

Pillar 5 - Engaging the Audience

Making sure our stories connect with people at home and abroad.

The government is seeking views on how cultural policy can respond to changing audience behaviours, discovery pathways and modes of engagement, including innovation in presentation and discovery to sustain participation, as well as marketing and distribution so Australian creativity continues to inspire, include and connect.

National Accessibility and Engagement Standards

Australia has an opportunity to strengthen how audiences experience culture through clearer accessibility standards and improved digital engagement.

A national accessibility and engagement guide could be developed in partnership with cultural institutions, local government, and state and territory governments.

The guide could support nationally consistent standards across galleries, museums, libraries, theatres, heritage sites, festivals, and public events.

Physical Accessibility and Visitor Experience

The guide could include practical standards for:

- step-free access
- signage and wayfinding
- accessible seating, lighting, and acoustics
- multilingual communication support

National guidance could support:

- Quick Response (QR) code URLs displaying trusted weblinks rather than default third party URLs
- mobile-friendly websites
- readable labels and plain-language communication
- captions, transcripts, and audio description
- accessible online exhibition content
- consistent formatting and navigation standards

This would help improve usability, reduce confusion, and strengthen long-term public engagement.

2028 Papal Visit to Australia

The anticipated 2028 Papal Visit presents a major opportunity to highlight the important work across Australia's cultural, creative and event sectors, and to recognise the substantial number of skilled workers involved in delivering major public and broadcast events.

The event could also be used to trial improved accessibility, communication, and broadcasting, including:

- multilingual live commentary audio channels
- enhanced television captioning and live-stream accessibility
- improved audio and visual description services

There is also an opportunity to improve the richness and clarity of closed captions.

Rather than relying on generic captions such as “[music],” broadcasts could provide more descriptive and informative captions that better communicate atmosphere, musical style and ceremonial context.

The event could also demonstrate how accessibility features can improve engagement for all audiences, including older Australians, tourists, and multilingual communities.

Lessons from the 2028 Papal Visit could help inform preparations for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, particularly in relation to broadcasting uplift and visitor experience.

AI and Accessibility Innovation

Simple AI tools could assist cultural institutions with accessibility testing and audience engagement, including:

- Digital Service Standard 2.0
- W3C Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 3.0
- signage clarity
- caption readability
- information layout testing
- broken URL link checkers

AI Conference Opportunities

Future AI conferences, creative technology forums, and accessibility events hosted in Australia could showcase Australian music, broadcasting, film, design, heritage and creative industries alongside accessibility innovation.

This would support collaboration between the arts sector, universities, broadcasters, tourism bodies, technology companies, and cultural institutions while promoting Australian creative work internationally.