

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Australia’s national cultural policy must recognise that regional, rural and remote creatives are central—not peripheral—to our cultural identity. If Revive is to succeed across its five pillars, it must address the structural inequities limiting participation, sustainability and growth outside metropolitan centres.

Supporting small creative businesses and sole traders in regional Victoria is critical. In regional and remote areas, many creatives operate as micro-businesses—workshop facilitators, teaching artists, and community cultural workers—yet face higher costs and fewer opportunities. Targeted support is needed to reduce the cost of doing business, including subsidised travel, materials, and grants for essential equipment. This strengthens Pillar 3: the centrality of the artist, by enabling sustainable creative careers.

Barriers to professionalisation must also be addressed. Regional creatives often lack access to business training, mentorship, and pathways to scale. Capability-building programs, paid traineeships, and apprenticeships would strengthen skills and career pathways, while supporting and incentivising volunteers who sustain local arts ecosystems.

A persistent challenge is the perception—and reality—that regional practitioners cannot charge at parity with metropolitan counterparts. This undervaluation undermines sustainability and must be addressed through fair pay standards embedded across funding and commissioning frameworks.

Regional creatives face significant barriers to accessing key markets. Events such as Finders Keepers and The Big Design Market are often cost-prohibitive once travel, accommodation, exhibition fees, and childcare are considered. Without targeted support, regional practitioners are excluded from critical visibility and income opportunities. Dedicated market access funding, including travel bursaries and family-inclusive support, is essential.

Collaboration is another major gap. Brand partnerships, activations, and commissions are concentrated in metropolitan areas, making it difficult for regional creatives to build networks or be considered. National policy should support mechanisms that connect regional creatives with collaborators, including curated directories, brokerage programs, and incentives for metro-based organisations and brands to partner regionally. This directly supports Pillar 5: reaching audiences.

Multi-year funding for regional arts organisations is essential for stability and impact. Strong institutions (Pillar 4) require sustained investment to nurture talent, retain staff, and deliver long-term programming.

Access, participation, and touring must move beyond metro-centric models. Investment in region-to-region exchange, residencies, and regionally generated work will foster more equitable cultural flows and strengthen Pillar 2: a place for every story.

All efforts must uphold Pillar 1: First Nations First, by centring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, particularly in regional and remote communities.

A truly national cultural policy must invest in the ecosystems that sustain creativity beyond cities—ensuring regional creatives are supported as professionals, businesses, and collaborators within a connected, equitable arts sector.