

## National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am a practising visual artist and educator with over 25 years of involvement in the visual arts. To this point, I have no metropolitan gallery representation. I navigate my practice in the small spaces between parenting and working for a major university with the odd small show and have had some recognition in art prize callouts.

Creative Australia's visual arts funding rounds include Arts Projects for Individuals (\$10,000–\$50,000), Fellowships (\$80,000), and the Visual Arts, Craft and Design Partnership Framework. These require detailed budgets, multi-page plans, up to five support letters, and extensive acquittal reports including financial certification for larger grants. This level of documentation assumes a volume of uninterrupted time that many working artists, particularly those navigating practice alongside caring duties and employment, simply do not have. This is not bad intent but a structural mismatch. The system unintentionally favours those with administrative support or grant-writing experience, not necessarily the most compelling artists.

I propose a two-track system within Creative Australia's visual arts rounds. A short-form option (one page, five questions, no attachments, no support letters) alongside the existing long form. Allocate 30% of Arts Projects funding to the short track. Reduce acquittal reporting to a single paragraph and three images. This lowers the barrier without removing the option for deeper documentation.

New cultural centres are valuable, but their budgets skew heavily toward architects, engineers, and construction. Grassroots artists are the very people who will animate these spaces and are often overlooked. This is not malicious, it is simply how capital works budgets have traditionally been structured.

I propose that you mandate publicly funded cultural builds to allocate no less than 25% of total project cost directly to grassroots artist fees. This ensures the vibrancy of the next generation of practitioners and gives new buildings fresh content not the same old celebrity artists.

Existing selection panels include experienced gallerists and curators whose knowledge is genuine and valuable. At the same time, the current system can unintentionally concentrate funding among a familiar group. Work that is yet to be appreciated or considered not fashionable often struggles for visibility alongside better-networked peers.

I propose you expand panel composition rather than replace it. Require that a meaningful proportion of selectors maintain an active studio practice. Additionally, create a dedicated pathway for artists outside metropolitan networks, judged primarily by regional and outer-suburban practitioners. Tastemakers remain at the table; they are simply joined by other voices.

Artists need time to work, not just time to apply.

I hope the new policy recognises that great artists exist across the whole ecosystem of artists who are represented and unrepresented, fashionable and otherwise. Simplify access. Fund people who make things, not just people who fill out forms. Make the Australian art scene a vibrant and energetic space to be envied by the world!

Thank you for considering this perspective.