

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I work with ActNow Theatre, an award-winning social justice theatre company based on Koorina Yorta. We seek to advocate for the inclusion of Community Arts and Cultural Development, cultural equity, and anti-racism as foundational pillars within the development of the next National Cultural Policy.

As a leader for CACD in South Australia, championing historically marginalised communities is at the heart of everything we do. Our work is founded in the democratisation and decolonisation of storytelling, and in creating meaningful pathways for First Nations, Global Majority, LGBTQASB+ and Disabled artists and communities to shape Australia's cultural future.

Through projects, practice and programs, ActNow Theatre creates interactive arts experiences with tangible social justice outcomes. We work alongside education, health and mental health practitioners, as well as those with lived-experience to take our works from concept to presentation.

Our work is performed in theatres, schools, workplaces, healthcare settings and community spaces. We believe that culture must be accessible, community-led and embedded with lived experience for greater social impact. We prioritise deep community engagement alongside artistic excellence, demonstrating that socially engaged practice can provide some of the most innovative, resonant and impactful artistic outcomes in the sector.

As the Federal Government considers the next National Cultural Policy development, we respectfully request consideration of the following priorities:

To realise the vision of REVIVE - "a place for every story" - CACD must be recognised, properly measured, and resourced as a cornerstone of Australia's cultural future. Without this, the policy risks falling short of its commitments to equity, participation and inclusion.

Long-term investment in organisations working alongside historically marginalised communities (First Nations, People of Colour, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, LGBTQSB+ and Disabled)

Further cohesion between Department of Human Services, Department of Education, Department of Health and Wellbeing for collaboration with Community Arts and Cultural Development organisations

Embedding anti-racism, cultural equity and accessibility as core principles across all national arts policy and funding frameworks

Increased investment in pathways, leadership development and employment opportunities for artists and arts workers from historically marginalised communities within CACD organisations.

Support for arts practice that advances community wellbeing and social change.

Recognition of the role of storytelling in truth-telling, decolonisation and cultural democracy.

ActNow Theatre collaborated as part of The Alliance of CACD orgs & individuals to formulate a collective submission to the next National Cultural Policy (attached below). We also wish to formally express our support for the Creating Impact submission led by Milk Crate Theatre, and submission by Diversity Arts Australia calling for anti-racism and cultural equity to be embedded as core cultural infrastructure.

We believe this moment presents an important opportunity to ensure Australia's cultural future is shaped not only by artistic production, but by equity, participation, access and community leadership. A strong National Cultural Policy must recognise that the arts are essential to how communities connect, heal, imagine and belong.