

Artspace Modern Award Review Submission

Introduction

Artspace is a leading independent, not-for-profit contemporary art space, cultural partner and community resource located in Sydney on Gadigal land. We receive government support from the Federal Government through Creative Australia and from the New South Wales (NSW) State Government through Create NSW. Government funding is supplemented through the valued contributions of our dedicated community of partners and benefactors. Artspace was established in 1983 as an artist-run gallery for emerging and early-career artists, conceived as an alternative to commercial galleries and major national collecting institutions. During the 1990s Artspace evolved into a funded contemporary art space with professional staff and a focus on supporting artists at all stages of their careers. Artspace provides a platform for artists to engage in critical dialogue within Australia and internationally, ensuring radical, open-ended, and speculative forms of making and thinking are embedded in our program. Local, regional, national and international partnerships are central to Artspace's expanded artistic program which offers a diversified approach to connect audiences and communities with Australian artists and their international peers. We present a collaborative, civic and creative platform which reaches from Woolloomooloo to the Asia Pacific and beyond through the strong relationships and partnerships at the heart of our activities. Artspace's program enables ideas to germinate and grow, extending the definition of what art is and what it can become.

Artspace employs 9 FTE staff across a breadth of roles in the visual arts, craft, and design sector. This includes but is not limited to artistic programming, business development and operations, and communications. We are making a submission to the Modern Award Review to actively improve our sector and advocate for best practice and industry standards, especially in the Small-to-Medium, Not-for-Profit (NFP) sector which relies on clear frameworks to support key operations and sustainability.

Chapter 2: The arts and culture sector:

1. Are there particular industries or occupations that should form the focus of the Commission's consideration of the arts and culture sector in this Review? If so, why?

The Visual Arts, Craft and Design industry should be the focus of the Modern Award Review. It is imperative that we have a distinct award that is clearly defined and has not been translated from our industry awards, which often lack adequate coverage or requires numerous awards for the visual arts. This will ensure that it accurately reflects the conditions of our sector, recognises the specialised skills, education, and experiences of our creative workforce, offers incentives for career progression, and is fit for purpose. The roles and responsibilities within our sector are not easily measured or quantifiable under the current awards available as these do not consider how positions shift in accordance with the scale of the organisation and their governing structure, for example. NFPs differ to commercial galleries, which differ again to government and/or statutory organisations.

Our organisation often adapts the Amusement, Event & Recreation Award and Live Performance Award for our occupations, however this is not always the most appropriate or sufficient approach, as it does not accurately indicate salary rates based on specialised expertise. It is important to have clearly defined levels of responsibility by creating a framework that outlines the roles, responsibilities, capabilities, expectations. Artspace supports a review as this would ideally bring unification and visibility to the sector, by establishing a clear framework for differing organisations, especially the Small-to-Medium, Not-For-Profit sector which relies on Fairwork Australia to ensure the integrity of their employment processes and the agency to be ethical and efficient.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Regards,

Michelle Newton
Deputy Director, Artspace

