

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the review of Australia's National Cultural Policy, Revive. My work, *The Feet Bus* represents the originality and resilience of Australia's contemporary independent arts sector. It illuminates the importance of supporting Australian stories and recognising artists as workers whose labour, innovation and cultural contribution are essential to the nation's creative future.

The Feet Bus was developed outside major institutional frameworks, it was fostered by individual vision, persistence and community connection. The work reflects the diversity, humour, and creativity of contemporary Australia. It contributes to a cultural identity that is distinct and internationally relevant.

The "A Place for Every Story" pillar is essential. Australia's cultural landscape depends on independent creators being able to develop work without needing to fit within commercial or institutional expectations. Some of the country's most innovative artistic voices emerge from small-scale independent practice, yet these artists face significant barriers to sustainability and growth.

For *The Feet Bus*, international interest has demonstrated the global potential of Australian independent work. The production has received invitations to present in Europe. However, responding to these opportunities is made difficult due to limited funding pathways and inflexible funding structures that do not reflect the realities of international touring.

The "Centrality of the Artist" pillar must acknowledge that artists are workers operating in highly unpredictable conditions. Independent artists are often required to act as creators, producers, administrators, marketers and tour managers while carrying substantial financial risk. In the case of international touring, opportunities often arise within timelines that do not align with existing funding rounds or assessment processes. This creates a situation where Australian artists can secure international demand for their work but remain unable to access the support required to realise those opportunities.

Responsive export funding, rapid-access touring support and funding structures that recognise the evolving nature of international opportunities would significantly strengthen Australia's global cultural presence. When Australian artists are invited to perform internationally, these opportunities should be viewed not only as individual career milestones but as valuable cultural diplomacy and export outcomes for the country.

Independent artists and productions like *The Feet Bus* contribute substantially to Australia's cultural reputation despite often operating with minimal resources. The work required to sustain these projects is extensive and ongoing, and policy settings must better recognise the labour involved in creating and touring contemporary Australian performance work.

As the Government reviews Revive, it is essential that the policy continues to support independent creators, flexible funding pathways and the international export of Australian stories. Independent artists such as myself are already demonstrating the quality and originality of Australian work on the world stage. With more responsive support structures, independent productions like *The Feet Bus* can continue to grow audiences internationally while strengthening Australia's cultural identity at home and abroad.