

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

Jeffrey Sarmiento



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

My name is Jeffrey Sarmiento. I am based in Canberra, and I work as a Glass Artist and academic.

Australian craft and design are distinctive and recognised globally. As a glass artist, innovative skilled making and the contemporising of tradition evidenced in the exemplars of practice and the leading figures in my field are the reasons I have emigrated to this country. I work in university as an educator and the infrastructure from traineeships through to commercial galleries, museums and craft organisations offers opportunities for people who express their creativity through making. Craft is a true source not only of the satisfaction for the individual maker but also a contribution to the distinctiveness of Australian culture and identity.

Before moving to Australia I worked in the UK for nearly 20 years. In that time I witnessed a height of production, craft fairs and education at the tertiary and non-formal levels. British glass was making its influence known from Venice to Beijing. Due to a lack in investment, the glass art sector has been devastated and has seen the closure of university programmes, craft schools, and production centres and galleries. When I think of how well the Australian glass sector is going, I also realise that without a serious commitment from the federal art strategy, the risk is significant.

I support the three asks made by the Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC) network in their submission to this consultation: a 10-year workforce development plan that addresses skills and training shortages for craftspeople and designers; the establishment of a dedicated craft and design structure within Creative Australia, with its own mandate to advocate for the sector, develop funding pathways, and coordinate across government; and an export and tourism development strategy that positions Australian makers in international markets.