


National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Organisation

Second Echo Ensemble



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Second Echo Ensemble is a Lutruwita/Tasmania-based, artist-led organisation shaped by disability practice, lived experience and regional realities.

For more than twenty years, our artists have created work across performance, film, sound, visual art, installation and community practice, often from positions outside traditional pathways and institutional structures.

Our work is grounded in a simple belief: every story counts.

Revive has made important progress. It has recognised artists as workers, acknowledged culture as essential to national life, and created Equity: the Arts and Disability Associated Plan. These are important foundations.

The next National Cultural Policy must go further.

The challenge is no longer inclusion alone. It is structural change. Artists with disability and those in regional communities must not only participate in the cultural system, but help author it.

In regional Tasmania, we see every week what happens when artists are given time, access and trust. Artists who have been excluded from education and employment pathways become performers, filmmakers, choreographers, mentors and cultural leaders. Work developed in community settings travels nationally and internationally. The issue is not lack of talent. The issue is whether systems are capable of recognising it.

Access must be understood as creative infrastructure, not as a specialist add-on. It shapes process, aesthetics, communication and audience experience. It changes how work is made.

Whether through a dedicated pillar or embedded structural responsibility across all pillars, accessibility must become foundational rather than optional.

We need sustained investment in place-based, community-led practice and recognition of relational, co-authored and disability-led methodologies as rigorous artistic forms. Community Arts and Cultural Development should be explicitly recognised within the next policy as a distinct and skilled field of practice.

This is also a workforce issue.

There remains a critical gap between development and employment, particularly for artists exiting education, living regionally, or moving between disability and arts systems. We need long-term investment in paid pathways, residencies, mentorships and training-to-employment models that recognise artists as workers and cultural contributors.

Infrastructure is not only buildings. Infrastructure is also people, access systems, continuity and space to sustain practice over time. Regional organisations continue to deliver national impact without access to fit-for-purpose spaces or long-term operational security.

The next policy must also think beyond segmentation. While targeted investment remains essential, artists do not live inside neat categories. Disability-led, First Nations-led, regional and community-based practices overlap constantly. Culture behaves as an ecosystem, not a series of separate pillars.

Audience behaviour is also changing. Audiences increasingly seek participation, connection and shared experience. Distribution, touring, audience development and relationship-building must be understood as essential cultural infrastructure, especially for regional and disability-led work.

The future of cultural policy must move beyond access as participation and toward authorship, leadership and economic agency.

Every story counts.

Now we need systems capable of holding complexity, difference and leadership in all its forms.