

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I strongly support the development of a long-term national cultural policy that invests in Australian artists, storytelling, creativity, and cultural identity. Supporting Australian stories and creative industries is important not only economically, but also socially, as culture shapes how we understand ourselves and connect with one another as a nation.

I also strongly support the recognition and celebration of Indigenous Australian cultures, histories, languages, and artistic expression. Indigenous storytelling and cultural preservation are deeply important parts of Australia's identity and should continue to be supported and elevated within our arts and cultural institutions.

However, I have concerns about "First Nations First" being positioned as the primary or central pillar of the national cultural framework. While I understand and appreciate the intention behind this approach, I worry that framing one group as culturally separate or prior to all others risks unintentionally reinforcing division rather than shared national identity.

As an Indigenous Australian myself, I believe it is important to recognise that Indigenous experiences are highly diverse and cannot be represented through a single narrative. Many Indigenous Australians today have urbanised upbringings and lived experiences that intersect significantly with broader Australian society. Many people navigate multiple identities at once and do not necessarily see themselves as culturally separate from the wider Australian community.

My concern is that when cultural policy heavily centres one identity framework above all others, even when well-intentioned, it can contribute to a sense of "othering" rather than collective participation. Over time, this risks creating resentment or disengagement among some Australians. In my view, cultural policy should encourage inclusion, participation, and integration across society. I believe culture is strongest when people feel they are participating together in a shared national story.

For this reason, I believe Pillar 2, "A Place for Every Story," should be more central to the policy framework. Modern Australia is forming and rapidly changing, and is becoming increasingly diverse, and our national culture should reflect the experiences and contributions of all Australians. You can learn from the past and from culture, but you should also be looking to growing together collectively.

A successful cultural policy should create space for Indigenous stories and perspectives to flourish, while also fostering a broader sense of collective Australian identity and belonging. In my opinion, the emphasis should be on shared participation in Australian culture, rather than positioning groups as culturally separate from one another.

Ultimately, culture should help bring Australians together. Every person wants to see themselves reflected in the national story, and I believe the strongest cultural future for Australia is one that is inclusive, cohesive, and built collectively by everyone who calls this country home.