

National Cultural Policy Submission

Anonymous

Submitted: As an artist

What challenges and opportunities do you see in the pillar or pillars most relevant to you? Feel free to respond to any or all pillars:

A Place for Every Story

I call for a National Digital Strategy. There is a need for robust digital capacity building within a framework that recognises and addresses inequality and uneven access to digital opportunities.

“The findings underscore the need for digital capacity building and strategies.... Participants called for professional development, investment in new and emerging digital art forms and models that support access to local content.” Reimagine: What Next?, Australia Council (2021).

A properly funded National Digital Strategy could include regional, metro and suburban ‘digital hubs’, within existing organisations, for intra and inter-state creative exchange (even rehearsal); meetings; forums and conferences (in a hub and spoke model, reducing travel and infection risk). Imagine small groups of locals meeting in-person, engaging with other hubs in other states, with excellent technology and internet connection facilitating a seamless exchange. The strategy would also include better digital capacity building within arts teams.

The Centrality of the Artist

Lack of security and stability

Working project to project

Lack of infrastructure to support freelance artists - i.e. lack of ability to apply for home loans because of fluctuating income, fact that many artists weren't eligible for job keeper.

The amount of time artists spend doing administration/applying for funding/reply to surveys instead of making art.

In WA, the lack of availability of venues, the lack of venues, the lack of affordability of venues, even though they are mostly run by a government trust.

Strong Institutions

Institutions being held at ransom by the board

The need for not-for-profit companies to have boards.

Lack of artists within institutions, being paid to do art (not admin).

Institutions not able to pay people competitively and therefore not getting the best people for the job.

Lack of opportunity for long term funding to be increased, so orgs can continue to grow.

Reaching the Audience

Allowing orgs or artists more opportunity/funding to access growing technologies that would allow the art to be delivered to audience's in different ways (I.e. live-streaming is expensive, even filming a show well is expensive)

Are there any other things that you would like to see in a National Cultural Policy?

A consideration of the mid-career artists, a place for them in the arts ecology.

Basic income scheme for artists and arts workers. Long-term, stable funding for independent artists has shown to increase productivity and reduce the desire to set up burdensome incorporations or companies

The arts to be recognised as a profession by government. This entails changes to what is recognised by Centrelink as 'seeking employment', and the adoption of an annual averaging process for artists' fluctuating income as is done by the ATO. There is also an opportunity to encourage employers to put artists onto payroll instead of contracts, as this ensures artists receive superannuation and are covered under WorkCover. This could be a requirement or a target for funded organisations to meet.

Raise the allocation for arms length peer-assessed arts funding for independent practitioners and at least 200 small to medium organisations through the Australia Council. There is currently no pathway for emerging companies, with the Four-Year Funding cohort reducing in size every cycle. There were 67 companies short-listed (the top third) in 2019 but not funded - these companies would be largely 'shovel ready' to grow with federal investment, and would create new part-time and full-time jobs. TNA's 2019 Company Salary Survey shows that companies employ an average of 7.8 core positions, both full and part-time.

Investing in growth of this sector could create between 350 and 520 new permanent jobs and hundreds of casual and freelance roles

Australia Council funds restored back to 2013 levels as a baseline and adjusted for inflation at a minimum.

Support universities and Tafe to expand delivery of professional practice units for all arts students and make arts degrees affordable and accessible to all people.

Affordable space for artists is included in urban and regional master planning.

Arts literacy and arts programs built into all education systems and curriculum.

Disaster support- underwriting and planning for risk in uncertain times (environmental, public health). Insurance. We still don't have financial security if we have to cancel shows because of covid. Also understudies cost a lot of extra money.

As a WA artist/artswoker I am concerned at the representation on the Ministers Panel, in particular:

- lack of WA representation
- lack of artists at differing stages of their career and artform