

National Cultural Policy Submission

1472899

Public

Individual

Paul Cordeiro



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am pleased to support a national arts strategy, and National Cultural Policy. The Arts are central to our culture and is key in shaping our national identity. My name is Paul Cordeiro, I am an immigrant, and I trained professionally as a dancer and choreographer. I have been performing for four decades, and over time have evolved. My artistic expression developed to include singing and storytelling. I consider myself and independent artist, and have moved in both the independent theatre scene and commercial dance work, musicals and cabaret. As a self determined artist, I don't necessarily fit neatly into funding criteria. I would define myself as a hybrid or blended artist. Strongly movement based, bust singing and speaking on stage. I teach dance and yoga as my main source of income. I have worked in night clubs, in queer dance parties, musicals, theatres in all major cities nationally, as well as touring regionally for months at a time. I am now in my mid sixties, and having a renaissance in my own creativity, and I have been successful, performing with Moira Finucane for almost two decades, at the Sydney Opera House and major Festivals, Carriage Works for Club Bent in 2023 and for CAAP Works in Progress in Sydney 2025 and in Queer Venue Qtopia. I find one of the biggest hurdles set by arts organisations is to define yourself in one easy label? I often read submissions and feel discouraged, when it says dance or theatre or using technology, or experimental. I have also more recently been told that if my show is using a male composer, male director and myself, that it would be harder to program, which i found startling, disregarding relationships that I have formed over time and preference to collaborate. The majority of all the work I'm involved in, women outnumber men. Would there be the same pressure if it was an all women show? Presently I am currently collaborating with a female musician.

One of the predicaments I found myself in for the first twenty years of my career, was choosing to do more commercial dance work, over contemporary dance, which guaranteed pay and opportunities compared to the scarcity of fully funded contemporary dance work. I created and was involved in many Asian theatre works, performing at Belvoir Street Theatre and the Performance Space. As an independent Artist instead of constantly writing Grant submissions, I seek out opportunities from theatres and festivals that invite works, or commission me as an artist and my work. Yes I would still have to submit but have a higher rate of success. However I would truly welcome some help in applying for grant submissions. Plus apart from being paid properly, there is support with technical and space, marketing and publicity. I want to work nationally and internationally, but I intend to keep contributing to the art scene and community here in Sydney my home. As and independent artist I totally support all the pillars of the Revive Policy, however the ones that I strongly relate to are A Place for Every Story, Centrality of the Artist, strong cultural infrastructure, and Engaging the Audience. One of my suggestions may be collaborating and leading workshops as a guest artist, and mentoring. Another suggestion is for longer term support of artists works, not for one stage in the process, but to support artists who have a proven track record of creating work and performing. Give them both financial support and extended time up to a year to develop and show work.