

National Cultural Policy Submission

Anonymous

Submitted: On behalf of an organisation with arts-components (e.g. community organisation, tourism, venue, health, education etc); On behalf of government or government body; As a worker/professional in an industry who uses arts (e.g. art therapist, tour guide); 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

There is a serious lack of education, support and resources for first nations people within the arts and cultural sector. From the perspective of art galleries and museums, until there are more first nations people working within the sector, their stories will never have the opportunity to be told correctly. They are currently being told by white men or not at all. There needs to be more room for first nations stories to be told as they should be told – rather than as Europeans want to tell them.

A Place for Every Story

There needs to be more opportunities for diverse cultures to be engaged within the arts sector in order to offer and present different stories and perspectives. Cultural stories should only be told by those cultures or those with authority and every voice should be listened to and respected.

The Centrality of the Artist

Artists should be seen as professionals. Their work is essential to wellbeing and cultural diversity of the country and its people. Artists need more resources, more financial support and more educational opportunities.

Strong Institutions

Western Australia currently has over 300 museums – at least 70% of these are volunteer run and do not have the staff, expertise or finances to look after Australia's national collections. Now is the time for the government to recognise the importance of museum and art gallery collections as culturally significant reflections on our country and its development. Money, training and resources must be increased and disseminated across the entire country – not just the big institutions. Western Australia currently has NO higher education for people to get into museum or gallery studies meaning our cultural institutions will disappear. The decision to increase the cost of arts degrees must be reversed immediately. Arts and culture should be valued and recognised as vital to Australia and its people. Art and culture must be recognised as being beneficial to the economy – it generates revenue, provides jobs and has been proven to be positive for people's wellbeing.

Reaching the Audience

Steps have been taken to digitise and promote Australia's collections, but more can be done to promote and strengthen this further. Proper investment in the digitisation of collections will help ensure more people are able to access the collections and the stories the collections can tell will live on for longer.

Please tell us how each of the 5 pillars are important to you and your practice and why.

First Nations

I want there to be greater opportunity for first nations people to tell their stories and be heard on equal footing.

A Place for Every Story

I want there to be greater opportunity for all people of all backgrounds to tell their stories and be heard on equal footing.

The Centrality of the Artist

Without artists, the world would be a dull place. I want Australia to get up to speed and embrace the arts and our artists. So many Australians go to Europe and spend time queuing to see the Mona Lisa – why don't we respect art in the same way here? Art and Culture should be equal to sport in our cultural priorities.

Strong Institutions

Our university system is letting down the progress and growth of the arts and cultural sectors. Money is given in token gestures to the larger institutions while smaller museums and galleries flounder. Not enough is being done at the top to show Australia that art and culture matters.

Reaching the Audience

Arts and cultural institutions are being told they must preserve and digitise collections for future generations but are not being supported with the extensive resources required to undertake this. Digitisation costs a lot of money and most museums and galleries are being held together on shoe strings. Investment and education is required.

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

Recognition that art and culture matters and it is staffed by professionals who deserve salaries that align with any other profession. It is not just a 'fun, nice to have.' It is critical to the health and wellbeing of our community and helps tell the stories of our country.