

National Cultural Policy Submission

1470177

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

There should be another pillar : Respecting our natural world

We are in a climate crisis, and biodiversity crisis, both of which will affect every aspect of our cultural and creative lives. It is shocking this isn't in the policy.

Everything we do as artists and audiences should centre the environment in which we live.

The policy must prioritise reducing environmental impacts: setting targets to reduce carbon emissions, decrease plastic use and encouraging use of natural materials.

It must acknowledge rising temperatures and increased storms & floods will impact creating, performing, touring and preserving artworks.

How will First Nations artists create works in 50C heat for the Alice Springs art centre? How will we prevent floods destroying art galleries as happened in Lismore and Fitzroy Crossing? How will outdoor music festivals operate amidst bushfire threats, storms or heatwaves? How will even small acts, like busking, or writers retreats continue in a time of climate breakdown?

These aren't far-off, academic questions but real threats artists, event organisers and audiences are dealing with now. They will worsen and we must plan and prepare for this.

Likewise, we must ensure art and creative practices don't do more harm to the natural world we all depend on. We must reduce carbon emissions from major events / tours, encourage low-emission practice such as solar-powered festivals, plus make more events accessible via public transport.

Arts organisations and centres must divest from fossil fuels, deforestation and other destructive practices.

There should be a policy with targets to reduce plastic use, including acrylic paints, and other harmful materials. For example, encouraging natural dyes for textile production, and increasing re-use facilities. I would love to see Reverse-Garbage in every major city, and incentives for artists and creative businesses to use them.

In all areas of the arts we need circular economies, less waste, and to better educate arts businesses on both carbon emissions and environmental stewardship.

The days of festivals run with enormous diesel generators, leaving behind tonnes of plastic tents and food packaging must end.

Arts organisations and culture should be integrated into our commitments to the Paris Agreement and related treaties.

We should also embrace and honour the abundant creativity in the natural environment: native flora and fauna, lands, rivers and oceans. Country must be respected and nurtured, not simply a backdrop to performances.

Finally, the policy should recognise the import role arts can play in helping process trauma, grief and other strong emotions as a result of climate breakdown, extreme weather events and species extinctions.

More than ever, we will need story-telling, poetry, music and art to share experiences, express feelings, buoy our spirits, and develop resilience in the face of ever worsening climate shocks.

Rather than wait for the next Black Summer or devastating flood, we must plan now for how art and creative events can help bring communities together, and deepen our connections to each other and to the natural world.