

[Copy to your museum's letterhead]

<insert date>

<insert Name and address of your local MP>

Re: COVID-19 Impact on Independent Community Museums

Dear <insert name of MP>,

We congratulate the NSW Government on their numerous initiatives to support individuals, businesses and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. We note the recent measures to support small businesses with a \$10,000 grant. To qualify for support, those businesses must pay wages, but not payroll tax, and have an annual turnover of \$75,000 or greater.

The <insert name of your museum> is one of many not for profit community groups who operate small businesses in your electorate. Whilst our businesses do not pay wages, our closures due to the pandemic will have an impact on our financial viability going forward as many of our operating expenses such as insurances, security, fire protection, telephone and internet services are fixed. Volunteer managed museums, like ours, generate over 75% of our operating income from museum admission fees; for some museums this percentage is even higher.

We and most other volunteer managed (or independent community museums) receive no government operating income yet are responsible for the care and preservation of much of the State's cultural heritage assets including buildings and collections.

Based on our admission income for the same period in 2019, the <insert name of your museum> will have an income shortfall of just over \$xxxxxx for the period 18 March to 30 June 2020 alone. This represents an almost XX% drop in operating income. Needless to say, a similar impact will be experienced by other independent community museums across the State.

There are some 300 volunteer managed museums in NSW, most of them in regional areas. We already operate on a tight budget and ongoing upkeep on our building has and continues to erode our cash reserves. Many volunteer managed museums hold little funds in cash reserves.

We ask that you draw this matter to the attention of the Premier and others in State Parliament and request consideration of financial support packages to Volunteer Managed museums across the State during the Pandemic shut down period. In the meantime, please stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

<insert name of your committee's President

President