

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Organisation

Creative Arts Gympie Region

Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

As the peak arts and cultural body for the Gympie region in regional Queensland, Creative Arts Gympie Region represents a diverse membership of artists, arts workers, venues, festivals, creative businesses, educators, and community organisations. Our region demonstrates both the immense value of arts and culture in regional Australia and the significant structural challenges facing regional creative communities.

This review presents an important opportunity to move beyond short-term and piecemeal approaches toward a more sustainable and place-based framework that recognises the critical role arts and culture play in regional economic development, social cohesion, identity, wellbeing, and community resilience.

A key priority must be the transition away from fragmented project-by-project funding models that currently dominate the sector. While project funding remains important, many regional organisations and artists are trapped in cycles of short-term delivery, administrative burden, and financial instability that undermine long-term planning, workforce retention, and sustainable cultural development.

Regional arts organisations require operational and multi-year investment models that support continuity, governance, staffing, programming, venue activation, and community engagement over time. Without this stability, regional communities remain dependent on volunteer labour and vulnerable to the loss of cultural infrastructure, programs, and creative leadership.

This is particularly critical in relation to small-to-medium live performance venues in regional Australia. These venues are not simply entertainment spaces; they are essential creative development infrastructure. They provide the first stages for emerging artists, support regional touring circuits, foster local identity, generate economic activity, and create accessible cultural participation opportunities for communities that are often excluded from metropolitan cultural investment.

National cultural policy must recognise that regional artists and arts workers are not peripheral to Australia's cultural life. They are essential contributors to cultural participation, tourism, community wellbeing, and local economies. Regional creatives often operate across multiple roles—as artists, producers, educators, technicians, organisers, and community leaders—while working with significantly fewer resources and opportunities than metropolitan counterparts.

Future policy settings should prioritise:

- Multi-year operational investment for regional arts organisations
- Support for small-to-medium live performance venues
- Regional touring and artist mobility
- Artist development pathways outside metropolitan centres
- Cultural infrastructure activation and adaptive reuse
- Youth creative career pathways in regional communities
- Fair remuneration and workforce sustainability for artists and arts workers.

The five pillars established through Revive remain highly relevant. However, their success depends on ensuring regional Australia is not treated as an afterthought, but as a central part of the nation's cultural future.

Strong regional arts ecosystems create stronger communities, stronger local economies, and a more inclusive national cultural identity.