

## Asialink Arts welcomes Asian Century White Paper

### For immediate release

Asialink Arts is delighted that the Government's recently released White Paper on Australia in the Asian Century has recognized the importance of cultural links as a key component and contributor to developing the capabilities and connections with Asia, particularly through Asia-capable leaders and institutions, closer people-to-people links and vibrant cultural connections.

"The White Paper demonstrates that the Government is taking a highly sophisticated approach to strategies for developing regional relationships," said Lesley Alway, Director, Asialink Arts.

"The paper will be welcomed in Asia - where cultural knowledge and relationships are embedded and integral to society."

"Asialink Arts is pleased to see the emphasis on two-way, collaboration and partnership opportunities as a key pathway to building stronger, deeper and broader cultural links with Asian nations."

This White Paper responds to Asialink's advocacy and experience developed over 20 years of working to develop cultural relationships in the region - that what Asia wants is reciprocity and partnerships to build a strong mutual understanding.

"Underpinning these initiatives to build stronger connections and partnerships across the region, there is a need to build Australia's Asia capabilities – and this applies as much to the cultural sector as any other sector of society and the economy," said Ms Alway.

Likewise, the White paper includes the opportunity for a more detailed policy response for the cultural sector through the Government's consideration of the of the Review of the Australia Council and the commitment to the 'revamp' of the Australia International Cultural Council. These reviews provide the opportunity for Australia to be at the forefront of global best practice in international cultural engagement.

"Asialink looks forward to contributing to the research and discussion of policy options and models to make this opportunity a reality," said Ms Alway.

The White Paper provides a roadmap for the cultural sector to navigate the Asia Century and equip our artists, producers, curators, arts managers, organisations and institutions to both contribute and learn from the opportunities emerging in the region. As the paper also notes, these challenges will require further community conversation.

"Asialink Arts looks forward to being part of this conversation and working with the Government to identify specific initiatives and resources in the forthcoming National Cultural Policy to implement the vision outlined by the Prime Minister," Ms Alway concluded.

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**Ms Lesley Alway is available for comment.**

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