



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

**MORE SUPPORT FOR ARTS, HERITAGE AND
LIBRARY SERVICES**

The ACT Government has strengthened its support for arts, heritage and library services, with over \$24.9 million provided in the 2004-2005 Budget to fund initiatives that will help ensure Canberra's arts and cultural sector is innovative, sustainable and accessible to all.

"We are committed to supporting the development and improvement of facilities and activities that will enhance Canberra's growing cultural and artistic standing and increase the creative aspects of community life," Arts and Heritage Minister Bill Wood said.

"\$14 million over two years has been provided for the Civic Library and Link Project, which will replace the existing single-storey Link Building between the Canberra Theatre and The Playhouse with a three-level facility serving the dual function of Civic Library and theatre foyer and box office.

"The new, purpose-built structure will provide a permanent home for Civic Library, resulting in major improvement in facilities and services for library users. It will also greatly improve facilities and services for Canberra Theatre Centre patrons, and will enhance and reinvigorate the Civic Square Cultural Precinct.

"Additional funding of \$4.175 million has been allocated for the construction of the Kingston Powerhouse Glass Centre. The funding will allow for the adaptive re-use of the Powerhouse as a glass centre. \$1.636 million has also been provided for the centre's operation over four years.

"The ACT's heritage will benefit from \$600,000 for a pilot project that will develop a series of heritage trails and install directional and interpretive signage to encourage visitors and residents to explore Canberra's rich natural and cultural heritage attractions.

"The ACT has one of the highest participation rates in the arts in Australia, creating a high demand for funding. \$2.05 million over four years has been allocated through the ACT Arts Funding Program to support a wide range of arts activities and programs.

The 2004-2005 Budget also provides funding for a range of other arts and cultural initiatives:

- \$200,000 will support site selection and forward design of a Belconnen community arts centre;

- Additional funding of \$1 million has been allocated for the construction of a new and expanded permanent library at Kippax, with a further \$220,000 to increase the size of the library's collection. \$241,000 has also been provided for Stage One of the refurbishment of Belconnen Library to improve access and safety standards;
- \$380,000 has been allocated over four years for the visual arts and crafts sector, with matching funding to be provided by the Commonwealth. The funding will support infrastructure sustainability, individual excellence, marketing development and national initiatives;
- \$250,000 has been provided to the ACT Public Art Program for new public artworks that will be integrated with larger capital works projects to complement our unique urban design;
- \$100,000 will allow for minor new works on arts facilities.

“Consistent with *The Canberra Plan*'s objective to create and support a City for All Ages, this Budget delivers on the ACT Government's commitment to enhancing access to the arts and other cultural activities for the benefit of all Canberrans,” Mr Wood said.

Statement Ends.