

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Submitted: 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:

A Place for Every Story

The NCP should acknowledge the cultural value in empowering communities to tell their own stories and explore concepts of local relevance, build capacity in the regions, and expand local audiences. The NCP should ensure that regions that are able to produce their own original quality content and engage audiences are given preference for funding over metropolitan organisations that are seeking funding to produce content on behalf of audiences in regional areas.

Strong Institutions

The NCP should recognise and challenge the funding inequity that continues to see access to arts and culture for regional audiences funded almost exclusively through council rates, while access for metro-based audiences is funded almost exclusively through taxes (which regional audiences contribute to).

Research published in 2020 by Museums and Galleries Queensland and the Public Galleries Association of Victoria for the National Public Galleries Alliance, demonstrated that 51% of arts and cultural organisations nationally are run by local councils. Nevertheless, funding decisions at the Federal and State level currently privilege metro-based organisations. There is broad acknowledgement across the sector that local councils do not offer the governance surety that organisations run by independent Boards do. In tandem with addressing this funding inequity, the NCP should commit to improving governance standards across the sector, providing guidance and structures that encourage local councils to adopt best practice structures.

The NCP should acknowledge that quality cultural products cost more to produce in rural and regional locations. Equitable funding frameworks should allow loadings for rural and regional areas to address this cost imbalance in order to sustain quality venues, quality (original) content, and develop a quality cultural workforce in regional Australia.

The NCP should recognise that quality cultural products are able to be

produced outside of metropolitan areas and insist that this continues through policy and practice changes.

Reaching the Audience

Impact and reach should be considered when assessing an audience. Considering the *travel radius* or *catchment* of the organisation is more practical than using political boundaries, (such as LGAs or State). There is an opportunity to address the funding inequity that exists between metropolitan and regional/rural cultural institutions by acknowledging catchments and access. Many regional cultural institutions have higher per capita attendance than metro-based institutions that persistently receive higher funding from State and Federal governments. In particular, cross-border communities should be acknowledged as being disadvantaged in funding as they can often be funded only by governments serving a defined political boundary (ie: State) rather than the actual population within the catchment of the museum (travel radius).

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

While the policy needs to maintain broad principles, it needs to be practical enough to be able to be interpreted on the ground and applied in a variety of settings (rural/regional versus metropolitan, organisations and individuals, for profit and not-for-profit)

The NCP should look beyond arts policies and portfolios to ensure arts and culture is considered across all government portfolios. The NCP scope should see an examination of the ways in which policy settings in other portfolios impact the work of artists, the sustainability of cultural organisations, and the production of cultural value in Australia.