

National Cultural Policy Submission

1472357

Public

Organisation

Woodville Concert Band



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

We are a not-for-profit, volunteer organisation with over 60 members including people living with disabilities, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, linguistically diverse people as well as seniors and high school students. Our focus is on accessibility (for both band members and audiences) and we offer a safe, inclusive space for our members to thrive and for community to access musical experiences that they generally cannot afford or that will expand their horizons. We regularly receive positive feedback from elected members and their representatives on the fact that we are non-insular, appeal to a diverse (and especially young) audience, and on the fact that we offer a unique community service that enables many to access classical music.

However, over the years, it has become more and more challenging to operate, especially in terms of accessing large performance halls (with community/not-for-profit hire rates increasing steadily). We would value council assets such as performance spaces being run as community assets rather than profit centres. A national commitment to supporting local community use of council (and/or federal) assets beyond sport use would ensure that groups such as ours can continue operating and offering essential opportunities for social cohesion and musical education. While a lot is generally done for sport, we find investment in music lacking. Yet, strong cultural infrastructure that is accessible to community groups is as key as sport infrastructure to delivering health, social and economic benefits. For us, fit-for-purpose infrastructure does not simply imply attracting big international acts. It also means ensuring that this infrastructure responds to the needs to small, local and generally volunteer-run community groups. Those are the types of organisations that contribute most to belonging, health, connection and social cohesion.