills.</li> <li>• Interstate borders only sporadically open for the next 3-4 years.</li> <li>• International touring remains untenable for years.</li> <li>• Mobility regionally, nationally and internationally is costly and uninsurable.</li> <li>• Digital access is relied on for a large part of the performing arts but there is fatigue and patchy access, especially regionally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No in-person gatherings at a national level. Small, nimble, local gatherings supported by national online exchange.</li> <li>• TNA facilitates dialogue about new artistic models of presentation.</li> <li>• Victorian gatherings are also small and nimble and can change to online quickly.</li> <li>• TNA works to coordinate digital offerings by other service providers and to ensure that digital offerings are accessible to all, including regional people, and people with disabilities.</li> <li>• Maintenance of jobs and skills in the performing arts becomes a crucial goal for TNA's advocacy.</li> <li>• TNA's role in maintaining the mental health and wellbeing of sector workers grows.</li> </ul>



## 4. Organisational Context

### History

TNA was founded as Theatre Network Victoria (TNV) in 2009 by nine Victorian small to medium performing arts organisations, in response to a need for connection, advocacy, and sector development, as evidenced by a Deloitte report commissioned by Arts Victoria (2007) into the small to medium arts sector.

An eighteen-month project was funded by (then) Arts Victoria's Sector Development program. At the end of the project, there was a hunger for ongoing networking and advocacy, and TNV had demonstrated that it was able to meet that need with practical strategies and effective advocacy. With annual funding from Creative Victoria from 2011 to 2012 and multiyear funding from 2013, we became a thriving service organisation for the professional, non-profit performing arts sector, focusing on the small to medium and independent sectors.

Early on, TNV identified the need for national coordination of the sector, and in particular, national advocacy for the small to medium and independent sectors. With Australia Council support, TNV was already producing the Australian Theatre Forum (2011, 2013, 2015, 2017), and was able to build on those networks. TNV named and drove the *Free The Arts* campaign from May 2015, leading the performing arts sector alongside other sectors and colleagues to eventually effect the return of \$80mil to the Australia Council for the Arts. Our work and our inclusive approach were highly valued by the sector across the country.

In 2015 we expanded our national work and restructured to include an ongoing program of national work, while retaining our Victorian focus. From 2016 we have received four-year funding from the Australia Council (for 2017-2020 and 2021-2024), allowing us to build on our national advocacy, research, communications, and gatherings, and to strengthen our partnerships and engagement across the country.

Unlike any other peak body or service organisation, TNA has retained its strong attachment to the Victorian performing arts sector, while operating a high-level program of work across the rest of the country. Our 'T' model is unique – a dedicated Victorian program supported by multi-year Creative Victoria funding and over 50% of membership income (the stem of the T); and a slimmer national program funded by Australia Council multi-year funding (the top bar of the T).

TNA is now highly regarded for an impressive body of work. Even more, we are appreciated for the dedicated care and commitment we provide to the sector, an approach that builds and empowers individuals and companies to step up and help make the whole sector stronger and fairer.

## Sector Analysis

Through our ongoing engagement with artists and arts organisations, TNA has a deep understanding of the key issues currently facing the sector. The below analysis has informed our strategic approach and will be used to help define TNA's Annual Program each year.

Sector-Wide Issue	Evidence
An urgent need to increase arts funding to the small to medium and independent sectors.	29 companies lost Four Year funding from Australia Council in 2020; grant success rates at 10-15% at Creative Victoria and Australia Council.
Putting First Nations work at the centre of Australian arts – in policy, how it is created, how it is supported, and how it is presented.	"First Nations participants spoke of the strength and resilience of their communities; the need for intergenerational healing; and what is needed to achieve a self-determined First Nations arts and cultural ecosystem, including pathways into all roles." <i>Reimagine: What Next?</i> , Australia Council (2021).
Using a justice framework – a more equitable distribution of resources, opportunities and power.	COVID Impact: Disproportionate impacts for culturally and linguistically diverse people, women, and young people; Reduced and uneven opportunities for engagement. [Need for] access to employment opportunities for creatives who are Deaf and creatives with disabilities. <i>Creative State 2025</i> , Victorian Government (2021).
Increasing diversity on stage, in our companies, in our artists, in our audiences, especially of People of Colour and people with disabilities.	Over 50% of organisations had no culturally and/or linguistically diverse representation amongst their board members, award panels and/or executives. <i>Shifting the Balance</i> , Diversity Arts Australia (2019).
Equality of women, trans, and non-binary people in creative leadership roles in the performing arts.	Out of 11 NPAF (former MPA) theatre, circus and dance orgs and 8 new NPAF orgs, only 6 Artistic Directors are female identifying (31%). None identify as trans or non-binary.
The need for new models of supporting the performing arts, such as insurance schemes to build confidence within an uncertain environment.	"76% of audiences say their plans have been affected by lockdowns. 52% say the risk of future lockdowns ... is inhibiting their attendance." <i>Audience Outlook Monitor</i> Australia Council, Patternmakers and WolfBrown. July (2021).  Live music and entertainment industry bodies APRA AMCOS, ARIA, PPCA, LPA ... called for the adoption of a government-backed insurance scheme. Various media, August (2021).
The need for unified advocacy and collaborating with other peak bodies to reach a long-term vision.	Australia's current investment in culture is 0.72% of GDP. The OECD country average is 1.11%. A New Approach, <i>The Big Picture Insight Report One</i> (2019).  "The participation of all stakeholders — including ... peak bodies — into the development of [an Arts, Culture and Creativity] Plan will give it the greatest likelihood of buy-in and success". A New Approach, <i>Imagining 2030</i> (2021).
Support for Small to Medium companies – new models of governance and administration, new	"Need for new, sustainable business models to support creative practice. ... COVID-19 has provided an opportunity for re-considering business models, income streams and ways of

financing models, skills for planning in uncertain times.	working for the industry.” <i>Reimagine: What Next?</i> , Australia Council (2021).
Need for digital capacity building within a framework that recognises and addresses inequality and uneven access to digital opportunities.	“The findings underscore the need for digital capacity building and strategies.... Participants called for professional development, investment in new and emerging digital art forms and models that support access to local content.” <i>Reimagine: What Next?</i> , Australia Council (2021).
The loss of key youth arts organisations and loss of support for performance work for/with/by young people, reducing opportunities and pathways for young people.	“[There was a call] for greater understanding and investment in the way young people engage in culture and more diverse and sustainable career pathways.” <i>Reimagine: What Next?</i> , Australia Council (2021). Loss of funding to five more Youth Arts/TYA companies in Australia Council’s Four Year Funding program, 2020.
Making the systems fairer for artists – brokering better access to opportunities in creation, marketing, presentation, and touring.	Between March and September 2020, there were 12% fewer jobs in the arts. A further 2.5% were lost in the year August 20 to August 21. ABS Payroll Jobs and Wages Index.  49% of independents reported they were financially worse off due to the pandemic and only 12% were better off. <i>This is How We Do It</i> , TNA (2020).
The wellbeing crisis in our sector has worsened – pre-COVID, it was already poor.	1 in 3 independent arts workers accessed mental health services during COVID in 2020. <i>This is How We Do It</i> , TNA (2020).  44% of workers experienced moderate to severe anxiety – Working in the Australian Entertainment Industry (2016).
Addressing sexual harassment and bullying.	40% of respondents to MEAA’s 2017 survey experienced harassment in the live performance sector.
The poor representation of and support for circus and physical theatre work.	More CaPT respondents (37%) accessed mental health services than the overall average (30%). <i>This is How We Do It</i> , TNA (2020). Circus is not a category in most peer assessment processes - see Australia Council for example.
Connections outside the arts – to other portfolios, sectors, and to other creative industries.	“Australia is yet to strategically capitalise on the combined value of cultural and creative industries and occupations”. A New Approach, <i>Behind the scenes</i> (2020).
Fixing touring coordination and regional development – local arts development and touring regional work to the cities.	“The need for better coordination and alignment of touring, both interstate and intrastate, was identified as an urgent priority.” “Reshaping and rebuilding touring activity will be a critical component of repairing the damage to the sector.” <i>National Performing Arts Touring Scan</i> , Australia Council, October 2020.
Efficient management and environmentally sustainable practice at all levels.	“Human actions still have the potential to determine the future course of climate [change]”. IPCC, <i>Climate change: widespread, rapid, and intensifying</i> (2021).
Sustainability for independents – wellbeing, financial, creative. Career progression.	Indies work an average of 11 creative projects per year to sustain their practice. 83% of artists lost work outside their creative practice. <i>This is How We Do It</i> , TNA (2020).

## **Internal Analysis**

TNA has an excellent reputation for its achievements to date. Our industry-based Board is committed, and our growing team of staff live and breathe the values of the organisation.

### **Strong, diverse, growing income**

TNA's financial situation provides a strong foundation, now with multi-year funding from both state and federal governments, significant philanthropic support, dozens of individuals donating annually, and increasing contract fees and earned income – giving us a diverse income base. Our membership income increased during 2020 and into 2021, demonstrating our relevance and our resilience in difficult times. We are continuing to focus on maintaining our reserves.

### **Robust business processes and excellent infrastructure**

Our business processes have significantly benefitted from multi-year support, including funding from Australia Council and Creative Victoria, allowing us to invest in our infrastructure for the first time. We have implemented a high-quality database system, our memberships now automatically renew annually, and we have a new, vibrant, accessible and well-resourced office in Southbank, co-located with APAM in the heart of the cultural precinct. We are also now able to provide hot-desks to the sector, and host workshops and events.

### **Maintaining agility and leveraging partnerships**

However, with this growth, we also need to prioritise agility and sustainability. Maintaining our relevance as a service organisation relies upon our ability to respond to changes in the landscape quickly. Our key internal challenge is balancing our small team and the ever increasing needs of the sector. We address this through leveraging partnerships, sharing resources, building on what others are doing, and adding value to them. In the last three years we have had over 60 organisational partnerships. Our approach is collegiate and efficient – avoiding duplication and achieving outcomes otherwise too complex.

### **Excellent staff capacity and strong governance**

Our move into multi-year projects allows us to build capacity over time and to implement continuous improvement. Our work over the past two years in building our team will continue, along with providing above sector-standard salaries and conditions, providing excellent professional development and giving staff higher duties. Flexible working arrangements, and an agreed plan to commit to increasing salaries – as part of succession planning – are also key to sustainability. Our employment policy recognises that looking after our staff ensures commitment and high-quality work.

TNA's Equity Action Plan documents our commitment to achieve systemic change internally and externally, to increase equity for First Peoples, people of colour, Deaf and disabled people and those based regionally. We have already publicly reported on the first year of our achievements and will continue to report annually.

TNA's industry-based Board is made up of leaders and change-makers selected against a skills, experience, and demographic-based matrix. There is a healthy mix of long-standing

members and newer people. Our succession plan which is currently being implemented includes the handover of the role of Chair to a First Nations person who is currently Co-Deputy Chair.



A person stands up with their arms spread wide, with other people smiling in the background. TNA's Neighbourhood Adelaide, APAM @ DreamBIG Festival, May 2021. Photo Sam Oster (Silvertrace).

## **Member Analysis**

TNA uses a broad-church definition of theatre and as of July 2021, has 540 active and engaged members, made up of 180 companies and 360 individuals.

### **Membership Overview**

Our members make up a core constituency to consult with and report to as TNA undertakes its advocacy and sector development work. However, our work benefits constituents beyond our membership – our E-News and social media subscribers, delegates, participants and of course, the wider sector. TNA engages with over 10,000 people annually, not including broadcast or radio audiences.

### **Members' Rationale**

Companies and individuals join TNA because they want an organisation to represent their issues and voice their aspirations – to the arts industry, to the media, to government and to the broader community. They also want to network with others in the performing arts, attend professional development forums and workshops, and have access to up-to-the-minute information about what's happening in the arts industry. TNA works closely with other service organisations to ensure that we can be united as possible, and to complement rather than duplicate the other industry development efforts.

### **Pricing Structure**

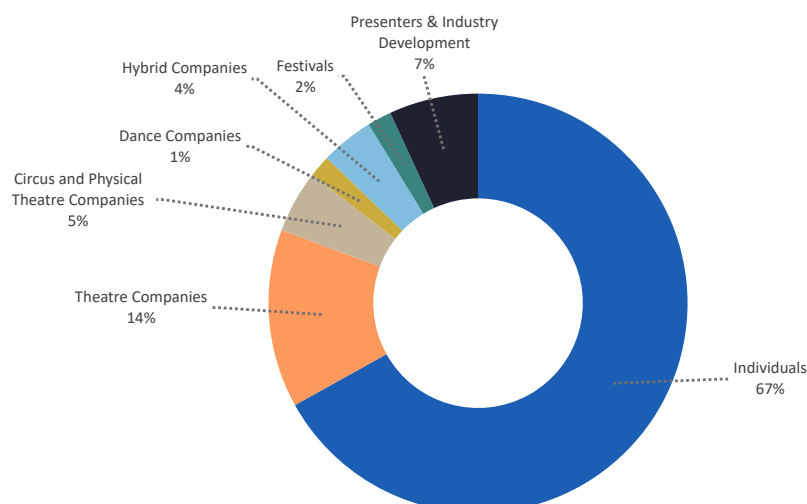
Our 'T' model of operation is reflected in our membership structure, with those organisations based in Melbourne joining as full members – benefiting from TNA's location, connections and work in the state. Those located nationally and in regional Victoria become Associate Members, at around 50% of the cost.

### **Members' Profiles**

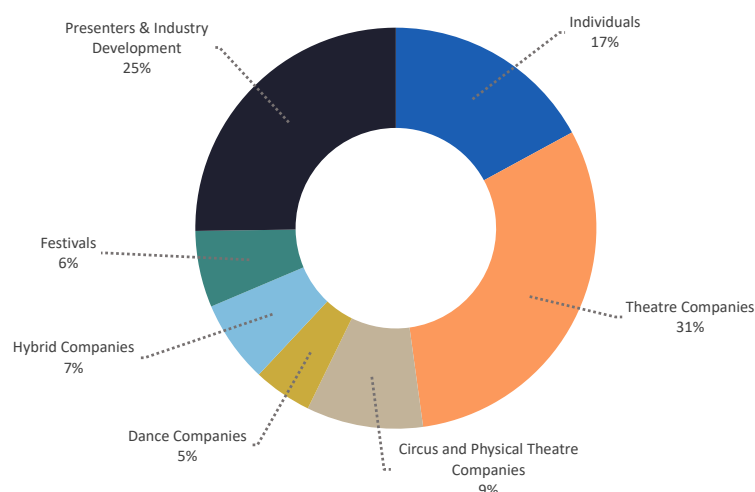
TNA members work across artforms and are located across regional and metropolitan areas. They include independent artists, producers, arts workers, collectives, small nimble ensembles with no formal structure, organisations and companies from the small to medium sector, established key organisations and larger performing arts companies, festivals, institutions, and peak bodies. While TNA's primary focus is on artists and small to medium companies, importantly, TNA manages to unite and service the broader subsidised performing arts sector, with many of the 'Partnership' (formerly MPA) companies also securing a TNA membership, endorsing the interconnectedness of the sector. Over the next five years, a priority for TNA is to increase the diversity within our membership, to better reflect the diversity of the Australian population – a bottom-up strategy.



## TNA Membership Breakdown by Member Type



## TNA Membership Breakdown by Membership Revenue



## Members' Work

The range of work that TNA's members make, present or support, is extremely broad. There is work for, with and by young people, visual theatre and puppetry, text-based work, music theatre, comedy, theatre made by artists with disabilities, cabaret, theatre made with and by communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theatre, dance, circus, physical theatre, and hybrid work. It is made by emerging artists as well as established veterans, it is made in regional areas and capital cities, it is made alone or in partnership with others as co-productions, and it is made as commissioned work by presenters and festivals.

## Other Stakeholders

In addition to current members (individuals and companies), TNA stakeholders include potential members, festivals and presenters, peak bodies and other industry development organisations. Beyond members, there is interest held in our work by venues, academics and universities, philanthropic organisations (as partners and funders), politicians, media,

the Australia Council for the Arts and Office for the Arts, Creative Victoria, other government departments, local government, audiences and communities. TNA's work is guided by a stakeholder analysis which outlines current and future interaction with all stakeholders.



**A blurry group of people outdoors look at someone talking out of shot, with a sign above reading Theatre Network Australia and APAM (NIDA and Fringe behind). The opening of our new home – a hub for VIPI, APAM and TNA in the heart of Southbank's Arts Precinct. Photo Danni Rodriguez.**



## 5. Five-Year Activity Plan

Strategies	Actions	Goals Addressed		
		Stronger Artists & Companies	Stronger Arts Sector	Stronger Organisation
<b>1. Advocacy</b> Public policy influence within three levels of government, arts and related agencies.	<b>1.1 National Advocacy</b> – promote a united and ambitious vision for the arts through an Arts, Culture, and Creativity Plan 2030. Organise the sector towards the next Federal election.	✓	✓	✓
	<b>1.2 Victorian Advocacy</b> – contribute to the effective roll-out of Creative State 2025 Strategy. Engagement with Creative Industries Minister and team, esp. on COVID recovery/adaptation. Organise the sector towards the 2022 state election.	✓	✓	✓
	<b>1.3 Creative Victoria Engagement</b> – provide expert advice to the leadership: esp. Chief Executive, Creative Industries Executive Director, Director Arts Investment. Work with other teams as needed: international, grants, policy, and communications.	✓	✓	
	<b>1.4 Australia Council Engagement</b> – provide expert advice to the executive: esp. CEO, Executive Director Arts Investment, Executive Director Development and Strategic Partnerships and Director of Theatre.		✓	
	<b>1.5 Increasing the Advocacy Capacity of the Sector</b> – through our <i>Champions of Arts and Culture</i> program; professional development and resources.	✓	✓	
	<b>1.6 Representing Sector Issues</b> – submissions to inquiries, presenting evidence at hearings, speaking out in forums, meetings, the media, conference presentations, funding panels, and reviews.		✓	✓
<b>2. Gatherings</b> A series of state and national gatherings that are responsive to our Objectives and adaptable to changes in restrictions due to COVID.	<b>2.1 Australian Theatre Forum (ATF):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>ATF 2023 Melbourne</b> will be the first fully national TNA gathering in six years. It will be in partnership with APAM and RISING Festival in Melbourne. (See Responsive COVID-19 Framework for how we would pivot, p.9)</li> <li>the preliminary plan for <b>ATF 2025</b> is to host a bi-nation gathering with New Zealand in partnership with Performing Arts Connections Australia.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
	<b>2.2 Victorian Theatre Forum</b> – 2022 Ballarat. 2023 combined with ATF, 2024 Castlemaine.	✓	✓	✓
	<b>2.3 Peer Learning Program</b> – evaluate pilot program from 2021 partnership with University of Queensland; roll-out annually as a 7-session program for up to 5 cohorts: 2022, 2023, 2024.	✓	✓	
<b>3. Sector Development</b> Building sector capacity, filling gaps, advocating internally in the sector for our Objectives.	<b>3.1 Partnership with Blak &amp; Bright Festival</b> – a best practice model to develop and support a First Nations Independent Producer for First Nations events.	✓	✓	
	<b>3.2 Associate Executive Collective Program:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>empower the next generation of decision makers, creating a diverse cohort for companies to recruit</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓

	<p>from, utilising Diversity Arts Australia principles and approaches to capacity building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o support organisations to take affirmative action to shift the power balance in their organisations to reflect our diverse population, and honour self-determination.</li> </ul>			
	<p><b>3.3 Playwright Support</b> – work alongside and support the new organisation Australian Plays Transform. Add value to their programs by promoting their library, presenting sessions for playwrights at ATF, and advocating for greater support for playwrights. Continue to have a Playwright on the TNA Board.</p>	✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>3.1 Promoting Databases and Supporting Networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Grow and maintain “THE LIST,” addressing gender inequality in technical design</li> <li>o Maintain and grow the Independent Producers database</li> <li>o Develop a new database for CaPT performing companies</li> <li>o Partner with ATYP on a new ASSITEJ database (performance with/by/for young people)</li> <li>o Provide advice, support and resources to other fledgling networks or sub-sectors, supporting self-determination.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	
	<p><b>3.2 Innovative Best Practice Recommendations</b> – provide organisational cultural leadership, promoting ways to increase the inclusion of people of colour, First Nations peoples, and Deaf/disabled people in the arts at all levels.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>4. Communications</b> Telling the story of the sector, sourcing, and synthesising information to empower the sector and effect change.</p>	<p><b>4.1 Sector Analysis</b> – record and substantiate sector needs and values through member, event evaluation, and program evaluation surveys.</p>	✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>4.2 E-News and Media</b> – provide relevant, targeted, and concise industry information, opportunities and movements through the TNA E-News, and regular media coverage.</p>	✓	✓	
	<p><b>4.3 Online Presence</b> – monitor and be involved in topical discussions on social media, supporting initiatives, and offering advice and resources. Maintain TNA website, ensuring accessibility.</p>		✓	✓
	<p><b>4.4 Member Advocacy Briefings</b> – minimum quarterly briefings to members on current issues, TNA’s work, and how to get involved in advocacy.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>5. Artist Development and Promotion</b> Providing specific advice, awards, bursaries and mentoring for artists; supporting independents to take on leadership roles and</p>	<p><b>5.1 Marketplace Support</b> – continue to advocate for fairer conditions, including free registration for independent artists and producers at marketplaces.</p>	✓	✓	
	<p><b>5.2 Support Act</b> – continue role on Support Act’s steering committee for the distribution of \$20mil to performing arts workers; advise on assessment and promotion and help advocacy efforts if ongoing support is needed.</p>	✓		
	<p><b>5.3 Wellbeing Fund</b> – establish a new fund that provides financial assistance to support the wellbeing of unsalaried artists and arts workers.</p>	✓		

to take control of a different future.	<b>5.4 SMASH Independent Bursary</b> – offer national bursary for a break-through independent annually: \$500 and a free TNA membership.	✓		
	<b>5.5 Mentorships and Professional Development</b> – provide personalised mentorship and governance experience for artists, specifically for TNA sponsored award winners (Melbourne Fringe, GRAA, etc)	✓	✓	
	<b>5.6 Monthly TNA Radio Spot</b> – Vision Australia Radio's Behind the Scenes program – present TNA's Member of the Month, update listeners on TNA's current focus and activity.	✓		
	<b>5.7 Access Initiatives</b> – limit financial barriers within the design of all programs, and allocate budget to support travel, event registration, and TNA membership to our target groups.	✓	✓	
<b>6. Research and Evidence</b> Undertaking primary research alone and in partnership. Providing analysis and user-friendly summaries of relevant research to the sector.	<b>6.1 Small to Medium Salary Survey and Report</b> – used to advocate for better conditions for the small to medium sector. Company staff and boards use it to benchmark their own salaries. (2021, 2023, 2025)	✓	✓	
	<b>6.2 Independents Survey and Report</b> – <i>This Is How We Do It</i> on remuneration and other work trends. (2022, 2024)	✓	✓	
	<b>6.3 Sector Specific Surveys</b> – gather artform and sub-sector specific data to inform advocacy (e.g. CaPT and ASSITEJ).	✓	✓	✓
	<b>6.4 University Partnerships and Relationships</b> – contribute to research goals of the performing arts by maintaining current relationships (Deakin University and Melbourne University) and developing new partnership – University of Qld.		✓	✓
	<b>6.5 Summarising Outcomes and External Research</b> – collate, edit, summarise and disseminate outcomes of our own work and gatherings, as well as useful research undertaken by others, for the sector.	✓	✓	✓
<b>Focus Areas</b>				
<b>7. ASSITEJ Network – Performance with/by/for young people.</b> Connecting and maintaining an international presence, even while borders remain closed. Advocating for more funding support and greater visibility. Providing networking and advice.	<b>7.1 National and international opportunities for Australian sector</b> – quarterly bulletin to ASSITEJ List and in TNA e-news; facilitate international residencies/exchange digital/IRL; work towards a delegation at Congress 2024 in Cuba.	✓	✓	
	<b>7.2 Promote the Australian sector internationally</b> – maintain our ASSITEJ National Centre Membership; promote the Australian ASSITEJ Video internationally; add Australian news to ASSITEJ international E-News, present at international forums (online); support Sue Giles as ASSITEJ President (2021–).	✓	✓	
	<b>7.3 Seek sector input through ASSITEJ Advisory Committee</b> – quarterly updates from each state/territory/region; planning for advocacy and other action.	✓	✓	✓
	<b>7.4 Advocate to government for greater support</b> – within Creative State 2025, Australia Council four-year funding, Office for the Arts funding e.g RISE,		✓	

	<p>upcoming federal Arts and Culture Plan, and State/Territory funding, policy, and plans.</p> <p><b>7.5 Provide Networking and Advice</b> – support Sue Giles' Fellowship 'Wide Open Window' (2020-2023), run webinars, provide letters of support, create networking opportunities at gatherings, new ASSITEJ database with ATYP.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>8. CaPT Strategy - Circus and Physical Theatre</b></p> <p>Contribute to a diverse, thriving, and sustainable CaPT sector: Deeply engage, support knowledge development, and connect people with opportunities and networks.</p>	<p><b>8.1 Promote Equity &amp; Justice</b> – work with First Peoples to empower First Nations artists, strengthen First Nations led companies, and create more culturally safe spaces via a formal framework.</p>	✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>8.2 Enhance Membership &amp; Engagement</b> – work with Youth Circus Australia Network (YCAN), NICA, TNA CaPT Advisory committee and other stakeholders.</p>	✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>8.3 Developing a sustainable &amp; connected sector</b> – facilitate networking, discussion, &amp; professional development. Including peer learning circles and partnering with festivals for gatherings.</p>	✓	✓	
	<p><b>8.4 Informing &amp; Supporting</b> – ongoing referral, information and intelligence. Increased CaPT specific content in TNA E-News, CaPT bulletin and website, new producing company database.</p>	✓	✓	
	<p><b>8.5 Advocating for Recognition and CaPT Specific Needs</b> – seek inclusion of the artform in local, state, and federal arts funding processes and an increase of CaPT peer assessors.</p>	✓	✓	
<p><b>9. International &amp; Digital Strategy and APAM Partnership</b></p> <p>Co-located and working alongside the Australian Performing Arts Market, connecting the sector internationally, and providing sector and curatorial insight to the APAM work.</p>	<p><b>9.1 Shared Office</b> – co-running The Guild office facility with APAM staff, offering ad-hoc hot-desking and meeting space to artists and companies.</p>	✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>9.2 Sector Insight</b> – to APAM's Office function and its Market Intelligence strategy, bringing TNA members' and constituents' interests to bear on APAM's planning.</p>	✓	✓	
	<p><b>9.3 APAM Gatherings</b> – contribute to curatorial design and directly program specific elements using TNA networks. Partner on major gathering 2023.</p>	✓	✓	
	<p><b>9.4 Communications</b> – provide information about international opportunities to the TNA network. Expand our 'no travel' international strategy connecting internationals and the local sector.</p>	✓		✓
<p><b>10. Victorian Independent Producers Initiative (VIPI)</b></p> <p>Strengthening the careers of independent performing arts producers, upskilling the artists and companies who work with them, and diversifying the producing sector.</p>	<p><b>10.1 Producers Mentorship Program</b> – rollout of Round 3-8 participants in the program. Prioritising (over 50%) mentees who are POC, First Nations, Deaf/Disabled and regional. Follow-up with Alumni from Rounds 1 and 2.</p>	✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>10.2 Unlocking Capacity Grant</b> – up to \$35,000 p/a for up to three years, for established independent producers. Work with Creative Victoria on process for Round 3 – 2022-2024. Employ participants in salon series and coaching.</p>	✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>10.3 Salon Series</b> – at least 6 salons annually (2022-2024), providing peer learning for program participants and business coaching for independent artists.</p>	✓		✓

## The Organisation

<b>11. Governance and Management</b> Modest organisational growth, strengthening our governance, and diverse leadership succession.	<b>11.1 Membership Plan</b> – retention of current members and modest annual membership growth of 2%.	✓	✓	✓
	<b>11.2 Staff</b> – continue to prioritise and enact policies and procedures to attract and retain a diverse staff, including EQAP, EAP, professional development and performance reviews. Pro-active approach to mentoring, shoulder tapping and providing pathways to employment for those missing out.	✓	✓	✓
	<b>11.3 Robust Financial Systems</b> – conduct annual audit and quarterly financial committee meetings.			✓
	<b>11.4 Governance</b> – conduct annual board review against matrix and board charter. Effective Sub/Working Committees. Board inducted in cultural awareness.			✓
	<b>11.5 Succession Planning</b> – develop and maintain robust systems and document and share organisational knowledge, skills and responsibilities across staff. Recruit new role of Associate Director.			✓
	<b>11.6 Financial Position</b> – maintain reserves at 15-20% of annual turnover.			✓
	<b>11.7 Strategic Plan</b> – conduct an annual formal review against progress, and undertake planning process for 2025-2028			✓



A group of diverse people around a table with food with an artwork blurred in the foreground. VIPI Cohort 2 in the Salon space in TNA's office. Photo Wild Hardt.



## 6. Measuring Success

TNA Goals	What Success Looks Like	TNA Metrics – captured annually	Contribution to Systemic Change
<b>Stronger Artists and Companies</b>  Strengthen, support, and connect independent performing artists and producers, and performing arts organisations.	Salaries and conditions improve in companies and for independents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Above CPI increase in salaries between surveys.</li> <li>- Average fee for independent casual gigs improves above CPI.</li> </ul>	<i>Artists and arts workers have long-term, sustainable careers in the arts.</i>
	Collaborative networks within the performing arts and outward to the broader arts sector are increased.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forum delegates make 2+ new connections.</li> <li>- TNA networks (mapped annually) grow in size and number.</li> </ul>	<i>Artists and companies are thriving: employing more arts-workers; making more relevant work to wider and more diverse audiences.</i>
	Increased diversity of participants at TNA and partner events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage of CaLD, First Nations, people with disabilities, LGBTIQ+, Regional = at or above population figures.</li> </ul>	<i>Artists and companies from these backgrounds have equity of opportunity including paid creative leadership roles.</i>
<b>Stronger Arts Sector</b>  Achieve progressive change in the arts industry and drive evidence-based, people-centred cultural policy.	Providing a safe workplace is a priority for employers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants of our programs report increased capacity to address this.</li> </ul>	<i>The performing arts sector provides safe and healthy workplaces.</i>
	TNA's work makes a difference to the sustainability of small to mediums and independents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Members report that our work increases their capacity.</li> <li>- TNA partners report that TNA's work helps them achieve change.</li> </ul>	<i>The small to medium and independent performing arts sector is valued and financially sustainable.</i>
	Australian cultural funding increases from 0.72% of GDP, to above 1.11% (average OECD countries).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TNA uses data and evidence of the benefits of investment and enhances public value of the performing arts sector.</li> </ul>	<i>A well-funded, united, sustainable arts sector.</i>
	Increased diversity of makers, board members, creative leaders and performing arts audiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TNA includes disability or First Nations or CaLD led sessions.</li> <li>- TNA leads dialogue about the need for equity and justice in at least one national gathering per year.</li> <li>- TNA provides dedicated safe spaces at major gatherings.</li> </ul>	<i>The arts sector is more inclusive and leads a culture which understands and addresses the intersectional needs of different groups of people.</i>
<b>Stronger Organisation</b>  TNA is recognised for its effective leadership in the performing arts and galvanises an extensive, broad and diverse membership in Victoria and across Australia.	TNA members are highly satisfied with our work and are highly engaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 90% membership retention of ongoing members.</li> <li>- Annual growth in membership numbers at least 2%.</li> <li>- Membership is representative of the population.</li> </ul>	<i>The sector benefits from a strong network of diverse members to enhance sector cohesion.</i>
	Reserves are sufficient for a rainy day. Aim for 20%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reserves will be maintained at between 15-20% of turnover.</li> </ul>	<i>Resilience of TNA as a vital peak body in the ecology.</i>
	A turnover that gives capacity for a small team of staff with sector-leading salaries and conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Turnover of above \$0.8million (and below \$1.5million).</li> </ul>	<i>TNA leads the way in good governance and providing excellent conditions for employees.</i>
	An engaged, relevant and influential board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase board numbers to 12 addressing identified gaps and provide pathways; with working committees operating in between.</li> </ul>	<i>TNA leads the way in representative governance for the sector.</i>

## 7. Finances

### Current Situation

TNA has robust financial management in place to ensure the highest level of accountability. All finances are overseen by a financial subcommittee, comprised of Board and staff members, who meet quarterly to assess the organisation's financial health, position, and strategy. TNA engages an external bookkeeper and the same financial auditor year-on-year to ensure consistency and additional accountability.

The organisation has seen significant growth in recent years, doubling its annual turnover between 2019 and 2020, and increasing the size of its program due to demand from the sector. This has demonstrated both TNA's capacity to maintain a program/budget of this size, but also ongoing need for this work.

TNA's 2020 audit show a diverse range of income sources, with a balance of federal and state funding, philanthropic and private income, earned income and other income. This puts TNA in a strong position. The following table shows the proportion of income by percentage in 2020 and 2021 (forecast).

Income Source	2020 Income	% of Income	2021 Forecast	% of Income
Membership	\$50,111	4%	\$56,000	5%
Other Earned Income	\$20,796	2%	\$6,130	1%
Australia Council	\$123,322	11%	\$124,750	11%
State Government (Core Funding)	\$118,000	10%	\$118,000	10%
State Government (Strategic Initiatives)	\$356,854	30%	\$557,649	50%
Other Government	\$20,000	2%	\$0	0%
Private Support	\$346,930	30%	\$221,792	20%
Government Assistance (COVID-19)	\$140,044	12%	\$39,700	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,176,057</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$1,124,021</b>	<b>100%</b>

We first introduced financial membership in 2014 (earning \$17k) and membership income has since grown steadily, exceeding our targets each year. Our target for 2020 (as forecast in 2015) was \$40k, and we exceeded this by \$10k. Over the next period, however, TNA is conscious of limited sector capacity, and is focused on maintaining this level of income, and instead has secured a significant increase in our private support.

### Financial Forecast

Our growth plan for 2021 to 2025 is modest, and it is founded on a well-developed strategic plan and sound sector analysis, including benchmarking of other service organisations and infrastructure. The growth is capitalising on an excellent reputation, demonstrated capacity to take on significant multi-year initiatives, seek diverse income, and manage large and complex projects and budgets.

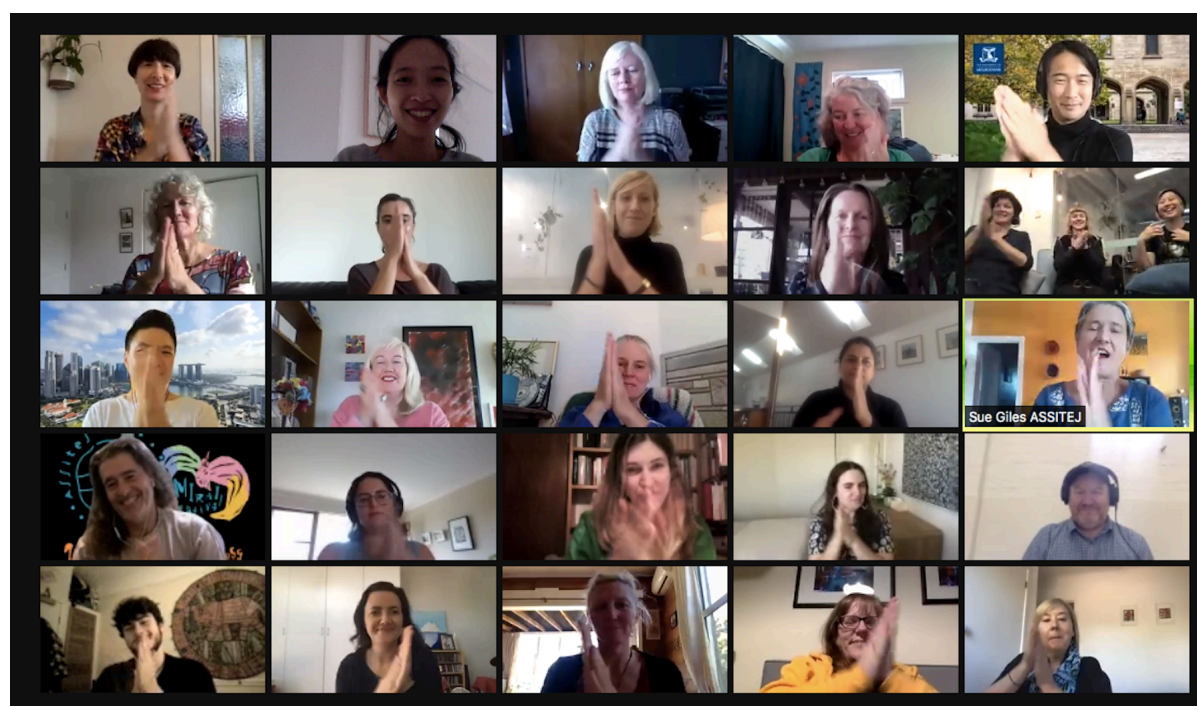
While turnover appears to initially decline in 2022-2023, this is due to the finalisation of the VIPI program, an initiative with significant financial investment. Offsetting this is planned growth within private support and an increase in core funding.

The Crisis Cash campaign, which raised \$366,000 across 2020-2021, not only demonstrated TNA's capacity to leverage significant support from private donations, but also allowed us to build a large donor base. We will continue to utilise this to support similar future campaigns, planning for modest annual growth in targets.

TNA budget forecasts contain very little risk; a large percentage of income is confirmed multi-year funding, and other income and support are based on amounts achieved consistently in previous years. Additionally, almost all unconfirmed income is offset by equivalent uncommitted expenditure (such as private donations being used to directly fund sector assistance programs at the equivalent amount). In this way our program and budget are adaptable and can change scale and scope as the needs of the sector change.

The table below gives an overview of our five-year financial forecast.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Income	\$1,124,021	\$923,844	\$827,058	\$937,000	\$965,110
Expenditure	\$1,124,021	\$923,844	\$825,058	\$927,000	\$956,664
Result	\$0	\$0	\$2,000	\$10,000	\$8,446
Closing Retained Earnings	\$173,403	\$173,403	\$175,403	\$185,403	\$193,849
Reserves as at % of Turnover	15%	19%	21%	20%	20%



A screenshot of 25 diverse people on a zoom meeting, all rubbing their hands together. TNA's international 'watch party' of our ASSITEJ Sector video, with ASSITEJ President Sue Giles facilitating.



## 8. Governance & Staffing

### Role of the Board

The role of the Board is to advise, assist and oversee the overall strategy of the organisation. The Board includes expertise across finance, advocacy, and government policy/strategy, and as an industry body, it is primarily made up of representatives of the arts sector. Day to day operational management is the responsibility of the TNA Executive Director and staff. The Board is co-opted by existing members against a matrix to ensure a representative mix of members from across the sector. Tenure is for a three-year period renewable by agreement for two further terms.

### Board of Management

Name	Role	Professional Role	Identify with our communities of focus			
			First Nations	CALD/PoC	Disability	Regional
Jill Smith AM	Chair	Member – Geelong Authority Trustee – Trust for Nature Chair – Deakin University Arts and Cultural Management Advisory Board				✓
Erica McCalman	Co-Deputy Chair	Director – Art Oracle	✓			✓
Caroline Bowditch	Co-Deputy Chair	CEO – Arts Access Victoria			✓	
Lou Oppenheim	Treasurer	Director, Production and Events – Sydney Opera House				
Sue Giles AM	Board Member	Artistic Director – Polyglot Theatre President – ASSITEJ International				
Andrea James	Board Member	Independent Playwright	✓			
Cassie McGannon	Board Member	Policy and Research Manager – Social Ventures Australia				
Sam Routledge	Board Member	Artistic Director – Terrapin Puppet Theatre				✓
Lyn Wallis	Board Member	Chief Rabbit/Independent Artist – The Daily Rabbit				✓
Robyn Gawenda	Board Member	Executive Director & Co-CEO – Footscray Arts Centre				
Zainab Syed	Board Member	Producer – Belvoir St Theatre		✓		

### Board Succession Plan

During 2020, Erica McCalman and Caroline Bowditch were supported onto the executive team, joining Jill Smith and Lou Oppenheim from 2021. In 2022 Jill will be stepping down as Chair, with a succession plan in place to replace her with Erica McCalman.

With a growing national program, and as part of our succession planning, TNA aims to recruit one new Board member during 2022. We have a matrix against which we balance national representation with a critical mass of local members; demographic diversity; and

experience and industry role – for example we are identifying diverse cultural leaders to join the board to better reflect the diversity of the Australian population.

As a part of TNA’s commitment to contributing to creating a diverse and active network of emerging leaders, we also welcome an Observer on the board every two years, which is undertaken through The Observership Program. In 2022 and 2024 TNA will be working with the Program to host Observers from our communities of focus.

### **Independent Board Member Sitting Fee**

In 2019-20 we worked with pro-bono lawyers Clayton Uzt to design a legal mechanism for paying Board members who are independent artists or arts workers, with an honorarium per meeting, as we found that underrepresented groups are over-represented as unsalaried Board members. This came into effect in February 2020.

### **Advisory Committees**

In addition to the Board, TNA utilises national advisory committees on specific programs. We have Circus and Physical Theatre and ASSITEJ Advisory Committees (independents are paid), as well as Equity Advisors.

#### ***ASSITEJ Advisory Committee***

Sarah Parsons (NSW), Helen Hristofski (WA), Christian Leavesly (VIC), Romi Kupfer (VIC), Rhen Soggee (SA), Louise Wellington (NT), Aleshia Johnson (ACT), Belinda Kelly (TAS), Tariro Mavondo (VIC), Zac James (WA), and Kevin Du Preez (NSW). A QLD representative is currently being confirmed.

#### ***Circus and Physical Theatre Advisory Committee***

Jascha Boyce (SA), Alice Cadwell (NSW), Harley Mann (VIC), Jo Smith (WA), Devon Taylor (VIC), Lisa McCready (QLD), Loki Rickus (SA), and Lisa Fa’alafi (NSW).

#### ***Equity Advisors***

Caroline Bowditch, Andrea James, Zainab Syed, Erica McCalman, Janice Florence, Christa Jonathan, Tariro Mavondo, Harley Mann, Tiara S, and Devon Taylor.

### **Risk Management**

The TNA Board assesses the risks to the organisation as part of its strategic planning cycle, and reviews this as needed, as the detail of programs and activities emerges. As a service organisation, our key operational risk is limited financial security. This is mitigated through a financial diversification and growth plan, to maintain multi-year funding from both state and federal government, growing membership income, significant multi-year philanthropic support, ongoing annual donors, and increasing contract fee income and earned income. We also have thorough and transparent budgeting and reporting process, and a rigorous audit process.

The other key risk is loss of core staff, and with them corporate knowledge. The crucial role that the Executive Director plays in advocacy is well understood. The Board has implemented a staggered pay rise over four years to ensure that the role remains attractive to her and future candidates, and the growing team has created a significant mitigation of that risk, with the organisation’s work, including advocacy and public representation, now

shared across many roles. In addition, this risk is eased with robust documentation of processes and knowledge, and retention of a highly experienced and very active industry-based board and advisory groups.

Our key production risk is when undertaking events and forums. To manage these risks, we undertake a detailed risk assessment and mitigation plan for each event, in conjunction with the venue partners and other key partners such as festivals.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will continue to pose risks and challenges in the years to come, and TNA is prepared to be responsive and flexible. As detailed earlier, we have painted three different scenarios over 2021-2025 and predicted some government and societal response to those scenarios. We have then mapped out how TNA's work might change accordingly. While our activity plan details only one action or initiative, we will continue to carry forward other options so that we are ready to adapt as needed.

## **Staffing**

TNA has six core staff positions. An Executive Director, General Manager, Program Director, Program Producer, Communications Manager, and a proposed supported Associate Director position from 2022 (see below). We also engage administration and project staff and contractors as needed, e.g. researchers for our surveys. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Management, all staff report to the Executive Director but are supervised day to day by the General Manager.

The main planned change to staffing over the next five years is to consolidate our recent growth, and to develop and implement succession plans for key roles. Our slimline structure is still a paramount goal, but staff will take on higher duties to embed corporate knowledge across the team and increasingly define distinct roles and responsibilities, including direct lines of reporting to the Board. All staff will take on outreach work, speaking opportunities and facilitation of meetings, ensuring that TNA's impact is expanding. Explicit in this, through the creation of the Associate Director role, is the inclusion of staff from our target communities.

### **TNA's Employment Policy**

We value the rich contributions to the arts made by people from a variety of backgrounds, and we aim to have a diverse group of people working at TNA. We are an equal opportunity workplace and we strongly encourage applications by people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, First Nations people, and people with disabilities –we then provide what people need to do their best work, whether access services or other needs. We understand needs of people with family obligations and we provide a flexible working week, and part-time positions. We understand artists' working lives, and by negotiation we allow time off for artistic practice and other commitments such as touring. We understand First Nations' protocol, including time for sorry business and other cultural needs. Our philosophy is based on generosity, empathy, and a commitment to deep work satisfaction for employees. We know that this is repaid in retaining committed, passionate staff who live and breathe the values of the organisation.

## **Current Staff Roles**

### **Executive Director (0.8 FTE)**

The Executive Director leads and manages TNA in an effective, creative, dynamic, and sustainable manner. The position is largely self-directed and governed by the needs of the stakeholders as identified through ongoing consultation and by the Board. This position leads the organisation's advocacy work, builds and maintains partnerships, drives the strategic directions, and is the main spokesperson for TNA.

### **General Manager (1.0 FTE)**

The General Manager ensures that TNA operates at the highest level of professional conduct, maintaining our reputation for providing exemplary and generous services to the performing arts sector. This includes strategic planning, compliance, budget management, policy development, the implementation of systems and processes, improving workflow, acting as the primary funding liaison, and all HR related matters.

### **Associate Director (0.5 FTE)**

The Associate Director is a new, budgeted position created to actively support the career progression of a mid-career arts leader from TNA's target communities (First Nations, CaLD, Deaf/disabled). This person will be included in the pool of people supported within the Associate Executive Collective, addressing the need for more diverse leadership succession planning in our sector. This position will take an active leadership role within TNA, while also being mentored and supported in areas and skills of interest to them.

### **Program Manager CaPT and Strategic Programs (0.8 FTE)**

The Program Manager works collaboratively to co-design and deliver TNA's national program of activity to provide opportunities and education for our members and stakeholders. This position takes the lead on our Circus and Physical Theatre work and is the key driver of our partnership with Safe Theatres' Australia.

### **Program Producer VIPI and Sector Development (0.6 FTE)**

The Program Producer is responsible for driving TNA's Victorian work, primarily the Victorian Independent Producers Initiative which includes curating salons and workshops, administering and running a mentoring program and liaising with the sector regarding funding opportunities.

### **Communications Manager (0.5 FTE)**

The Communications Manager works collaboratively to develop and implement the communication and marketing strategy to maintain excellent communications with our members, subscribers, followers, and stakeholders. This position is responsible for the successful release of TNA's monthly e-news and supports TNA more broadly in advocacy campaigns and research.

### **Bookkeeping and Finances (Contract) - Sam Ryan, Director, SAYSO**