

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

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

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.

Aligning with recommendations by arts organisation, Next Wave - Australia cannot afford to lose the organisations, artists and pathways that cultivate the next generation of cultural life. The consequences of disinvestment in emerging practice are not just immediate but they are cumulative and long-term. The effects will be felt in diminished artistic diversity, weakened workforce pipelines, reduced cultural participation, and the loss of future sector leaders.

These challenges are not without solutions. A coordinated national response could include a Youth Cultural Access Scheme, structured paid industry learning pathways, and dedicated investment in emerging artist development organisations as cultural infrastructure. Together with cross-portfolio investment linking arts, education and health, and a more nuanced approach to measuring cultural participation, these measures would rebuild the pipeline between education and professional practice. They would ensure that Australia does not lose a generation of artists, but instead builds the conditions for them to thrive.

I urge government to recognise young people, emerging artists, and the organisations that support them at the centre of the future of national cultural policy. Investment in emerging practice is an investment in Australia’s cultural future. This especially includes artists in regional and remote areas of Australia.

Climate also needs to be addressed. Reduce a reliance on AI and respect expression and the humanity that comes through sharing and creating work in the arts (Pillar 3 - Centrality of the artist). Creative Climate is a positive step. Funding and support must continue to build capacity in arts leaders, and all arts organisations - particularly small-medium artist-run initiatives (ARIs).

Listening to young people and emerging practitioners should also be a priority. We are at the forefront of innovation and cultural development. This should not be understated - our value - and our need to continue this important work. This includes increased pay, opportunities for professional development - and support to invest in our practice among cost-of-living challenges. Australia needs us and we need substantive investment and trust.