

# GYRO Group

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Submission to the Australian Government  
Towards a New National Cultural Policy — Public Consultation 2026

## Submission on Australia's New National Cultural Policy

GYRO.Group is a Brisbane-headquartered music technology and services company operating across 40+ markets worldwide. Through our distribution platform, we partner with hundreds of independent labels, and tens of thousands of artists, and music businesses, placing us at the centre of the Australian independent music ecosystem. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the development of Australia's next National Cultural Policy and urge the Government to adopt a commercially ambitious framework — one that treats the music industry not only as a cultural asset, but as an export industry with genuine global potential.

The case for urgent action is not abstract. According to the IFPI Global Music Report, Australia dropped out of the top ten recorded music markets for the first time in almost thirty years in 2024, replaced by Mexico. By 2025, Australia had slipped further still, falling to 13th globally — a two-place drop in a single year, despite recording modest revenue growth of 1.2%. Meanwhile, less than 10% of music streamed within Australia comes from local artists (Music Australia's own data). These two data points tell the same story: Australian music is being crowded out — at home and abroad — and the policy response must match the scale of the problem.

### 1. Local Content Consumption and Algorithmic Equity

The most pressing structural issue facing Australian music today is not the quality of what we make — it is whether Australians can find it. Streaming platforms recommendation algorithms, editorial playlists, and discovery features are shaped by data from Western populations many times larger than ours, and the result is systemic under-representation of Australian artists in Australian listeners' feeds.

Music Australia's Ausify Your Algo campaign, launched during Ausmusic Month in November 2025, demonstrated that there is genuine public appetite to address this. But a consumer behaviour campaign, however successful, cannot fix a structural problem embedded in the architecture of global platforms.

The Revive policy's commitment to requiring streaming services to tell more Australian stories was a meaningful step. The new policy must go further, with specific, measurable commitments tied to platform accountability.

*We recommend the new policy commit to:*

- Providing sustained, multi-year funding for Music Australia to run Ausify as a permanent, year-round programme rather than a single Ausmusic Month campaign — including dedicated investment in artist discovery infrastructure and consumer education.
- Commissioning independent research into streaming platform algorithmic practices and their impact on local content visibility, with findings used to inform regulatory settings and platform negotiations.

### 2. Scaling Investment in Independent Label and Distributor Infrastructure

Australia's independent music sector generates the vast majority of Australian recorded music output, yet the infrastructure that develops and sustains that music — the labels, publishers, and distributors who take commercial risk on artists — remains underfunded relative to international peers.

Music Australia's Record Label Development Scheme is a meaningful start, and we commend the Government for establishing it. However, we urge a significant expansion in both scale and scope. Canada's FACTOR model — which funds the entire supply chain including distributors, labels, and managers alongside artists — is a proven template. It recognises a fundamental truth: investing in the business infrastructure of music multiplies the impact of every dollar spent on artist development.

Current state-based programmes (Victoria's Music Works, Sound NSW's recording and promotion grants, Arts Queensland's export fund) are valuable but fragmented, inconsistently available across jurisdictions, and primarily artist-facing. A nationally consistent, federally led fund — one that explicitly includes distributors and labels as eligible recipients — would create the infrastructure backbone that sustainable careers require.

*We recommend the new policy commit to:*

- Substantially expanding the Music Australia Record Label Development Scheme, with dedicated streams for distributors and music services businesses.
- Harmonising state and federal music industry funding so that the ecosystem — not just the artist — is supported consistently across all jurisdictions.
- Commissioning a national economic study into the independent music supply chain to establish a current baseline for future investment decisions, updating the foundational Deloitte analysis commissioned by AIR in 2017.

### **3. AI, Copyright, and Artist Education: Holding the Line While Building the Future**

GYRO.Group has been actively engaged in industry advocacy alongside ARIA, PPCA, and AIR on the question of Text and Data Mining (TDM) exceptions. We strongly supported the Government's decision to reject a TDM exception to Australian copyright law and urge the Government to enshrine this commitment within the new National Cultural Policy as a foundational principle: Australian creators must retain consent, control, and the right to compensation over how their work is used in AI systems.

At the same time, AI is also creating new commercial opportunities for independent artists. Ethical licensing agreements between AI companies and rights-holders are already emerging globally, and the independent sector stands to benefit significantly from these deals. The gap we observe is not primarily a legal one; it is an educational one. Most independent artists do not understand how their music is or could be licensed to AI companies, what those arrangements mean in practice, or how to identify and access the new revenue streams becoming available. This is a role government is well-placed to support.

*We recommend the new policy commit to:*

- Maintaining and codifying the existing commitment to reject TDM exceptions, and resisting any future pressure to introduce amendments that would erode Australian creators' rights to transparency and consent over AI use of their work.
- Funding a national AI and Music literacy programme — delivered through existing peak bodies including ARIA, AIR, and APRA AMCOS — to educate artists and small labels on AI licensing, emerging revenue models, and their rights under copyright law.

- Resourcing State peak bodies to develop practical, artist-facing guidance on engaging ethically and commercially with AI platforms, ensuring independent artists can participate in the AI licensing economy on informed terms.

#### **4. Music Export Readiness: Building Australia's Next Global Creative Wave**

GYRO.Group's strategic ambition is to become Australia's largest net exporter of recorded music. We raise this not to advocate for our own business, but because that ambition is only achievable if the broader policy environment is oriented toward music as an export industry — not just a cultural one.

The contrast with comparable markets is stark. Korea and Thailand have made substantial government investment in artist development, stagecraft, broadcast performance training, and international market-entry support — and the export results speak for themselves. Australia has world-class talent. What we lack is the production infrastructure to present that talent at an international standard, consistently. Recent performances by Australian artists at major international festivals have demonstrated what is possible, while domestic televised showcases have highlighted persistent gaps in broadcast performance training that continue to hold our artists back on the global stage.

Visa and touring infrastructure also remain a significant barrier. The complexity and cost of outbound touring visas for Australian artists entering major markets — particularly the United States and United Kingdom — disproportionately disadvantages independent artists. Bilateral advocacy to streamline cultural visa pathways must be a component of any genuinely export-focused policy.

*We recommend the new policy commit to:*

- Establishing a national stagecraft and broadcast performance training programme, potentially housed within an expanded AFTRS mandate, to build the production skills Australian artists need to perform credibly on international stages and for international broadcast.
- Significantly increasing music export development funding available through Sounds Australia and Austrade's Export Market Development Grants, with specific eligibility pathways for independent artists and their representative labels and distributors.
- Pursuing bilateral cultural agreements with key markets — particularly the United States, United Kingdom, and major Asian markets — to streamline touring visa pathways for Australian artists, reducing the administrative and financial burden that currently deters independent artists from pursuing international opportunities.

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Australia has every ingredient required to become a dominant global force in recorded music. What has been missing is a policy framework that treats the industry's commercial infrastructure with the same seriousness as its cultural output — and that starts at home, by ensuring Australians can find and hear Australian music in their daily lives. The new National Cultural Policy is an opportunity to change that trajectory. GYRO.Group welcomes further engagement and stands ready to contribute to consultation at any stage of the process.