

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Monday, 24 November 2008



### **Councils encouraged to spend bonus infrastructure funding on cultural facilities**

Central West councils received around \$5.5 million to spend on infrastructure in surprise one-off grants announced by the Federal Government last week.

Arts OutWest, the regional arts and cultural development board for the Central West region, is encouraging councils to consider the dire need for improvements to cultural infrastructure as they plan how to use the funding.

The 12 councils in the Arts OutWest program area have received a total of \$5,449,000, ranging from \$267,000 to Oberon Council up to \$959,000 to Bathurst Regional Council.

In recent research submitted to the NSW Parliament Inquiry into the Development of Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Outside the Sydney CBD (2008), Arts OutWest identified a list of needs across the region: from community halls needing repair, improvement and development of performing arts facilities, new storage spaces for the Regional Galleries and the overall development of multi-purpose community spaces that add to the cultural life of residents.

“This new funding is both a boost to local industry in a time of international financial crisis and an acknowledgement that local government still provides the majority of the important facilities in our communities” said Arts OutWest Chair Brandon Wilson. “It is our cultural facilities - places the whole community can come together, places that provide that sense of belonging for a community – that can really benefit from improvements and new building works.”

“Both state and federal governments are looking to the creative industries as major growth areas for regional economies. Local government can assist this by providing suitable, modern cultural infrastructure” said Mr Wilson.

The new federal funding, which has been allocated nationally based on populations and population growth needs, is targeted for small local projects that accelerate and encourage economic development as well as improving the quality of life in local communities.

In addition to these one-off grants to Australian councils, a pool of \$50 million is also on offer nationally for major infrastructure projects where the project will cost more than \$2 million.

As many of the councils have begun plans to spend this windfall already, Arts OutWest would welcome involvement in the process and looks forward to discussing ideas on cultural infrastructure with each local government.

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**Amounts received by each LGA:**

<i>LGA</i>	<i>Funds allocated</i>
<i>Bathurst Region</i>	<i>\$959,000</i>
<i>Blayney</i>	<i>\$289,000</i>
<i>Cabonne</i>	<i>\$381,000</i>
<i>Cowra</i>	<i>\$448,000</i>
<i>Forbes</i>	<i>\$494,000</i>
<i>Lachlan</i>	<i>\$576,000</i>
<i>Lithgow</i>	<i>\$529,000</i>
<i>Mid-Western Region</i>	<i>\$572,000</i>
<i>Oberon</i>	<i>\$267,000</i>
<i>Orange</i>	<i>\$875,000</i>
<i>Parkes</i>	<i>\$543,000</i>
<i>Wellington</i>	<i>\$395,000</i>

Funding announcement: [www.aclq.gov.au](http://www.aclq.gov.au)

Funding guidelines and full lists of funds received by each LGA:  
[http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/local/rcip\\_guidelines.aspx](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/local/rcip_guidelines.aspx)

Info on the Inquiry into the NSW Parliament Development of Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Outside the Sydney CBD:  
<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/committee.nsf/0/25BA7ADA4BC40244CA2574950003F979>