



Your place to connect

Dear Minister Burke,

I welcome the review of the REVIVE National Cultural Policy as a critical moment to ensure that Australia's cultural framework reflects the full breadth of creative practice shaping our nation.

Through this submission, I want to highlight the essential role Community Arts and Cultural Development plays in helping people participate in, shape and sustain cultural life within their own communities. CACD is the community-building practice that helps people connect, create and share, that turns REVIVE's vision of "a place for every story" into something real, lived and accessible for people across Australia.

As the Community Arts, Culture and Community Development Coordinator at West Winds Community Centre, I work alongside regional communities in Southern Tasmania where access to arts participation, mental health support and crisis response services is often limited by geography, transport barriers and under-resourcing.

Through Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD), I have seen firsthand how arts and cultural practice can become essential social infrastructure. At West Winds Community Centre, we have developed trauma-informed arts programs and nature-based creative initiatives that provide non-clinical pathways for wellbeing, social connection and resilience. These programs support children, young people, seniors, carers and community members experiencing isolation, disadvantage and increasing social complexity.

Our work demonstrates that CACD is not simply an "arts activity." It is a relational, community-led methodology grounded in equity, participation, lived experience and long-term trust building. It creates spaces where people feel safe, valued and connected, often reaching individuals who would never engage with traditional clinical services or formal arts institutions.

Partnerships are central to this work. Collaborating with organisations such as Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company has enabled our regional community to access nationally recognised expertise in socially engaged theatre practice, youth and adult performances, workshops, mentoring and professional development opportunities that would otherwise be inaccessible in our region. These partnerships strengthen local creative capacity while ensuring regional communities are not excluded from Australia's broader cultural landscape.

I strongly support the continuation of the Five Enduring Pillars established through REVIVE, particularly “A Place for Every Story” and “Engaging the Audience.” However, without explicit recognition of Community Arts and Cultural Development, the new National Cultural Policy risks overlooking one of the primary ways Australians meaningfully participate in arts and culture. CACD is often the bridge between communities and cultural participation itself.

The challenges facing Australia, including social fragmentation, climate instability, mental health pressures, rising inequality and disaster recovery, are not only economic or policy challenges. They are relational challenges. CACD provides the creative and community-led infrastructure that helps communities process change, strengthen belonging and build resilience.

I strongly support the national alliance recommendations to:

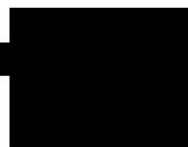
- Formally recognise CACD as a distinct and essential field of practice within the National Cultural Policy
- Establish a dedicated national CACD body within Creative Australia
- Increase investment in long-term, place-based community arts initiatives
- Support workforce sustainability, mentoring and trauma-informed practice frameworks
- Reform funding models to better support relational and ongoing community-led practice
- Embed CACD across health, education, justice, climate adaptation, disaster recovery and regional development policy areas
- Strengthen research, evaluation and national impact measurement
- Ensure equitable access to funding, cultural participation and creative opportunities for regional, remote and marginalised communities

***Culture is not only what happens on major stages or inside institutions.
In regional communities like ours, culture happens around shared tables,
in community gardens, through storytelling, music, theatre, creative workshops
and collective experiences that foster belonging and connection.***

If the next National Cultural Policy truly aims to create “a place for every story,” then Community Arts & Cultural Development must be recognised, resourced and embedded as a cornerstone of Australia’s cultural future.

Thank you for championing the arts and culture with conscience and commitment to inclusivity.

Kind Regards,



Stephanie Shoebridge
She/Her
Mon / Tue / Wed 9-4



**Creative South Channel
Arts & Culture Programs**

Fostering creativity and building vibrant
community connections through the
arts across Southern Tasmania.



*WE acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia
and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.
We pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging,*

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