

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

Jimi Osborne-McNeilly



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Jimi Osborne-Mcneilly, I'm a Melbourne based concept artist working in the video game industry. I've been in the field for just over six years now, after studying at RMIT, and in that time I've watched games shift from a more niche interest into one of the biggest entertainment industries globally.

I'm writing because I believe video games deserve stronger recognition within Australia's National Cultural Policy. Despite how large and influential the industry has become, it still tends to sit in the shadow of film and television when it comes to funding and policy support. That feels increasingly out of step, especially given how much overlap there is in skills, technology, and creative practice.

One issue I've noticed is that games are often grouped into broader "screen" categories. On paper that makes sense, but in practice the way games are developed, financed, and released is quite different. Because of that, support structures don't always land where they're needed. At the same time, Australia continues to invest heavily in film and TV, while games—despite being just as culturally and commercially significant—receive far less targeted attention.

From my own experience, many developers here are working in small teams or independently, trying to break into a global market with limited local support. Funding is difficult to access, and the barriers for newer studios can be pretty steep. More tailored grants, clearer development pathways, and better support for small teams would go a long way. There's also real potential in backing areas like real-time production, technical art, and interactive storytelling, which increasingly overlap with other screen industries.

Another issue is talent leaving the country. A lot of Australian developers, myself included, end up working for overseas companies simply because that's where the opportunities are. While that work is valuable, it often means contributing to other countries' industries rather than building up our own. Personally, I'd much rather be working on Australian projects with local teams and helping grow something here.

There's no shortage of talent. Australian developers have already proven they can create globally successful work. The challenge is maintaining that momentum without consistent support and recognition, otherwise more people will continue to look elsewhere.

If games were treated on par with film and television, it wouldn't just help retain talent—it would also give Australia more opportunities to tell its own stories through a medium that reaches a massive global audience. Right now, there's a real risk of falling behind simply by not taking games seriously enough as part of our cultural landscape.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jimi Osborne-Mcneilly