

I believe it is crucial that the connection between tertiary education and professional arts practice is reflected more strongly in the next National Cultural Policy.

One of the ten principles in *Revive* was that ‘Australian students have the opportunity to receive an education that includes culture, creativity, humanities and the arts’. It was encouraging that *Revive* recognised the value that arts and humanities play in education. While *Revive* also acknowledged the important links between education providers and the development of artists, there were few *direct* references to universities or higher education. Therefore, there are significant opportunities for this crucial nexus to be acknowledged and developed more thoroughly and precisely in the next National Cultural Policy.

I teach future artists and arts workers in an Australian university, and I have also worked professionally in the GLAM sector. I understand that the contributions that universities make to the arts and cultural sector are multi-faceted; they are much more than simply training institutions. These contributions have been poorly understood or overlooked for years. As Jenny Wilson wrote in 2016 (in relation to Creative Australia’s 2015 *Arts Nation* report): ‘there are still gaps that need to be filled to build a greater public understanding of the arts in Australia. The contribution of Australian universities to the arts is one such lacuna’.

Universities are the core education pathway for Australian artists, but they have wider roles to play in the cultural sector. Universities employ large numbers of artists and arts workers as teachers, researchers and arts administrators. Universities have impressive cultural infrastructure such as art museums and concert halls that offer valuable opportunities for artists at different career stages. Universities conduct best-practice research, often partnering and linking with our important cultural institutions.

Prof. Graeme Turner AO has recently detailed and analysed the significant strain that the Australian university sector is under. This situation in universities is having flow-on effects to Australian artists and cultural institutions. Opportunities are being lost, due to lack of capacity in universities, and lack of strategic understanding and investment in the pathways between tertiary education providers, artists, and cultural institutions. Furthermore, the Job-Ready Graduates package is still unfairly impacting students enrolled in arts and humanities degrees.

I would like to see the next National Cultural Policy investing in and recognising the essential contribution that universities make to our arts and cultural sector. *Revive* presented much of its related discussion in the pillar ‘The Centrality of the Artist’, which made sense due to the connections between arts training and work. I believe, however, there is a strong case to be made for adding an additional pillar focused on the essential connections between art and education.

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References

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