

# National Cultural Policy Submission

Tom Patterson

Submitted on behalf of 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:**

The pillars identified are good. In addition, I would suggest an overarching statement that simply states the purpose of the policy. Maybe something like:

*The Cultural Policy aims to encourage the development of the arts and to facilitate access to art and culture for all Australians.*

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

The policy would also benefit from an understanding of the scale of investment in the arts in Australia. Currently, \$800 million is budgeted per year by the federal government ([Link](#)). This equates to about 60 cents per person per week.

The arguments for return on investment in the arts are valid, but the joy and solace of art could also be simply and easily shown. The movies, the books, the music, the festivals, the museums, the galleries. It would also be then easy for the individual to reflect how a small per person monetary increase could have a large impact on the quality and variety of art they consume.

I would like to advocate for the area of the arts that I work in, literature. Its importance can be shown by its place in the school curriculum. English is the only compulsory subject in the Higher School Certificate and it is principally taught through the study of literature. The Australian Curriculum provides a good summary of its value ([Link](#)). It should be noted that this supports each of the five pillars of the Cultural Policy.

Currently, \$4.7 million is allocated by the Australian Government to literature per year ([Link](#)). This is about a third of one cent per citizen per week. This is not an accurate reflection of its place in Australian life.

It should also be understood that although a grant to a writer goes to an individual, many people are included in the artistic project. As an example, the book I wrote involved interviewing over fifty people who were not traditionally involved in the production of art. Secondly, there is a team at the publisher that produces the book. Thirdly, the story is discussed in other mediums, such as radio, in print and at festivals. Among its other great values, literature is participative.

To summarise, I would like to thank the government for pursuing a cultural policy for Australia. This feels like a fresh start and an exciting time for all Australians.

Best Regards

Tom Patterson