

National Cultural Policy Submission

1473622

Public and anonymous

Organisation



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I strongly support the direction of Revive: A place for every story, a story for every place and its recognition that culture, storytelling and identity are deeply connected. The policy's emphasis on First Nations voices is especially important. Living and working alongside First Nations peoples in Alice Springs has shown me how central storytelling is to culture, connection and community. In Central Australia, stories are inseparable from Country, language and lived experience, and any national cultural policy must continue to place First Nations storytelling at its heart.

I also strongly agree with the policy's broader focus on place and story. Australia has unique stories that deserve to be told in our own voices and from our own landscapes and communities. Artists are often the people who carry and articulate these stories, helping communities see themselves reflected through art, music, literature and performance.

However, I believe the policy should more explicitly recognise the role of cinema and film exhibition as essential cultural infrastructure. Film is one of the most accessible and widely shared forms of contemporary storytelling, and cinemas are places where communities gather to experience stories together in a collective way.

Take for example the Alice Springs Cinema. As the only cinema within more than 1,000 kilometres, it is far more than an entertainment venue. It is a shared civic and cultural space where Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians come together, where school groups, families, elders, remote visitors and young people participate in cultural life together.

The cinema also provides access to Australian films, documentaries, multicultural programming and film festivals that reflect the diversity of the local community and connect Alice Springs audiences to the wider national cultural conversation. In communities where distance and isolation can create cultural disconnection, cinemas play a vital role in ensuring people remain connected to shared Australian stories and experiences.

If national cultural policy values Australian storytelling, it must also value and support the places where Australians experience those stories together.

For this reason, I believe film (as the medium) and cinemas (as the institution) should be formally recognised within Australia's cultural infrastructure framework, particularly in regional and remote communities where cinemas serve an essential cultural, social and civic role beyond their commercial function.