

National Cultural Policy Submission

1472546

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

To support Revive via the five pillars as set out in the proposed framework of Australia's Cultural Policy:

- For recognition and respect of the contribution given to arts and culture by First Nations arts workers, story tellers and knowledge holders, a living wage is a prime indicator of how a person's individual story and culture is valued by the nation at large.
- To show recognition and support for diverse forms of cultural expression and participation, funding artists, curators, makers and culture holders by paying them a living wage to ensure their contribution can maintain quality and consistency.
- To make safer, more inclusive workplaces and to ensure the highest quality of work from arts workers, we need to be paid a liveable wage. At the core of my creative practice, I am expected to research, ideate and make proposals either heavily discounted or for free, often culminating in large works supported by a flat-rate percentage exhibition fee, not in keeping with my master's degree level of training, not even level with years in industry that I have as a skilled practitioner with apprentice-level qualification. I have the highest level of qualification of anyone I know, and lowest pay expectations, still unmet. I sit on boards for free, attend work meetings, openings, conferences, and often contribute to artist talks all for free. I do networking that would be part of a paid business day for other workers and visit exhibitions in my own time to forward my skills and understanding of my industry. I would feel better supported, and indeed celebrated, if I were paid a liveable wage.
- For resiliency, adaptability and long-term sustainability, we must support artists to tackle bigger projects and shoulder more responsibility. To experience the full benefit of their expertise by reducing the worries associated with the gig economy and poorly lit, ventilated and heated workspaces, artists need to be paid a liveable wage and to be resourced like any other professional worker.
- Inspiration is created from the day-in and day-out application of long practiced, hard worked-for knowledge and technical skill, created in and adapted from appropriate training programs. Artists self-fund research and development (we're paid under the threshold of benefit to get the R+D tax breaks applicable to larger businesses) in our own time, only able to profit from the actual product that we make - at alarmingly reduced cost to those of aligned industries - as we would sell none of our output were we to charge at the hourly rate of similarly-tenured tradespeople. And all to engage an audience, to make them think, cry, laugh – feel. We would better innovate and captivate if we could be guaranteed the comfort and safety afforded to other professionals by the remuneration afforded to them.

Arts deserve the same budgets as sports (we know there are similar benefits in mental health and community development given the safe inclusion of elder, younger and at-risk communities) and to be similarly recognised for their achievements.