

National Cultural Policy Submission

1472283

Public and anonymous

Individual

Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am the [REDACTED] a long standing game developers' community group (since 2004), recently incorporated. [REDACTED] Queensland Games Festival ([REDACTED] under different names). The festival is a community - public facing event which highlights the important contribution of the game development cultural sector. Every year, we put on this festival of locally made games as an opportunity for game developers to celebrate their practice together whilst providing an opportunity for the general public to come and play the games and chat with the developers. Every year we get the same enthusiastic response from members of the general public who stumble across the festival (held at the Brisbane Powerhouse) along the lines of: "Oh, we didn't know we made games here in Queensland". As games are present in 94% of Australian households and 82% of Australians play games, this is a sad state of affairs. A further very frequent response from parents who come to the festival is that their children want to make their own games.

Games and the broader cultural ecosystem of games cultures is one of the most popular art-forms in Australia, with one out of five people playing digital games regularly and nine out of ten people playing other forms of games such as tabletop games. Games are one of our most important and vividly alive forms of storytelling, appealing to a wide range of demographics and ages. Increasingly, games are the stories shared between generations, replacing the old broadcast media channels as family activity. Games let people live Australian stories instead of passively consuming them.

The Australian games sector employs between 2,500 and 10,000 people nationally and generated \$600 million in domestic sales in the last financial year. Australian games, including our internationally renowned and most successful, are predominantly made by small studios who are strengthened by community support from organisations such as brIGDA. Small studios and the way we tell stories through our playful interactive medium means that the game development process is distinct, a mix of arts practice and technological practice that needs its own cultural policy and funding approaches.

We would like to see a National Cultural Policy that recognises our games makers as creative Australian story tellers through initiatives such as:

- A dedicated category of "playful interactive arts" to scaffold funding into games as a recognised medium and more than merely "screen-based works"
- Reflect the contribution of the games sector and ensure that governing boards and executive teams with responsibility for arts and culture policy, promotion and funding appoint people with games sector experience.
- Government funding that reflects the overall contribution that Australian games sales make to the economy.
- Ensuring Australian games content requirements are encouraged to highlight our Australian game making talents
- Recognising how powerful games as story telling experiences are and supporting regulation to protect games as a cultural sector from destructive use of generative artificial intelligence.