

Ex-ministers protest against VCA merger

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Former Victorian Ministers of Art have written to Melbourne University protesting against the proposed merger with the Victorian College of the Arts.

They say the changes could threaten the VCA's future.

The ex-ministers plan to meet the university's vice-chancellor, Professor Glyn Davis later this week to discuss their concerns.

Former Premier and Arts Minister, Jeff Kennett is worried about the college's survival.

"It is to me a very important part of our creative base in Victoria and Australia," he said.

"I think it would be very sad if it were to continue down the path that has been suggested, for that would lead to its ultimate death."

Another former Labor arts minister, Race Matthews says it is critical that the college survives.

"The VCA is truly one of the jewels in the crown of the arts in Victoria," he said.

It's been a great source of creative talent in the State, nationally, and also internationally, as support for it for its retention by people like Geoffrey Rush has attested."

Last week, several hundred students rallied outside the Victorian Parliament to protest against the proposed changes.

Opponents say the changes would force students to take more generalised, theoretical subjects and would reduce their ability to specialise.

The VCA's dean, Sharman Pretty said last week that the college has a \$6million

and the college needs to broaden its curriculum in order to remain competitive.

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Actor Geoffrey Rush addressed a Save the VCA rally last week. (ABC TV: Maris Beck)

- [Map: Melbourne 3000](#)