

Ted Baillieu MP

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Leader of the Opposition
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Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Media Release

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BRUMBY CUTS VCA ADRIFT

Arts Minister Peter Batchelor today confirmed the Brumby Government would not help the Victorian School of the Arts (VCA).

In the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearings today Minister Batchelor said the Brumby Labor Government would not offer funding support for the VCA to ensure its long term future as one of Victoria's pre-eminent arts institutions.

"It is a very sad day for the arts community in Victoria when the Victorian Government has willingly washed its hands completely of the VCA. All the Minister could say today was that any financial support for the VCA was the responsibility of the Federal Government," Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Leader and Shadow Arts Minister Ted Baillieu said.

"The VCAM Review Report released last week did not make clear the future of the Victorian College of the Arts as a centre of arts excellence, principally because there is inadequate support outside the University of Melbourne. The report called upon the Federal and Victorian Governments to contribute adequate funding, and identified a shortfall of around \$6 million," Mr Baillieu said.

"The Minister completely ignored the report's findings, instead saying the University of Melbourne could ask the Federal Government for more funding.

"This is not good enough and threatens the long term future of the VCA.

"If the Brumby Government will not do anything to ensure an independent and viable VCA, the Coalition will.

"The Coalition stands by its commitment to provide up to \$6 million in funding for the VCA to ensure it continues to offer the highest possible quality education and training in the arts in Melbourne.

"We risk losing one of the most significant arts institutions in the nation, and some of the best arts students and staff in Australia. Despite the review, that risk has not been diminished.

"The Coalition stands for protecting the future of the Victorian College of the Arts as one of Victoria's great cultural treasures. It appears the Brumby Government is quite content to let the VCA fade into history," Mr Baillieu said.

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