

Dear Minister Burke,

Nathan Stoneham here.

I was a shy kid. I wanted to be a sheep when I grew up. I didn't talk to anyone until I found the preschool dress-up box, so the story goes. I was a country queer interested in dinosaurs, Mexico, rocks, drawing, Milo, and pressed flowers. I liked to follow creeks through the bush, perform DIY magic shows for my family, and ride my bike down steep hills with my hands off the handlebars – howling. I was lucky to grow up in a time when regular touring shows to regional Queensland existed. These were a highlight of my year, exposing me to stories and songs so different to those in my small town.

In high school, I got into drama and music. I was lucky to be studying in a time when choosing arts subjects wouldn't limit my pathway to university. My friends and I formed a band and set awkward teenage poetry to stylistically confused music. We performed in live music venues across Brisbane. I was lucky these now closed venues existed.

I went on to study the creative industries and education at Uni. I was lucky to enrol when arts courses weren't unaffordable options. At that time, there were community and youth arts organisations in Queensland where I could learn from elders, and there were dedicated funding programs and mentorships for emerging artists. I was lucky to be a young artist at that time, as most of these opportunities no longer exist.

Now I'm a community artist and creative producer... still playing, organising, exploring, and making experiences that are outside the everyday. I've enjoyed an independent career in the arts for twenty years. Making art and facilitating creative processes has seen me travel across the Asia Pacific, from remote places like Tonga and Mongolia, to big cities like Seoul and Bangalore. I've performed for kids, worked in local governments, toured queer music-theatre shows, worked in NGOs, managed community arts venues, saved trees, volunteered, and facilitated inclusive community arts projects all over the place.

I seek sensory experiences, places I can move slowly and think deeply, and stories that cut through the bullshit and remind me where I am - what has happened here - what we stand to lose – and how we're connected. Arts and culture remind me of all the love we're capable of. This is what the arts offers me – making me feel alive, healthy, a part of something, and more human in a world of overlapping crises, immense sadness, and immense beauty.

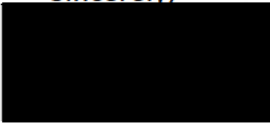
Growing up, I didn't know that policies in governments were shaping what arts and culture experiences I could and could not access. Now I see that I wasn't just "lucky" – arts and culture were a part of my life because plans and decisions in governments were enabling it. I now understand the power of policies, and how they can play out on the ground. Our National Cultural Policy could ensure that every person across this continent experiences wonder and awe - things that help make our lives extraordinary. The policy could play a role in supporting us to learn, meet, understand, and care. It could help show some odd kid in the regions (like me) that there are different ways to live. It could help remind us that ideas, experiments, generosity and expression could get us back on track towards rich and diverse cultures, where we're interdependent and things are fair, and where we laugh and cry and sing and dance together.

My submission on the following pages comprises of statements and recommendations including:

- The #Revive Community Arts submission
- Creative Climate's submission
- The Say No to Censorship, Political Interference and Racism in the Arts submission
- The Arts and Disability Network Australia's submission, and;
- Qld Children and Young People in the Arts Submission

In addition, I challenge you to consider how the next National Cultural Policy can take steps towards a **basic income for artists**. In Ireland, the unconditional basic income for artists reduced financial stress, improved participants' mental and physical health, and gave artists the security needed to focus on their creative practice. It also recouped more than its net cost. I believe a basic income for artists would solve many challenges in the arts sector and spark some transformational art that would reach far and wide. A basic income for artists would position Australia as a country that truly values arts and culture and believes in artists' potential to enrich the lives of all Australians.

Sincerely,


Nathan Stoneham |  | 24/5/2026

I support the #Revive Community Arts submission.

It reads:

Dear Minister Bourke,

We write to you as a national alliance of **Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD)** organisations and independent practitioners working at the forefront of arts, culture and community life across Australia.

Our collective practice – Community Arts and Cultural Development – sits at the intersection of creativity, community and public value, cultivating social cohesion, strengthening resilience, and enabling meaningful cultural participation in communities experiencing both opportunity and increasing complexity.

We welcome the review of the REVIVE National Cultural Policy as a critical moment to ensure that Australia's cultural framework reflects the full breadth of creative practice shaping our nation.

Through this submission, we seek to highlight the essential role of Community Arts and Cultural Development as the social and relational cultural practice that enables communities to participate in, shape and sustain cultural life—making REVIVE's vision of "a place for every story" achievable in practice.

By relational practice, we refer to long-term, trust-based, community-led creative processes that build connection, participation and collective capacity. Known across Australia through traditions of community arts, community arts and cultural development, socially engaged practice, applied arts and arts for social change, this work has a long and significant history of enabling diverse communities to express, shape and sustain the cultural life of the nation.

Drawing on lived experience across regional, remote and metropolitan communities, and informed by national research and policy priorities, we offer both evidence and practical recommendations to strengthen the next cultural policy's capacity to deliver on equity, access, participation and cultural democracy.

We look forward to contributing constructively to this process and to working with the government to ensure that no community is left behind in Australia's cultural future.

Recognising Community Arts and Cultural Development

To deliver on REVIVE's vision of *"a place for every story,"* the government must invest in the people, practices and relationships that ensure those often-invisible stories are seen, heard and valued. **Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) is that infrastructure and must be recognised, resourced and embedded as the cornerstone of Australia's cultural future.**

What is CACD?

Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) is a nationally embedded, practice-led field of arts and cultural activity that leads to **social cohesion, resilience and collective wellbeing.**

Through long-term, place-based and relational arts practice, CACD enables communities to:

- Respond to complex social, environmental and economic challenges
- Process lived experience
- Be creative
- Experience aesthetic enrichment
- Gain knowledge, ideas and insight
- Engage with and appreciate diverse cultural expressions
- Break down barriers and build connections and trust
- Challenge prejudices
- Present creative experiences to audiences which inspire, challenge and provoke perceptions, building greater understanding and awareness for those most marginalised, and present voices rarely heard on the mainstage
- Through participatory engagement grow new audiences for Australia's creative sector, many of whom would not otherwise attend theatre performances or visual art exhibitions

CACD operates across arts, health, education, justice, community services, disaster management, climate adaptation and social policy—delivering outcomes that extend far beyond traditional cultural metrics.

Our vision of social cohesion is a diverse, connected and socially healthy nation where cultural and creative practice is recognised as **essential infrastructure** supporting cultural, social, ecological, economic and civic harmony.

The Gap in REVIVE

Despite its national reach and impact, CACD is **not explicitly recognised within the current REVIVE policy framework**.

This absence limits:

- Visibility of a critical cross-sector creative practice
- Effectiveness of policy outcomes related to inclusion, access and participation
- Capacity to mobilise creative practice in response to compounding national challenges (social fragmentation, economic inequality, climate, disaster)

Without CACD, REVIVE risks overlooking the **primary mechanism through which many Australians meaningfully engage with arts and culture**.

This gap is particularly significant in light of national policy and research priorities that emphasise:

- Equity and inclusion (e.g. *The Arts and Disability Associated Plan*, 2024)
- Cultural diversity and representation (*Towards Equity 2*, 2026)
- Audience diversification and participation (*Leading Change*, Deakin University & Creative Australia, 2024)
- Youth engagement (Creative Industries Youth Advisory Group)
- Multicultural participation (Australian Government Multicultural Framework Review response)
- Community and First Nations led Climate adaptation and recovery – National Climate Risk Assessment <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/climate-change/policy/adaptation/ncra>

Collectively, these frameworks identify participation, representation and access as central policy challenges—**all of which CACD directly addresses in practice**.

Structural under-recognition and under-resourcing of CACD

Despite its central role in delivering public value, CACD remains **structurally under-recognised and under-resourced within national funding frameworks**.

Analysis of the *Creative Australia Annual Report 2024–25* indicates CACD receives approximately \$13–15 million in total investment within an overall funding pool of approximately \$237.4 million, representing only ~5–6% of total national arts investment. It sits well below major artforms like Music ~18 and Visual Arts ~14%. On face value, this positions CACD as a minor category within the cultural economy. However, this figure is **structurally misleading**.

CACD is not a niche artform—it is a **cross-cutting methodology** underpinning work across First Nations arts and culture, theatre, music, dance, visual arts, literature, digital media and community-led initiatives. As a result:

- Community-engaged practice is funded across multiple panels
- Outcomes are embedded within broader programs (including First Nations, multi-year funding and cross-sector initiatives)
- There is **no consistent mechanism to track or report CACD-aligned investment**.

This produces a systemic distortion:

Undercounting

Community-engaged practice is dispersed and not consistently identified across funding streams, masking its true scale and reach.

Undervaluation

With only ~5–6% explicitly labelled, CACD appears marginal—reinforcing the perception that it is peripheral rather than foundational, and constraining the case for proportional investment.

Policy Misalignment

This contradicts national commitments to access, participation, equity and cultural democracy embedded across REVIVE and associated frameworks, weakening their implementation.

Why this Matters

This is not simply a reporting issue—it has **material policy consequences**.

- What is not counted is not prioritised
- What is not visible is not scaled
- What is not recognised is not sustained

At a time when Australia is seeking to:

- Increase arts participation (National Arts Participation Survey, 2025/26)
- Address systemic inequities in access and representation
- Strengthen social cohesion and community resilience

The under-recognition of CACD **limits the effectiveness of national cultural policy itself.**

Recent mapping work ([Where Community Meets Creativity, 2025](#)) demonstrates the breadth of CACD activity across Australia, particularly in:

- Regional and remote communities
- Disaster-impacted areas
- Diverse and marginalised populations

Yet this scale of activity is not reflected in funding visibility, measurement frameworks, proportional investment or policy architecture.

As outlined in this submission, CACD provides the **relational infrastructure** that enables communities to connect, adapt and respond—particularly in contexts of social change, climate disruption, and recovery. Without increased, clearly identified and trackable investment, this infrastructure remains fragile, limiting both its impact and its capacity to meet growing national demand for community-driven solutions to complex challenges.

Policy Implication

If government is serious about cultural inclusion, social cohesion and equitable access, CACD must be:

- Recognised as **core cultural infrastructure**, a cornerstone of Australia's cultural future not a marginal category
- **Equitably invested** alongside other artforms within Creative Australia, ensuring inclusive, community-led cultural practice is valued and resourced on an equal footing.
- **Properly measured** across all funding streams, not confined to a single panel
- Resourced in proportion to its **cross-sector impact and national reach**

Until CACD is accurately counted, it will continue to be underfunded. And while it remains underfunded, Australia's cultural system will continue to fall short of its commitments to **equity, participation and inclusion.**

What CACD Delivers

Through its community centred creative process, CACD delivers outcomes across multiple policy domains:

Social

- Improves social cohesion
- Increases sense of belonging

- Improves mental and physical wellbeing
- Strengthens relationships and trust
- Bridges social difference without erasing it
- Produces innovative and transformative solutions to challenges faced by communities
- Creates safer, inclusive spaces for expression and connection where people feel valued
- Increases sense of safety and security

Economic

- Builds local economies through creative participation
- Develops skills and workforce pathways
- Builds resilience

Civic

- Advances democracy
- Amplifies community voice
- Builds civic trust and participation
- Enables culturally responsive policy design
- Builds shared identity and civic participation

Environmental

- Inspires environmental stewardship and supports First Nations led environmental stewardship
- Deepens ecological understanding
- Supports climate response and adaptation
- Activates place-based sustainability practices

CACD builds the creative **relational infrastructure** that enables communities to mobilise, adapt and thrive.

How CACD Works

CACD is not a single artform—it is a **creative methodology** grounded in:

- Equity and access
- Community-led decision making
- Cultural democracy
- Long-term relationship building

- Lived experience as expertise
- Trauma informed practice

It is:

- Place-based
- Intersectional
- Cross-sectoral
- Responsive and adaptive

It prioritises **ongoing engagement over one-off delivery**, ensuring sustained impact.

Alignment with the REVIVE Pillars

CACD strengthens all five pillars of REVIVE:

1. First Nations First

- Supports self-determined cultural activity, storytelling and long-term cultural relationships
- Builds respectful, long-term relationships with First Nations community and organisations

2. A Place for Every Story

- Ensures all voices – particularly underrepresented communities – are visible and valued
- Activates storytelling as a tool for inclusion and equity

3. Centrality of the Artist

- Recognises community artists as essential cultural workers
- Supports practice that is collaborative, relational and socially embedded
- Actively invests in arts career pathways for emerging artists and arts workers of diverse backgrounds

4. Strong Cultural Infrastructure

- Positions CACD as social infrastructure

5. Engaging the Audience

- Moves beyond audiences to participation and co-creation
- Reaches diverse audiences that experience barriers to participation in the arts

- Builds lifelong cultural engagement through belonging and agency

Priority Communities

CACD plays a critical role in engaging:

- First Nations Communities
- Children and young people
- Refugee and migrant communities
- d/Deaf and disabled communities
- LGBTQIA+ communities
- People of Colour
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Communities experiencing racism and marginalisation
- Seniors
- Regional and remote communities
- Disaster-impacted communities

It ensures these communities are **not just included in, but actively shaping cultural life reflective of lived experiences.**

Key Recommendations

1. Formal Recognition

Explicitly recognise CACD within the new cultural policy as a distinct and essential field of creative practice and core cultural infrastructure.

2. Establish a National CACD Entity

Create a national body within Creative Australia to:

- Advocate for the CACD sector
- Develop and safeguard CACD practice frameworks
- Coordinate national collaboration amongst CACD practitioners
- Lead research, evaluation and data collection to further understand and communicate the impact of CACD
- Strengthen cross-sector partnerships
- Amplify community voice in policy

3. Increased investment in CACD practice

Invest in local place-based arts initiatives that:

- Strengthen social cohesion

- Foster belonging in Australian communities
- Build local capacity and agency
- Promote well-being and Inclusion

4. **Invest in Workforce & Practice Sustainability**

Invest in:

- Training, mentoring and professional development specific to CACD practice
- Support for emerging and established CACD practitioners
- Professional supervision and wellbeing frameworks specific to CACD practice
- Recognition of frontline, trauma-informed practice

5. **Reform Funding and Measurement Systems**

- **Introduce** cross-program tracking of CACD-aligned investment
- **Report annually on** total community-engaged funding (direct + embedded)
- **Shift from short-term project funding to** long-term, place-based investment models for CACD practice
- **Resource** the relational and ongoing nature of CACD practice

6. **Embed CACD Across Government Policy**

Position CACD as a **cross-government delivery mechanism** across:

- Health and wellbeing
- Disaster preparedness and recovery
- Climate adaptation
- Social services and justice
- Regional development
- Education and community development

7. **Strengthen Research & Evaluation**

- Invest in and support activation of national CACD data collection and impact measurement
- Build Partnership with research institutions
- Align with national datasets (participation, equity, diversity)
- Ensure CACD informs evidence-based policy

8. **Equity of Access**

Guarantee equitable access to:

- Funding and resources
- Cultural participation opportunities

- Networks and infrastructure

Particularly for:

- First Nations communities
- Regional and remote communities
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Disabled and marginalised groups
- Children and young people

Why This Matters Now

Australia is facing:

- Social fragmentation
- Increasing climate instability
- Rising inequality
- Compounding disaster impacts

These are not just policy challenges—they are **relational challenges**.

CACD provides the creative, relational and community-led infrastructure required to respond. Social cohesion is not a fixed outcome — it is an aspirational ongoing goal. CACD practice achieves outcomes across the cultural, social, environmental, economic, and civic policy domains that help move Australian society towards this goal.

Through creativity, cultural practice and collective expression, CACD:

- Builds a sense of belonging and connectedness
- Deepens understandings and appreciation of others
- Strengthens trust
- Enables voice and agency

These are relational outcomes that represent the human infrastructure of a healthy society and ones that cannot be achieved by policy alone.

Conclusion

CACD is how communities come together in times of change, crisis and recovery. Through creativity, aesthetic enrichment, ideas, and cultural practice, CACD builds belonging, appreciation of difference, voice and connection—things policy alone can't achieve. We need the next iteration of REVIVE to recognise and resource this work so no community is left behind.

To realise the vision of REVIVE, CACD must be **recognised, resourced and embedded as a cornerstone of Australia's cultural future.**

The #Revivecommunityarts statement above lists environmental outcomes achieved through cultural activity... This connects to **Creative Climate's submission**, which I support. It reads:

Who We Are

Creative Climate is Australia's national peak body for culture-led climate action. We are a First Nations and artist-led consortium, funded by Creative Australia, bringing together Green Music Australia, A Climate for Art (ACFA), Centre for Reworlding, and pvi collective, alongside facilitators and environmental specialists. Our consortium members are practitioners: musicians, performance-makers, visual artists, First Nations writers and cultural workers. We understand from experience what it means to make art under escalating climate pressure, to tour a production into a smoke-choked city, to programme outdoor events when heatwave forecasts are routine, and to hold community grief in a river valley that has flooded three times in four years.

More importantly, we represent the national arts and culture sector - a mycelium of thousands of artists and organisations across the country - undertaking their practice within this same environmental context. This submission draws on the sector's leadership, advocacy, and capacity building in climate action and is informed by Creative Climate's ongoing consultation with artists, cultural workers, and First Nations communities across Australia. It builds on Creative Climate's advocacy in the Revive submission (2025), EPBC Review submission, 2025 Federal Election advocacy campaign, and our just published Risk Management of Climate Change Impacts report (2026).

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the unceded lands on which we meet, gather, and work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Our Call: Culture as Climate Infrastructure

The new National Cultural Policy arrives at a critical juncture. Australia has already passed an average global warming level of 1.5°C since the pre-industrial period. As the National Climate Risk Assessment (2025) makes clear: climate adaptation will fail without governance built on collaboration, trust, inclusion, equity and imagination. These are not aspirational values — they are the practical foundations of arts and cultural practice, developed and refined across decades and, in the case of First Nations cultural practice, across millennia.

The escalating frequency of climate events — floods, fires, heatwaves, and drought — is compounding an already fragile social cohesion. Communities are being separated from place, from each other, and from the stories that hold them together.

The mental health and wellbeing impacts are profound and growing: climate anxiety, ecological grief, disaster trauma, and the chronic stress of sustained uncertainty are now features of everyday life for millions of Australians. Young people are disproportionately

carrying this burden — they are inheriting a crisis they did not create, and they know it. The cultural sector has a specific, irreplaceable role in rebuilding those connections — as a practical community infrastructure, driving preparedness, recovery, adaptation, and systems change.

“Artists are not decorating the edge of the climate crisis. They are working in its centre, in communities, in grief, in imagination, making the cultural change that science and policy alone cannot.”

— Creative Climate, Federal Election Advocacy Statement, 2025

Creative Climate submits that a properly resourced culture sector is the missing link in Australia’s climate strategy. The new National Cultural Policy must do more than acknowledge the climate emergency and its impact on culture and the arts. It must embed and resource culture and community-led climate action as a structural priority — naming it explicitly across all five existing pillars, and committing to support of First Nations leadership in climate actions with dedicated funding, cross-portfolio coordination, and sector-wide accountability frameworks to ensure it is delivered.

Culture-Led Climate Action Across the Five Pillars

Creative Climate’s previous submissions to Revive, the EPBC Review, and in the lead-up to the 2025 Federal Election have consistently demonstrated how culture-led climate action cuts across all of Revive’s five existing pillars. We urge the new policy to reflect this explicitly in each pillar.

First Nations First

Country is the original cultural infrastructure. First Nations knowledge keepers have maintained living ecological relationships across more than 65,000 years and 250 language groups. The National Climate Risk Assessment (2025) affirms: working with and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can guide adaptation towards positive social outcomes. Leadership from and genuine co-design with First Nations artists, Elders, and knowledge keepers is a governance imperative.

A Place for Every Story

Climate stories are stories of place. In coastal communities facing inundation, in fire-scarred regions rebuilding after disaster, in cities renegotiating relationships with extreme heat — artists are the storytellers our communities need most right now. Culture holds what data cannot: grief resilience, possibility, and the emotional truth of what is at stake. The cultural sector is the only sector with both the trust and the tools to hold these stories and transform them into community building and action.

Centrality of the Artist

Artists are not peripheral to climate response — they are frontline workers, future speculators, and leaders of the cultural change our communities need. Yet most artist income is precarious. Dedicated resourcing for artists sustain their practice and to engage in

sustained cultural climate action — in communities, schools, public spaces, and governance processes — will ensure their irreplaceable contribution.

Strong Cultural Infrastructure

Theatres, galleries, rehearsal spaces, archives, and outdoor venues are all under mounting physical threat. Creative Climate's Risk Management of Climate Change Impacts report (2026) documents cascading vulnerabilities across all domains of the cultural sector: heatwaves damage instruments and archives, flooding destroys sets and collections, and bushfire smoke cancels seasons. Community spaces frequently become places of refuge when disaster strikes and recovery longer term. Investment in cultural infrastructure is investment in community safety infrastructure.

Reaching the Audience

The cultural sector reaches every demographic, every geography, across generations. UK research shows 75% of arts audiences expect the sector to take climate action. No other sector has this combination of community trust, emotional reach, and mobilisation capacity. Touring of creative works in all art forms and practices is the connective tissue of our shared imaginations. This reach is especially powerful with young people: artists and arts organisations can meet young Australians where they are — in schools, online, in community spaces — offering creative processes through which climate anxiety is transformed into agency and collective action. A properly resourced culture sector is the missing link in Australia's climate strategy.

Culture as Climate Infrastructure

We call on the new National Cultural Policy to formally recognise that the arts and culture sector is essential climate infrastructure. This means: dedicated funding lines for culture-climate integration within Creative Australia's remit; mandatory cross-portfolio coordination between the arts portfolio, OFTA, DCCEEW, and Treasury; and a clear accountability framework that tracks the sector's decarbonisation progress and climate adaptation investment. Through the new National Cultural Policy, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to position our creative sector as a global exemplar of culture-led intergenerational climate leadership.

Now Is the Time

The cultural and creative sector contributed \$67.4 billion to Australia's economy in 2023–24 — a 2.5% share of GDP. Our carbon footprint is a fraction of every other sector. We already have the community trust and the storytelling capacity to lead and build the social cohesion and community building necessary for collective climate action. What we do not yet have is the policy recognition and the resourcing to do it at the scale required. The mental health and wellbeing of Australians — and particularly our young people and other equity denied communities — depends in part on whether they have access to culture and community that helps them make sense of the world they are inheriting. Artists and arts organisations are already doing this work, without adequate recognition or resourcing. Intergenerational climate justice requires that we fund and sustain it. Artists and First Nations cultural leaders

have been working at the intersection of culture and climate without adequate support for too long. The new National Cultural Policy has the opportunity to change that. We are ready to lead. We ask the government to resource us to do so.

Priority Recommendations

The following recommendations emerge from Creative Climate's sector consultation, advocacy, and capacity building. They are grounded in the lived experience of artists, cultural workers, and First Nations communities navigating the climate crisis across the country.

01 Integrate arts and culture into national and international climate governance

Ensure arts and culture representation within the governance structures of Australia's National Adaptation Plan, Climate Risk Assessment processes, and COP planning. Establish formal pathways for cross-portfolio coordination between the arts portfolio, OFTA and Creative Australia, DCCEEW, DFAT and Treasury — to embed cultural sector climate perspectives into policy design across mitigation, adaptation, finance, and technology.

02 Establish a National Culture and Climate Taskforce

Co-chaired with First Nations leadership, establish a national culture and climate taskforce, with responsibility for the creation of a sector-wide Culture Climate Charter. Following a national audit of climate readiness across the sector, the Charter will establish commitments to decarbonisation targets, adaptation strategies, accountability frameworks, capacity building programs that enable intergenerational community engagement in culture-led climate adaptation.

03 Increase and sustain funding for culture-led climate action

A dedicated funding stream within Creative Australia for climate-culture programs, with a minimum 10% of core funding for all funded organisations allocated to decarbonisation and climate adaptation (currently less than 1%). Sustained and extended investment in Creative Climate as the national peak body. New programs of support for artists doing climate engagement work in communities, schools, and public processes and dedicated investment in intergenerational and youth-focused culture-climate programs — recognising that arts organisations are among the most trusted and effective spaces for young Australians to develop climate literacy, adaptive practices and connect to Country and First Nations custodians of Country.

04 Mandate climate risk management and environmental reporting

Require all Creative Australia-funded organisations to develop climate risk and adaptation management plans, drawing on Creative Climate's 2026 Risk Management Framework. Align with mandatory Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions reporting under the Corporations Act (2027). Resource a sector-wide capacity building program to build literacy and capacity within organisations and institutions.

05 Embed First Nations cultural and Care for Country knowledge in climate policy

Formally recognise and resource First Nations cultural knowledge keepers as leaders in climate adaptation. Dedicated funding for community-based cultural care for Country practices, protection of Country-based knowledge systems, and genuine self-determination

in how First Nations communities engage with and respond to climate impacts on culture and Country. Financially support existing First Nations-led initiatives including Knowledge Keepers and Common Threads.

06 Invest in R&D for adaptive and sustainable creative practice

Ambitious R&D programs, co-designed with artists, arts organisations, tertiary institutions and funding bodies to better understand our communities and audiences needs, innovate in decarbonisation management, new touring, exhibition and production models, community engagement and training for artists as culture and sustainability community leaders with sector-specific accreditation schemes.

Creative Climate welcomes the opportunity to provide further information or to appear before the consultation panel.

We endorse the intersecting climate action and climate justice strategies of the sector including in the submissions of:

Arts on Tour

Performance and Ecology Research Lab, Griffith University

Creative Climate Action Alliance

Theatre Network Australia

Diversity Arts Australia

Creative Cultural Diversity Network

Australian Disability Arts Network

National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)

Accessible Arts NSW

Signed Angharad Wynne-Jones

Creative Climate,

Facilitator

On behalf of:

- Catherine Jones, Creative Climate, Facilitator
- Matt Wicking, Creative Climate, Environmental Consultant
- Berish Bilander, CEO Green Music Australia
- Lana Nguyen and Eliko Reade, A Climate For Art
- Claire G. Coleman and Jen Rae, Centre for Re Worlding
- kelli mccluskey, steve bull, tom campbell, rachel arianne ogle, pvi collective

The #Revivecommunityarts statement above lists civic outcomes achieved through cultural activity. This connects to the **Say No to Censorship, Political Interference and Racism in the Arts submission**, which I support. It reads:

It is crucial that the forthcoming National Cultural Plan reflects current issues faced by artists and arts workers, as well as the arts sector at large. I am concerned by the prevalence of censorship, political interference and racism in the arts. As such, this submission is grounded in core values of and commitment to decolonisation, anti-racism, anti-discrimination; artists as the moral compass of the sector; freedom of artistic expression without limitations; and freedom from political interference in the arts.

Commitment to decolonisation, anti-racism and anti-discrimination (Pillars 1: First Nations First, 3: Centrality of the Artist & 4: Strong Cultural Infrastructure)

- The National Cultural Policy must take a decolonial, anti-racist and anti-discrimination approach. It should respect and take leadership from those in the sector who are already working from a strong decolonial, anti-racist and anti-discrimination framework.
- The IHRA definition of antisemitism must be removed from all arts, cultural and educational institutions and be replaced with the UN Core Stance of Values: “The UN asserts that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, without distinction of any kind, including race or ethnic origin. It maintains that no state, institution, group, or individual should make any discrimination in human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

Artists are the moral compass of the sector (Pillar 3: Centrality of the Artist)

- The National Cultural Policy must support artists to continue to be ethical and values-driven leaders of the sector and broader community.
- Artists must be able to speak freely, sign letters and participate in boycott actions without harming their reputation and livelihoods.
- Arts and cultural institutions must respect cultural diversity, and support, champion and care for the diverse conversations that artists bring to their programs, particularly those who have been targeted in the media for speaking out against injustices.
- Artists must not be instrumentalised by institutions, lobbyists, the media and politicians.

Freedom of speech and artistic expression (Pillars 3: Centrality of the Artist & 4: Strong Cultural Infrastructure)

- Strong cultural infrastructure must be based on artistic freedom of speech. This is already enshrined in the Creative Australia Act (11.e “to uphold and promote freedom of expression in the arts”) and needs to be upheld in the National Cultural Policy.
- In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, art must be able to facilitate critical discourse, address political issues and critique power and class structures.
- In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, there must be an end to the culture of intimidation that prevents artists from expressing and creating art freely.
- The National Cultural Policy must address the prevalence of censorship, targeting and cancellation of artists who speak out against injustices, particularly in relation to nations that have been condemned by the UN for acts of apartheid, genocide and war crimes.

Freedom from political interference in the arts (Pillars 3: Centrality of the Artist & 4: Strong Cultural Infrastructure)

- In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, the arts must remain independent and free from political interference.
- The National Cultural Policy must ensure independent and ‘arms length’ funding processes across federal, state and local government. This includes ensuring that politicians at all levels must not influence or give advice that results in the provision or removal of funding support of a particular project or artist. This is already enshrined in the Creative Australia Act (article 14.2) and needs to be upheld in the National Cultural Policy.
- A key action for the National Cultural Policy must be to implement an inquiry into political interference in the arts, including through donations and board membership and lobbying.
- Donors must not influence arts organisations and institutions.
- Board members with connections to political parties or lobbyists must be removed.

The #Revivecommunityarts statement above lists how access and inclusion can be achieved through cultural activity. This connects to **Arts and Disability Network Australia's submission**, which I support.

I support the submission from Arts and Disability Network Australia (ADNA). I argue that the next iteration of the *Revive National Cultural Policy* must continue to recognise the significant role arts and disability culture plays in ensuring that arts and culture are accessible for all Australians.

Between 2023 and 2024, the cultural and creative industries contributed \$67.4 billion to the Australian economy. Ensuring accessibility for the more than 20% of Australians who identify as disabled is not just economic logic, participation in culture is a fundamental human right. Yet without access — to spaces, funding, decision-making and artistic opportunity — that right is denied. It is not just denied for Australians with disabilities, but for any Australian with access needs.

While Equity: The Arts and Disability Associated Plan (ADAP) initiated important change, a four-year policy is insufficient to fully realise the time-based structural transformation required to ensure that d/Deaf and disabled knowledge contributes to the design of a more equitable future for all Australians. Disability-led practice must be recognised as a driver of policy. Through Revive, our community have shown that our lived experience offers culturally relevant and previously unrecognised knowledge across all five pillars.

I support ADNA's recommendation that in the next National Cultural Policy, the government establish a dedicated sixth pillar, 'Access for all Australians,' to ensure that culture is fully accessible to as many people as possible. A pillar for access will strengthen First Nations cultural participation and leadership; ensure that everybody can access the spaces, conversations and information needed to create and share their stories; protect artists through safer, fairer and more accessible working conditions; embed accessibility into the design of venues, institutions and digital systems and expand audience participation and engagement across Australia by positioning access as the framework through which all cultural life becomes more innovative and inclusive.

Our contributions through Revive prove that arts and disability culture is not a discrete sector. It is a generative force with distinct creative methods, languages, and access practices that improve personal and collective wellbeing and initiate conversations that bring tangible benefits to the public.

To fully support these important contributions, ADNA argues that Australia's next iteration of the Revive National Cultural Policy should invest in a new Community and Cultural Development (CACD) Australia. This will ensure ADNA's communities as well as our CACD allies are supported across the entire policy framework. As Australia faces increasing social,

environmental and economic crises, CACD must be recognised as a key component of essential cultural infrastructure.

Forming CACD Australia and recognising access as a sixth pillar acknowledges that the government recognises that access is not a subset of inclusion. Access is the condition that makes all other pillars possible — not just for the arts and disability community but for all Australians. Without access, there is no meaningful participation, no equitable workforce, no sustainable infrastructure, and no true reflection of Australia's cultural life.

#AccessToEquity

The #Revivecommunityarts statement above lists children and young people as a priority community who benefit from cultural activity... This connects to the **Qld Children and Young People in the Arts Submission** which I support. It reads:

Introduction

Queensland's children and young people are being failed in their right to equal access and participation in arts and culture. Research gathered via Creative Australia's Arts Participation report shows Queensland's children and young people do not have equal access to arts and culture, as per the UN convention on the rights of the child Article 31. The specialised artists that make this work are being failed in their efforts to have a sustainable career within this sector and deliver the arts programs and projects needed across this state. The supports that historically allowed Queenslanders to create quality arts experiences for children and young people have been eroded. Organisations and independent practitioners across the state can rebuild the sector, and the next National Cultural Policy can play a role in ensuring Queensland children, families, and artists benefit from sustained engagement with arts and culture.

Context

The Children and Young People in the arts sector in Queensland is made up of independent makers, independent and funded companies that are dedicated to work for/by/with children and young people, as well as artists and artworkers that make work for/by/with children and young people from within non-dedicated companies including venues, theatre, dance, circus, opera companies. The artists and artworkers work in different artforms, work with a broad range of age-ranges (audiences and participants range from 0 - 25 years), cover a range of geographical locations and are informed by artists and communities from diverse cultural backgrounds, with disabilities and various caring and cultural responsibilities.

The sector is mostly made up of experienced and mid-career practitioners, with few emerging and early years artists due to a lack of visibility on this portion of the sector and viability to maintain stable careers in the sector, despite some interest. Within this cohort, there is limited leadership capacity due to chronic structural under investment, despite leadership capability and expertise within the sector.

Of the investment made to children and young people's arts in Queensland, very little subsidy is provided to dedicated companies (ie companies that focus solely on the making of work with/by/for children and young people.) The QLD State and very minimal federal operational subsidy is largely spread to companies that include programs, productions and activity for children and young people within their organisations broader scope of work, including NPAPF funded organisations. These non-dedicated organisations are doing excellent work, however the nature of the organisations being non-specific to CYP means there is fluctuating quality and commitment to the ongoing work required to service the approx. 1.6 million children and young people across Queensland.

In addition to this specific group, Queensland also has significant numbers of private dance, drama, music theatre schools and other types of user-pays schools or training programs that engage young people, and a breadth of community-theatre companies that also engage young people in theatre and the performing arts. These companies all contribute to the participation of children and young people in the arts, however they are different to the artists who gathered in May who are primarily working to create professional theatre for/by or with children and young people.

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

- Limited funding both federally and state-based to dedicated youth arts and childrens focussed companies
- Lack of funding availability specific to youth arts, work for children and emerging artists
- Lack of peak body or organised representation for work for and with children and young people locally and nationally to unify voices and actions.
- Expertise in the sector has moved interstate, or now working in other sectors because careers in the CYP sector in Queensland are not viable
- Many CYP arts organisations no longer exist, there is very limited infrastructure for CYP organisations in QLD.
- Limited opportunities for Children and Young People to access performing arts, especially in regional and remote QLD.
- Distrust and undervaluing of Queensland-based artists and arts leadership in the Children and Young People space: artistically and in leadership.
- Regional and remote communities are underserved in terms of artistic support, infrastructure and resources and access for children and young people to arts and culture.
- The cost of making high-quality work for and with children and young people is the same, or often higher than work for adults. Australian families cannot afford adult ticket prices so subsidy is required to offset lower box office/ school purchase prices. When funding/subsidy is not available, works are made on lower budgets minimising professional artistic experiences and offering a poorer quality product than the artists envisage.
- Insurance costs and cost of living are negatively impacting companies making physical work (Circus, dance, theatre) with young people and pushing costs on to families. Current cost of living is impacting family budgets and slowing enrolments.
- Engagement with Children and young people has a higher duty of care than working with adults, there are additional child-safe measures as well as real on the ground additional load of pastoral care, yet funding amounts do not consider these additional and higher adult to child ratios or additional specialisation in skills.
- Chronic underestimating of the benefits of the arts within the Education sector including learning and wellbeing impacts, creating gate-kept access to young people for artists, creative companies and venues.

- Arts funders using economic measures such as reach, attendance and budgets to evaluate arts projects. Work for children and families and work with young people has qualitative/intrinsic benefit and is challenging to measure.
- Limited visibility of CYP career pathways and bespoke training for emerging artists to experience and join the sector.
- Limited pathways for CYP practitioners to access:
 - Artistic skills development
 - Professional development
 - Opportunities to make new work
 - Opportunities to share/present work
 - Resources to support ongoing practice, and full lifecycle of projects

Opportunities

- There are strong artists and companies in Queensland who are connected to their community, make exceptional work and are ready to rebuild the sector in order to support children and young people's access to arts and culture in their home state.
- Queensland has a rich history of quality arts with/by/for CYP
- Wisdom and expertise exist in Queensland, including First Nations work, national and international touring, community-engaged practice, arts in education.
- Approximately 23% of Australia's children live in Queensland
- There is an appetite for arts participation and an opportunity to grow audiences and expand appreciation for arts with/by/for CYP
- Artists are capable, committed and tenacious and have experience working with limited resources and are primed ready to be supported with infrastructure and resources.
- Connection to allied industries to support and enhance multi sector success with Health and Education
- Intergenerational wellbeing improvement for babies, toddlers, children, teens, parents and grandparents through communally shared experiences - live performance is a communal event, it takes away screen time and improves social, emotional and cognitive connection as well as provides embodied physical connection. Participatory activity such as youth theatre/ dance/ circus show additional communication, and physical benefits.
- Research opportunities to create a varied evaluation framework for CYP work that responds to statistical data on wellbeing, social cohesion, and other 'soft skills'; long term impacts of early arts engagement and depth of impact of arts projects in the lives of children and young people.
- Research supports the fact that participation in the arts at a young age enriches their lives and:
 - Assists with development and improves wellbeing
 - Fosters an appreciation of the arts and cultural diversity
 - Deepens children's sense of belonging and connection to family, friends, and their community
 - Develops 21st century skills
 - Sparks creativity, ideas, new knowledge, care for others and the environment, and offers a platform for them to express themselves and have agency in their lives.

The Five Pillars

Children and Young People are artists *and* audiences. Children and young people are important in each of the five pillars in *Revive*.

First Nations First: First Nations children and young people have a right to arts and culture. First Nations practitioners making work with and for children have a right to a sustained career. All Australian children are enriched through engagement with First Nations perspectives embedded in the arts and culture they engage with. Visibility of Self-Determined First Nations practice creates pathways for young people and supports social cohesion.

A Place for Every Story: Every child and young person has a story. Arts with/by/for CYP makes a space for these stories to be expressed and appreciated. The lives of children are enriched through stories. Places that welcome children and families into storytelling are essential, bringing people together through arts and culture.

Centrality of the Artist: Children and young people are artists who have a right to express themselves. Practitioners who work in arts for/with/by CYP support, advocate for, and empower children to participate in and benefit from arts and culture. Practitioners should be able to enjoy a career working with CYP in the arts, and be able to access artistic and professional development opportunities and beneficial networks and resources to enable their work and support the creative pathways of children and young people.

Strong Cultural Infrastructure: Infrastructure that has considered and welcomes children and young people is essential to enable meaningful participation in arts and culture. Family friendly physical spaces are required for the development and sharing of work for CYP. Services, programs, networks, festivals, tours, plans, and funding that support the development and sharing of arts with/by/for CYP ensures CYP and artists across the nation can benefit from arts and culture.

Engaging the Audience: Children, young people and their families are audiences. Engaging CYP in transformational arts experiences at an early age builds an appreciation of the arts and develops life-long audiences. Barriers to participation in the arts need to be reduced to enable CYP to access relevant, timely, and enriching arts experiences as valued audience members.

What we want to see reflected:

1. **All Pillars: Children identified as a separate group of people and included in each Pillar of the Policy** with committed actions that value children and young people as makers now, and audiences now, as well as audiences and makers of the future.
2. **Pillar 1, 2, 4 & 5: Annual funding quarantined to fund projects for, by and/or with children and young people.** This includes development, presentation and touring of performances and programs. This funding can span artform areas including CACD, disability arts and into Education, but must be for the benefit of people aged 0-18 and their carers/ communities to engage with the performing arts. Models might include
 - Co-investment from health, education and the arts in a per-child subsidy for theatre tickets, to ensure children can engage in live performing arts annually. Ticket price is worked out on cost to make the work and cover costs
 - Early years performances linked to early years learning framework, National Early Years Strategy in Education and subsidised via education or the arts.
 - Arts engagement for children and young people included and prioritised in Social Prescriptions through Health.

3. **Pillar 4: 10 - year investment in infrastructure for Queensland Children and Young People's dedicated companies and artists to rebuild.** Support for a Queensland-lead action plan to rebuild the Children and Young Peoples sector and subsequent support for the plan to be delivered. Funding provided to existing companies and artists across QLD to re-vision, restructure and regrow the Queensland CYP sector from within. Priorities include
 - Capacity building - upskilling of artists, producers, managers and leaders
 - Career pathways - building pathways back into CYP in QLD for QLD young people
 - Artistic investment - support new work, creative risk taking, professional development and exchange of existing and emerging artists.
 - Audience development - growth of audiences of work for, by and with young people. Subsidy to venues (particularly regional venues) to offset free and low cost programming by QLD based artists.
 - Infrastructure - operational funding for a peak body/core company an/dor support for existing companies to provided sustainability and guide the revisioning and regrowth of the sector.
4. **Pillar 1, 4 & 5: Increased, long-term investment and strategy in international market development** and international touring to support the export of world-class arts and culture made by/ for/with children and young people.
5. **Pillar 1, 4 & 5: Support and leadership for national CYP workers and companies to engage in cross-portfolio collaboration particularly with Education, Health, Disability and Social services.** Including
 - Matched funding to support cross-portfolio collaboration
 - Support for research partnerships to identify data gaps that are specific to barriers to participation in the arts, attendance at arts and cultural events, and career success, leadership pathways, wellbeing for young people who have engaged in youth arts. eg there is data from people who attend performances, there is data on how children and young people learn, we need the direct data on how to engage young people, and how the engagement in performing arts or participation supports learning and engagement.
 - Education: co-fund the support for an artist in every primary school in Australia every 2 years.
 - Sector lead, research driven Governmental advocacy across departments to lead and support cross-portfolio partnerships.
6. **Pillar 3 & 4: Tax reform for sole traders working in the arts and cultural sector.** Grant income tax reconsidered to prevent artists paying tax on grant expenditure.
7. **Pillar 3 & 4: Insurance review** - provide incentives for riggers insurance, and participatory insurances for small and medium sized arts organisations and individuals working with children and young people in order to maintain ticket prices and fees at achievable rates for families.
8. **Pillar 1, 2 & 3: Regional artists and companies endorsed to lead from the regions and promote regional stories for/by/with children and young people.** Regional Arts Australia, DARTS and other peak bodies representing regionally based artists and companies are supported with dedicated funding to support regional practitioners to lead from the regions by offering capacity building funds, promotional support and visibility within and across regions to promote pathways and advocate for the quality of regionally lead work for by and with regional young people.
9. **Pillar 3: Tertiary pathway reform to prevent barriers into creative careers for young people.** Technical, design, behind the scenes and performance degrees for young people based across Queensland need to be addressed and reinstated as per the recommendations of the National Advocates for Arts Education submission.