

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am a retired Royal Australian Navy veteran. Culture, identity, conflict and unity are important factors for me and have been through my life. My biggest concerns are that we have a rich blend of international cultures that define our Australian identity. I am concerned that politicians and media are actively working to reignite venture ears and divide our national character even more; actions that are based on political expediency and not on progressing this great nation. I believe any policy measures should be about celebrating our rich and diverse cultural identity that is based upon a futuristic cultural view and not to be the Australia of my childhood in the 1970's. Even though I would describe myself as a white Anglo Saxon Australian male with all the priveleges associated with my life; I find the richest gift I have received is by embracing friends and work colleagues from indigenous communities and other countries that have brought their culture but gifted it to the rich tapestry that it is in being an Australian- I don't know how we harness that unity in the current climate of self focus- but I believe it should be central to any future cultural policy.

It is important for my mental health to experience art in multiple forms; it heals me and inspires me. There should be adequate funding to support creatives and art as part of our culture. Libraries, reading, book clubs (I am an officer in the Tough Guy Book Club), and community centres are also important to continue in the building of unity and progressive collaboration as well as enriched expressions of our identities and cultures. Funding and support should be in place for the development, strengthening and perfusion of these sacred places of humanity. To read more, talk more on serious subjects and to make new friends are important factors for any demographic within a community. People are given spaces to develop resilience in safe spaces and with others sharing common goals and ground.

Another concern for me is that I feel there is a lack of being genuine if AI is used in the arts and creativity, to me it is important that artists create their own material in its rawest form. This way creativity allows for greater diversity and authenticity as a true expression and voice of the creator. I believe policies should be in place to recognise this authenticity and rawness. That AI has limited use in culture institutions and in particular fictional literacy and storytelling.

Having experienced 26 years of a unique culture that is Naval Service I like that I have an opportunity to bring this as part of my identity and add to culture in a small way. I believe culture is integral to who we are and requires nurturing and support as it grows in community. Any policies need to cater and allow for culture in Australia and in particular that which will grow unity to thrive. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute.