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21 May 2026

It is crucial that the forthcoming National Cultural Plan reflects current issues faced by artists and arts workers, as well as the arts sector at large. I am concerned by the prevalence of censorship, political interference and racism in the arts. As such, this submission is grounded in core values of and commitment to decolonisation, anti-racism, anti-discrimination; artists as the moral compass of the sector; freedom of artistic expression without limitations; and freedom from political interference in the arts.

- **Commitment to decolonisation, anti-racism and anti-discrimination** (Pillars 1: First Nations First, 3: Centrality of the Artist & 4: Strong Cultural Infrastructure)
 - The National Cultural Policy must take a decolonial, anti-racist and anti-discrimination approach. It should respect and take leadership from those in the sector who are already working from a strong decolonial, anti-racist and anti-discrimination framework.
 - The IHRA definition of antisemitism must be removed from all arts, cultural and educational institutions and be replaced with the UN Core Stance of Values: “The UN asserts that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, without distinction of any kind, including race or ethnic origin. It maintains that no state, institution, group, or individual should make any discrimination in human rights and fundamental freedoms.”
- **Artists are the moral compass of the sector** (Pillar 3: Centrality of the Artist)
 - The National Cultural Policy must support artists to continue to be ethical and values-driven leaders of the sector and broader community.
 - Artists must be able to speak freely, sign letters and participate in boycott actions without harming their reputation and livelihoods.
 - Arts and cultural institutions must respect cultural diversity, and support, champion and care for the diverse conversations that artists bring to their programs, particularly those who have been targeted in the media for speaking out against injustices.
 - Artists must not be instrumentalised by institutions, lobbyists, the media and politicians.
- **Freedom of speech and artistic expression** (Pillars 3: Centrality of the Artist & 4: Strong Cultural Infrastructure)
 - Strong cultural infrastructure must be based on artistic freedom of speech. This is already enshrined in the Creative Australia Act (11.e “to uphold and promote freedom of expression in the arts”) and needs to be upheld in the National Cultural Policy.
 - In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, art must be able to facilitate critical discourse, address political issues and critique power and class structures.
 - In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, there must be an end to the culture of intimidation that prevents artists from expressing and creating art freely.

- The National Cultural Policy must address the prevalence of censorship, targeting and cancellation of artists who speak out against injustices, particularly in relation to nations that have been condemned by the UN for acts of apartheid, genocide and war crimes.
- **Freedom from political interference in the arts** (Pillars 3: Centrality of the Artist & 4: Strong Cultural Infrastructure)
 - In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, the arts must remain independent and free from political interference.
 - The National Cultural Policy must ensure independent and 'arms length' funding processes across federal, state and local government. This includes ensuring that politicians at all levels must not influence or give advice that results in the provision or removal of funding support of a particular project or artist. This is already enshrined in the Creative Australia Act (article 14.2) and needs to be upheld in the National Cultural Policy.
 - A key action for the National Cultural Policy must be to implement an inquiry into political interference in the arts, including through donations and board membership and lobbying.
 - Donors must not influence arts organisations and institutions.
 - Board members with connections to political parties or lobbyists must be removed.

Additionally, I agree with the following proposals developed by artists in consultation with NAVA (National Association of Visual Arts):

- Exempt art prizes, fellowships and government grants from income tax and reform Non-Commercial Loss rules, GST obligations and HECS/HELP repayment settings to better support artists with fluctuating incomes.
- Property and tax reforms to support affordable artist studios and residencies, including incentives for landlords to lease vacant or underused properties as creative workspaces and tax deductions for living costs associated with artists' residencies.
- Embed stronger social security, welfare and income support systems for artists and arts workers operating outside traditional employment frameworks, including consideration of basic income and living wage models for artists.
- Mandate artist remuneration standards across publicly funded visual arts activity, including minimum rates, consultation fees, regional loading and recognition of hidden and administrative labour.
- Reform superannuation laws to ensure artists are paid superannuation when they are engaged for their labour, including exhibitions, commissions, talks, workshops, residencies and other forms of professional artistic work, and clarify obligations under the Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992 (Cth).
- Require dedicated superannuation line items within grant applications and strengthen education around artists' workplace rights, contracts, taxation and entitlements.
- Expand the Cultural Gifts Program and introduce tax incentives to encourage galleries, businesses and collectors to acquire and support work by living Australian artists, particularly emerging artists.
- Introduce legislated protections for artistic freedom and freedom of expression, recognising the role of artists in public debate and protecting lawful artistic work

from censorship, disproportionate sanction and self-censorship driven by fear of legal or reputational consequences.

- Embed arts education as a key commitment in National Cultural Policy, including sustained investment in tertiary arts education, vocational pathways and professional development.
- Create a nationally coordinated arts funding strategy that improves consistency, accessibility and long-term sustainability across Federal, State and local government funding systems.
- Commit to ongoing investment in local visual arts infrastructure, including council-owned exhibition spaces, shared studios, regional arts networks and community artmaking spaces.
- Introduce targeted measures addressing gender inequality within the visual arts sector, including equal representation in acquisitions, exhibitions and leadership opportunities.
- Develop a national arts strategy addressing AI, copyright infringement, online harms and the misuse of artists' work in digital environments.
- Recognise arts and culture as essential climate infrastructure and increase support for artist-led responses to climate change and natural disasters, including dedicated funding for First Nations-led initiatives.
- Establish dedicated disaster preparedness, recovery and resilience funding for cultural infrastructure, including artist studios, archives, collections, community art spaces and locally run arts organisations affected by climate change and natural disasters.

I would also like to see the new National Cultural Policy addressing the inaccessibility of arts for Deaf and Disabled people. The arts sector struggles to provide adequate access for audiences, and working in the sector as a Deaf or Disabled person is to encounter barriers to access, lack of structural support, inaccessible systems and a lack of representation at all levels. Deaf and Disabled artists deserve to tell their stories, and have their access needs and human rights met. The policy needs to ensure Deaf and Disabled artists are at the centre of creative practice in this country. This means demanding accessible spaces and digital spaces by any funded organisation/venue, providing support and infrastructure to the sector to platform and promote Deaf and Disabled artists and artworks, properly funding disability arts, and encouraging partnerships between disabled and non-disabled organisations to grow future talent. All these measures should be disability-led.

The above statements are copied exactly from the Reinstart Khaled Collective and NAVA public statements. I have done so as the government will be using A.I to summarise submissions and I therefore wanted the above statements to be captured and emphasised as part of the submission process.