

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual

Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

As a multicultural independent artist based in South Australia, I believe Australia's future cultural policy should place greater emphasis on long-term sustainability for emerging and culturally diverse artists, not only project-based outcomes.

As a Chinese Australian Huqin (Chinese bowed-string instrument) musician, producer, and educator, I work across contemporary music, jazz, experimental performance, and community arts. While Australia increasingly celebrates cultural diversity, multicultural artists are still often expected to represent tradition or heritage in limited ways, rather than being recognised as contemporary artists contributing to the future of Australian arts practice.

Many culturally diverse artists are creating innovative cross-cultural work that combines different artistic languages, technologies, and lived experiences. However, there are still limited pathways for artists working with culturally specific instruments or practices to develop sustainable careers within Australia's contemporary arts sector. Support for experimentation, mentorship, commissioning, residencies, and long-term artistic development is essential.

I also believe there needs to be greater recognition of the invisible labour involved in independent arts practice. Emerging artists are often simultaneously performers, producers, marketers, grant writers, administrators, and project managers, while also balancing casual employment to survive financially. Funding programs frequently support individual projects, but not necessarily the long-term growth of artists themselves.

For many artists from migrant backgrounds, arts practice is also deeply connected to identity, belonging, memory, and community connection. Contemporary multicultural art should not only be viewed as cultural celebration, but also as a space for experimentation, vulnerability, and artistic innovation.

I would like to see future cultural policy continue investing in grassroots organisations, independent venues, and mentorship programs that support emerging artists from diverse backgrounds to build sustainable careers in Australia. These spaces are often where the most meaningful cross-cultural collaborations and new artistic voices are developed.

Australia's cultural identity is evolving. Supporting artists from diverse cultural backgrounds not only enriches the arts sector, but also helps shape a more inclusive and contemporary vision of Australian culture itself.