

National Cultural Policy Submission

Kelly Aspinall [REDACTED]

I make this submission as an individual, and as a volunteer worker in the youth arts sector.

I have been engaged in the Youth Arts sector for the past 6 years as part of Jopuka Productions on the Central Coast of NSW. I am on the board, and hold the role of General Manager. I also form part of the welfare team, who oversee rehearsals and the general wellbeing of our young people. It is from these positions and experience that I write my submission. I have seen how important the arts is to our young people, and I believe the following points will only enhance their experience, and the longevity of the arts in general. Our young people need the creative outlet that arts programs bring outside of their formal education, the feeling of being represented and having the ability to tell their stories through art is vital to their sense of belonging and to their mental health. I believe security of the arts is paramount as is the National Cultural Policy, and youth should be represented in that policy in their own right.

I support the existing pillars at they stand :

- First Nations
- A Place for Every Story
- Centrality of the Artist
- Strong Institutions
- Reaching the Audience.

In addition I support the follow 4 points recommendations put forward by Arena Theatre Company, Polyglot Theatre, Shopfront Arts Co-op, St Martin's Youth Theatre and ATYP:

1. Include “Young People's Engagement with the Arts” as a priority of the National Cultural Plan.
2. Establish an ongoing, dedicated funding stream for Young People's Engagement with the Arts for companies whose core business is young people's engagement, administered by the Australia Council for the Arts;
3. Establish targeted, cross-department streams of funding for Young People's Engagement to work with Health and Mental Health, Employment, Youth Justice, Regional Youth and Education – co-managed by the Australia Council;
4. Establish Advisory Boards that represent the diversity of young Australians, managed independently, as ongoing standing committees for the Australia Council for the Arts and the Minister for the Arts.

And add to those further with the inclusion of the following recommendations below.

5. Establish an ongoing, dedicated funding stream for Young People's Engagement with the Arts for companies whose core business is young people's engagement in regional and rural Australia, administered by Regional Arts Australia;

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6. Establish at least TWO national “flagship” youth arts bodies, namely Australian Theatre For Young People, and Carclew, and fund them as national priority along with the other flagship companies.
7. Discontinue the use of the Modified Monash Model when it comes to arts funding distribution, as it incorrectly zones many regional arts bodies as metro arts bodies due to their proximity to health services.

Enactment of these 7 points, will aid and improve all five pillars being targeted in the cultural plan, and greatly improve arts access to young Australians, and those supporting those young people.

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