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To the National Cultural Policy Review Panel,

I am writing to lodge an individual submission to the National Cultural Policy consultation to emphasise the immediate, structural threat facing the commercial sustainability and global competitiveness of Australia's creative industries.

At the outset, it must be acknowledged that the launch and initial implementation of *Revive* was a landmark success for Australia's cultural landscape. The policy has done vital work in re-energizing the professional arts sector, stabilizing cultural institutions, and restoring much-needed respect to the artist as worker. It provided a coherent, unified vision that our industry desperately needed after years of disruption.

Having spent over four decades producing, financing, and distributing Australian film, television, and music to global markets - from foundational independent productions to major cultural documentaries like *John Farnham: Finding the Voice* and *Midnight Oil: The Hardest Line* - I view cultural policy through a lens of economic resilience and national Intellectual Property (IP) generation.

For *Revive* to truly achieve its 10-year vision, we must look honestly at the systemic gap that threatens its long-term sustainability: the foundational education system. Australia's cultural and creative sectors contribute **\$67.4 billion** to our economy. Yet, our position as the 8th largest music market globally is currently being built on an incredibly fragile foundation.

Years ago, my close alignment with Don Spencer OAM and his foundational mission at the ACMF made it clear to me that the non-profit sector was carrying a structural burden that belongs to a whole-of-government mandate. Don founded the ACMF on the principle that music is a fundamental right. Today, as Chairman of the ACMF, I see that the structural failure to guarantee that right in primary schools is actively throttling our future commercial creative economy.

The current implementation gap under *Revive* is stark. While funding has correctly targeted professional arts architecture, the foundational pipeline has been starved, highlighted by a massive funding disparity where school arts initiatives received just \$2.6 million over five years compared to \$75.6 million for STEM.

When **77% of government primary schools lack specialist music instruction**, students enter Years 7 and 8 entirely "behind the curve," without any foundational literacy in songwriting or digital music production. This means marginalized, regional, and low-SES youth are effectively being filtered out of the creative industries before they can ever reach industry-level development programs like APRA AMCOS's *SongMakers*. We are choking off our own supply of future IP creators.

I fully and formally endorse the strategic submission lodged by the ACMF. The objectives of the policy's **Five Pillars** - particularly the economic contribution to the broader economy (Pillar 3) and the cultivation of future culturally literate audiences (Pillar 5) - cannot be achieved if the foundational talent pool remains a postcode lottery.

To achieve actual progress, the new iteration of *Revive* must address cross-departmental accountability. We must formalise a **New Creative Arts Education Pillar** that treats music education not as an extracurricular luxury, but as the essential architecture required to generate national cultural IP. I urge the government to adopt the ACMF's recommendations in full to secure the long-term economic and cultural future of the nation.

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