



22 May 2026

Office for the Arts  
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication, Sport and the Arts

### **Towards a New National Cultural Policy**

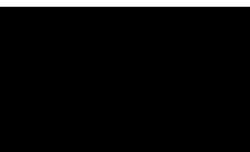
Sidney Myer Fund and The Myer Foundation welcome this consultation and commend the Government for undertaking it. We are keenly aware of what it takes – in time, in political will, and in genuine openness to the sector – to run a process of this kind well. That it follows *Revive* rather than replacing a decade of silence makes it historic: for the first time, Australia has the opportunity to build a second consecutive national cultural policy, compounding the foundations of the first rather than starting again.

This moment deserves to be met with ambition. The opportunity before government is not simply to refresh what exists, but to establish a policy architecture capable of sustaining Australia's cultural life across a generation – one that is long-term in its thinking, cross-jurisdictional in its reach, and serious about the relationship between artistic excellence, cultural infrastructure, and Australia's place in the world.

We have chosen, in this submission, not to put forward new recommendations of our own. The consultation has already produced a body of thinking – from artists, organisations, researchers and advocates – that is sophisticated, grounded in lived experience and authoritative. We believe the most useful contribution a philanthropic foundation in our position can make is not to generate more proposals, but to signal our support for a few already before government which we feel deserve serious consideration.

What follows are formal cross-endorsements of three specific submissions. We have chosen them because they reflect values and ideas we have invested in over many years and because we think their convergence – on questions of international engagement, systemic coherence, and long-term ambition – is itself a message worth hearing.

Kind regards



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## About Sidney Myer Fund and The Myer Foundation

The Sidney Myer Fund and The Myer Foundation (SMF/TMF) are two separate philanthropic entities of Myer family philanthropy. Both have long believed that a thriving cultural life is not an adornment to Australian society but foundational to it, and that there is a strong connection between arts and culture and the wellbeing of a community.

Our arts and culture philanthropy focuses on the centrality of the artist through our Sidney Myer Creative Fellowships program.<sup>1</sup> We believe individual artists provide the lifeblood to our arts sector. They are the creative force. And they often exist with little or no income from their practice, and often supplement their income with work in other fields.

SMF/TMF have also had a long and abiding philanthropic interest in how Australia engages artistically and culturally with our region and the world. We have been proud to co-invest with the Australian Government on major initiatives like Asialink and the Asia-Pacific Triennial of Performing Arts.

Through the Creative Fellowships and our partnerships with organisations across the country, we seek to nurture the conditions in which Australian artists can do their best work while reaching the widest possible audience, both here and abroad.

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<sup>1</sup> Since their inception in 2011, the Sidney Myer Creative Fellowships have provided \$21 million in funding to 125 individuals.



**Endorsement 1: A New Approach (ANA)  
Submission to the National Cultural Policy Refresh**

We endorse fully the submission of A New Approach – Australia’s national arts and culture think tank – to this consultation. We do so not only because ANA’s submission is the most comprehensive and evidence-grounded contribution we have encountered in this process, but because SMF/TMF have a deep connection to ANA’s work, and have been instrumental in ANA’s creation, governance and sustained impact.<sup>2</sup>

ANA’s submission argues, with rigour and clarity, that Australia’s arts and culture system requires not just greater investment but a fundamentally more coherent and collaborative policy architecture – one that is long-term, cross-jurisdictional and grounded in shared vision and measurement. We believe this framing is correct and compelling, and that it represents the most important shift in ambition available to government in this new national cultural policy.

As funders, we appreciate both the complexity and the transformative potential of concerted, long-term collaboration. Indeed, we are particularly struck by ANA’s call for the next National Cultural Policy to function as a genuine 10-year framework – a structure for collaboration across all three levels of government, with shared outcomes, shared measurements and regular ministerial accountability. This is the kind of ambition that could make a lasting difference. It is also, we note, the kind of ambition that requires political deftness and courage to sustain. We urge government to rise to it.

**Endorsement 2: Turning World  
Proposal to Strengthen Australia’s International Cultural Engagement**

We warmly endorse the submission of Turning World, the Melbourne-based cultural agency led by Kate Ben-Tovim and Tam Nguyen. Turning World makes the case that Australia is significantly under-realising its potential on the international cultural stage – not for want of talent or demand, but for want of strategic coherence and institutional infrastructure.

SMF/TMF have already put resources behind this, with a four-year \$560,000 investment in Turning World’s pilot of the Australian Cultural Diplomacy Centre (ACDC), a new, independent entity designed to bridge the worlds of creative practice and diplomatic engagement. That investment reflects a considered judgement: that the vision, the relationships, and the expertise exist to build something genuinely new and genuinely needed. The pilot activity to date has given us every confidence in that judgement.

Turning World’s submission focuses on two practical proposals: support for ACDC as a formal independent entity, and the establishment of a Government Advisory Panel for International Cultural Relations co-chaired by the Office for the Arts and DFAT. We would welcome the opportunity to engage with government as these structures take shape, and we believe they could represent key, durable outcomes of this policy refresh.

<sup>2</sup> ANA is a current grantee of SMF/TMF and its Chair, Rupert Myer AO, is also President of TMF.



### **Endorsement 3: Australian Live Performance Export Alliance Live Performance Export – Turning Global Demand into Sustainable Cultural Value**

We also support the submission of the Australian Live Performance Export Alliance – an informal but formidable alignment of organisations including Gravity & Other Myths, Chunky Move, Lucy Guerin Inc, Stephanie Lake Company, Briefs Factory, Polyglot Theatre, Patch Theatre, Joel Bray Dance, BlakDance, and Legs On The Wall.

Their submission makes a clear and urgent argument: Australia does not lack international demand for live performance. It lacks the systems needed to convert that demand into feasible and sustainable international activity. We find this framing both honest and important, and it is consistent with what we hear from the artists and organisations we fund.

These are some of Australia's most internationally distinctive companies: agile, artistically adventurous, and genuinely wanted on the world's stages. They are also, in many cases, the organisations least able to absorb the financial risk of a tour that collapses mid-way through, or an engagement that becomes unviable because presenter fees have not kept pace with the real cost of touring from Australia. The Alliance's submission addresses this gap directly, with a set of practical, well-considered proposals focused on export funding, disruption resilience, cross-government coordination, and dedicated infrastructure for First Nations-led international exchange.

We endorse these proposals and encourage government to engage with them seriously. In particular, we note that the Alliance's call for a cross-government International Cultural Relations coordination mechanism maps directly onto recommendations made by both Turning World and ANA in their respective submissions. The convergence of these voices is not coincidental; it reflects a genuine and widespread recognition that the current architecture for supporting Australian artists internationally is not fit-for-purpose.

#### **Closing remarks**

The foundations laid by *Revive* have been real and meaningful. The next chapter calls for boldness – a structural framework built to last, and a vision of Australia as a cultural powerhouse.

We are delighted to have contributed funding that has indirectly supported the rigour and scope finding its way into this consultation. We commend the submissions of ANA, Turning World, and the Australian Live Performance Export Alliance to the government, and we stand ready to be a partner in bringing their best ideas to life.

We thank the Office for the Arts for this opportunity to contribute.