

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

It is crucial that the forthcoming National Cultural Plan reflects current issues faced by artists and arts workers, as well as the arts sector at large. I am deeply concerned by the prevalence of censorship, political interference and racism in the arts. This submission is grounded in core values and a commitment to decolonisation, anti-racism, and anti-discrimination; artists as the moral compass of the sector; freedom of artistic expression without limitations; and freedom from political interference in the arts.

Artists are the moral compass of the sector (Pillar 3: Centrality of the Artist)

The National Cultural Policy must support artists to continue to be ethical and values-driven leaders of the sector and broader community.

Artists must be able to speak freely, sign letters and participate in boycott actions without harming their reputation and livelihoods.

Arts and cultural institutions must respect cultural diversity, and support, champion and care for the diverse conversations that artists bring to their programs, particularly those who have been targeted in the media for speaking out against injustices.

Artists must not be instrumentalised by institutions, lobbyists, the media and politicians.

Freedom of speech and artistic expression (Pillars 3: Centrality of the Artist & 4: Strong Cultural Infrastructure)

Strong cultural infrastructure must be based on artistic freedom of speech. This is already enshrined in the Creative Australia Act (11.e “to uphold and promote freedom of expression in the arts”) and needs to be upheld in the National Cultural Policy.

In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, art must be able to facilitate critical discourse, address political issues and critique power and class structures.

In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, there must be an end to the culture of intimidation that prevents artists from expressing and creating art freely.

The National Cultural Policy must address the prevalence of censorship, targeting and cancellation of artists who speak out against injustices, particularly in relation to nations that have been condemned by the UN for acts of apartheid, genocide and war crimes.

Freedom from political interference in the arts (Pillars 3: Centrality of the Artist & 4: Strong Cultural Infrastructure)

In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, the arts must remain independent and free from political interference.

The National Cultural Policy must ensure independent and ‘arms length’ funding processes across federal, state and local government. This includes ensuring that politicians at all levels must not influence or give advice that results in the provision or removal of funding support of a particular project or artist. This is already enshrined in the Creative Australia Act (article 14.2) and needs to be upheld in the National Cultural Policy.

A key action for the National Cultural Policy must be to implement an inquiry into political interference in the arts, including through donations and board membership and lobbying.

Donors must not influence arts organisations and institutions.

Board members with connections to political parties or lobbyists must be removed.

