

My name is Jack Wardana and I have been part of the street dance scene in Australia for over twenty years. Over this time I have come from being a student to making dance a full time career and seeing students flourish and become world champions. I believe we have a strong, unique and diverse street dance community here in Australia and our impact on the global scene will be propelled further with the help of the points stated by cypher culture in the paragraphs below.

In the next National Cultural Policy, I'm joining Cypher Culture in calling for the Australian Government to invest in street dance.

I ask the Australian Government to explicitly recognise street dance, battles, cyphers and jams as legitimate contemporary cultural practice in the National Cultural Policy. Street dance should be recognised on its own terms, not forced into traditional arts models that do not reflect how the culture works.

I also ask the Government and Creative Australia to create dedicated Street Dance funding allocations. Street dance is popular and has strong participation, especially among young people, culturally diverse communities and LGBTQIA+ communities. However, it does not receive enough recognition, funding or infrastructure that reflect its participation.

I support the establishment of a dedicated Community Arts and Cultural Development body within Creative Australia. Grassroots communities like street dance build culture from the ground up. They create artists, mentors, event organisers, audiences and community leaders. These communities need dedicated support that reflect their impact on Australian culture.

Street dance communities also need access to safe, affordable and welcoming public and semi-public spaces to train, jam and battle. Many dancers do not have enough places to practise, gather or build community. We need spaces with safe surfaces, shelter, lighting, transport access and permissions without being moved on.

If Australia is serious about "A Place for Every Story", then street dance stories, spaces and communities must be recognised and supported.