

National Cultural Policy Submission

1471380

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less).

My name is [REDACTED]. I am based in [REDACTED], and I work as a Jewellery and Accessories Maker - wire, polymer clay, fibre and paper based work..

Crafting has been a part of my life from an early age, in a variety of mediums. Eventually I settled upon jewellery making as my main venture, and have built up an Etsy store with a dedicated but small following.

Its not a living wage but it does fund what I make. But I can't help but notice how much traditional arts dominated by men are given a higher profile, more gallery exhibition space and peer recognition via awards for their craft.

I am looking forward to one day hopefully having a universal basic income, provided by a gas/mining tax so that myself and others can continue to create.

I'd also like to add that unregulated AI is a deep concern for most of us within the art and craft sector. We need limitations and better rules in place to stop copyright theft, to safeguard artists and stop artificial art becoming the norm.

Research published via Australian Policy Online (APO) notes that Australia's making and craft economy is actually slightly larger in size and workforce impact than the Australian sports economy, which generates an estimated AUD \$14.5 billion to GDP and employs roughly 128,000 people across professional leagues, localized clubs, and sports. Yet we have little to no coverage of our crafts provided on local media, including the ABC/SBS (for which I fervently hope for more funding to produce locally made content).

According to the ABS Cultural Participation Survey, 56.1% of all women who engage in cultural activities participate specifically in craft. This translates to roughly 2.4 million Australian women actively sewing, weaving, throwing pottery, dyeing textiles, or building.

Sector-specific research published by RMIT University and ABS data indicates that 74% of the visual arts and craft workforce identifies as women.

Despite dominating the workforce and participation metrics, women face a steep economic disadvantage in the commercial art market. A massive 47% gender pay gap exists for visual and craft artists in Australia. The average income from a dedicated visual art or craft practice sits at AUD \$12,330 for women, compared to AUD \$23,130 for men.

While over half of all art and craft graduates in Australia are women, they make up only about 36% of artists represented by commercial galleries in the primary market, and account for just 32% of total retail sales turnover.

I support the three asks made by the Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC) network in their submission to this consultation: a 10-year workforce development plan that addresses skills and training shortages for craftspeople and designers; the establishment of a dedicated craft and design structure within Creative Australia, with its own mandate to advocate for the sector, develop funding pathways, and coordinate across government; and an export and tourism development strategy that positions Australian makers in international markets, including at showcase events like Milan Design Week.