

Terms of Reference

Ministers Advisory Committee for the Arts

1. Purpose

The Ministerial Advisory Committee for the Arts (MACA) provides strategic and regionally informed advice to the Minister for Arts on issues, opportunities and challenges affecting the Northern Territory's arts, culture and creative industries. The Committee supports implementation of the Northern Territory Arts Strategy 2034 and the Northern Territory Arts Strategy Action Plan 2025-2029.

2. Authority

MACA is a non-statutory advisory group established by the Minister for Arts. It holds no delegated powers to act on behalf of the Minister, or to commit the Minister or government to actions. The Terms of Reference align to the *Northern Territory Government Boards Handbook* (the Handbook).

3. Objectives

The objective of the MACA is to:

- Provide advice on priorities, emerging issues, and opportunities influencing the Northern Territory's arts and creative industries, including:
 - sector capacity and sustainability, governance, workforce development, digital transformation and environmental responsibility
 - regional and artform-specific strategies that reflect NT communities' strengths, aspirations, and cultural diversity
 - opportunities for collaboration between government, industry, education, tourism, and community sectors to achieve shared social, cultural, and economic outcomes.
- Consider and advise on the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of arts and creative industry policies, programs, and initiatives to ensure alignment with the Northern Territory Arts Strategy 2034 and its Action Plan.
- Support communication and accountability by contributing to the development of public communiqués following each meeting.
- Consider issues that the Minister for Arts may refer to the MACA for advice.

4. Membership

4.1. Composition

The MACA may have up to 12 members consisting of six (6) Leading Arts Organisations and six (6) Community Members appointed by the Minister for the Arts.

The MACA membership will reflect expertise across the breadth of the creative industries, including visual arts, crafts and design, performing arts (music, dance, theatre, comedy, circus, etc.), literature, digital and interactive media, and community cultural development.

4.2. Observer

From time to time, relevant organisations such as the Australian Government (i.e. Office for the Arts/ Creative Australia), Northern Territory Government Key Partners identified in the Action Plan 2025-26, Local Government, regional councils and industry experts may be invited to attend as observers or presenters when deemed appropriate.

Observers may contribute to discussions at the invitation of the Chair but do not hold voting rights.

4.3. Appointment

Members are selected following a public expression of interest process. A selection panel will shortlist EOIs received and make recommendations on suitable nominees to the Minister for Arts for consideration.

The Minister may also invite people to join the Committee. Members are appointed with a letter of appointment from the Minister.

Membership duration will be staggered between 2 or 3 years, with the ability to be re-appointed by the Minister for a subsequent term.

4.3.1. Leading Arts Organisations members

Leading Arts Organisations members represent arts organisations that receive five-year funding through the NT Arts Grants Program. These organisations play a pivotal role in delivering programs and services across multiple artforms and regions, ensuring access and participation for all Territorians.

Collectively, Leading Arts Organisations members provide industry-level leadership and bring strategic insight, operational experience, and both regional and national perspectives to the MACA. They contribute artform-specific expertise and insights that inform government decision-making, helping to identify sector-wide priorities, emerging trends, and opportunities for collaboration that strengthen the arts ecosystem across the Northern Territory.

4.3.2. Community members

Community members will include artists and arts workers, independent practitioners, educators, representatives from non-funded arts organisations, audiences and participants in arts and cultural activity, and individuals from allied sectors such as health, tourism, education, and community development.

Community members will contribute informed, on-the-ground perspectives that reflect the lived experience of creating, engaging with, and supporting the arts across the Northern Territory. Their input will help ensure that advice to government is grounded in community realities, responsive to local needs, and aligned with sector aspirations.

4.4. Chair and Deputy Chair

A Chair will be appointed by the Minister. A Deputy Chair may also be appointed at the discretion of the Minister. Where both a Chair and Deputy Chair are appointed, one must be a community member.

The Chair will be selected for their skills, knowledge, experience and broader community representation.

5. Operation

5.1. Meetings

MACA will meet at least twice per year. Agenda papers will be circulated to members prior to the meeting.

Whenever possible, decisions will be made by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote of members present will determine the outcome. The advice provided to the Minister will reflect the diversity of views expressed.

5.2. Quorum

A quorum is half of the current members plus one. Observers or any visiting experts are not included in the count for a quorum and cannot vote.

5.3. Proxies

Proxies or substitute representatives are not permitted. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they may provide written input on agenda items in advance for consideration by the Chair. Absences will be noted in the meeting record.

5.4. Absences

If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must submit an apology to the Secretariat. Apologies will be noted in the minutes. If a member fails to attend two consecutive meetings without leave approved by the Chair, their term may be cancelled by the Minister.

Members may apply through the Chair to take a leave of absence from their MACA responsibilities for up to two meetings. For a period of absence longer than two meetings, the request requires consideration from the Minister.

5.5. Secretariat

Secretariat support will be provided by the Department – Arts NT, including coordination of meetings, preparation and distribution of agendas and papers, recording of minutes, and maintenance of records.

6. Remuneration

6.1.1. Leading Arts Organisation Members

Leading Arts Organisation members will not be remunerated for their participation on the MACA.

This reflects that Leading Arts Organisation representatives are funded through the NT Arts Grants Program to deliver strategic outcomes that include leadership, advocacy, and collaboration across the arts sector. Participation in the MACA is therefore considered part of their funded role in providing strategic and sector-wide input.

This approach maintains equity and transparency across government processes, avoids potential conflicts of interest, and reinforces the expectation that Leading Arts Organisation members contribute to sector development as part of their leadership commitment.

6.1.2. Community and Independent Members

Community and independent members who are not otherwise supported through NT Government funding may be eligible for remuneration and reimbursement in line with Northern Territory Government policies for advisory boards and committees.

This ensures accessibility and inclusion by recognising the contribution of individuals who bring lived experience, community insight, and professional expertise from outside funded organisations.

Travel and accommodation expenses may also be reimbursed where participation requires travel from regional or remote locations, consistent with NT Government travel guidelines.

Remuneration will be paid in accordance with the *Northern Territory Government Boards and Committees Handbook*, classified as Class C – Advisory and Review Boards, Level C3 (Ministerial Assistance).

7. Conflict of interest

Members must comply with the NT Public Sector Code of Conduct and the NT Government Boards and Committees Handbook and act with honesty, integrity, and diligence at all times. Members must avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. Declarations of interest will be sought at each meeting and recorded in the minutes.

Where a conflict arises, the member must declare the interest and, if required, absent themselves from discussion and decision-making on that matter. All deliberations, advice and information considered by the Committee are confidential unless otherwise agreed by the Chairperson or the Department.

8. Confidentiality

Members must take care to maintain the security of documents and information provided in the course of their duties.

Unless otherwise indicated, all papers and minutes are confidential. MACA will determine what papers are marked for release at the end of each meeting, or in subsequent meetings.

Members may be provided with other confidential material, which they should treat with care and discretion and cannot disclose to anyone outside of MACA.

9. Resignation

Members may resign from MACA at any time. All resignations must be submitted in writing to the Minister. Appointment of replacement members is at the discretion of the Minister.

10. Review of the Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Minister for Arts in consultation with MACA, at least, every two years or as required.