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Music Technology Australia — Submission to the National Cultural Policy Review

About Music Technology Australia

Music Technology Australia advocates for a flourishing Australian music technology ecosystem. We seek a creative landscape where technology empowers and augments human creators rather than displacing them, where rights are respected, and where those who make music receive fair payment for their contribution.

By "creators" we mean musicians, producers, beatmakers, roadies, venue staff, singers, songwriters and other workers whose labour makes music possible.

Our principles

- **Standing with creators** — We represent the people who are the lifeblood of Australia's music scene and defend their artistic and economic interests.
- **Ethical innovation** — We support development approaches that protect copyright, ensure transparent practice, and secure fair remuneration. As generative technologies evolve, systems must credit and recompense the human creators whose work trains them.
- **Collaboration, not replacement** — We envisage a future where technology lowers barriers, automates repetitive tasks and expands creative possibility, while leaving artistic agency and reward firmly with people.

Submission proposals

1. Rights, Consent and Transparency Framework for AI and Creative Works

Problem

AI systems are being trained on creative material without creators' permission or recompense, undermining intellectual property and the livelihoods of artists and industry workers.

Proposal & expected outcome

Amend the Copyright Act and related regulation to require explicit consent, transparent disclosure and fair payment where creative works are used to train AI models or where AI-generated outputs rely on third-party material. Introduce clear rules to protect creators' moral and economic rights, deter unauthorised data-mining, and promote accountable development practices. Complement this with an accredited labelling scheme that identifies human-originated content (a "Made by Humans" mark) so audiences can distinguish works produced or substantially shaped by people.

Implementation & scope

Federal legislation and regulation (Attorney-General's Department, Communications portfolios), supported by Standards Australia for labelling and accreditation. Obligations apply to AI developers and platforms operating in Australia.

Cost

Regulatory implementation costs; not a direct grant program.

Model examples

Regulatory approaches comparable to the EU AI Act and data protection frameworks.

<https://artificialintelligenceact.eu>

<https://gdpr-info.eu/>

2. Australian Music Visibility Requirement for Streaming Services

Problem

Streaming algorithms and editorial systems increasingly prioritise global content, reducing the discoverability of Australian artists and weakening the domestic music pipeline.

Proposal & expected outcome

Mandate that eligible streaming services integrate Australian repertoire into both editorial placements and algorithmic recommendations and require platforms to reinvest in local discoverability initiatives. The measure would raise the profile of Australian artists, help emerging talent gain traction and correct algorithmic biases that disadvantage local music.

Implementation & scope

Federal administration (Arts and Communications portfolios, ACMA/ACCC). Applies to streaming services exceeding a defined national subscriber or revenue threshold. Should be aligned with any expanded Australian content obligations for digital music platforms.

Cost

Regulatory; potential compliance costs for platforms.

Model examples

Policies drawing on EU digital services frameworks and Canadian discoverability practices.

<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/digital-services-act-package>

3. Digital Platforms and AI Revenue Contribution for Cultural Investment

Problem

Large streaming platforms and AI service providers generate substantial revenue from Australian users but do not proportionately reinvest in local cultural infrastructure. In addition, AI training has exploited Australian artists' work without adequate attribution or compensation.

Proposal & expected outcome

Establish a modest levy (proposed 5%) on revenue from Australian users of streaming and AI platforms. Revenues would be allocated to artist development, local content production, discoverability programs, venue and infrastructure support, and industry capacity building. This creates an enduring funding stream directly tied to digital consumption and helps sustain the creative sector as digital services grow.

Implementation & scope

Federally legislated, collected by the ATO/Treasury and distributed by Creative Australia (or an equivalent body) to artists, small creative companies, venues and industry programs. The levy would be additional to any copyright licensing or AI training fees required under other laws.

Cost / Revenue

Industry-funded; projected to generate in the order of tens of millions annually (illustrative estimate: \$25–\$100 million per year depending on design and thresholds).

Model example

Mechanisms similar to France's cultural levies on digital music services and national cultural funds.

<https://cnm.fr>

Closing remarks

Music Technology Australia urges the National Cultural Policy to incorporate measures that:

- Protect creators' rights and income in the era of AI;
- Restore and enhance the discoverability of Australian music on major platforms; and
- Ensure digital platforms contribute fairly to the local cultural ecosystem.

These proposals are intended to preserve artistic agency, foster sustainable careers, and maintain a vibrant, technologically informed music sector in Australia.