

AUSTRALIAN
PERFORMING
ARTS MARKET

APAM

Program Overview



APAM 2020–2024 is an initiative of the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, and the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.

January 2021

Introduction

The Australian Performing Arts Market (APAM) works year-round, and across Australia, to connect contemporary Australian theatre, dance, emerging and experimental art with international and national opportunities.

APAM deepens relationships and creates new markets and pathways across the globe for contemporary Australian performance. If you are an Australian artist or company, a venue, a festival or an international colleague, producer or presenter, APAM invites you to connect!

In 2021, APAM hosts two Gatherings at:

- **DreamBIG Children's Festival**

Adelaide, SA | May 2021

- **Darwin Festival**

Darwin, NT | August 2021

Gatherings are more than just a showcase. They will provide all the elements of traditional performing arts markets, but with full-length public performances. Happening at established festivals across Australia, Gatherings will build more opportunities for collaboration across the performing arts.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gatherings will be held as hybrid events: accessible both online and in-person (travel restrictions permitting).

We welcome your ideas, contributions and involvement in APAM and our activities over the coming years.

APAM acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters, communities, and culture. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and, through them, to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Who is APAM for?

Australian and New Zealand artists in the global marketplace

APAM is a strategic initiative of the Australia Council for the Arts. It is designed to showcase Australian and New Zealand contemporary dance, theatre, emerging and experimental arts nationally and internationally.

APAM seeks to work with artists and organisations that have strategic market development plans and engage professional artists.

APAM operates at a national level as well as an international one. APAM's events and activities take place in different locations across the country, giving participants a variety of opportunities and situations to build their market development capacity and develop interstate and international relationships and networks.

First Nations Focus

Central to APAM's continued success is the celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, companies and communities.

APAM works with ILBIJERRI Theatre Company, an internationally significant First Nations-run and led performing arts company, as the First Nations Lead for APAM. ILBIJERRI brings extensive expertise and leadership to APAM, and focuses in particular on building capacity, skills, and networks among First Nations arts leaders.

The First Nations Advisory Group frames and guides APAM's First Nations relationships and programming, ensuring that cultural sensitivity and consideration are embedded in APAM's processes. The First Nations Advisory Group comprises performing arts sector leaders from First Nations across the country. They guide the work of the First Nations producing team employed by ILBIJERRI, who are based in the APAM Office. The First Nations Advisory Group has a rotating membership in order to connect to community and specialised knowledge around Australia.

What's APAM's purpose?

As a strategic initiative of the Australia Council for the Arts, APAM has operated for 24 years as a biennial market event. The impact of this investment history is that Australian and New Zealand artists and arts organisation are well-connected, savvy and resilient market leaders. They work across a spectrum of international engagement that includes touring, co-commissioning, collaboration and residencies.

APAM is currently delivered by Creative Victoria and has evolved to reflect the increasingly connected, sophisticated and established Australian performing arts sector. The role of APAM in its new iteration is to deepen relationships through exchange, reciprocity, and hospitality.

APAM's three functions

1. An APAM Office, open year-round to facilitate visitors to Australia

Based in Melbourne with a national remit, a small, dedicated staff of advocates is ready to welcome, host and connect international artists, presenters, and partners with contemporary Australian performance.

2. Hosting 1–2 annual APAM Gatherings at established festivals around Australia

Gatherings replace the previous biennial market events, increasing the number of APAM events and the diversity of contexts in which to visit performing arts communities around the country.

3. Market intelligence for contemporary Australian performance

APAM will serve as an Australian-based hub of market intelligence that will benefit contemporary Australian performance and its advocates internationally.

A. The APAM Office

The APAM Office is open year-round, serving as both a physical and figurative welcome desk for inbound visitors and delegations to Australia, including outside Gatherings.

The experienced team at the APAM Office is open to international visitors who are interested in connecting with contemporary Australian performance. Although Gatherings will be the main focus of APAM and the most popular time to visit, the APAM Office offers itineraries, informal events, or networking opportunities for visiting international presenters to meet the Australian sector and make their visit more productive.

APAM subsidises the attendance of priority international visitors at Gatherings. The purpose of helping bring international presenters to Australia is to assist them to get to know and understand Australian contemporary performing arts. This will strengthen existing relationships and spark new ones.

APAM will encourage international visitors to travel within Australia to see work in context. International visitors subsidised by APAM will be expected to:

- Have the capacity and intention to commit to further exchange between Australian and international artists and audiences.
- Fully participate in the APAM Gathering or activity, which includes attending full-length works. APAM will encourage visitors to travel to at least one other state, territory, or region as part of that trip.

- Provide their contact details and curatorial policies to APAM so the Australian performing arts community can access them.

How you might engage with the APAM Office

- An international visitor extends their trip and works with the APAM Office to visit another Australian city to meet artists and companies they aren't familiar with. APAM engages a local host to show them around.
- An international presenter wants to see Australian practitioners in a particular artform so they can potentially present them. APAM provides information and offers to connect them with relevant artists and companies.
- An experienced Australian company returns from an important international tour. The APAM Office hosts a local event and a national teleconference for the sector to hear from the company about changed market conditions.
- An Australian festival hosts a visiting artist. In collaboration with the APAM Office they host an informal event for the artist to meet local artists, producers and curators to offer an insight into their country's performing arts community.
- An Australian artist wants to make the most of an international residency and connects with the APAM Office for an introduction to a recent international visitor in the same region.

B. APAM Gatherings

APAM hosts 1–2 Gatherings each year around Australia. Like previous markets, APAM Gatherings invite participants to pay a registration fee to attend, alongside other participants whose attendance is subsidised. Gatherings will include programs such as pitches, exchange of ideas, and networking that you've come to expect at APAM and other performing arts markets.

In 2021, Gatherings will be at DreamBIG Festival in Adelaide, and Darwin Festival. APAM Gatherings are held at a range of festivals and cities, which will allow participants to experience Australian contemporary performance on a variety of scales and through various lenses. Some APAM Gatherings will have an artform-specific context or special interest area. They will be up to five days in length — often shorter — and will be calibrated to the context of the host festival. All Gatherings will include significant contributions from First Nations artists and companies.

APAM Gatherings enable national and international presenters to experience Australian and New Zealand contemporary performance in context and under ideal presentation conditions: at full scale, full length, with uncompromised production values, and with a public audience.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gatherings will be held as hybrid events: accessible both online and in-person (travel restrictions permitting).

APAM's partnerships with host festivals will increase the number, diversity and geographic spread of APAM activities. Gatherings draw the sector to established Australian festivals, helping national, international, artist and industry-focused participants to mingle.

APAM will make rolling announcements as Gatherings are confirmed at festivals.

APAM partners with festivals that:

- Are curated, and that present high-quality works by Australian and New Zealand artists.
- Present and commission new Australian work, remunerating the artists and companies they program.
- Have an established presence in their community and are well attended by local audiences.
- Include significant works and relationships with First Nations artists and companies.
- Are dense, encouraging participants to attend multiple works each day.
- Have an enthusiastic and collaborative relationship with their local performing arts community.

What to expect at Gatherings

Participants at Gatherings will experience a range of activities including:

Showcased works in the festival

Curated and presented as part of the host festival.

All showcased works will be available to members of the public. Participants at Gatherings will need to purchase tickets to see showcased works. APAM will ensure a limited number of tickets for all showcased works are made available to Gathering participants.

Profiles

Selected by a national curatorial panel from an expressions-of-interest process.

Profile sessions offer opportunities for artists, companies and groups to share their repertoire, ideas and ambitions. Profile sessions include works in development seeking commission or presentation; productions with a completed premiere; and presenters engaging in innovative and sustainable ways to present work.

As at previous markets, the curatorial panel will be made up of national and international industry leaders who draw on a range of practice and international experiences. The panel will liaise closely with the Australia Council for the Arts' International Development Managers (IDMs).

Local Partner Events

Curated by presenters and producers who are based in the host festival's city.

Designed to offer participants a window into the contemporary performing arts sector locally, these events are collaborations between APAM and local players. Local partners curate talks, events and programming — not the presentation of full-length works — grouped by genre, form, subject matter, process or special interest.

Exchange

Curated by APAM.

Exchange includes keynotes, panels, talks and networking programs at Gatherings. Exchange is informed by the host festival's context, and incorporates national and international perspectives.

National focus

Within each Gathering there will be a focus on the most relevant dialogues or conversations that need addressing within the national sector. These conversations may be co-hosted by partner organisations and may differ from Gathering to Gathering in agenda, artform or approach.

C. Market intelligence

APAM has an exciting opportunity to be an Australian-based hub for market intelligence about and for the contemporary performing arts.

This aspect of the new APAM model will evolve over time, and will grow most fruitfully if the sector is collegiate and generous with information, opportunities and networks. Over the next few years, APAM will trial a handful of resources, tools and intelligence-gathering exercises, exploring how much they benefit Australian artists and companies. The new APAM website will be a key hub for this information, and will also track outcomes for all three APAM functions.

Strategies APAM will trial in 2020 include:

- After Australian delegations head to key international markets and events, APAM will host teleconferences at which delegates can offer feedback to others who are interested or could not attend.
- Festivals that host their own international visitors program will be able to request APAM's database of visitors.

Keep in contact with us to find out more and to let us know what is useful and relevant.

Key things to note

- APAM Gatherings will be smaller in size than previous APAM market events, but more frequent and diverse. We expect regular, targeted Gatherings will enable deeper relationships and provide more regular opportunities for presenters, producers and artists.
- Excerpts from productions will not be shown at APAM Gatherings. The host festival will present showcased works in full and in context, and will also bear the cost of presenting these showcased works.
- There are no limits to how 'new' a work needs to be for Showcase or Profile at a Gathering. The market development plans of the artists and companies will guide and justify their inclusion in Profiles at APAM Gatherings.
- APAM Gatherings will be more frequent than previous markets but will not consistently be over the same dates or repeat over the five-year cycle (2020–24). Because APAM knows that planning for Gatherings is important, rolling announcements will confirm each Gathering.
- Flexibility across APAM's five-year program is a great way to take advantage of the lessons learnt in the new APAM model. It also helps APAM respond to changes in the festival sector — and new opportunities and resources — that may not be on the horizon yet.
- APAM is in conversation with each State and Territory arts agency to discuss how they can support their local artists, companies, and presenters to participate at APAM Gatherings.

apam.org.au

hello@apam.org.au

+61 3 9947 1020

G5, 152 Sturt Street
Southbank VIC 3006