

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Organisation

Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group of Australia, WA



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Jewellery and Metalsmithing are specialist skill areas that threaten to disappear if not supported now and in future.

Unfortunately, one of the great ironies of Revive is that the sector currently has a full suite of State, Territory and Federal cultural policies in place for the first time and has never been more vulnerable. Well-meaning or performative policies intended to herald what Burke describes as the ‘restoration of culture to be at the centre of our national life’ have been accompanied by systemic deprioritisation of civic infrastructure in all areas, including our sector.

The Australian investment in arts and culture is not keeping pace with our population, and State and Territory expenditure.

Within the craft sector itself, with more investment going to prop up failing cultural institutions than small-to-medium size organisations, which consistently outperform their larger counterparts in terms of reach, representation, access and return on investment. In particular, contemporary CRAFT is often left out.

We are in the midst of a national cultural workforce crisis. Around 78% of artists and 60% of cultural workers are self-employed (a much higher proportion than the overall workforce). Jobs in jewellery and art-based metal smithing are disappearing in Western Australia, and students are not finding work hence leave the sector. Professional Development is no longer on offer due to closure of University and other tertiary courses.

We need a new commitment to protect our sector and revive it for the future.