

As a musician and music sociologist, I support the five pillars outlined in the *Towards a new National Cultural Policy* public consultation paper. However, I recommend reframing pillars 3 and 5 to avoid assuming that (1) arts professionals are the sole creators of art and exist for economic gain and (2) that audiences are inherently passive consumers of art. This framing excludes a substantial portion of art practice, limits the proposed cultural policy's potential social impacts, contradicts pillars 1 and 2, and is ultimately inaccurate.

Pillar 3's emphasis on safe workplaces, creative rights, and arts education recognises the essential role of professional artists in Australia's arts ecosystem. However, arts professionals do much more than directly create art. Art educators, therapists, workshop facilitators, ensemble leaders, and other professionals are all valid members of the arts community. Yet these professionals are not well represented in pillar 3's current framing of "artists" and "creators". The phrase "recognised across the broader economy" also assumes that art is inherently an economic activity. Pillar 5 frames audiences as passive consumers who need to "discover" art that is "presented" to them through "marketing". This excludes many arts practices in which audiences play an active role in the arts creation process, and whose purpose extends well beyond economics. Examples include one-on-one art lessons, art workshops, art therapy, community choirs, practising art individually, and simply making art with friends and family.

The art practices excluded by the current framing have significant impacts on wellbeing, social connection, community development, and national identity. In particular, the impacts of First Nations art (pillar 1) extend beyond the economic gain of professionals, including maintaining culture in spite of colonisation, enlivening connection to Country, and transforming political conditions. Many First Nations arts practices are participatory and not limited to a distinct class of professionals. Examples include community music and dance or the maintenance of rock carvings across countless generations. Pillar 2 is similarly incongruent with an emphasis on professional artists, passive consumers, and economic gain. We cannot "reflect... the breadth of our stories" and "recognise diverse forms of cultural expression" while excluding everyday, participatory art practices. We cannot acknowledge local and place-based art while excluding non-commercial, community art. Importantly, the framing of audiences as passive consumers is simply inaccurate. Audiences actively choose which art they engage with, and their reasons are frequently highly personal and not solely the result of market dynamics. Potential motivations include constructing identity, invoking memory, processing life experiences, and connecting with peers.

A national cultural policy that truly renews Australian arts and culture needs to include all art practices, not just those involving economically motivated creators and passive consumers. To do this, I recommend:

1. Expanding pillar 3's framing to include the full range of arts professionals beyond those who directly create art for economic gain.
2. Reframing pillar 5 to describe audiences as active participants in art creation and consumption.

3. Shifting perceptions across the Commonwealth's arts agencies towards seeing art as a diverse, participatory practice.