

## National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

What matters most to my work and to the health of our entire cultural ecosystem is ensuring adequate funding and real creative freedom for artists. Yet the sector continues to face a chronic and debilitating challenge: the resources required to make work and bring it to audiences are not keeping pace with demand.

Arts organisations are forced to spend an extraordinary share of their time and operational budgets not on creating art, but on chasing funds and navigating increasingly complex grant requirements. Each year, the process becomes more burdensome. Organisations are expected to deliver not only artistic outcomes but a growing list of social obligations, from community cohesion to economic impact. Meanwhile, competition for grants intensifies, pitting longestablished institutions against emerging voices all drawing from a funding pool that has not matched sector's growth.

If we are serious about the centrality of the artist, we must recognise what artists actually do: they push boundaries, explore new ideas, and challenge the assumptions that shape our society. Their work can be confronting, uncomfortable, even shocking and that is precisely why it matters. Art expands our understanding of the world. It opens space for new perspectives. It drives cultural progress.

To protect this vital role, we must defend and strengthen freedom of expression. Artists need the freedom to take risks without fear of political pressure or funding repercussions. Creativity cannot thrive in an environment of constraint.