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MEDIA RELEASE

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BUDGETS TIGHTEN AT HOME WHILE CREATIVE AUSTRALIA LIVES LARGE ABROAD

The Coalition has slammed Creative Australia for their excessive international travel bill, revealing the agency has taken over 100 overseas trips since it was established – at a cost of \$636,126 to taxpayers.

Two examples of the excessive travel, highlighted in Senate Estimates today included:

- A three-day UNESCO Mondiacult conference in Barcelona, where Creative Australia's CEO travelled business class and stayed at the Leonardo Royal Hotel Barcelona Forum, costing taxpayers \$17,939 – nearly \$6,000 per day.
- A four-day summit on arts and culture in Korea, where Creative Australia sent three staff business class, at a total cost of \$26,651.

Shadow Minister for the Arts Julian Leeser said it was shocking to see that while families are tightening their budgets and not being able to travel this summer, Labor's arts agency have been racking up their frequent flyer points.

“Right now, families are cancelling trips, cutting back on groceries and watching every dollar,” Mr Leeser said.

“Yet under Labor, Creative Australia are sending officials overseas on average once every eight days. That tells you everything about this Government’s priorities.”

“At the same time Creative Australia is spending nearly \$6,000 a day on a single conference, their own research shows the average professional artist earns just \$23,200 a year from their creative work,” Mr Leeser said.

“With 119 full-time staff and 101 international trips in just over two years, Creative Australia is almost at the point where every staff member could have had an overseas trip. That doesn’t pass the pub test.”

“Every dollar spent on business-class flights and four-star hotels is a dollar that isn’t going directly to artists and organisations on the ground,” Mr Leeser said.

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