

National Cultural Policy Submission

1468345

Public and anonymous



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am an Australian musician of more than 25 years and an Australian business owner who supports and works with other local musicians. My view is that the next National Cultural Policy should place a much stronger focus on rebuilding a shared Australian cultural identity.

Australia has rarely felt more divided. Many people feel unsure about what we are collectively trying to protect, celebrate or become. Culture should help fix that. It should give people a shared sense of belonging, responsibility and pride in the country we all live in.

Australia is made up of many backgrounds, histories and communities. That diversity can be a strength when it feeds into a common national culture. The policy should encourage every Australian, regardless of background, to see themselves as part of one shared story. A healthy national culture gives people a common language, common reference points, common civic values and a shared emotional connection to the country.

My concern is that cultural policy can sometimes place too much emphasis on separate cultural identities competing for recognition, visibility or special status. That approach can unintentionally deepen division. It can make people feel that Australian identity itself is being pushed aside, or that pride in Australia is somehow less valid than pride in a particular background, community or subculture.

The next cultural policy should take a different direction. It should champion a confident Australian identity that welcomes people in and gives them something shared to belong to. Inclusion should come through participation in the common life of the country, not through the endless separation of people into competing categories.

This includes recognising First Nations culture as foundational to this continent's story, while also strengthening the broader Australian identity that all citizens and communities can participate in. Migrant stories, regional stories, suburban stories, working-class stories, artistic stories and youth stories should all be welcomed into one national frame.

For music and the arts, this means stronger support for Australian voices, Australian stories, local venues, regional performance, schools, community arts and pathways for local artists. It also means making sure Australian culture is visible and valued in a global environment where imported media, global platforms and overseas trends can easily dominate attention.

The five pillars should be guided by one clear principle: Australian culture should bring people together. It should build common ground, shared pride and a stronger sense of national belonging.

My recommendation is that the next National Cultural Policy explicitly commits to rebuilding a common Australian cultural identity: inclusive, confident, locally grounded and proud of this country. A nation with a strong shared culture will be better placed to support artists, strengthen communities and reduce the division many Australians feel today.