



MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS

MEDIA STATEMENT

Attention: News Editor/Chief of Staff

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New digital initiative for artists is an Australian first.

An Australian-first initiative will give Western Australian artists an opportunity to reach and interact with new audiences through ABC television and online.

Culture and Arts Minister Sheila McHale said the iArts project would partner selected WA artists and musicians with WA producers to create interactive works that could be streamed online, podcast, vodcast or broadcast on mobile networks and on ABC TV.

"iArts is the first initiative of its kind in Australia and is an excellent example of cross-industry collaboration," Ms McHale said.

"It will give WA artists an opportunity to develop critical online business skills which will help them profile their work nationally and internationally.

"The applications for digital technology are exciting. For example, a project might be created around a performance piece, whereby ABC online streams the rehearsal process live and the audience has opportunities to comment and possibly input into the direction of the piece. ABC2 may later show an edited version of the rehearsals and how the piece came together, and ABC1 may run the completed performance piece."

The Minister said the WA Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA), ScreenWest and ABC TV had come together to fund the initiative, with \$160,000 of the total budget going directly to the production of the two projects.

ABC TV director Kim Dalton said iArts was a significant new partnership which strengthened the relationship between WA arts organisations, the community and the ABC.

"The ABC, through its digital broadcast and online platforms, can provide artists and filmmakers with opportunities to reach new audiences, to expand and develop new markets, to learn about rights management in the digital era and to experiment with new business models," Mr Dalton said.

More information about iArts can be obtained from ScreenWest at <http://www.screenwest.com.au>

Applications close July 21 and successful projects will be announced in August.

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