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**OPEN LETTER TO THE CEO & BOARD OF CREATIVE AUSTRALIA  
FROM ALL CONFERENCE**

We, the members of All Conference—a national network of artist-run initiatives and independent arts organisations—strongly condemn Creative Australia’s decision to cancel the appointment of artist Khaled Sabsabi and curator Michael Dagostino as Australia’s representatives for the 2026 Venice Biennale.

This decision not only undermines the integrity of our national arts sector but also sets a dangerous precedent for artistic censorship and political interference in peer-reviewed selections. Creative Australia has long upheld the principle of arms-length funding, free from government or external influence. The reversal of a peer-led decision directly contradicts this principle, sending a message that artistic expression is now subject to political pressure and interference.

We are particularly alarmed by the complete lack of consultation with Khaled Sabsabi before this decision was made public. At no point was he contacted by the Creative Australia board, nor given any opportunity to engage in dialogue or respond before statements were issued. This disregard for due process and transparency has caused significant damage—not only to Sabsabi personally but to the broader arts community, which depends on Creative Australia to uphold fair and independent decision-making.

As a collective of artists, curators, and cultural workers committed to fostering artistic experimentation and the freedom to express diverse viewpoints without fear, we believe that the ability to engage critically with complex ideas is fundamental to a thriving arts ecology. The cancellation of Sabsabi’s commission sends a chilling message to artists across the country: that those who challenge dominant narratives risk censorship, exclusion, and retroactive punishment.

This decision will have long-term consequences for both established and emerging artists. Early-career artists look to institutions such as Creative Australia for leadership and

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support in shaping their futures. The precedent set by this decision discourages engagement with politically and socially relevant themes, erodes trust in the independence of our national arts institutions, and undermines confidence in Australia's commitment to creative freedom on an international stage.

We call on Creative Australia to immediately reinstate Khaled Sabsabi as Australia's representative for the 2026 Venice Biennale. Additionally, we support Sabsabi's request for a formal meeting with the Creative Australia board to discuss the lack of transparency in this process and its broader implications for the arts sector.

We further urge Creative Australia to acknowledge the damage this decision has caused to the arts community and take immediate steps to restore trust and reaffirm its commitment to independent, peer-led decision-making.

The role of a national funding body is to support artists—not to silence them. Emerging artists closely observe the experiences of established artists to understand how their own careers may develop. If this precedent is allowed to stand, many may no longer see a viable future for their practices within the arts ecology of this country.

We strongly urge Creative Australia to reconsider its position, take accountability for this decision, and reaffirm its commitment to artistic freedom, transparency, and the integrity of peer-led selection processes.

The members of All Conference:

Blindside

Bus Projects

Constance

Cool Change Contemporary

FELTspace

Firstdraft

KINGS

Liquid Architecture

Outer Space

Runway

Seventh

Trocadero Projects

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