

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

From: A community radio advocate and listener

I am a regular listener and supporter of community radio, specifically RTRFM 92.1. This includes presenting, mentoring, DJing, community events planning and contributing, mentoring and being a member of the RTRFM programming committee. My perspective comes from witnessing firsthand how local, human-powered broadcasting strengthens communities from the ground up.

What matters most is maintaining spaces free from algorithms, mandated playlists, and “AI slop.” As we watch the rise of disconnection and authoritarian tendencies globally, the human and durable skills of community radio, dialogue, care, local knowledge are not quaint; they are essential.

The cultural sector faces a challenge of invisible infrastructure. Commercial platforms extract attention; local radio builds belonging. The opportunity is to recognise community broadcasting as a democratic and cultural backbone, not a niche hobby.

What I would like to see in the new National Cultural Policy:

- Explicit support for local voice amplification (especially marginalised and silenced groups), funding and protections for stations that prioritise local issues, artists, and information sharing without tech overlords. The importance of local, independent truth telling to build a fair future for everyone to thrive has never been stronger.
- Recognition of radio as a public good, not just content, but a place for education, citizen participation, and family business support.
- Resistance to algorithmic cultural monoculture, the policy should actively favour human programming decisions and local music quotas over automated playlists.
- Emergency preparedness for democracy, when corporate media fails, community radio enhances democracy by discussing local issues and encouraging real dialogue.

Key point

There is no sweeter place than RTRFM and grass-roots radio. But that sweetness is fragile. Please reflect in the policy that local radio amplifies voices, strengthens mutual care, designs a homegrown future, and welcomes those who cannot find support in the corporate mainstream.