

The Creative Economy in Australia: Cultural production, creative services and income



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This factsheet presents an economic overview of cultural and creative activity in Australia, drawing on custom tables from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Census collection.

Highlights:

- Three quarters of jobs in the creative industries are in creative services, with the balance located in cultural production
- Employment in the creative services sector is growing on average by nearly three times the rate of the Australian workforce
- Incomes in the creative services sector are higher than the Australian average
- In nearly all creative industry occupation categories, income growth is not keeping pace with the rest of the workforce and is in some cases falling

Three quarters of creative employment is in creative services...

In 2016, 439,080 people—74 per cent of the Australian creative workforce—worked in the *creative services* sector (tables 1 and 2). This included 285,120 people employed in creative service businesses in a variety of roles and 153,960 people working in creative service occupations in other industries. *Cultural production* organisations employed 123,690 people—26 per cent of the creative workforce—and a further 31,060 people worked in cultural production occupations in other industries.

Table 1: Estimates of creative employment by industry and occupation, 2016 (persons)*

593,830 <i>Total creative</i>		Creative industries		Other Industries	Total
		Creative services	Cultural production		
Creative occupations	Creative Services	95,640	9,220	153,960	258,820
	Cultural Production	5,510	51,800	31,060	88,370
		<i>Specialist</i>		<i>Embedded</i>	
Other occupations		183,970	62,680	10,090,000	10,336,650
		<i>Support</i>		<i>Other</i>	
Total		285,120	123,690	10,275,030	10,683,840
					<i>Workforce</i>

Table 2: Employment, share of jobs and growth by occupation, 2011-2016

		Persons		Share (%)		Growth (%)
		2011	2016	2011	2016	
Creative services occupations	Embedded	128,110	153,960	24	26	3.7
	Specialists	81,200	95,640	15	16	3.3
	Other creatives	4,880	5,510	1	1	2.5
	Support	156,020	183,970	29	31	3.4
	Total	370,210	439,080	70	74	3.5
Cultural production occupations	Embedded	31,340	31,060	6	5	-0.2
	Specialists	50,950	51,800	10	9	0.3
	Other creatives	9,960	9,220	2	2	-1.5
	Support	68,480	62,680	13	11	-1.8
	Total	160,730	154,760	30	26	-0.8
Total creative employment		530,940	593,840	100	100	2.3

... and creative services are growing at nearly three times the rate of the Australian workforce

Employment in *creative services* grew by nearly three times that of the Australian workforce between 2011 and 2016. The number of people employed in *creative services industries* increased by more than 43,000 between 2011 and 2016, an average increase of 3.3 per cent per annum, while the number of people employed in *creative services occupations* increased by more than 39,000, an average of 3.4 per cent per annum. (tables 2 and 3).

The strongest growth in creative employment between 2011 and 2016 was in *cultural production occupations in other industries*, which increased by an annual average of 3.7 per cent, *support occupations located in creative services industries*, which increased by of 3.4 per cent per annum, and *specialist creative service occupations*, which increased by 3.3 per cent per annum.

Table 3: Cumulative growth in employment by sector, 2011 to 2016 (per cent)

2.3 Total creative		Creative industries		Other Industries	Total
		Creative services	Cultural production		
Creative occupations	Creative Services	3.3	-1.5	3.7	3.4
	Cultural Production	2.5	0.3	-0.2	0.3
		<i>Specialist</i>		<i>Embedded</i>	
Other occupations		3.4	-1.8	1.2	1.2
		<i>Support</i>		<i>Other</i>	
Total		3.3	-0.9	1.2	1.2
					<i>Workforce</i>

Job growth is strongest in creative services, and strongest of all in advertising and marketing

Between 2011 and 2016, all occupation groups in *creative services* experienced job growth higher than that of the Australian workforce overall, while positions in all occupation groups in *cultural production* grew at a slower rate than the Australian workforce, or decreased (table 4).

Creative services occupations:

1. Advertising and marketing. Between 2011 and 2016, the strongest growth in positions was in the advertising and marketing sub-sector, which grew by an annual average of 4.7 per cent, nearly 3500 positions per year.
2. Architecture and design. This sub-sector experienced the third largest increase in positions between 2011 and 2016, just over 2000 positions per annum.
3. Software and digital content. The second highest increase of 2.4 per cent and nearly 2400 positions per year.

Cultural production occupations:

1. Film, television and radio. Between 2011 and 2016, positions in this occupation group grew at the same rate as the Australian workforce, accumulating just over 250 additional positions each year.
2. Music and performing arts. The number of positions in this category grew at a faster rate than the Australian workforce, at average annual rate of 1.9 per cent, just over 400 positions per annum.
3. Publishing. The number of positions recorded in published fell between 2011 and 2016, resulting in an average loss of nearly 400 positions each year.
4. Visual arts. The number of positions in visual arts has fallen since 1996, although the rate of decrease slowed between 2011 and 2016, to an average rate of -0.6 per cent or nearly 100 positions each year.

Table 4: Estimates of employment and growth by creative industry occupation, 1996 to 2016**

Occupations		Persons			Share of total creative occupations (per cent)			Average annual growth (per cent)	
		1996	2011	2016	1996	2011	2016	1996-2016	2011-16
Creative services	Advertising and marketing	31,530	67,180	84,510	16	22	24	5.1	4.7
	Architecture and design	43,860	81,250	91,500	23	27	26	3.7	2.4
	Software and digital content	46,780	70,870	82,820	24	23	24	2.9	3.2
	Total	122,170	219,300	258,840	63	72	75	3.8	3.4
Cultural production	Film, television and radio	13,570	21,100	22,420	7	7	6	2.5	1.2
	Music and performing arts	13,280	20,250	22,290	7	7	6	2.6	1.9
	Publishing	25,020	32,290	30,390	13	11	9	1.0	-1.2
	Visual arts	18,730	13,610	13,200	10	4	4	-1.7	-0.6
	Total	70,600	87,240	88,290	37	28	25	1.1	0.2
Total creative occupations		192,770	306,540	347,130	100	100	100	3.0	2.5
Total workforce		7,632,690	10,057,150	10,683,840				1.7	1.2

Creative industry incomes are highest in the creative services sector...

In 2016, the mean *creative services industry* income—at \$81,600 per annum—was 32 per cent higher than the average in cultural production industries and 34 per cent higher than in other sectors (table 5).

Within the creative services industries, the highest incomes were earned by people working in support roles, with a mean of \$85,500, followed by people in creative services occupations at \$74,600 and those in cultural production roles at \$68,000. In contrast, within the cultural production industries, people working in creative services roles earned the highest mean incomes of \$69,200, with those in cultural production and support occupations earning very similar mean incomes of \$60,300 and \$60,600 respectively.

Table 5: Estimates of mean income by sector, 2016 (2016 dollars)**

\$76,100 <i>Total creative</i>		Creative industries		Other Industries	Total
		Creative services	Cultural production		
Creative occupations	Creative Services	\$74,600	\$69,200	\$82,800	\$79,900
	Cultural Production	\$68,000	\$60,300	\$54,500	\$59,800
		<i>Specialist</i>		<i>Embedded</i>	
Other occupations		\$85,500	\$60,600	\$60,000	\$60,800
		<i>Support</i>		<i>Other</i>	
Total		\$81,600	\$62,000	\$60,700	\$61,400
					<i>Workforce</i>

... with software and digital content professionals earning the highest incomes since 1996

Creative industry occupation mean incomes are relatively stable compared both in relation to each other and the total Australian workforce, with each occupation group generally maintaining its income ranking over time. In nearly all occupation categories, creative industry incomes are on average higher than that of the Australian workforce but their growth has not kept pace with growth in total workforce income (table 6).

Creative services occupations:

1. Advertising and marketing. This group earned the second-highest creative industry mean income, with strong growth in positions suggesting demand for personnel is supporting wages. Five-year income growth is half that of the total workforce, following strong growth up to 2011.
2. Architecture and design. Incomes here are growing more slowly than in other creative industry occupations, with the mean converging on that of the national workforce.
3. Software and digital content. Since 1996 this occupation group has consistently earned the highest creative industry mean income. Although growth in the number of positions in this category exceeded that of the total workforce, income growth slowed in the five years to 2016, at one quarter of that of the workforce.

Cultural production occupations:

1. Film, television and radio. Mean incomes here fell in real terms between 2011 and 2016, decreasing by an average of 0.2 per cent per annum. This occupation category is the only one to have fallen in its ranking by income, from second in 1996 to third in 2011 and 2016.
2. Music and performing arts. The lowest-earning creative occupation, mean income fell by an average of 0.4 per cent per annum while the workforce in this category continued to grow at a rate faster than the total workforce.
3. Publishing. The mean income in publishing is growing at about half the rate of that of the total workforce, while positions in the sub-sector fall at a faster rate than in any other creative industry category.
4. Visual arts. Although one of the lowest-income categories and with a shrinking workforce, between 2011 and 2016 mean income in the visual arts sub-sector grew at a faster rate than that of the Australian workforce.

Table 6: Estimates of mean income by creative occupation segments, 1996 to 2016 (2016 dollars, adjusted using CPI)**

		Mean income			Difference compared with total workforce (per cent)			Average annual growth (per cent)	
		1996	2011	2016	1996	2011	2016	1996-2016	2011-16
Creative services occupations	Advertising and marketing	\$61,400	\$80,100	\$81,600	32	36	33	1.4	0.4
	Architecture and design	\$55,400	\$65,400	\$66,300	19	11	8	0.9	0.3
	Software and digital content	\$78,500	\$91,800	\$93,100	68	56	52	0.9	0.3
	Total	\$65,800	\$78,500	\$79,900	41	33	30	1.0	0.4
Cultural production occupations	Film, television and radio	\$69,000	\$75,100	\$74,500	48	27	21	0.4	-0.2
	Music and performing arts	\$40,200	\$45,100	\$44,200	-14	-24	-28	0.5	-0.4
	Publishing	\$57,800	\$65,400	\$66,400	24	11	8	0.7	0.3
	Visual arts	\$36,300	\$43,700	\$45,700	-22	-26	-26	1.2	0.9
	Total	\$50,900	\$59,600	\$59,700	9	1	-3	0.8	0.0
Total creative occupations		\$60,400	\$73,100	\$74,800	30	24	22	1.1	0.5
Total workforce		\$46,600	\$59,000	\$61,400	-	-	-	1.4	0.8

Definitions

The *creative industries* embrace cultural production (including film, television and radio, music and performing arts, publishing and visual arts) and creative services (including advertising and marketing, architecture and design, and software and digital content).*

Specialist creatives work in creative occupations within the creative industries.

Support professionals work in support roles (not defined as creative occupations) within the creative industries.

Embedded creatives work in creative occupations in industries other than creative industries.

* Detail on the official classifications of occupations and industries and further insights into the creative industries are available at <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/92726/>. Applying the NESTA Dynamic Mapping definition methodology to Australian classifications.

** Confidentialisation of 2016 Census data at the SA3 level means the creative occupation position count for 2016 is an underestimate.

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