

## National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual

Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am writing to support stronger recognition of Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) within the National Cultural Policy, REVIVE.

In my experience working across community storytelling, participatory media and cultural development projects, CACD is not a niche area of the arts. It is often the main way everyday people meaningfully participate in arts and culture at all.

A lot of this work happens outside major institutions and is therefore easy to overlook in policy and funding structures. But on the ground, it is doing some of the heaviest lifting. It creates spaces where people feel heard, connected and able to contribute. It helps communities tell their own stories, preserve cultural knowledge, build relationships and respond to change together.

I strongly support the call for CACD to be explicitly recognised within REVIVE. At the moment, there is a clear gap between the language of participation, inclusion and cultural democracy in the policy, and the actual recognition of the sector that most directly delivers those outcomes.

This work is especially important in regional areas, disaster-impacted communities, and in projects led by or working alongside First Nations communities. In these contexts, creative practice is not just about producing artistic outcomes. It is about trust, belonging, continuity and collective capacity.

I have seen community cultural development projects create genuine engagement with people who are often excluded from traditional arts spaces or broader civic participation. I have seen storytelling and creative projects strengthen intergenerational relationships, support wellbeing, and help communities process grief, change and social fragmentation. This kind of work cannot always be measured through ticket sales or short-term outputs, but that does not make it less valuable. In many cases, it is essential social and cultural infrastructure.

I also support the sector's call for long-term, place-based funding models and better national measurement of CACD activity and impact. The current system significantly undercounts this work because it is spread across multiple sectors including health, education, justice, youth work, climate adaptation and disaster recovery. As a result, its contribution is consistently undervalued despite delivering outcomes across many areas of public life.

At a time when Australia is facing increasing climate instability, inequality and social fragmentation, we need approaches that build connection, participation and resilience at a community level. Policy alone cannot create this. Relationships do. CACD provides the creative and relational mechanisms that help communities stay connected and actively shape their cultural futures.

To fully realise the vision of REVIVE as "a place for every story", Community Arts and Cultural Development must be properly recognised, measured and resourced as a core part of Australia's cultural landscape - not treated as a peripheral practice.