

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the consultation process for the new National Cultural Policy.

Culture is not peripheral to national life; it is one of the foundations of social cohesion, democratic resilience, and national identity. In an era of increasing geopolitical competition, social fragmentation, and digital disruption, Australia's cultural institutions and creative sectors play a critical role in strengthening the country's civic confidence, shared identity, and international presence.

I urge the Government to adopt the following key priorities:

1. Recognise culture as a strategic national capability, not simply an economic sector.

Australia often discusses culture primarily in terms of economic contribution or entertainment value. While the creative industries are economically significant, culture also performs a broader national function. It strengthens civic trust, preserves historical memory, builds social cohesion, and communicates Australian identity internationally.

Countries that invest seriously in their cultural institutions are often better equipped to project soft power abroad and maintain social resilience at home. Australia should adopt a national cultural framework that recognises literature, museums, libraries, archives, public broadcasting, performing arts, and local cultural institutions as essential civic infrastructure.

The National Cultural Policy should explicitly recognise the relationship between culture, democratic resilience, social cohesion, and Australia's international standing.

2. Strengthen and modernise Australia's public cultural institutions.

Libraries, galleries, museums, archives, and public broadcasters remain among the most trusted institutions in Australian society. However, many face increasing financial pressure, workforce strain, and the challenge of adapting to rapidly changing digital consumption patterns.

Public cultural institutions should be supported not only to preserve heritage, but also to actively combat misinformation, improve media literacy, and create accessible public spaces for education and community engagement.

Libraries in particular deserve renewed attention. Modern libraries are no longer simply repositories of books; they are democratic civic spaces that provide digital access, lifelong learning opportunities, research capability, and community connection. In many communities, they are among the few remaining genuinely free public spaces.

The Government should prioritise long-term investment in cultural institutions to ensure they remain accessible, modern, and capable of serving future generations.

3. Expand support for Australian storytelling and intellectual life.

Australian stories help Australians understand themselves. They also shape how Australia is perceived internationally. Yet Australian writers, publishers, filmmakers, researchers, and artists continue to operate in a highly competitive global information environment dominated by larger overseas markets and digital platforms.

The National Cultural Policy should place greater emphasis on supporting Australian intellectual and creative output across literature, publishing, film, documentary, theatre, journalism, and digital media. This includes

ensuring sustainable pathways for emerging creators and preserving spaces for serious cultural and intellectual discussion.