

National Cultural Policy Submission

1471996

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

As I write this I am recovering from jet lag in Paris France. I have been saving to make this move as an investment in myself and career as an artist and fashion designer through working at pubs in Melbourne. Melbourne has very little opportunities for people like me. The work I was able to find in my chosen field was severely underpaid and insecure. Often I would take contract work for less than 5 months at a time, and then work at the pub of an evening. Even though I was getting paid much less than minimum wage making clothes- or not at all during the countless internships I have done - the experience seemed worth it to move me closer to the thing I love. Artists are constantly asked to make this choice in Australia, and are given so few options to support themselves in their decision to contribute to Australian culture. We are priced out of studio and work spaces by the property market - while large usable spaces lay empty for the landlords to profit off the value of the land - there is no incentive or pressure to ensure that artists and makers have access to places for work. The fact that my whole life expressing my creative aspirations in Australia has been met with such disaffected disbelief and encouragement to pursue something else is a blight on Australian culture and if it is something our government would be willing to meaningfully address - it would be interesting to see the changes that could occur. Melbourne and Sydney have a vibrant and unique approach to fashion that could really be competitive cultural export if supported correctly. I would love to move back to Australia if it was feasible to own or work in a creative business and support yourself full time. Even in those small businesses I worked for - making Australian made and designed clothing - this was never the case, with my bosses also having to work a second job to supplement their income. I hope that this national cultural policy aims to address the systemic problems of being an artist in Australia and not just line the pockets of landlords like everything else in this country.