

National Cultural Policy Submission

1472004

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I write as an independent arts worker and founder of an independent youth arts organisation in Queensland. I have worked in the children and young people's (CYP) arts sector since the early 2000s, with a significant break caused by the deep funding cuts that decimated Queensland's CYP arts landscape. During that time I moved into arts administration and my own practice, but my commitment to this sector has never wavered nor has the difficulty of sustaining a career within it.

Queensland's CYP arts sector is in critical decline. Chronic underfunding, collapsed infrastructure, and unviable career pathways have driven experienced practitioners interstate or out of the sector entirely. Children particularly those in regional and remote areas have inadequate access to quality arts experiences, while the artists making that work face compounding barriers: funding that doesn't reflect the true cost of CYP work, mounting insurance pressures, and a near-total absence of professional development pathways.

Yet the foundation for renewal is here. Queensland retains skilled, committed artists with deep community connections, First Nations expertise, and a track record of excellence. Approximately 23% of Australia's children live in this state. Research is unambiguous: early engagement in the arts supports development, wellbeing, social cohesion, and lifelong creativity. This sector is not starting from scratch, it is ready to rebuild, and needs the investment to do it.

I am asking for children and young people to be explicitly named and prioritised across all five pillars, with committed actions and dedicated annual funding for work made with, by, and for people aged 0–18. In Queensland, a 10-year infrastructure investment is needed to rebuild the sector from within funding capacity building, career pathways, new work, audience development, and a peak body to guide renewal. Nationally, we call for genuine cross-portfolio collaboration with Education, Health, and Disability; an artist in every primary school every two years; matched funding for partnerships. We also need long-term investment in international touring, tax reform to end the inequity of artists paying tax on grant expenditure, insurance incentives for those working physically with young people, dedicated support for regional artists to lead from their communities, and tertiary pathway reform to keep creative careers accessible for Queensland's young people.

This submission draws on a gathering of Queensland CYP performing arts practitioners held in May 2026. Please consider our sector in the National Cultural Policy.

With thanks,

