

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

The rising cost of humanities/ arts degrees is creating a significant barrier to entry into the cultural and creative industries. These disciplines underpin our cultural identity, storytelling, and civic life, yet they are becoming increasingly inaccessible. Rebalancing fee structures to make humanities education affordable again is essential to maintaining a diverse and skilled workforce.

Alongside affordability, Australia must invest in clear and viable education and career pathways. This includes strengthening links between education providers and industry, ensuring graduates can transition into stable employment with opportunities for progression. Expanding vocational and higher education pathways in the arts and cultural sectors will support workforce sustainability and innovation.

A critical issue facing the sector is the lack of consistent and fair remuneration. There is a pressing need to improve industry awards and establish better standards of pay across cultural professions. Artists and cultural workers must be able to sustain careers without financial precarity. Fair pay is fundamental to attracting and retaining talent.

Increased and ongoing funding is also crucial. Investment must extend beyond project-based grants to support the long-term delivery of programs and organisations. Strategic funding should prioritise job creation, skills development, and regional capacity-building.

Support for the creative economy should include targeted investment in music touring and Australian film, television, and drama production. These industries not only generate economic return but also strengthen national identity and global cultural presence.

Infrastructure planning must also play a role. In rapidly growing metropolitan areas, developers should be incentivised or required to invest in cultural infrastructure such as theatres, galleries, and museums. Embedding culture into new developments ensures access and participation for expanding communities.

Finally, a national approach to local history and museum collections is needed. Coordinated investment in preservation, digitisation, and interpretation will safeguard Australia's cultural memory and improve public access. Local stories are vital to understanding our shared identity and must be supported through a cohesive national strategy.

Australia's cultural future depends on affordable education, fair employment conditions, sustained funding, and integrated infrastructure planning. With targeted investment and national coordination, the sector can grow, innovate, and continue to enrich communities across the country.