

National Cultural Policy Submission

Anonymous

Submitted: As an artist; As an individual

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

As a practising writer and artist in this country, and a child of immigrants, I want recognition of the centrality of First Nations stories to Australian arts and culture, and for First Nations leadership in arts and culture to be supported and heard by Government.

The Centrality of the Artist

Artists and writers are essential workers. The creative work we contribute is essential to the wellbeing of our society, to our sense of ourselves as a nation, and to the economy. This work should be recognised. I have a day job to sustain my creative practice. Most writers do. Artists and writers have been denigrated or ignored by successive Governments for so long that it doesn't surprise me when I hear of someone who has given up their practice because they cannot afford to live and create work (ie contribute to society). This diminishing of our work is *exhausting*. Justifying again and again why we produce books and artwork for the benefit of society demeans us all. We are artists, we are writers, we are workers, we contribute to social and cultural life and help it to flourish. People consume and want more of the objects and the words we produce. It's about time our work (and creative lives) were respected by supporting and funding all working artists and writers.

Strong Institutions

My debut book took nearly a decade to write. It would not have taken as long if more support had been available. As it was, it was written with the (limited) financial support from institutions such as Writers Victoria, the Copyright Agency and Creative Victoria. This money gave me some time to think and write, complete a manuscript,

to find an agent and eventually a publisher. Restoring and increasing Australia Council funding for independent artists and writers and small-medium organisations would provide a massive boost to creative work in this country.

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

I want to see an investment in long-term ways to fund and support working artists and writers. A basic income would be a start. Ireland are running a *Basic Income for the Arts* pilot scheme to support creative practice and to address the financial instability faced by many working in the arts. Look closely at its success and shortcomings, and trial it for working writers and artists in Australia.

Also, a scheme where writers and artists are employed in educational settings, in local councils, reading initiatives, libraries, and in health care would benefit both creative practitioners and non-artist/writers in the community.