



**Submission to Port Philip Council
on the Australian National Academy of Music**

October 2015

Contact

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unChain Inc supports the proposal to grant a 15 year lease in the South Melbourne Town Hall (SMTH) to the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM).

ANAM is a jewel in the crown of Port Phillip. It is an internationally recognised centre of excellence in music. It makes a major contribution to the quality of life for Melbourne residents and visitors and, in particular, to the quality of life for Port Phillip residents.

The current ANAM leases for parts of the SMTH are due to expire in March 2017. Council has advertised for submissions on the proposed lease.

ANAM is both a national training institution and a public performing company. In its latter role, ANAM provides over 180 performances per year attracting over 22,000 patrons. It is clearly an appropriate use of the SMTH to provide an international centre of excellence, to enrich Melbourne's culture and to provide benefits for Port Phillip residents. In recent years, Council has worked to create a vibrant arts and community hub around SMTH. Clearly ANAM makes a major contribution to this for Port Phillip residents.

ANAM will not have a monopoly over the SMTH. The lease would maintain year round community access to various facilities in the SMTH. In particular for 19 weeks p.a. the Main Hall will be available to other users (e.g. the Port Phillip Community Ball and citizenship ceremonies). The other facilities that are available for community access are the Theatrette, two meeting rooms, the Community Hub and the Council Chamber. The Community Hub accommodates some Council services and community groups like the Royal District Nursing Service. Some Council meetings would continue to be held in the Council Chambers at the SMTH.

The proposed rental (\$120,000) is less than the market rental (\$450,000) and less than ANAM's share of outgoings (\$178,500). However this lower amount is consistent with Council policy. It is Council policy that while a market rent is desirable, council will accept lower than market rent to help support community based organisations that provide community benefits or services. Furthermore Council will also consider the tenant's ability to pay rent and the effect rent would have on its programs and community benefit. Furthermore there are no clear alternative users for the Main Hall.

unChain Inc is aware of the submission of ANAM. We endorse that submission. In particular we note that:

- ANAM has delivered nearly \$3 million in capital funding to the SMTH.
- ANAM delivers \$3.5 million p.a. in government funding for its music performances
- ANAM presents over 180 public performances p.a.
- Every Port Phillip residents is entitled to a free ANAM membership (which normally costs \$65)

- ANAM conducts programs with 7 local schools involving over 1,100 students
- ANAM as a 'good neighbour' launched the Emerald Hill Festival in 2010, which has continued to grow
- The potential for the SMTH is 'enormous' and ANAM is just at the beginning of realizing that potential.

In conclusion, unChain Inc strongly supports the proposal to grant a 15 year lease in the SMTH to the Australian National Academy of Music.