



REGIONAL ARTS  
NSW



**MEDIA RELEASE:**

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## **CEO of Australia Council for Arts to tour Central West**

The CEO of the Australia Council for the Arts, Kathy Keele, will join the CEO of Regional Arts NSW, Elizabeth Rogers, Arts OutWest Executive Officer, Tracey Callinan and Orana Arts Regional Development Officer, Merryn Spencer, on a regional tour during the first week of December.

As the head of the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body, Ms Keele is keen to visit regional areas of Australia and this will be her first trip to inland NSW. Also with her will be Louise Walsh, Director, Artsupport Australia, the Australia Council section that builds philanthropic support for the arts.

Leaving Sydney on 30 November, they will visit Canowindra, Forbes, Condobolin, Lake Cargelligo Parkes, Dubbo, Wellington, Molong, Orange and Bathurst, returning to Sydney on 4 December. They will see how the unique network of regional arts boards in NSW develops arts and cultural programs that address the needs and aspirations of diverse local communities. They will meet with arts organisations, arts workers, local council staff, arts business owners and Aboriginal artists in the region, as well as review cultural infrastructure, arts programs and creative industry development.

Whilst Ms Keele, who has headed the Australia Council since 2007, has visited many parts of the country, this will be her first extensive tour of regional inland NSW. The tour will offer her a first-hand look at art and cultural projects recently completed in both the Arts Outwest and Orana Arts region and broaden her understanding of the role played by the arts in a regional landscape.

Regional Arts NSW CEO, Elizabeth Rogers commented, "It also will be my first extensive tour of the Arts OutWest region and we couldn't come this far without popping across the 'border' into Dubbo. I'm delighted that Kathy was available to take up my invitation. It is an added bonus to have Louise along for the ride, given her critical role in developing cultural philanthropy, including in regional Australia."

"I hope this trip will be an eye-opener about life in regional, rural and remote communities, and particularly the role played by local government in supporting the arts. Most importantly, they will have the opportunity to meet with local people, many of whom are volunteers, who contribute so much to the cultural life of our communities."

'I am deeply appreciative of the work done by Tracey Callinan from Arts OutWest and Merryn Spencer from Orana Arts and their staff in setting up so many meetings to give Kathy and Louise a picture of the vast range of art activities in the region.'

"We've found people from the Central West very keen to share their experiences of arts development in regional New South Wales, the challenges as well as the successes and achievements," said Tracey Callinan.

Merryn Spencer from Orana Arts agrees. "Kathy Keele and Louise Walsh have each accomplished a great deal for the arts in Australia and are great mentors to those of us working in the field. This is a rare opportunity for our region and I look forward to some very interesting discussions, as well as a bit of expert advice!"

### **For further information please contact:**

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