

National Cultural Policy Submission

1472742

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I'm an actor and singer, currently living in [REDACTED] and working professionally in Australia across stage and screen for the past 15 years.

I'm grateful for this opportunity to contribute to the National Cultural Policy, it's important that artists remain central in decisions which affect our livelihood and the culture of our nation.

Since having my daughter 18 months ago, my relationship to the industry has shifted drastically. The financial instability of freelance arts work and just how little the government understands what we do has never been more evident. As a primary caregiver, I have not found the hours needed to complete my submission for the Parenting Payment through Centrelink, mainly because the information required as a freelancer is almost impossible to provide. Ireland has shown us what economic and social benefits may be gained from introducing a Universal Basic Income for artists: notably, for every €1 invested, they found a €1.39 return in societal value.

Along the financial lines, there is scope for the federal government to fund arts in the same way as sport. Both are an important part of our national identity and bring huge economic returns, why should they not be treated with the same respect at a governmental level? There is a massive divide between independent or amateur work and the professional sector and I have seen wonderful artists leave the industry before "making it" into the professional sector because there is no clear pipeline and no support for those unpaid hours.

Why not develop something akin to the HORIZON policy and implement a 10-year National Arts and Cultural Strategy? Young people deserve to pursue a career in the arts without the social bias that it's nothing more than a "hobby". And those of us who have stuck it out, deserve a robust industry with plenty of opportunities to earn a living.

I believe there needs to be a restructuring of theatre systems around how new Australian work is produced. In my experience, largely in musical theatre, we don't have the structures in place that they do in the USA or the UK to support building great works that can go on to have further life on world stages. For example, after only a handful of development rounds, state theatre companies are staging entirely new works after a "regular" rehearsal period, and audiences are expecting a fully realised production. We need something similar to the out-of-town tryout/off-Broadway season. Perhaps incentivising companies to do an initial season at one of the many theatres outside metropolitan areas would be a good start?

Lastly, our First Nations artists need more support. The federal government should provide dedicated investment and support for a First

Nations performing arts commissioning system. This would enable dedicated commissioning pathways for works of audience scale and

cultural scale, as well as investment in long term creation and development processes.

It's so important to provide real and long lasting support for independent First Nations artists and emerging companies, as

well as writers, dramaturgs, choreographers and producers. These are our stories, Australian stories, and the artists who tell them must be supported.

Thank you.