

3rd March 2025

Oron Catts
Head
SymbioticA (artist group)
0411 686 121

Dear Creative Australia Peers,

I am writing to confirm my participation in *Project MRT* and to provide an overview of the current situation with SymbioticA.

SymbioticA was established as a research centre at The University of Western Australia (UWA) in 2000. Ionat Zurr and I developed its methodology based on our artist-initiated residency with the Department of Anatomy and Human Biology at UWA, involving direct, hands-on engagement with the tools, technologies, and knowledge of the life sciences. SymbioticA facilitated artistic research into life ranging from the molecular to the ecological. It was the first research lab of its kind globally, featuring a Level 2 biological laboratory dedicated to artistic research.

From 2000 to 2024, SymbioticA hosted over 120 research residents from around the world and developed more than 150 artistic projects. The centre had an academic program that included undergraduate units, Master, and PhD courses. SymbioticA produced exhibitions, conferences, masterclasses, workshops, and festivals, with work presented at prestigious galleries such as NY MoMA, Pompidou Centre, National Art Museum of China, NGV and many more. In 2007, SymbioticA won the inaugural Golden Nica in Hybrid Arts from Prix Ars Electronica. SymbioticA's pioneering work established Australia and Perth as global hubs for biological arts (Bioart).

In 2022, UWA decided to transition SymbioticA out of the university, and from June 2024, SymbioticA was no longer part of UWA. UWA transferred SymbioticA's IP and many of its assets to me. Currently, SymbioticA is an unincorporated artist group exploring incorporation as a charitable artistic research entity and has been offered to be hosted by the Art Gallery of Western Australia.

Project MRT is the first initiative from the newly transformed SymbioticA, presenting a unique opportunity to demonstrate our continued innovation and vitality in the arts. It is one of the most ambitious projects we have undertaken, with YCAM, the peak media arts centre in Japan, being the ideal venue to host and produce its showcase.

Project MRT is a testament to SymbioticA's ongoing relevance and pioneering work in biological arts. Your funding will enable us to bring this exciting project to fruition and maintain our standing as a leading program for artistic research and presentation of experimental arts. I urge you to support this project.

Thank you for considering our application.

Sincerely,



Oron Catts
Head, SymbioticA