

Australian
Design
Centre



Australian Design Centre Submission – A New National Cultural Policy

Australian Design Centre has been forced to [close in June 2026](#) after supporting the careers of thousands of artists for 62 years due to defunding by governments.

As a NSW based organisation with national reach, this not only leaves the largest state, without an independent organisation supporting makers and designers it also leaves a huge hole in the national arts ecology.

After decades of continuous investment, the decision by Creative Australia and Create NSW to defund Australian Design Centre is inexplicable.

The development of the *Revive* policy made much of ‘reviving’ and restoring funding to the small to medium sector which was decimated by the previous government.

This has not happened.

A recent [report](#) by the NSW Legislative Council into the structure and funding for the arts found:

“The imminent closure of the Australian Design Centre is a travesty, and a stark example of the impact of such a seismic shift in the Government’s priorities in the arts, music and night-time economy portfolios. For decades, the Centre has played a vital role in supporting designers, makers and artists, and in connecting audiences with contemporary craft and design. Its loss will not only remove a key institution from the cultural landscape, but also diminish the technical expertise, professional development pathways, and creative infrastructure that underpin the craft and design sector in NSW.”

Recommendation 12: *“That the NSW Government urgently restore baseline funding to the Australian Design Centre from \$150,000 to \$500,000 per annum for 2026 and 2027 to enable the state’s only government-supported institution dedicated to craft and design to continue operations beyond 30 June 2026.”*

Recommendation 13: *“That the NSW Government advocate to the Federal Government for emergency Federal funding for Australian Design Centre.”*

The Inquiry further found *“That the current arts funding and grants framework and processes are undermining the capacity and sustainability of independent artists and small-to-medium arts organisations.”*

Government funding for craft and design, has declined in real terms.

The infrastructure developed over decades is being dismantled by the negative consequences of a Creative Australia funding program that has a misguided concept of competition - which has a place in some economic sectors but is misplaced in the arts and culture sector – that negates investing in long-standing effective organisations like ADC which have repeatedly demonstrated value and accountability leading to sustainable cultural outcomes.

Australian Design Centre delivers massive outcomes year on year and nurtures generations of artists and creative practices enriching culture for everyone.

The new national cultural policy needs to focus its attention on investing in craft and design before the fragile infrastructure for these art forms is eroded further to the point of extinction.

We support the aspirations in the Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC) Network [submission](#), making the point that this national network is significantly weakened with the defunding of the Australian Design Centre by Creative Australia.

We recommend that an independent review of the *Revive* policy be undertaken as part of the development of a new policy. This will illuminate the value and limitations of the policy in its first iteration, the effectiveness of the implementation of that policy by government agencies, and prevent a new policy being developed to a timeline devised for political expediency.

Please see:

[ADC Annual Report 2025](#)

[ADC Feedback Survey 2025](#)

Submitted by Australian Design Centre, 19 May 2026.