

# National Cultural Policy Submission

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Submitted: On behalf of a not-for-profit arts organisation  
On behalf of a for-profit arts business  
As an individual

## **What challenges and opportunities do you see in the pillar or pillars most relevant to you? Feel free to respond to any or all pillars:**

### **First Nations**

As a non-First Nations arts worker, access to First Nations cultural capability training is an issue.

On the Cultural Competence Continuum, I would say many organisations are at Cultural Pre-Competence – best and sincere intentions, but ultimately the result is tokenism.

There is a huge desire to do better. Particularly for artist-run / NFP orgs, largely run by volunteers, they are caught in a limbo between wanting to do better, but not having funds to pay for appropriate training.

Seeking support from First Nations artist and arts worker advisers in a volunteer-run environment is also fraught when there is no money to pay for those services.

I would like to see a fund set up for NFPs to access appropriate cultural training.

### **The Centrality of the Artist**

As an arts worker – at a commercial gallery in Naarm/Melbourne, and a volunteer board member at an artist-run initiative – I support, promote and advocate for artists.

The following is a summary of feedback from a range of contemporary artists on what they need in order to live, work and thrive in a vibrant arts ecology and as part of a sector that contributes \$14.7billion economic benefit to Australia.

- Restoration and expansion of arts funding after a decade of cuts and underfunding. Think of the opportunity cost in making life harder for arts

orgs! We can do so much with a tiny bit of money – imagine what we could do without having to struggle to pay the rent every month.

- Locked-in increases to arts funding to recognise the costs of inflation on materials, transport, labour etc
- Recognise arts practice as valuable work. Think of artists as primary producers
- or manufacturers – artists are one of the few groups in this country that actually produce material items of cultural and economic value! Give artists the subsidies and support that are afforded to other primary producers and exporters.
- At minimum, a Universal Basic Income to support artists to develop a sustainable long-term career
- Prioritise direct funding to artists for primary artwork production and day-to-day practice.
- Recognise that artist funds are often directed towards non-artwork making expenses: framing, freight, materials, exhibition photography, hire fees to commercial AV companies, studio overheads etc. These businesses thrive while artists lose money. Artists need a UBI just to stay afloat.
- Artist-run spaces and not for profit arts organisations are the cornerstones of emerging artist opportunities. These organisations need stable organisational funding, separate to project funding, to secure crucial opportunities for artists and curators to establish their practice beyond education institutions. ARIs expand audiences, develop the careers of curators and writers, offer interns and volunteers professional experience, support diversity, equality and equity. Arts orgs waste so much time struggling to financially survive, instead of devoting energy towards fulfilling their mission!
- An Equipment facility which offers heavily discounted, high quality equipment to artists is sorely needed. Or a fund which allows artists to help buy their own or hire it from others. Equipment hire costs often take up most of a budget, instead of going into making the artwork!
- Fellowships for visual artists that are spread over 2 years, modelled on the Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship, eg/ \$160,000 over 2 years. Enable artists to realise their most ambitious work.
- Think big - support project funding for international self-directed artist residencies, research, travel, artist's books/catalogues to broaden artist career opportunities internationally. Artists need to meet influential arts personnel face to face. Support outreach to curators, biennials, art fairs and institutions all over the world.
- Incentivise and foster a culture of collecting: educate, socially reward patronage and collecting with tax incentives.
- Maintain incentives for corporate/office collections.

- Offer incentives to include contemporary art in superannuation funds.
- Construction incentives – require a percentage of the budget for public art. – Increase and regulate resale royalties.
- Offer export funding for commercial galleries to showcase artists internationally at art fairs
- Creative villages – subsidise rent / costs to adapt languishing shopfronts / buildings for creative use. The Collingwood Arts Precinct in inner Melbourne can be a model for expansion.
- Include artist practitioners on the boards and/or trustee councils of publicly funded organisations
- Funding for a regional artist residency and schools program – artist incursions at schools to support art education and practice, combined with residencies for research and development.

### **Strong Institutions**

- Support more international joint acquisition programs akin to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney and Tate International program which places the work of Australian artists into major museum collections outside Australia.
- Funding for museum architecture and buildings is great – but regional and state museums should have an increased budget for acquisition of local contemporary artists and an elevated program of exhibitions for living contemporary artists.

### **Reaching the Audience**

- Lead from the top: we want to see visible government support for contemporary art and artists and promotion of those artists and artworks. Be proud of us!
- Capitalise on audiences hungry for art experiences who are visiting the state museums by providing marketing and promotions support and funding to the entire visual arts ecology, particularly NFPs and Artist-Run-Initiatives.