

## National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Australia's new National Cultural Policy is an important acknowledgement that arts and culture matter deeply to the identity, wellbeing and future of the country. It recognises that artists are not simply entertainers, but storytellers, cultural contributors and essential voices within society. I welcome the increased investment in the arts, support for First Nations culture, and recognition of the need for stronger cultural infrastructure and long-term sustainability for artists and organisations.

At the same time, I believe it is important that any cultural policy also strongly protects artistic freedom and resists censorship.

Art has always been a space where people can ask difficult questions, challenge systems, express emotions and reflect the complexity of human experience. Not all art is comfortable, decorative or universally agreeable — and that is precisely why it is important. A healthy cultural landscape should allow room for experimentation, disagreement, vulnerability and diverse perspectives.

I am concerned about any form of cultural censorship, whether political, institutional or ideological. When artists begin to self-censor out of fear of backlash, funding pressures or public controversy, the cultural landscape becomes narrower and less honest. Art should not only reflect what is safe or popular; it should also allow space for nuance, ambiguity and critical reflection.

As an artist who migrated to Australia from [REDACTED], I deeply value the freedom of expression that Australia offers. That freedom has allowed me to develop a practice that combines humour, spirituality, beauty and social reflection in ways that may not always fit neatly within traditional categories. I believe one of Australia's greatest cultural strengths is its diversity of voices, experiences and viewpoints. Protecting artistic freedom is essential to maintaining that diversity.

I also believe cultural policy should support accessibility and participation in the arts, not only within major institutions but also within communities, regional areas and everyday life. The arts can create connection, empathy and understanding across different backgrounds and generations. They can help people feel seen, heard and valued. This becomes especially important during times of social division or uncertainty.

Importantly, freedom of expression does not remove the need for responsibility, care or respectful dialogue. Artists should remain thoughtful about the impact of their work and open to discussion and critique. However, critique and censorship are not the same thing. Open conversation strengthens culture; suppression weakens it.

Overall, I see the new National Cultural Policy as a positive step toward recognising the value of the arts in Australia. However, alongside investment and infrastructure, I hope Australia continues to defend the fundamental freedom of artists to create work that is honest, challenging, emotional and diverse. A strong culture is not built through control or restriction, but through trust in artists and in the public's ability to engage with complexity.