

THEATRE NETWORK VICTORIA

2011 Issues Paper

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

This paper has been written primarily to inform TNV's work for 2011, but is available for use by others to support advocacy efforts that align with TNV's.

The four key objectives for 2011 were chosen through discussion by the TNV Committee and staff in February 2011, with the outcomes of the 2010 Victorian Theatre Meeting used as a basis for the discussion.

The key goal for Theatre Network Victoria is:

To strengthen the small to medium performing arts sector.

The following objectives support this goal:

1. To increase cultural diversity within the theatre sector.
2. To develop new models and structures to support theatre making.
3. To address issues of environmental sustainability within the theatre sector.
4. To ensure the ongoing sustainability of the small to medium sector and in particular to ensure that independent artists are better supported.

The objectives chosen are both important for the sector, and, in our opinion, are in need of further advocacy and support – i.e. there is a gap in addressing these issues that TNV can help to fill. Issues equally important but currently well supported in another way were not included in TNV's workplan, but TNV will continue to promote and support those issues in partnership with other organisations, such as Australian Women Directors Association (Women Directors in Key Creative Positions), VAPAC and RAV (Regional Touring), and YPAA (Diversity and Age Discrimination).

Victorian Theatre Meeting outcomes

The 2010 Victorian Theatre Meeting resulted in eight top issues chosen as vital for the sector to address (see <http://tnv.net.au/resources/post/tnv-victorian-theatre-meeting-report-2010> for the full report):

- ⇒ Diversity and Age Discrimination.
- ⇒ Light, Flexible Infrastructure.
- ⇒ Regional and National Touring - supporting higher risk and diversity on the road.
- ⇒ What is a Producer?
- ⇒ Women Directors in key creative positions in the professional sector.
- ⇒ Affiliated Artistic Directors for Regionally based Performing Arts Centres.
- ⇒ Cultural Change for Theatre.
- ⇒ Longer, Deeper, Slower....a ten year vision. What will we do to become environmentally sustainable in the next decade?

The issues that TNV has chosen to work on will cover many of the above topics, as some are combined into a single topic.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION PLAN

These four key issues are discussed further below: we relate the issue to TNV's existing Manifesto, we outline what we want to see happen, and we commit action towards those aims.

1. To increase Cultural Diversity within the Theatre sector.

TNV Manifesto – statement of principle:

We believe a diverse theatre sector provides a richness of skills, perspectives and identities that is vital. We believe theatre will benefit from increased participation at all levels by women, people with disabilities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, indigenous Australians, children and young people, and older people.

Next Steps:

In particular, we want increased participation at all levels of the theatre industry, of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and indigenous Australians.

We will:

- ⇒ Support DATA in their efforts at increasing cultural diversity on theatre stages and in all other levels of the theatre sector in Australia.
- ⇒ Ensure that the Australian Theatre Forum addresses cultural diversity in its content and structure.
- ⇒ Create a web-page for this strategy on the TNV website.
- ⇒ Promote this issue throughout the theatre industry and beyond, and monitor and support the efforts of Arts Victoria and the Australia Council in their work in this area.

2. To progress new models and new ways of supporting theatre making.

TNV Manifesto – statement of principle:

We believe there are multiple ways for a society to support a thriving arts sector. We believe different artistic, business, funding, financial, and governance models can work, and that flexibility and exploration are paramount.

Next Steps:

In particular, we want to see courageous and new ways of supporting the making of theatre: new funding structures, new producing models, new artistic structures, new marketing paradigms, new development and training methods, new ways to pool and share resources, and new ways to network and support colleagues.

We will:

- ⇒ Support the work of organisations and initiatives that are developing and supporting new ways of working, e.g. MAPS, Auspicious Incubator, Independent Producers Australia, Melbourne Fringe etc.
- ⇒ Monitor and support research and development regarding the impact of the National Broadband Network on the arts sector.

- ⇒ Run a forum in Melbourne to identify and explore new models.
- ⇒ Create a web-page for this strategy on the TNV website.
- ⇒ Promote this issue throughout the theatre industry and beyond, including documentation and directions from the Forum above.

3. To address issues of Environmental Sustainability within the theatre sector.

TNV Manifesto – statement of principle:

We believe the arts are essential to our collective civic identity, and can simultaneously impact in social, economic and environmental arenas.

Next Steps:

In particular, we believe that it is our job to work in a sustainable way, using minimal resources and creating minimal carbon impact.

We will:

- ⇒ Support the work of Tipping Point Australia and other like-minded organisations, such as Climart.org.
- ⇒ Create a web-page for this strategy on the TNV website.
- ⇒ Promote this issue throughout the theatre industry and beyond.
- ⇒ Minimise our own organisational carbon impact.

4. To ensure the ongoing sustainability of the small to medium sector and in particular to ensure that independent artists are better supported.

TNV Manifesto – statements of principle:

We believe artists – including writers, devisors, composers, designers, performers, dramaturges - play a pivotal role in the theatre industry; and

We believe small-to-medium sized theatre companies are a career destination (not simply pathways to commercial or major sectors) and are integral to invention and innovation in theatre in Australia.

Next Steps:

In particular, we believe that independent theatre makers – those not associated with an ongoing theatre company – are a vital but vulnerable group within the theatre profession, and warrant stronger support in order to continue to contribute to the sector.

We will:

- ⇒ Continue advocacy for the small to medium and independent theatre sectors.
- ⇒ Support the work of other organisations and initiatives that are supporting independent theatre makers.
- ⇒ Work with other organisations, such as Live Performance Australia, Ausdance, etc, to advocate for better pay and conditions for independent performance makers.
- ⇒ Create a web-page for this strategy on the TNV website.
- ⇒ Promote this issue throughout the theatre industry and beyond.

Further Information: TNV's Manifesto and the Victorian Theatre Meeting Report, plus other resources, are available to download from www.tnv.net.au or contact us on phone: 03 8256 9685 or Nicole@tnv.net.au