

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the redevelopment of Australia's National Cultural Policy. I believe it is incredibly important that Australia continues to invest in a long-term cultural vision that recognises the arts not as a luxury, but as an essential part of our social fabric, national identity, and future.

I am a [REDACTED]-based theatre director, producer, movement practitioner and acting lecturer. I run an independent theatre company that creates highly physical, visually driven contemporary performance, often centring queer perspectives, radical feminist ideas, and non-traditional storytelling forms. Alongside my own creative practice, I also teach devised and movement-based theatre training to emerging artists.

Over the past several years, I have worked throughout [REDACTED] independent theatre sector across directing, producing, and movement-based performance. My work has been presented through a multitude of theatres in [REDACTED]. Like many artists working in Australia, most of this work has only been possible through enormous personal financial sacrifice and countless unpaid hours.

I strongly support initiatives that place the "Centrality of the Artist" at the core of future cultural planning, particularly models that create stable employment pathways and sustainable incomes for artists. Independent theatre artists are often expected to function simultaneously as directors, producers, marketers, grant writers, administrators, educators, technicians, and community builders, often without stable pay, security, or support.

I also strongly support a national investigation into Universal Basic Income for Artists. Australian artists already contribute enormous cultural and social value while living in unstable financial conditions, and that instability directly impacts the work being made. Increasingly, independent theatre is reaching audiences before it has had the chance to fully develop, not because artists lack ambition or rigour, but because there is little time, funding, or space available to experiment, fail, refine, and try again.

Artists need more than somewhere to rehearse. We need environments where development is genuinely supported, and where getting things wrong initially is understood as a necessary part of creating meaningful work. Greater investment in living-wage models, developmental funding, and accessible rehearsal infrastructure would allow artists to take creative risks and build more ambitious, rigorous work.

I also believe Australia urgently needs a long-term national arts strategy comparable to the level of structural thinking and investment applied to sport. We celebrate Australian stories and artistic achievements internationally, yet many artists exist without stable career pathways, workforce protections, or sustainable infrastructure. A long-term national arts strategy could help create clearer pathways from education and independent practice into long-term, sustainable careers.

Finally, I believe independent and experimental theatre plays a vital role within Australia's broader cultural ecology. These sectors are often where new forms, emerging voices, artistic innovation, and future industry leaders first develop. Future cultural policy must ensure independent artists are not treated as peripheral to the industry, but recognised as essential to its future growth and evolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this consultation.