

**National Cultural Policy Submission**

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)


For me the most basic tenet of Art policies should be - how we 'build value'. Building value is important because it shifts arts policy from a defensive argument about funding to a constructive argument about public purpose. Instead of asking the arts to justify themselves only through attendance, tourism, jobs or short-term economic return, it asks what cultural, social, educational, institutional and future capacity is being created through public investment. This matters because much of the value produced by the arts is real but not immediately visible: artists develop skills, communities gain voice, institutions hold memory, young people encounter new ways of thinking, places acquire identity, and society expands its capacity to imagine different futures. A “building value” approach makes these outcomes visible and contestable. It allows policy to ask not only what was funded, but what was strengthened, who benefited, what capability was created, and what future possibilities were opened.

Therefore, my question would be \,Where do our Arts Policies create value, who benefits from that value, and how can that value be made visible?\,

In my opinion a stronger arts policy discussion begins by asking where value is actually created. Arts policies do not only fund events, exhibitions, performances or organisations; it must produce and build value across a wider public system. It must support artists and creative workers, strengthen institutions, build cultural memory, enables participation, develops skills, animates places, creates public meaning and continually expand the imaginative capacity of society. The policy question is therefore not simply whether the arts deserve support, but where that support creates value, who benefits from it, and how that value can be made visible. This requires a broader evidence framework — one that recognises economic outcomes, but also cultural, social, educational, institutional and future value.

Therefore, a broader evidence framework would combine numbers (eg ticket sales, box office etc) with stories, case studies, long-term tracking, community testimony, artist development, institutional resilience and evidence of new capability. It would ask not only “how many people came?” or “how much money was generated?”, but also “what changed, who gained capacity, what knowledge was preserved or created, what relationships were strengthened, and what future possibilities were opened?”

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