

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Organisation

KINGS Artist-Run



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

As an organisation that has spent over two decades uplifting emerging and early-career artists, this review presents a critical opportunity to address many urgent structural issues facing the sector: the increasing inaccessibility to cultural practice for young people; the inequity faced by small organisations within current funding structures; the continued precarity and devaluation of creative labour; as well as the prevalence of censorship and racism within the arts.

The review of the National Cultural Policy presents an opportunity to build a more equitable and sustainable cultural sector, providing artists with the right to dignified work in remuneration which acknowledges the labour of artistic practice; support for organisations to continue this work moving into the future; and dedicated pathways for practitioners from low socio-economic backgrounds.

The cultural landscape of Australia is built on the artists, organisations, and programs which cultivate the next generation of creative workers. Without these supportive networks, the consequences of disinvestment in emerging practices and the small organisations which sustain these ripple through the sector in cumulative and long-term effects. To echo our friends at Next Wave, “these would be felt in diminished artistic diversity, weakened workforce pipelines, reduced cultural participation, and the loss of future sector leaders.”

These challenges, with the right infrastructural support, can be collectively addressed. A return to separated funding streams based on organisational size as a direct investment specifically for supporting emerging practitioners, structured paid industry development programs to create learning pathways, supported operational costs separate to project funding in order to more sustainably support artistic practice as well as the labour which facilitates this, and critically, income protection and collectively negotiated insurance schemes for artists, arts workers, and creative organisations.

The IHRA definition of antisemitism must also be removed from all arts, cultural and educational institutions and be replaced with the UN Core Stance of Values: “The UN asserts that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, without distinction of any kind, including race or ethnic origin. It maintains that no state, institution, group, or individual should make any discrimination in human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

In order to create strong cultural infrastructure, the arts must remain independent and free from political interference, and be supported to undertake development, alongside public-facing outcomes, in order to ensure the sustainability of the industry.

Together with cross-portfolio investment across the arts, tourism, education and health, alongside a more sustained and diverse approach to measuring cultural participation, we believe this renewed National Cultural Policy could rebuild our fractured arts infrastructure. That rather than watch our ecology lose future generations of artists, we could build a system where they would continuously thrive.

KINGS Artist-Run urges the government to recognise the importance of artistic practice as labour, to support the development of emerging practitioners and the organisations which support them, and to ensure equitable access to the cultural practice for artists from every background.

To invest in our emerging artistic landscape is to invest in our cultural future.