

## National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am incredibly hopeful on the potential of the New Cultural Policy and the benefits it can create for our artistic and national identity. Including the possibilities this can make for the cultivating of art in the future.

My name is [REDACTED], I am an actor and fight choreographer having recently debuted at Belvoir and Sydney Theatre Company. I have also been in the independent theatre scene in Sydney since graduating with a Bachelor of Performance from Western Sydney University seventeen years ago.

One of the challenges I have seen throughout my time in this sector is the volatility and scarcity of opportunities for new artists entering the arts after graduating. Often they find themselves struggling to have access to open programs, developmental or otherwise. And often when trying to become involved in said programs or institutions they are met with resistance due to perceived inexperience or a lack of a fully developed skillset. Sometimes it can even be as simple a reason as distance - when I was finishing my course at Theatre Nepean in 2008 we had a showcase where we invited all theatrical and commercial agencies in Sydney to attend in hopes of being seen and possibly signed to begin our journey out of acting school. Unfortunately for us, not a single one came. Their reason: it was too far to go, as our showing was in Penrith where we had trained.

I strongly believe in the talent that I graduated alongside and to be robbed of that opportunity when knowing that other schools closer to the city would have full attendance for their graduating showcases creates an instant handicap for those who are just as skilled. I believe that accessibility for institutions such as these can provide a greater opportunity for artists to continue their craft instead of falling by the wayside. Many schools have their graduate shows facilitated by venues such as Belvoir and I think it would be of great benefit to provide a similar opportunity for schools that are further away. The newly revamped Theatre Nepean and Charles Sturt University's acting course are the first that comes to mind.

Working predominantly as an independent theatre maker, I have spent thousands of hours and dollars on labour. Often, we make very little of our money back - if any - through profit share and while being proud of our work and the effort it takes, it can become an exhausting process. Many of us take casual or full-time work to make ends meet and doing both professions at once can lead to burnout and often having to sacrifice one for the sake of the other. The Irish government's Universal Basic Income trial has become a prime example of the benefits that it can provide for both creatives and the economy. Similarly, Belvoir St Theatre's proposal of a pilot program called Artists as Workers is a prime example of supporting artists while allowing for cultivation of their artistic pursuit. A three-year training and employment initiative placing artists in salaried roles within participating theatre companies. These kinds of initiatives are what can truly allow artists to thrive and create original and insightful work.