

**Submission to the National Cultural Policy by MusicSA**

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*This submission can be made public.*

MusicSA is the peak advocacy body for the South Australian contemporary music industry. Funded by the Government of South Australia through the Music Development Office, MusicSA is a NFP arts organisation with a 25-year history that delivers on the core business of

- advocating for and supporting the contemporary music sector in South Australia
- identifying and delivering industry and professional development opportunities for artists, businesses and venues operating across the contemporary music sector
- identifying and delivering projects, programs and strategic initiatives that support, grow and enable the sector

MusicSA is part of the Australian Music Industry Network (AMIN), represented by the peak contemporary music industry bodies in each state and territory: Music Victoria, MusicNSW, WAM, QMusic, Music NT, Music Tasmania, MusicSA and MusicACT. AMIN advocates on behalf of local and state sectors at a national level and works collaboratively with, and provides advice to, various national bodies, businesses and agencies across policy, strategic development, programs and industry development.

**MusicSA responses to the 5 pillars:**

**First Nations**

At present there is not an independent representative national arts body that supports the needs of First Nations artists, arts professionals and audiences. First Nations artists require a body that represents their culture and interests across music, theatre, dance and visual arts.

Additionally, the Australian music industry would be better served by an independent First Nations body that supports the needs of First Nations musicians, industry professionals, businesses and audiences, across all facets of the industry.

**A Place for Every Story**

Australian contemporary music is severely under-represented in regional Australia. Most national music bodies and agencies are centralised along the eastern seaboard. A lack of cohesive policy and program frameworks results in many regional communities being bypassed by contemporary music engagement, and programs and strategic initiatives can lack the scale and scope to deliver broad-based benefits in regional areas.

The investment in, and activation of, thoughtful and strategic contemporary music opportunities in regional areas in South Australia will drive regional participation in music and culture, support the development of regional artists, audiences and venues, build connected creative communities, and grow regional tourism and economic development.

MusicNSW recently implemented a new Regional Touring Network (RTN) to assist artists and industry to tour along and around the eastern seaboard. The RTN is an innovative and clever model that can easily be adopted and replicated by other states to build stronger regional touring pathways for musicians, and with relatively small investment, both bricks-and mortar and outdoor open regional venues can be improved and activated as live music venues for touring artists and communities.

### The Centrality of the Artist

South Australians are regularly told by envious visiting arts professionals that SA has a 'certain vibe', innovative ways of making and creating new and original work, and ways of connecting and sharing that is different from our eastern counterparts.

South Australia is affordable for artists, with a strong and vibrant creative community and a highly innovative music community of talented artists, performers and songwriters. Without the eastern states' businesses, labels, managers and promoters, the local contemporary community maps out its own way of doing business and champions its own successes in sustainable and measurable ways.

The state-based music bodies, such as MusicSA, are the only organisations in Australia that represent and advocate for music artists without vested interests. MusicSA supports artist development across all career stages and drives industry development within holistic, sustainable and equitable frameworks without competing or commercial imperatives.

Australia desperately needs a diverse and entrepreneurial cultural policy that not only supports artists and organisations in the making and creation of new and original work, but also supports emerging commercial creative enterprise through a pipeline to sustainable independence.

### Strong Institutions

The state and territory music organisations that make up the AMIN body are critical music infrastructure in Australia and sit firmly at the junction of national and state activity and engagement. National organisations and agencies often don't fully realise regional engagement and access remits - for many reasons, while MusicSA and the other state and territory music organisations know exactly what is happening across each state and territory, and deliver localised and shaped industry, professional and audience development. The national music industry would benefit exponentially from a state/national co-funded model that supports the AMIN organisations to collaboratively and collectively increase outcomes for musicians, industry professionals and businesses.

It is imperative for a high-functioning national cultural policy to implement data collection and mapping processes to identify successful programs and initiatives that exist across Australia. This will ensure success can be modelled, adapted and replicated efficiently and removes the occurrence of double-ups and inefficiencies.

The music industry is impacted by staff shortages and the exodus of skills and expertise from the sector, which will merge in the near future with reduced vocational and tertiary education pathways in arts and culture industries, creating a perfect storm for the contemporary music industry and the wrap-around industries that work with it. Arts and cultural industries and sectors need, as a high priority, pathways and pipelines that will re-boot employment numbers and skills development in arts and cultural industries, demonstrating that successful careers in the music industry and the creative industries are both achievable and viable.

### Reaching the Audience

COVID-19 has changed the behaviour of audiences and how we access and consume art and culture. Audience numbers attending live music have not bounced back to pre-pandemic levels and only time will tell whether they will, or whether audience patterns have permanently shifted. This has a fundamental flow-on impact for the industry from artists, to venues, to ancillary and wrap-around industries.

Adelaide and South Australia is increasingly missing out on national and international touring acts and large-scale music festivals and events - for many complex reasons. MusicSA has an important role and place in addressing and correcting this imbalance and working with government and the national industry to rebuild relationships with touring promoters, agents and producers. Nuanced cultural policy that highlights the increasingly important role of, and palette for, cultural tourism and visitor engagement in cultural activity, will be a game-changer for arts and culture, economic development and jobs.

MusicSA produces and presents a month-long open access live music festival, called Umbrella Festival, that showcases live music in all its forms. Building on Adelaide's mantle as a designated UNESCO City of Music, Umbrella Festival is just one example of how arts and tourism can drive regional engagement and economic outcomes for communities and audiences – imagine the staging of major festivals and music events at places such as Streaky Bay, Flinders Ranges and Kangaroo Island!

### **What else MusicSA would like to see in a National Cultural Policy**

- MusicSA is a signatory to the Australian Contemporary Music Industry Joint Submission, and specifically supports the call for the activation of a 'Music Australia' body, a national contemporary music government agency that drives policy, strategy, support and investment, which is developed from a process of co-design and thorough consultation with industry.
- MusicSA is a signatory to the AMIN National Cultural Policy Submission, specifically the noting of the imminent release of the Music Industry Review and support that will be needed to reform leadership and workplace safety, and a National Access Accreditation charter for music artists, audiences and venues.
- MusicSA calls for a national Cultural Policy that connects authentically and intrinsically across Government portfolios, collectively enhances Arts, Culture and the Creative Industries, and that provides a long-term vision and dedicated support for Australian contemporary music.