

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual

Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

It's an incredible opportunity to contribute to the redevelopment of the National Policy. Having a National Arts Strategy is important for creative practitioners and audiences and is key that Australia continues to have strategies that centre the importance and impact of the arts to our national identity.

That all sounds great on paper, because while I write this, I find myself homeless with no fixed address and even if I was in a position to entertain the Australian dream to own a home – what bank would lend money to a playwright?

As a playwright, I experience many challenges, for starters - it can take years to write a play, meaning that I have contributed thousands of hours of unpaid labour into my writing and although I have had recent success through the recognition of awards, it's worth noting that I have been writing for the past thirty years. It's also worth noting that while I have had some recognition for my accomplishments, I am neither published nor have my plays been produced on stage.

Another challenge is that I write my plays in isolation and yet plays are intended to be performed by actors. And the biggest challenge as a playwright is that I am creatively restricted because many theatre companies frankly don't have the funds for large casts or large productions meaning I need to keep this in mind when I'm writing.

My recommendations are as follows:

Pillar: Centrality of the Artist

Recommendation: Fund a pipeline for artist to go from award recognition to a fully realised stage production.

To really support the artist as worker and celebrating artists as creators, funding bodies could continue to acknowledge an artist's work through awards and recognition, however this celebrates the artists on paper leaving the artist to connect and fend for themselves to realise their work as a production, so unless the acknowledgments lead to further career pathways such as creating and supporting the work towards a pipeline from the recognition through to development and a realised staged production - then the playwright can go from being a celebrated writer on paper to one who has access to a career path in the real working world with other real working creative practitioners.

Pillar: Centrality of the Artist

Recommendation: Fund a program for artists that places them in a national training and employment program.

The program would provide artists with intensive, industry-focused training alongside professional development, mentoring, and portfolio support. Participants would then receive structured career assistance, including networking opportunities, theatre partnerships, internships, and placement support to help transition directly into sustainable creative employment. The initiative would bridge the gap between artistic talent and long-term economic participation in the creative industries.