

National Cultural Policy Submission

1472331

Public

Individual

Liz Ballantyne



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am the Regional Director of Art at Liquid Development, a Keywords Studio, leading art teams across Australia and the wider APAC region. Over the past 20 years, I have worked across Australian game development as an artist, creative leader and mentor, helping build teams, support emerging talent, and deliver world-class interactive experiences for global audiences.

Across my career, I have contributed to award-winning interactive projects including The Oregon Trail, Carmen Sandiego, and Bluey's Happy Snaps. These projects demonstrate how Australian creative talent can craft culturally meaningful, globally recognised interactive experiences that connect audiences through storytelling, education, play and shared cultural identity.

I welcome the opportunity to contribute to Australia's next National Cultural Policy.

Games are one of Australia's most powerful and under-recognised cultural forms. They combine visual art, storytelling, design, music and technology to create participatory experiences that allow audiences to actively engage with stories rather than passively consume them. As digital-native forms of creative expression continue to shape how younger generations connect, learn and create, games must be recognised as central to Australia's cultural future.

The consultation paper highlights the need to respond to evolving digital participation, changing creative work, and the global opportunity for Australian cultural exports. This is where games represent enormous potential. While Australia has exceptional creative capability in interactive entertainment, our policy settings have not yet evolved at the pace of the sector's cultural, creative and economic impact.

From my experience leading creative teams, one of the greatest challenges is retaining and developing talent locally. Australia produces extraordinary artists and developers, but too many face limited long-term pathways, inconsistent funding opportunities, and systems that assess games through frameworks designed for other creative industries.

To strengthen the sector, I believe the next National Cultural Policy should prioritise:

Recognising game creators as cultural workers

Games artists, designers and developers should be supported under Pillar 3: Centrality of the Artist, with clearer pathways for professional development, mentorship and sustainable careers.

Embedding games expertise in decision-making

Policy and funding decisions relating to games should involve experienced game developers and creative leaders who understand the realities of interactive production.

Building stronger cultural infrastructure for games

Australia needs dedicated national support structures that enable studios to grow sustainably, support emerging creators, and strengthen collaboration between education and industry.

Recognising games as a major vehicle for Australian stories globally

Under Pillar 5: Engaging the Audience, games should be recognised as one of Australia's most effective ways to connect global audiences with Australian creativity.

Australia has the talent, creativity and ambition to be a global leader in games. What we need now is cultural policy that recognises interactive media not as an emerging niche, but as a core part of Australia's creative identity and future cultural economy.

