

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Organisation

Banyule City Council



Banyule City Council welcomes the opportunity to contribute to Australia's new National Cultural Policy and strongly supports a nationally coordinated approach that recognises the essential role of local government in Australia's creative ecology.

Banyule is a diverse and culturally rich municipality in Melbourne's north east, home to a growing population of artists, creative workers and highly engaged arts audiences. Our Creative Strategy is grounded in community consultation, demographic insight and a clear commitment to First Nations self-determination (Pillar 1), strengthening cultural participation (Pillar 2), professional pathways for artists (Pillar 3), and access to high quality arts experiences close to where people live (Pillar 5). We recognise that culture is not a 'nice to have', but a cornerstone of community health, wellbeing, connection and civic pride.

A standout example of the impact of Federal-Local collaboration is Banyule's participation in the Sharing the National Collection loan program. Through this initiative, internationally significant artworks from the Heidelberg School were displayed in Banyule. This investment not only enhanced local cultural infrastructure but enabled our community to experience masterpieces, many created locally, that had not been seen in Banyule since they were first painted. The works fostered community pride and connection, reinforcing the idea that nationally significant culture belongs in local places. Funding provided to the National Gallery of Australia to work directly with councils streamlined delivery and improved access (Pillar 4). We would encourage more of this investment.

Federal support has also been instrumental in enabling Banyule's Twilight Sounds festival of Australian musicians to grow. This much loved event provides fair paid opportunities for local and national artists, while creating free, accessible cultural experiences for local audiences (Pillar 5). In an era of cost of living pressure, these initiatives are critical: they allow people to experience high quality Australian music in their local environment, support the livelihoods of artists, and deliver tangible wellbeing benefits. In this case, the funding came directly to council for us to employ creatives. We would encourage more of this investment.

The current economic climate is placing acute pressure on creative workers. These pressures are contributing to a splintering of the creative sector, with artists increasingly disconnected from professional networks and peer communities that support collaboration and resilience. Local government plays a vital role in responding to this challenge by helping to re establish and sustain local creative networks through grants, commissioning, employment, and opportunities embedded in community life. This highly place based support is responsive to local need, but it relies on sustained Federal investment and policy settings that recognise councils as key delivery partners.

Federal cultural investment has demonstrably enabled employment for creatives, meaningful engagement for communities, and civic pride through access to Australia's cultural treasures. Banyule strongly advocates for a cultural policy framework that continues to invest in artists, strengthens local cultural infrastructure, supports loans and access, and recognises the vital role of councils in delivering inclusive, high impact cultural outcomes for communities across Australia.