

## National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

### Executive Summary

Survivors of 20th Century adoption practices remain largely excluded from frameworks addressing Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CaRM) communities because adoption is not formally recognised as a cultural or social identity category. As a result, adoptees affected by coercive, secretive, and forced adoption practices often remain invisible within discussions surrounding equity, trauma-informed care, cultural participation, and inclusion under Australia's National Cultural Policy.

Many adoptees experience lifelong impacts including identity disruption, severed kinship connections, disenfranchised grief, stigma, suicidal ideation, and intergenerational trauma. Despite official apologies and documented historical harms, adoptees continue to be excluded from diversity, inclusion, and cultural policy frameworks.

Australia's National Cultural Policy should recognise adoptees and forced adoption survivors as a historically silenced and structurally harmed community requiring consultation, representation, trauma-informed support, and inclusion in national cultural conversations.

### Recommendations

1 Formally recognise adoptees and forced adoption survivors within National Cultural Policy and 2 CaRM inclusion frameworks.

3 Ensure adoptee representation in policy consultation, cultural programs, archives, and storytelling initiatives.

4 Develop trauma-informed frameworks acknowledging adoption-related identity disruption, grief, stigma, and institutional harm.

5 Support adoptee-led organisations, oral history projects, exhibitions, and archives.

6 Require trauma-informed practices when cultural institutions engage with adoption histories and survivor narratives.

7 Recognise intersectional experiences affecting Indigenous, transracial, migrant, and culturally displaced adoptees.

### Submission

Survivors of 20th Century adoption practices are frequently excluded from frameworks addressing Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CaRM) communities because adoption status is not recognised as a distinct cultural or social identity category. Consequently, many adoptees, particularly those affected by forced, coercive, and secretive adoption practices, remain invisible within national discussions concerning equity, cultural participation, inclusion, and trauma-informed care.

Although some adoptees may also belong to CaRM communities through ethnicity, Indigenous identity, or transracial adoption, Australia's domestic adoption community is not consistently recognised as a group with shared experiences of institutional trauma, identity disruption, family separation, and marginalisation. This contributes to the ongoing exclusion of adoptee voices from policy development, archives, storytelling programs, and cultural healing initiatives.

Many adoptees continue to experience lifelong consequences including loss of identity, severed kinship connections, disenfranchised grief, stigma, suicidal ideation, and intergenerational trauma. Despite official

apologies acknowledging the harms of historical adoption practices, adoptees remain largely absent from cultural and diversity frameworks shaping public policy and inclusion initiatives.

A genuinely inclusive National Cultural Policy should recognise adoptees and forced adoption survivors as a historically silenced and structurally harmed community whose lived experiences require consultation, representation, trauma-informed support, and respectful inclusion in national cultural conversations.