

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I think it's exceptionally important. I'm glad to have the chance to be part of the redevelopment of the National Cultural Policy. I'm a proud Australian artist and I want to be able to live and work in Australia. I graduated from one of the top 5 acting schools in Australia in 2023. I've been trying to make a living in the industry since then. I've set up 2 separate theatre companies in that time, creating our own work (with one business partner we set up a physical theatre company that created a production that sold out, across a limited season, and yet made a loss, and with my other business partner, we set up a comedy club that ran for 9 months (weekly shows), and eventually broke even after all the costs incurred), and I have been cast in 2 other independent theatre productions (during which I earned roughly \$13 per hour as an hourly rate, if rehearsal and performance times were taken into account) and 2 other professional theatre productions (Australian Shakespeare company). I am an actor, a producer, a writer, a dancer, a director and a stand-up comedian.

As a theatre-maker, I've contributed hundreds of hours in unpaid labour in an attempt to gather credits and experience, hoping that my work will be noticed by professional theatre companies, or that our work will reach a broader audience. I've not had an audition, let alone an acting job opportunity at any of the main stage theatre companies in Sydney in the 3 years since graduating. As someone who acts in other people's productions, but also creates their own work with business partners alike, I have to work 4 casual jobs concurrently (hospitality), just to maintain enough of an income to live in Sydney and still have the flexibility (ruling out full time work) to take time off to be involved in low/no pay productions, or attend unpaid auditions, or put together self-tapes for projects that aren't hosting in-person auditions. Sometimes I'm working 16 hour days across multiple jobs just to save enough money to put on a production through our independent theatre company. The reality is that I'm an ambitious young artist with something to say, and the creative drive to do so, but the financial and time constraints of being an artist in Australia means that I just don't have the means to actualise those ambitions and turn that into work.

I suggest:

- Considering Universal Basic Income for Artists/living wage for artists.
- More PERFORMANCE spaces for a cheaper cost to the artist (maybe using an application process where people pitch?) / leveraging pre-existing space that is available
- Cheaper housing accommodation for registered artists, maybe that double as artistic studios / rehearsal spaces
- Govt. stipends at the END of independent theatre productions, based on cast size and audience attendance, rewarding theatre creation.
- More school-touring/retirement-home-touring theatre programs
- Conduct national review on the health of the theatre sector
- Provide subsidised marketing - whether that's billboard space or online space across social media (for cheaper, or for free) - Give discounted airtime to theatre productions so we can get the word out about productions that are on. Or maybe provide dedicated marketing consultants to assist with increasing the quality of the marketing content, to attract a younger audience (the future of theatre-goers).
- KPIs for main-stage theatre companies to cast a certain number of drama school graduates each year.