

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Submitted: On behalf of a not-for-profit arts organisation; As an artist; 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

-Collaboration between First Nations people and non-indigenous people should be welcomed and promoted, but must be supported.

A Place for Every Story

-To ensure Australian stories are heard, increase TV and radio quotas.

-We need regional hubs, autonomous or attached to institutions, staffed to allow open access and containing exhibition space, performance spaces, meeting spaces. A working example is the growth of medical multipurpose facilities in remote areas.

The Centrality of the Artist

-We need just rewards for the artist. The artist is the primary producer. Without the artist there is only administration.

-If the artist is at the centre, then every other person is/ must be a support person.

-Arts projects should be based on artist' practice as well as curatorial whim.

-Artists should be as well rewarded and supported as administrators. (Remember the lockdowns)

-Creativity is to be valued as an important skill and artist valued as skilled workers.

-All programs should leave behind an enhanced skill set in the region. Workshops, talks, traineeships create a legacy of knowledge and skills.

Strong Institutions

-Strong institutions come from strong small groups. If you want an orchestra, there must be a strong foundation of music training to support it. This is especially important in regional areas.

-Extend the capability of Australian students by re-instituting Humanities and Arts as important areas of study. Note that this pre-supposes that the purpose of education is to develop the ability to think, rather than the acquisition of job ready skills. This does not mean to down grade STEM, but rather to integrate these approaches to skills development.

-Restore TAFE Creative Industries so that the system returns to more than a trade skills institution.

-Creative hubs established in existing institutions e.g., Artist residences attached to Art galleries or conservatoriums.

Reaching the Audience

- Provide insurance for arts creators, especially public liability.
- Re-instate quotas for Australian content on TV.
- Use the tax system. Remember the boost to the Australian film industry in the 80s.
- Support touring programs that are not simply city-based organisations showing off in the bush. E.g., touring exhibitions or performances from regional areas go to other regional areas and capital cities.

Please tell us how each of the 5 pillars are important to you and your practice and why. Feel free to respond to any or all that are applicable to you:

First Nations

When I work with my indigenous friends I learn so much. They need avenues of access to the wider Australian audience. We need their knowledge.

A Place for Every Story

As a regional artist I tire of the city voice and long to hear from people who understand my world. Alongside this is the need to stay connected to the artworld beyond my reach.

The Centrality of the Artist

At the moment arts funding seems to mainly provide for a career path for arts administrators, especially those based in the big city institutions. Without artists there is no art. Without a just reward there are no artists. Without the artists there is no need for the administrators.

Strong Institutions

Institutions that are working well with their communities are important. A breadth of knowledge and facilities is an important resource for artists. But institutions that are essentially vanity projects for well-connected people are damaging to the development of artists with credible stories.

Reaching the Audience

-In regional areas there is a great tradition of receiving city based artists with gratitude. There is little reciprocal activity.

-Access to an audience validates an artist's practice. Without a regional voice, regional artists suspect we have been told our place in the cultural hierarchy.

Are there any other things that you would like to see in a National Cultural Policy?

-A strong place for the arts in the national curriculum, supported by appropriate training for educators i.e.

Training in the purpose of art and creative thinking, not modest tech skills and mandatory projects.

-A clear statement that an artist is not produced by simply accumulating technical skills and is not the result of the good luck to have been born with talent. An artist is a person who uses those skills to produce work which reveals an understanding of the world for themselves and for their audience.