



**Submission to consultations on a new National
Cultural Policy**

22 May 2026

Introduction

In just over two decades, YouTube has shown how technology can work in partnership with creativity to generate new opportunities for individuals, for industries and for society. This is no less true in Australia, where YouTube has become a powerful engine for Australia's vibrant culture, connecting its established and new generation creators and artists with audiences at home and around the world.

The next phase of our national cultural policy will only be strengthened by understanding how these technologies work to support our creative industries and ensuring our policy settings are correctly calibrated to maximise the opportunities they offer Australian creatives, existing and emerging.

A Place for Every Story

YouTube is a library of video content that users across the world have free access to consume and contribute to. For creators and artists, YouTube offers an open marketplace for creativity by breaking down traditional barriers and connecting them with audiences from across the world.

On YouTube, Australian creatives from all walks of life have access to a platform that enables them to share their own voices, to build community and to grow dedicated audiences - while also developing their skills and talents. Australian creatives are taking up this opportunity, with over 5.5 million hours of content uploaded by Australian channels in the past year (a/o December 2025). This is translating into building successful and sustainable careers both on and off the platform. More than 30 000 Australian channels that have attracted over 10 000 subscribers (a/o December 2025) and YouTube has played a key part in the success of many Australians, such as artist [REDACTED] and award winning directors [REDACTED]

As a space where everyone has a voice, YouTube has become one of the most diverse platforms in the world. It has allowed historically marginalised artists and creators to tell their stories. This is equally true in Australia, where our diverse voices, unique communities and varied perspectives have an opportunity to be shared and heard on YouTube. From First Nations creators the [REDACTED] to our own Bollywood artist and NT-based doctor [REDACTED] YouTube provides a platform for all Australian voices. Research by Oxford Economic found that in Australia, 72% of viewers agree YouTube helps them discover niche or independent voices they wouldn't have found elsewhere.

Our business model incentivises continued investment in our creator community and we channel this investment both on and off platform through programs and support:

- We have teams dedicated to ensuring creators and artists receive the guidance and support they need to grow and maintain their YouTube channels.
- We run targeted programs to support skilling and development of local creatives and artists, such:
 - [Black Voices Fund](#) dedicated to spotlighting and growing Black creators and music on our platform by giving them access to resources and help to thrive on YouTube and

through which we have funded Australian artist, songwriters and producers including [REDACTED]

- **FIFTY DEEP**, a global cultural initiative that celebrates 50 years of hip-hop through global marketing promotion, songwriter sessions, partner strategy support and grant funding for content development and through which we supported Australian artists Citizen Kay and B Wise.
- **YouTube Foundry and Foundry Rising Artists**, YouTube's incubator for independent music, supporting indie artists at all stages of their careers through annual artist development classes and ongoing release support campaigns. YouTube provides partner strategy support, global marketing promotion, and grant funding for content development that can be used for experimenting with new music to diversifying video creation formats. Australian artists [REDACTED] have been supported as Foundry artists.
- **Creator Collectives**, national creator programs run by YouTube across Australia to skill and develop local creatives and businesses to grow on our platform.
- We have invested in local partnerships to support the development of Australia's pipeline of creative talent and the celebration of Australian culture, including:
 - **[Skip Ahead](#)**, our decade-long partnership with Screen Australia which has supported Australian creatives such as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
 - **SongHubs**, a writing camp in partnership with APRA AMCOS launching in 2026.
 - Support for local events including the NIMAs, Tropfest, IndieCon/AIR Awards and APRA Awards.

Our investment extends to bringing the best of Google's innovation to support the creative process, including most recently the advances in AI technology which has the potential to unlock new forms of creativity and to make the everyday work of creation easier. Through these technologies, our goal is to empower human creativity, not replace it by providing for example auto-dubbing tools that expand audiences or inspiration for ideation. But always with the right protections and guardrails in place.

And like all Australians, creatives have access to a significant and accessible learning resource in YouTube. A resource that they might use at the beginning of their career to learn their craft like [REDACTED], a First Nations ARIA nominated artist [who used YouTube to learn guitar from remote](#) [REDACTED], through to more established creators who could turn to the platform to learn how to run their business such as for marketing advice. According to research by Oxford Economics, 90% of users report using YouTube to gather information and knowledge.

Centrality of the Artist

We think it is critically important - and recognise our responsibility to ensure - that artists, creators, and rightsholders benefit from their work. We share our revenue from advertisers and our subscription business with the creators, artists and media companies who use YouTube to share their content and we

reinvest the remainder in keeping YouTube operating responsibly for all our users. We have industry leading tools to protect rights holders.

Supporting sustainable careers

YouTube's main source of revenue is advertising, which enables businesses to find relevant audiences and grow their businesses and brands. We also earn money from our monthly subscription businesses such as [YouTube Premium](#). With YouTube Premium, members can enjoy any video on YouTube without ads while still supporting creators and artists.

We share advertising revenue and revenue from YouTube Premium membership fees with eligible creators and artists. Creators who meet specific eligibility criteria, including minimum watch hours, subscriber count and adherence to community guidelines and monetisation policies, can apply to become a member of the [YouTube Partner Programme](#) and access monetisation opportunities. Official Artists on YouTube run [Official Artist Channels \(OACs\)](#), which are approved by YouTube based on specific criteria. OACs are eligible for monetisation as well.

YouTube also offers creators and artists a number of additional monetisation options. Creators can also earn more by offering subscribers exclusive content and perks through Channel Memberships. The Shopping function enables creators and artists to [sell products and merchandise](#) directly through their YouTube channel. Musicians, artists and performers can also [sell tickets](#) directly through the platform so that as fans are watching music videos from their favourite artist, a link to concert tickets will appear on the video page, with the date and time of the concert.

YouTube's support for creators has an indirect impact on the economy, as many creators and artists purchase other goods and services to run their YouTube channel such as filming equipment, editing services, sound recording. This creative ecosystem contributed more than \$1.1 billion to Australia's GDP and supported over 18,000 full-time equivalent jobs in 2025.

A modernised cultural policy should recognize that direct industry investments are just as vital as traditional funding programs. Meaningful contributions to the Australian creative ecosystem encompass our on-the-ground investments, including dedicated partner support, bespoke training, professional development programs, marketing campaigns, and sponsorships. Recognising these diverse forms of support will incentivise platforms to continue growing their investments in Australia.

Protecting Rightsholders

We have licence agreements with every major record label and music publisher, independent labels, and music publishing collecting societies, and work collaboratively with these partners so they have the tools to control the rights that they own and to leverage the reach and revenue potential of our platform. The payments YouTube makes to rightsholders are made according to the terms of our bilateral agreements, and we enter into those agreements with the intent that artists and songwriters will be compensated fairly by the rightsholder.

Another critical way we enable rightsholders to maximise value from YouTube is through the use of our rightsholder-facing content management system, [Content ID](#). Content ID lets rightsholders choose to either monetise or block UGC that includes their content, whether that is the sound recording (for an artist or label) or the composition (for a composer/songwriter or publisher). If they choose to monetise, they will share in the advertising revenues generated from that UGC. More than 90% of music rightsholders globally have chosen to monetise off Content ID claims, creating additional economic opportunities for creators and artists, and more than USD 12 billion in ad revenue has been paid to rights holders as of December 2024 from content claimed and monetised through Content ID.¹

Engaging the Audience

YouTube is an open platform where creators and artists can be discovered by audiences across the world as those audiences come to YouTube to discover content that is valuable to them.

Discovery on YouTube

We use personalised recommendations to connect users to content they will value and enjoy from the corpus of more than 20 billion videos on our platform. Our recommendation system learns every day from over 80 billion pieces of information and sorts through billions of videos, songs, tv shows, movies, and podcasts to recommend content tailored to a viewer's specific interests. Users can fine tune their recommendations or turn off personalised recommendations by turning off their Search & Watch History setting.

This means that those users are in the driver's seat on YouTube. Unlike traditional radio or broadcasters that exercise editorial control and "push" a linear schedule of programming, YouTube functions as an on-demand "pull" environment where the user has entire control over what content they select to consume. It is therefore an experience designed to respond to their individual preferences and our systems are designed to serve this user-centric model.

Personalised recommendations benefit not just users, but the creators and artists behind the content by facilitating their discovery by interested audiences who might not have otherwise found them. This means that a wider variety of talent - new, niche and emerging creators and artists and not just those with big marketing resources behind them - have an evergreen tool that helps to find an audience for their content in Australia and abroad. Research by Oxford Economics found that a majority of Australian creators agreed that personalised recommendations on YouTube are important to grow their audience.

Alternative methods of organising YouTube's vast library of video content do not deliver these same benefits. A chronological feed of the most recent videos means that content which has been on YouTube for years could be lost to users and a 'trending' feed would promote popular creators and artists to the disadvantage of those less well-known. Both risk disincentivising Australian creators and artists from

¹ [YouTube Copyright Transparency Report](#)

sharing their content on YouTube, impacting the diversity of content available to users and the diversity of creators who may find success on YouTube.

Discovery extends beyond borders

As a global platform, audiences are not limited by national borders. Our platform is speaker and location agnostic and our recommendations system does not discriminate based on country of upload, meaning it works to connect Australian content with audiences across the globe.

This creates significant opportunities for creators and artists sharing their content to YouTube, with that content equally able to be seen by someone on another continent as someone down the road. Access to these global markets is particularly important for creators in countries with smaller populations like Australia, where a greater audience translates into greater opportunities to grow and earn while also exporting local culture globally. Oxford Economics research found that in Australia, 83% of music companies with a YouTube channel say YouTube helps them reach new audiences across the world.

But these benefits risk being lost by requirements to prioritise certain types of content over others in any single market. If a user is presented with content that does not match their interests, but is instead promoted based on a mandate, they will likely skip or ignore it. This negative engagement signals to the system that the content is not relevant. Forcing content onto uninterested users is not discoverability; it is a distortion that will inevitably harm Australian artists by teaching our global systems that their content is not relevant, thereby decreasing the very cultural exports we aim to support. This reduces the reach of Australian content in international markets where it currently sees resonance, with over 90% of watchtime on content produced by channels in Australia coming from outside of Australia (a/o December 2025).

Conclusion

YouTube appreciates the opportunity to make this submission on the next phase of Australia's National Cultural Policy. We look forward to continuing to contribute to this important conversation and to working in partnership with the Government and Australia's creative industries to support settings that drive real opportunities for local culture to thrive.