

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

For most of my adult life I have participated in cultural activities, from writing, and studying Literature (PhD) and public art (Masters), to working in the art sector as Artistic Director and Producer on large regional festivals. I have had the pleasure to work on large gigs with many incredible First Nation artists, and with people in the disability sector. I have worked with many key regional organisations in regional NSW and Victoria

I have concurrently been running my own arts practice, including a theatre company (Thieves), public art, and visual art (often digital).

I have worked closely with Regional Arts NSW, and was on the Board of Regional Arts Victoria for 6 years.

I have travelled widely and studied how other cultures promote their culture. I am a member of A.R.E.A (Art in Regional European Areas) and have held zoom meetings with art makers from all over Europe since Covid.

As a predominantly regional artist (with odd opportunities in metro areas and internationally, I have suffered the usual structural problems that other regional artists have.

- A lack of opportunities and funding (which has an inherent bias towards metro (or close to metro) artists.
- Lack of technical expertise and equipment. I have become skilled in AV, LX, SX and production because I have had to.
- Lack of audience.
- Art journalists rarely attend regional and remote events unless they are big named.
- The cost of accessing predominantly city based professional development.
- As a contemporary artist there is a shortage of peers in many of the regional towns I have lived.
- Public art galleries focus on touring Metro artists rather than supporting eligible local artists.
- Increasingly, travel costs.
- Increasingly seeing the real costs of environmental damage and climate change, which metro artists don't. As a result, many regional and remote artists make work about environment and creative recovery (disaster preparedness) whereas (anecdotally – and I am on several funding panels) metro artists usually make work about identity.

A National Cultural Policy, as stated, should have a First Nations emphasis. It should value the artist. It should support individual artists as much as large named companies. It should support regional and remote artists. It should be conscious of the mental and physical health impacts that the above challenges can cause.

Often there is an assumption (I have seen this in funding allocations, and often it is structurally built into the application itself), that regional artists only work with community. It is biased against artists who are making great work in the pursuit of art.

I have applied unsuccessfully to funding bodies to do a survey of regional digital artists, often people doing the equivalent of their city-based contemporaries.

It should celebrate our First Nation culture, and our rich multi-cultural heritage. It should defend freedom of expression.

It should be well funded. The success rate of both National and State funding is so low. I have been on panels where I have seen incredible projects not make it above the cut-off line. These are great cultural moments that the

Australian public, metro, regional and remote never had the chance to see, and our culture is poorer because of this.