

## National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Organisation

A Climate For Art

Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

A Climate For Art (ACFA) is one of Victoria's leading organisations in climate awareness, advocacy, and practice within the cultural sector, co-organised by Naarm/Melbourne-based independent producers Eliki Reade and Lana Nguyen. ACFA are consortium members of Creative Climate, Australia's national peak body for culture-led climate action.

ACFA unifies the arts around the issue of our changing climate through divestment practices and community building. We see the climate crisis as a cultural crisis requiring a cultural response. ACFA is focused on collectivising responses through tangible actions, growing critical climate dialogues through a community of practice, built from an ongoing series of events, creative projects and gatherings. ACFA's work is supported by an extensive list of independent artists and 28 concerned and aligned small-to-medium arts organisations who mobilise around climate action.

We live in a new climate reality. Australia has surpassed an average global warming level of 1.5°C since the pre-industrial period. We have witnessed the direct impacts of climate change, from the smoke and smog that affected work within the city in the 2019 nation-wide bushfires, to multiple cancellations due to heat and flooding events, to the ongoing impacts of COVID pandemics and the growing threat of pandemics to come as climate change ramps up their occurrences.

Responding to the large swathes of art centring the issue of climate and the concerns of organisations and workers directly, we know that there is keen appetite for climate leadership in the arts.

The arts have the opportunity and an extensive toolkit to lead what is easily the biggest existential crisis of our time. However, we are fundamentally unresourced to do so. The conditions that organisations, arts workers, and artists work within fail to sustain practices, and limit the response to the risks and challenges of these existential crises, which threaten both our personal and professional lives. The environmental crisis needs to prioritise messages from our cultural sector, but we don't have the means to recontextualise our artistic and cultural practices for this moment.

It is clear that without a healthy climate, none of the five pillars of the National Cultural Policy can stand strong. Climate is foundational to culture and the lives we live.

Further to this, cultural responses have been historically ignored in climate policy negotiations and in climate discourse at large. It is urgent to use our artistic and cultural power to respond in ways that science and policy cannot do alone.

We want to see climate action embedded in the National Cultural Policy, and stand behind Creative Climate's submission. We want to see dedicated funding lines for culture to be a key voice in climate response, more resources for First Nations communities to do ecological work as cultural work, and funds for more research and critical thinking in the intersection between art and climate.