

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

Sonja Baram



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Submission to the National Cultural Policy Consultation

Australia's arts and cultural sectors should be recognised not only as creative industries, but as essential social and civic infrastructure contributing to employment, education, innovation, participation, and community cohesion.

Current policy settings often prioritise high-visibility major events and short-term tourism outcomes (mostly sporting). While these investments have value, arts, culture, local music, libraries, arts education, film, television, gaming, and digital cultural production require sustained investment across the full ecosystem: community infrastructure, education, creative development pathways, production capacity, and public participation.

Arts and cultural investment produces long-term public outcomes across multiple sectors of Australian life.

These sectors create employment not only for artists, but also for educators, technicians, librarians, musicians, venue workers, producers, screen practitioners, programmers, digital designers, and community organisations. Film, television, gaming, and hybrid digital production are increasingly significant contributors to Australia's knowledge economy and international cultural presence.

At the same time, arts and cultural participation strengthens social cohesion and civic participation. Libraries, festivals, local music venues, screen production, gaming communities, and hybrid cultural events create spaces where people gather across generations, backgrounds, and communities. Increasingly, participation occurs across both physical and digital environments through live performance, streaming, interactive media, virtual platforms, and hybrid public events.

This is particularly important for young people.

Arts, music, film, gaming, libraries, and cultural participation provide spaces for identity formation, creative development, social connection, and skill-building during key developmental stages. These are directly connected to educational engagement, workforce participation, technological innovation, and community wellbeing.

Public libraries also deserve explicit recognition within national cultural policy. Libraries remain among the most accessible cultural institutions in Australia and play a foundational role in literacy, digital inclusion, learning, access to technology, and community participation. A balanced national cultural policy should therefore support both major institutions and locally embedded cultural ecosystems across physical and digital forms.

While major events deliver immediate tourism returns, arts and cultural investment delivers ongoing employment, youth engagement, innovation, and community participation across the entire country.

To support this, the Australian Government should:

- + increase sustained investment in local arts, culture, music, libraries, film, television, gaming, and arts education;
- + strengthen youth participation and creative employment pathways across both digital and physical sectors;
- + recognise libraries and community cultural spaces as essential civic infrastructure;
- + support small-to-medium organisations that sustain participation at the community level; and
- + invest in hybrid cultural production integrating live, digital, interactive, and virtual forms of participation.

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Our long-term cultural resilience may depend on this, especially during times of economic storms and unemployment: Culture helps us weather these storms.

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