

Mission Statements.

Most of the mission statements, policy statements, and grant criteria emanating from RAA are virtually incomprehensible. For example – ‘...*Australia’s creative sector is uniquely positioned to bolster... etc. Creative industries generate economic and social value...etc Integrating creativity into broader economic strategies... etc*’ What does all that mean?

Don Watson in his book ‘**Death Sentence – the decay of public language**’ wrote that such grandiose obfuscation is ‘*the language of power and influence*’. It is anti-democratic and provides cover for the powerful to do as they please.

Many questions arise.

- What is the creative sector?
- What are the creative industries? All industries involve creativity.
- What is art and what is culture? They mean quite different things.
- What is an artist? Is it someone who earns a full-time living creating art, or is it someone for whom art is a hobby?

Statistics re population and employment opportunities are meaningless without analysis and interpretation.

The Five Pillars of Revive.

All need interrogating to clarify.

1. Seems to privilege First Nations stories/arts over all others – how democratic is that?
2. Seems to contradict 1.
3. Little evidence of this in how grants are determined.
4. What does this mean? Is it not RAA’s purpose to support the arts?
5. How? Mostly the arts are way too expensive for ordinary people to access.

Criteria for Grant Applications.

My experience is with CASA both as an applicant and on an Assessment Panel.

The obstacle course of Assessment Criteria conveys no more than a rudimentary understanding of the artistic process and lack of trust in the intrinsic value of the arts per se.

Why are Grants conditional upon extensive work to *provisionally* garner community support?

The fact that CASA runs workshops to teach applicants how to make an application says a lot about the confusing speculative requirements therein.

Yet CASA acts as a curator/producer in its own right, with no accountability. Why this contradiction?

Art is work. Do nurses, teachers, police, et al have to justify and speculate upon their work to qualify for a wage?

Quality.

The most important criterium for arts activity should always be quality. There are relatively simple ways for informed people to assess that. All investment in the future involves risk. Art is about taking risks.

Art for Art's Sake.

The arts in Australia comprise a meagre proportion of the national budget, yet they have become highly politicized as evidenced by some recent high-profile cases. RAA policy is more about social engineering than supporting art and artists for their own sakes.

The availability of arts grants needs to be widely publicized into all **Regional and Remote communities** to encourage artistic ambitions to grow from within communities.

It is incumbent upon RAA and its subsidiaries to be cognizant of all the limitations and specific conditions that exist in **Regional and Remote areas**.

PS. Recommended reading for what art is all about: **The Australian Magazine of May 2-3, 2026, by Nikki Gemmell about film director Chloe Zhao whose film *Hamnet* won many Oscars.**