

Greg McKing ([00:00](#)):

It's great to have this opportunity to share with friends and colleagues, and most importantly, an Adelaide Festival of Ideas, audience, a few things that have been on my mind. I'd like, of course, to absorb, observe an important cultural protocol as, as yeah. Doreen and acknowledged the garner people as the traditional owners of the country. I'd also, I'm very proud to acknowledge the late Jim Bettison and Helen James for always backing the Adelaide festival of ideas from its inception. Thanks to Simone vinyl and Simone's fellow foundation trustees, Dorian Miller, and Jeff Purdy F and of course, Amanda Duffy from Adelaide film festival and perpetual trustees who administer the gym medicine and Helen James foundation award. I knew Jim and Helen and valued their support for some of the causes about which we shared a passion in essence, the arts and ideas, the value of learning and the power of human potential to both imagine, and then to realize a change in our lives.

Greg McKing ([01:02](#)):

And so it was especially humbling for me when I was invited to be the inaugural recipient of the award established by the foundation in their name. It's also a particular through to know that I now find myself in the company of two incredible fellow recipients of this award, Meryl Tankard. Hi, Meryl, love your work. And Tim Jarvis, each of us are incredibly different, incredibly different in terms of our chosen paths. But I think this speaks so positively of the ambit of the Jim Bettison and Helen James foundation. Now I've only around 20 minutes in which to share with you a few of the things percolating at presence. So indulge me the pace and the brevity of detail. This is after all a festival of ideas and not a blueprints. So to maximise the gift of this opportunity, I'll speak really fast joke, joke.

Greg McKing ([01:55](#)):

Yeah, I've headlined this address thinking Adelaide and I did so for a deliberate reason on Friday evening, my esteem, amigo Phillip Adams, and delivered the 2016 AFOI oration about magicians politics and various forms of Huff and puff. Yeah. Yesterday, our other IFOA national living treasure, the other truly great elder of ideas in this 2016 Festival, Barry Owen Jones talked about the need for a new political force in Australia, both of their chosen themes and topics really resonated powerfully with me. And I imagine with many of you here this morning, in a sense what's driven my various efforts in culture here in Adelaide over 30 years has been a deep desire to embed in our public culture, the valuing of ideas, and thinking as an active and dynamic part of a journey to a more equitable and sustainable society that has been driven and inspired by my experience as a teenager during the Dunstan era of a South Australia, that valued intelligence and egalitarianism that valued and invested in the arts and culture, and that believed in the 19th century founding principles of the province of South Australia, the paradise of descent, where diversity was a strength and where to be truly Frank as a young man coming to terms with my own sexuality, where I wouldn't be thrown into jail for being gay.

Greg McKing ([03:18](#)):

So you might well be wondering, what does this have to do with anything? Well, back in 2010 11, while I was deputy chief executive in the premiers department, I'd convinced them premier Mike Gran who was also a minister for the arts to let me set up for South Australia, a digital portal under the name, thinking Adelaide on behalf of the South Australian government, we trademarked the name, secured the web domains of all variants of the name, www dot thinking, adelaide.com.edu.net.org dot every every thing possible. And to promote the intellectual property of the concept. We registered similar domains for every other Australian capital city. And for all the major cities of the English speaking world, we were not going to let someone get to us, get to at first, my concept at the time was simple, a single web-

based point of entry for any citizen or potential visitor to Adelaide with an interest in the life of the mind to provide easy link through and access to events and organizations that were about promoting ideas and thinking at the time.

Greg McKing ([04:23](#)):

And we were in what I still regard as something of a golden age, we had the Adelaide festival of ideas, Adelaide thinkers in residence, the Australian center for social innovation, the Don Dunstan foundation, the Hawk center, the center for Muslim, and non-Muslim understanding Royal institution Australia, the Australian science media center, the integrated design commission Adelaide writers week, and a burgeoning number of think tanks attached to our three universities. And I want to, at this stage acknowledge that the Adelaide festival of ideas had its origin under the last liberal government in South Australia. It was the then minister for the arts to Diana Laidlaw with whom I had my first conversation about resourcing a festival of ideas, but I digress back to 2010 11. It felt that we were approaching a new Renaissance little was I to know at the time that Mike ran stays, where numbered you see back in 2011, 12, the department of premier and cabinet was an ideas crucible for climate change, renewable energy for thought leadership.

Greg McKing ([05:25](#)):

It was actually being dismantled and it was being reinvented by its new chief executive officer as a service center for the South Australian public centre sector. Mike Ramm was moved on and within six months, so die off to head up aging with John Hill rightly or wrongly. It felt to me as though thinking and ideas were no longer valued and that the past was no longer something upon which to build new legacies instead, things were to be abandoned. So here I am five years later having left the essay public sector in 2013 and thanks to the inaugural Bederson James award in 2015, I was afforded some grace and doing time in which to focus on rescuing the Adelaide festival of ideas from oblivion. And so along with a great bunch of AFO, true believers, who now comprise our board, I had the chance to pull this festival, as I said, from oblivion to reclaim the brand and I an intellectual property from government neglect to establish an independent not-for-profit incorporated association and to do some of the legwork, to reactivate old partnerships and to forge some new ones.

Greg McKing ([06:31](#)):

I want to talk briefly about my idea to develop thinking Adelaide as an Adelaide festival of ideas, global alumni, to connect past present, and future guests of the Adelaide festival of ideas and others in a loose network of advocates and honorary ambassadors for both the Adelaide festival of ideas. And also for the idea of Adelaide as a place where ideas and ideals, where thinking is highly valued in a civil society. You see, at that time, none of our three public universities had invested terribly seriously in their alumni associations, the value of these diaspora relationships of knowledge, and know-how had been left largely untended thinking Adelaide has withered. And with that, I believe an incredible, powerful set of connections and opportunities that has not been able to make its contribution to our greater good. And so by way of set up for this idea, a couple of observations about mythology, about space, time, and relativity.

Greg McKing ([07:27](#)):

And by this, I don't mean physics in every society, in every community and in every village around the world, there are stories that people tell themselves that are told about us by others, stories about identity and what it is that makes us distinctive, or maybe even special. I preface my next comment by

reaffirming my deep passion for Adelaide and for South Australia. One of the things that we tell ourselves here is the Adelaide and South Australia is a great place to collaborate after all, it's seemingly easy to get quite the right people and quote around a table at reasonably short notice. And we tell ourselves that this means we do collaboration better. We're wrong, totally wrong. The urbanist and former Adelaide thinker in resident residents, creative industries, expert Charles Landry concluded of Adelaide, that we fall victim to confusing conversation with collaboration. Adelaide's very much a public sector town, and as such we've turned meetings into a pathology.

Greg McKing ([08:28](#)):

And I pause it that the reason for this is that we place too little value on that most precious and scarce of resources, time like frogs in a pot of water warming slowly on the benchtop. We, we squandered time as though it has no value. We make meetings with no clear sense of purpose. We invite more people than we need to those meetings with no regard to the authorizing environment and hierarchies needed to make collaboration happen. And we squander valuable time that might otherwise be put to more productive, loose use, or that might dare I say it otherwise save the taxpayer a hard-earned money. So there having said that, I contend that we need to move some of that productive investment of time into cultivating and renewing relationships with the people who come to our place and who share with us their intellectual property.

Greg McKing ([09:20](#)):

My thinking is two fold. First, we should better leverage these past and present relationships for the future benefit by connecting and collecting people for 16 years, government, half funded the Adelaide festival of ideas as a biennial event that is half of a half equals a quarter. Only one quarter of the opportunity realized as was the case for decades with our Adelaide festival of arts, Adelaide fringe. And WOMA Adelaide once every two years, we cranked up the engine and put on a festival of ideas. That's no way to cultivate meaningful change, and it's no way to build a brand or an audience or a sponsorship business case. That's no way to do anything other than to be entertained. When Mike ran hired me to run the arts portfolio, he gave me a very simple KPI, make the arts more relevant to more people. More of the time I recommended that we create a new season of events and activities in spring.

Greg McKing ([10:20](#)):

And so in 2011, I moved the Adelaide festival of ideas from wintry July to October. And I'm sure some of you here remember those cold afternoons with lamp rugs and shawls. But again, I purposefully digress. If we're serious about winning friends and converting them into enthusiastic and influential champions for Adelaide in South Australia, we need to invest in that most human of transactions, a two way relationship of longevity. We need to value people and we need to nurture friendships. This is made hard by that phenomenon called by some people public sector mobility, and by others, the politicization that the senior public sector, it's hard to hold course of journey, but when programs are at the mercy of political pleasure and not subjected to the kind of rigor of evidence-based evaluation. And so in 16 years, they've been around 160 guests of the Adelaide festival of ideas.

Greg McKing ([11:15](#)):

And of these 90% have been people who live elsewhere, or certainly who now live elsewhere. We should be cultivating those relationships more. And with more purpose than a photo opportunity for a scrapbook, there's an amazing organization out there called advance Australians abroad. It was established by the Howard government and it activates ex-patriot Australian networks around the

world. It's run from new New York city by a great woman. Sarah Fino Marano, actually a former Adelaide based arts worker and administrator. Other state governments invest in a relationship with this incredible network, but not South Australia. Why I think because it falls in the cracks between fiefdoms, we simply do not have a strategic focus on the value of external relationships. What I'm proposing is to adopt a mantra in South Australia of better cultivating and sustaining the relationships with thought leaders that we bring into our local communion.

Greg McKing ([12:12](#)):

And of course, I mean that in a non-religious sense and that we convert again in a non-religious sense, these people into champions and advocates for our shared mission. And that is to position Adelaide in South Australia as a place that is progressive, smart and prosperous. We mustn't be fooled by spin and the false hood that connectivity equals connectedness or that conversation equals collaboration. The second of my ideas this morning is informed by the opportunity that my new day job affords a sharper focus. And that is a notion that by better connecting people with collections that we develop for Adelaide, a special identity place for the promotion of a culture of, and for collecting as a culture broker. I know what I am not, I'm not an historian, but I have an opportunity to bring new energy and focus to the mission and value of history.

Greg McKing ([13:09](#)):

I want to speak to the idea of developing a strategy for Adelaide as a city of collections after an extended period out in the cold, but doing consultancy work employment struck again for me in January, 2016, when I commenced a short stint as interim director of the Botanic gardens of South Australia, a brilliant collecting institution that not unlike the South Australia museum is also a place of science and research. And in late April, I commenced as chief executive officer of the history trust of South Australia. Our organisation is the keeper on behalf of the people of South Australia, of the state history collection. We present an annual history festival and we operate three museums, migration, motor, and maritime. There goes the plug while there will always be larger museums and bigger collections elsewhere in Australia and in the world. I want to propose the development of a 20th strategy to expand our collections footprint, both public and private.

Greg McKing ([14:11](#)):

We should look at ways to achieve better exposure to our state collections, our city of collections and collecting. And this is not just a play for more taxpayer dollars to be invested in museums. Although having said that, Adelaide is the only state Capitol city without a museum that tells its state story more than migration, motor vehicles and maritime, which are the three public museums that comprise the belly week that I just described more than a history festival. It is to the human predilection for predilection, for collecting that I believe we must turn our focus, the collecting impulses as deeply ingrained in our cultural DNA as a food shopping and forgive the French, the impulse to acquisition is deeply embedded, and it is the estate upon which cultural inheritance is built to be the, to be at the impulse to now collect digital collections or the habits of my youth from stamps to coins, to records, to compact discs, to books.

Greg McKing ([15:11](#)):

And these days to art collecting is something that most people understand. It is something that connects people, the passions that become obsessions that add meaning and purpose to our loves and our lives to the impulse deserves to be both better, studied and better understood. If Adelaide were to put its

collected minds to the task, a city of collections could eventually become as significant a signifier for Adelaide as does the festival city tag that took decades to earn philanthropy and gifting has built the state history collection, and it has built the art gallery of South Australia's collection. We have the world's best and largest collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artifacts at the South Australian museum. We established the world's first museum of migration and our boutique size and temperament lends itself to such a mantle. Even if it's not true. Now, the ambit is plausible it's for this reason that I enthusiastically embrace and support the vision of the Art Gallery of South Australia, Snick of edge to establish Adelaide contemporary, a major contemporary art gallery that is also home to the entire art collection storage.

Greg McKing ([16:24](#)):

But wait, there's more by fostering and promoting the practice of private collecting. We ultimately create the pipeline for building the state's collections, our common wealth, who knows what Richard's reside in the homes of private citizens from first edition books to the visual arts and all manner of material culture. We collect ourselves into immortality, of course, for many people collecting as a personal and deeply private thing. And that must always be respected, but surely with the right enablement, our many privately held collections might be temporarily revealed. The Roche house gallery in north Adelaide is reputed to be the biggest house collection in the Southern hemisphere, and then their existing state collections that are incredible, but that remain in storage because of a lack of opportunity and appropriate places in which to display them between our four state collecting institutions. We hold vast treasures on behalf of the public that await public sharing.

Greg McKing ([17:26](#)):

And there are all manner of possible ways to display them. If only we had a place with sufficient temporary exhibition spaces in which to reveal them, perhaps the old Royal Adelaide hospital site will present opportunity. Perhaps there are plans and concepts that are already at concept stage. Perhaps we need a 20 year plan to get our collections act together, build it, and they will come. Perhaps the kind of investment is a pet's. This kind of investment is a more sustainable, less environmentally risky, and far less costly way to forge a future for our state than a large cement bunker full of plutonium, whatever, whatever the future holds. We already hold our future. It is called our past and it deserves to be shared. And by way of conclusion, it's through better connecting and through better understanding the impulse for collecting the Adelaide and South Australia has an opportunity to, again, pitch above its weight. Thank you. [inaudible]

Phillip Adams ([18:39](#)):

Looking around at the faces here today. I realise that many of us are of a vintage to recognize, or to remember a time when the prefix public was something to be very proud of. We had a public education, public transport, public hospitals, public broadcasting, again and again, and again, if it was public, we were proud of it. And then this long process of privatisation occurred so extreme that there was even a moment in new south Wales when public toilets would, would it be privatised. And those of us wishing to spend it to penny would, were threatened with the prospect of spending a dollar with an entrepreneur by the name of John Singleton. I have the greatest respect for public as a prefix for public as a, as an adjective. And you young man, to me the the quintessential public servant, and you've done an extraordinary job, an extraordinary job. [inaudible]

Phillip Adams ([20:01](#)):

I got your SEO far overnight, and it contains a to whom it may concern from the high commissioner Australia house London, some lifting called Mike Grant. Let me just, you get the feeling for it. I'll just read a couple of paragraphs, which I understand he wrote it on his iPhone in an airport lounge. I have known Greg McKing for 20 years and worked with him closely for almost a decade when I was premier minister of the arts, economic development, social inclusion, sustainability, and climate change. Mr. Mackey in so many ways had a profound impact across my, within the government. He was often referred to as our best ideas man, but in a rare combination, he was also an excellent administrator who inspired extraordinary loyalty as a team member. He also enjoyed bipartisan support respected by the liberal opposition, South Australia and by senior ministers in the Howard government. And he's excellent relations with the Commonwealth public service also proved invaluable to South Australia. And that's just the first two paragraphs event of a, to whom it may concern of approximately the length of James Joyce's Ulysses. You mentioned collecting the Impulsely ancient human impulse to collect and not simply a human one. We've got bow bow. For example, we share that with our birds, right. Collectors. Is there any, any career that you still wish to complete hard?

Greg McKing ([21:47](#)):

Look, I have a secret fantasy of just growing vegetables down on the floor at peninsula

Phillip Adams ([21:54](#)):

Pushing off a serious question. Do you still have, I mean, you've done so much, Greg. I've sat back and watched you with fascinated aura really over the last years. Is there anything you haven't done? Well

Greg McKing ([22:07](#)):

That's a difficult question, Phillip, one of in, in public, in the public sector and for better or worse, I seem to have found myself largely drawn toward the public sector as an avenue for public service in the last 15 years. I, I I always hankered for the reorganization of the administrative functions of the public sector to create a department for cultural development. When I was promoted to deputy chief executive in premier and cabinet, I was appointed the deputy chief executive for what was the day nine. It was Mike completely forgettable. It was something that brought you to forgettable. And I convinced Mike to let me rebrand the role as deputy chief executive cultural development, because that's sort of what I feel I do. And he agreed and it brought together a whole stack of things.

Greg McKing ([23:12](#)):

You'd like thinkers in residence program. The arts of course Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs. It was an incredibly exciting portfolio of, of poor struggling noble ambits. And I think that we could take a leaf out of the European government model and establish a department for culture that brings together various parts with culture doesn't exist in a vacuum. I'm sure you will appreciate that. It's, it's an important set of connections. It's everything we do. It's everything we do. That's important. It's everything we do that I think makes our story with telling

Phillip Adams ([23:58](#)):

Mike mentioned in passing that you were able to communicate across party lines. Now I remember, and it wasn't so long ago when there were great friendships, even love affairs across the across party lines. The number of people that had affairs in Canberra during the Whitlam years would astonish you. And I'm willing to give a secret information later, but that withered and died, particularly after the dismissal in Canberra, which seemed to be seen to be the end of it. But across the board, there were so many

areas, including the arts, where there was passionate bi-partisan enthusiasm were premiers are not just labor premiers wants to be the minister for the arts, absolutely.

Greg McKing ([24:47](#)):

And impart for a politician with a heavy set of obligations. And probably you wouldn't want to be the minister for health, just the minister for health after all people die on your watch. You being minister for the arts is something good. The arts was seen as something fun at a political level, and therefore it's something nice to have. And of course there are members of parliament who are themselves deeply committed arts citizens, and occasionally they find their way into cabinet and occasionally they actually get offered the portfolio. The arts has been a bi-partisan space largely in Australia, but it's less of an active bipartisanship and more of a, this is not something that matters to the people whose votes matter. And therefore we can, we can, we can ignore it or we can agree to not politicize it. So

Phillip Adams ([25:43](#)):

The great Andre Malraux was advisor on artistic matters to JFK, to the president of France and nugget Coombs. And I visited him when, in the process of setting up the Australia council and Malraux gave us advice. He said, you must make the president, the minister for the arts. He filled this, he was talking about the gold in his case. He said, if you get the president, he will get the money and he will be too busy to interfere. And I always found that the wisest of council. And so the first thing was to make sure that the incumbent premier certainly in any labor stipend, sometimes in liberal states, took the, took the chore and deter for prime ministers. Whitlam of course loved the job, but as soon as it was downgraded, the Malraux warning came true. I, we were suddenly stuck with junior minister and when bill McMahon was briefly and forget to be prime minister, and he's known was Peter House who I immediately dubbed a pain in the arts. And it is, it is terribly important also for symbolism, not merely for access to money, but to have the art taken that seriously.

Greg McKing ([27:09](#)):

Yes it is. And speaking for myself in the years that I've headed up the arts portfolio here, it was true that the premier as minister for the arts was an incredibly busy guy, but he extended to me just the most incredible amount of trust and respect, and that was mutual. And it meant that I could get on with doing the job and know that in cabinet, at budget time, he was in our corner. And it didn't mean that Mike neglected the portfolio. He shared the portfolio with another senior government minister, and that meant we had two guaranteed votes in cabinet. Then we had the minister for Adelaide and minister for education, Jane Lomax Smith, who was after dilated law, the second person to commit to supporting the Adelaide festival of ideas. So we had three guaranteed votes in cabinet. It's an exercise in numbers, really an exercise in numbers. And we were just incredibly fortunate that even though many people probably regard Kevin Foley as probably the antithesis of an arts citizen by the end of those years, Kevin and I had this sort of pension duty act that added estimates time budget bilaterals, that he would have a spike at me and I would, you know, cop it and then keep smiling. And by the end of it, we always got where we needed to get.

Phillip Adams ([28:38](#)):

I mentioned the, the endless process, the ongoing process of privatizations of anything deemed public and all the threats that, that introduces we were always told from day one that the money that was evaporating from government would be more than later for, by the generosity of corporations didn't quite happen to them.

Greg McKing ([29:05](#)):

I can't speak for other jurisdictions, but certainly in South Australia, if it never happened we have a very small corporate base here. We have a larger philanthropic base, but even still relative to the more populous states we are, we will back in the pack. The opportunity for corporates to partner with the arts is less about the return on investment to the business and more about the individual passion of a chief executive or a board chairman

Phillip Adams ([29:42](#)):

And a corporation would all of a sudden be very concerned about the dangers of funding, any party or any individual it might get overly provocative.

Greg McKing ([29:54](#)):

That, that is a reality. I certainly know at the time that the Olympic dam expansion was on the books before the collapse of the price of uranium that BHP Billiton who had a five-year partnership with South Australian youth arts board and the come out festival youth arts festival they got particularly sensitive at a time when in a parade there were, there was a display about anti-nuclear that that was the choice of school children. And we were not the arbiter or the censor of their enthusiasm.

Phillip Adams ([30:32](#)):

Greg, I'm going to open this to questions from the audience shortly, because it's a good chance to talk to talk to this extraordinary for that you mentioned in passing the issue of your own sexuality. Was that ever a problem for you in Ghana?

Greg McKing ([30:49](#)):

No, I can honestly say to my face, it was never a problem in government. And quite frankly, what is said in the locker room to quote Donald Trump is as long as it stayed in the locker room and wasn't made public, I actually really didn't care. And still don't care what people think.

Phillip Adams ([31:13](#)):

So it was a, a sort of don't ask, don't tell about

Greg McKing ([31:16](#)):

No, no, it was always, I was always pretty out. I was all believe me. I was always pretty out. And I feel I was always treated with respect and, and I am still treated with respect, ladies and gentlemen, are

Phillip Adams ([31:31](#)):

There any members of the audience that would like to engage in this? I would love you to do so there's a microphone in the middle of the hole and yes, someone is

Greg McKing ([31:43](#)):

Already well, this gentlemen who I know it gets to the microphone. There was only one incidence in my bureaucratic or public small people in real life where sexuality came into it. When I was a candidate for Lord mayor in 2003 my fellow counselor and Moran in a big article in the pub in the Sunday mail declared that she didn't think Adelaide was ready for a Gaylord mare course. This was the same



counselor. And I say this with, with some, with, with affection somehow, somewhat too. And she's also the person who presided over the demolition of most of the public toilets in Adelaide, for reasons that I best leaf to the people's speculation.

Phillip Adams ([32:33](#)):

I remember. And then she wondered

Greg McKing ([32:35](#)):

Why she was not a gay icon like Jane next Smith.

Phillip Adams ([32:39](#)):

I suddenly remember an early column I wrote for the age, my very closest friend was gay and he introduced me to the, to that side of reality when I was in my late teens, not as a practitioner,

Greg McKing ([32:52](#)):

I was just going to save as this sense, but as

Phillip Adams ([32:55](#)):

Someone of great of anthropological curiosity, and I remember discovering that the various gay, the various famous Lewes around Melbourne all had pet names. There was one next to the library in Swanson street, which was known as the reading room. And there was one with the made up of those strange translucent glass tiles. And I think that was called the, oh, I've forgotten now, early onset dementia, cert

Speaker 3 ([33:27](#)):

Philip, I, I almost feel reluctant to disrupt the flow of your conversation is getting particularly interesting. I started just two thoughts in regard to the two ideas that Greg mentioned in terms of the network of people who had previously spoke at the festival ideas and also the collections idea in regard to the network there might be a case for thinking also about the, would it be \$500 thousand people who've come along over the years to the writer's festival as in fact, a potentially bigger network of people, at least some of them could potentially be linked into the hundred and 60 or saw, I think you mentioned from the festival ideas. So before you respond

Phillip Adams ([34:20](#)):

To that, I should point out that there is a subtle difference in emphasis. The writers weeks tend to infect favor fiction, the festivals of ideas, nonfiction. I think there are, there are a good contrast.

Greg McKing ([34:33](#)):

They are a good contrast, but still at the point that you're making is that people who know people and who talk to people can be really powerful ambassadors. And so, ah, I accept, accept that as a really good suggestion

Speaker 3 ([34:48](#)):

In regard to the, the collections idea, perhaps slightly more critically in terms of the sort of leverage and benefits that could flow from that. And I'm sure there are many I assume it would be partly connected to the idea to visit visitors to South Australia, to tourism, if you like. And given that the current projections really put an emphasis upon Chinese tourists for the next 10, 20 years has been the major growth area. I think you would perhaps need to try and connect your collections idea among other things specifically to that 20 years worth of Chinese visitors. Absolutely.

Greg McKing ([35:34](#)):

And indeed we are utterly at providing multi-lingual interpretation and for visitors who don't have English as a first language, thank you.

Phillip Adams ([35:46](#)):

When I was a victim was with any time I've ever been president of anything. When I was prisoned at the Victorian council for the arts, we did a survey of the number of significant convictions in Victoria and to our astonishment, there were over 500 places that could be called museums. Now some of them were absolutely right bag, but fun, and they were just everywhere and we had, we never developed it, but the idea in fact of the passport that people go along and get a stamp and say meandered around the country, because for every object that's on display in a major institution, there are dozens and dozens, perhaps hundreds of eclectic little collection

Greg McKing ([36:33](#)):

That that's absolutely correct. And in South Australia, there's a vast network of largely community owned and operated community museums in regional, South Australia and metropolitan Adelaide. And the history trust has administered for more than 20 years. Our fund, a special fund that government has provided. It's \$150,000 a year. It's only \$150,000 a year. And that number has not changed in over 20 years. We have an incredible opportunity to, and I, I'm very interested in my, in my role with the history trust in identifying corporate and philanthropic partnerships to help grow that fund, to enable more support and more facilitation for those community museums

Phillip Adams ([37:21](#)):

As one of your more elderly guests. And I know I speak for Barry Jones as well. We'd be willing to offer ourselves for texting dermal purposes, and you could set up a new form of national portrait gallery between that and met them to

Greg McKing ([37:39](#)):

Move over at the house of wax. Exactly. Yeah. Madam,

Speaker 4 ([37:44](#)):

I'd like to ask a slightly provocative question as this is the fiscal of ideas. I wonder if the two of you could nominate your personal, your favorite personal abomination in Sydney for your Phillip and Adelaide for you, Greg, and what might be a brilliant way to overcome. It could be anything, it could be a building or, you know, a situation, but something that would be brilliant noisier, Gerard Henderson, something that's non liable, less would be good stuff.

Greg McKing ([38:23](#)):

Okay. And I trust that your question was abomination abomination,

Speaker 4 ([38:28](#)):

Sorry. Abomination.

Greg McKing ([38:30](#)):

Wow. Well, I will, I will reserve final judgment for the completion of the project. I'm really pretty cranky about the tunnel through Reimar park at the moment. [inaudible] Of course, as a public sector executive, I'm actually not allowed to say that. So just erase that, that little component

Phillip Adams ([38:54](#)):

You are going to have a world-class collection of radio radioactive route to understand there'll be a little pool of big crowd.

Greg McKing ([39:03](#)):

Well, Pepsi, uranium glass was very, very popular a century ago, but perhaps, perhaps that's our future.

Phillip Adams ([39:10](#)):

I would like to apologize for what I said a bit Jared industry, but before I arrived, you sent me over a little thing was some local member of the commentary was complaining bitterly about what you saw as the progressive political bias of those attending and those sitting on stage. And he said, where, where is Andrew Bolden? I'd like to ask you that question. Where is Andrew book? Does anybody really care? Well, he certainly did Greg preaching to the converted here, but as a fellow public servant, how do you, how do you get your message to the public service?

Greg McKing ([39:59](#)):

That's a very interesting question. Thanks to the commissioner for public employment and Maraney airy. We managed to get a Sage in South Australian government, electronic messaging service message out to promote the Adelaide festival of ideas. That was something that we are allowed to do jury within the rules and and Irma obliged and 80,000 public servants got a message. And perhaps some of you are here today. It's about an exercise of discretion, language, nuance, timing, and platform, I guess. And that's, that's an interesting wobble board of of considerations. I don't feel censored indeed if I were, I perhaps wouldn't have said some of what I've put in my, in my talk this morning. And I shared those thoughts as personal thoughts, not on behalf of of the organization that I lead, but it does behoove us as public servants to exercise judgment.

Speaker 4 ([41:16](#)):

Hi, Greg. I was just wondering if you had any have been thinking about ideas for future festival ideas to encourage more young people to come along, because one of the themes that I've noticed over the weekend is the importance of growing community, where older people and younger altogether. And I'm just wondering if you'd thought about connecting with schools and maybe, you know, broadening the audience.

Greg McKing ([41:41](#)):

We've we, we think a lot about that and one of the things that we, we should have done in planning this year, but we actually didn't have any control over. It was the timing of the festival when the timing of the university exam period. So unfortunately, but a lot of university students aren't here, but I also, I would add whilst conceding, the importance of access and accepting and embracing the importance of a festival of ideas, being a platform for people of all ages is that I get, I do get cranky, and I know this is not where your question was coming from, but I get cranky about people who belittle an older audience. We are the majority in the state. We are at a point in life where reflection and repose is more appealing. And certainly for myself in my twenties, I wouldn't have been in the least bit interested in coming along to a festival of ideas. You know, a lot of boring people talking about boring subjects. I was more interested in, you know some of those things that I refer to it

Phillip Adams ([42:54](#)):

As, you know, certain Australia produced this country's first Saint had Griggs stayed on in the in the legislature, in the body involved in handing out orders of Australia. I was going to suggest that we add to it, the role of secular site. Greg, I think qualifies. He's already produced a couple of clear miracles, getting the festival ideas, going in the first place and keeping him in the second. And so I would like to propose you now as a South Australia's for secular site, and I hope it will be carried on the voices.  
[inaudible]

Speaker 5 ([43:40](#)):

Thank you.