



Woman  
Giving Fund

Melynda von Wayward  
Founder - Wayward Woman Giving Fund



**RE: Submission to A new National Cultural Policy**

To whom it may concern:

My name is Melynda von Wayward, and I am a Melbourne-based artiste and founder of the Wayward Woman Giving Fund – a nonprofit organisation that raises and distributes funds to nonprofit organisations and individuals who create projects and programs that focus on Cultural arts and Community Development outcomes. So far, we have raised and distributed \$10,000 towards this cause.

Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) involves highly skilled arts practitioners working collaboratively with communities for the purpose of social change through art and culture. As a practice, CACD has demonstrated its ability to have positive impact on the health and wellbeing of communities and stimulate artistic innovation and vibrancy.

As you have acknowledged in your paper titled *Towards a new National Cultural Policy*, engaging with the arts can be used as a vehicle to explore and communicate social concerns, give voice to hidden issues and allow self-expression, and can have powerful impacts on health, wellbeing and the strengthening of communities.

My submission therefore is to champion a specific sector of the Australian arts industry – that of Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) – and how to better engage and support highly skilled arts practitioners who choose to work in this area.

The need for CACD engagement is vital to the most vulnerable members of the community. According to a report by Creative Australia, titled *Where Community Meets Creativity: Mapping Community Arts and Cultural Development, activities across Australia*:

- ***'Health, mental health and wellbeing' is the most commonly cited impact area. More than three quarters (77%) of the organisations surveyed dedicate their CACD efforts to addressing this area, with the next largest group addressing social isolation (72%), followed by diversity (66%).***

However, in the same report it noted that:

- ***Employment on CACD projects is most often short-term, with 83% of organisations engaging artists or practitioners on a short-term basis.***

It is commonly known that highly skilled arts practitioners are grossly underemployed in Australia, with many of them having to work either full time or part time jobs to supplement their creative output.

And while Australia's cultural and creative sector continues to evolve in a rapidly changing environment, and the use of technology is also becoming widely integrated into the Australian arts and cultural sector, there is still very much a need for human contact in the form of CACD programs and projects.

For participants to gain the most value from a CACD program or project, then hands on participation is vital! A community mural, or an arts and craft workshop in a local neighbourhood centre cannot be done via a zoom link. At the very heart of CACD is the coming together of people to engage in creativity, to connect with others and to ultimately be a healthy and happy member of society.

If the desire of the Australian Government is for its citizens to live in a healthy and happy society, where the most vulnerable members of our community are encouraged to thrive, then the need for ongoing financial support for organisations and artists who work in the field of CCD is imperative.

We can also look to models in other countries where artists are paid a 'living wage' to make art, so that they do not have to look for other forms of employment to subsidise their profession.

Finland's basic income for artists funds creativity, proving welfare enables cultural production rather than laziness. Finland's artist basic income program provides €1,200 monthly to 2,000 artists without work requirements - enabling creative production impossible when struggling for survival. Recipient artists produced 340% more work than before receiving income, created higher-quality pieces, and achieved greater commercial success than when distracted by survival jobs. The program proves that financial security enhances productivity rather than encouraging laziness, demolishing conservative arguments that welfare creates dependency. Artists with basic income work harder at meaningful creative labor than when forced into service jobs draining energy and creativity.

#### **Resources:**

- [https://culturaldevelopment.net.au/kitka/wp-content/uploads/CREATING-AUSTRALIA-DEFINITION-OF-CACD\\_.pdf](https://culturaldevelopment.net.au/kitka/wp-content/uploads/CREATING-AUSTRALIA-DEFINITION-OF-CACD_.pdf)
- <https://creative.gov.au/research/dont-give-your-day-job-economic-study-professional-artists-australia>
- <https://creative.gov.au/research/artists-workers-economic-study-professional-artists-australia>
- <https://www.facebook.com/ItisaScience/posts/finlands-basic-income-for-artists-funds-creativity-proving-welfare-enables-cultu/122207393006051326/>