

**National Cultural Policy Submission**

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

The nation is defined by its culture. Protecting and preserving that culture is therefore essential to Australia's survival and development for present and future generations. I am surprised the new Australian National Cultural Policy is not more tightly bounded and makes no explicit reference to a Cultural Heritage Conservation Policy. Cultural heritage comprises people, collections, heritage buildings, and sites; much of it is aging and in need of active protection. It is the responsibility of government and the nation to safeguard this heritage.

In particular, the policy should emphasise closer collaboration between educational institutions and cultural organisations to share conservation resources and expertise. Such partnerships are vital for delivering highlevel, handson conservation training for future conservators. Cultural institutions can and should show leadership by establishing a Structured National Heritage Conservation Internship Program. In close partnership with universities, and through direct involvement in the education of conservators, these institutions could promote conservation across the community while ensuring collections are properly maintained and treated over time—regardless of changing fashions or efficiencydriven shifts in collection management and policy.

While it is crucial to recognise and preserve First Nations cultures, it is equally important to conserve the cultural contributions of generations of native Australians and migrants who have contributed greatly to shape Australia's artistic and cultural landscape over the past 238 years.