

# National Cultural Policy Submission

**Name:** Maria Zann (Sevdah Soul duo)

**Submitted:** As an artist; as an individual

**What challenges and opportunities do you see in the pillar or pillars most relevant to you?**

## 1. First Nations

I would like to see every language group among First Nations peoples to play a key role in the cultural identity of their land and sea country and be well supported by other Australians. Fostering visual arts through workshops and peer mentoring.

I want to hear local language songs and stories of First Nations peoples on mainstream local ABC radio. I want to see cultural organisations support performances of First Nations peoples as mainstream acts, and paid accordingly.

## 2. A Place for Every Story

The rich folk culture of ethnic multicultural Australians needs to be represented in regional Australia. The ABC needs to bring back world music especially that with a locally relevant flavour, to promote local world music and ethnic music artists. A folk and ethnic radio channel would foster this. This would allow the stories of people who are part of this country to be recognised in all its diversity.

There are plenty of opportunities for classical and country and western commercial music already, don't expand the latter as it is an American inspired commercial format.

## 3. The Centrality of the Artist

Everyone has the capacity to be an artist and musical and dance expression are part of our group culture. Orally and causally transmitted music, song and dance has been undervalued by previous governments but this is the experience of the people. Encouraging artists and culturally significant individuals to share their experiences through workshoping and mentoring hands experience on to the community and fosters a richer culture. Jam sessions and dance workshops do this.

Paying a decent artists wage is critical to value culture. Minimum performance fees of \$250 per performance and standard fees will increase the way society values the artist.

Fostering traditional arts in the media via a folk or ethnic music on ABC radio would raise the profile of the artist as a significant cultural feature of our nation.

## 4. Strong Institutions

As a young person I value the ABC as a transmitter of culture. I no longer do. Reform the ABC to become more representative of the culture of our nation.

The National Library of Australia took little interest in the culture of refugees such as Bosnians or other Moslem minorities. Twenty years of history is missing from the archives. Widen the scope of the Library to be more inclusive of refugees and women's topics such as dance.

## 5. Reaching the Audience

Covid19 has severely impacted on my ability and that of my duo to reach an audience. There aren't any regional venues for traditional music and dance performances.

Reaching the audience another way, via blogs, internet social media and live zoom performances is an alternative but alas free, hence artists remain unpaid.

Artists need assistance in recording and promotion of their music or visual art online. Grants could help.

A radio station playing traditional content would assist in promoting performance and online music.

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

**1. First Nations**

Very important because they represent the core culture of the land

**2. A Place for Every Story**

Very important because currently multicultural Australians aren't heard

**3. The Centrality of the Artist**

Very important but in a folk culture there needs to be an opportunity for everyone to be an artist rather than only certain individuals.

**4. Strong Institutions**

Without strong institutions artists are on their own.

**5. Reaching the Audience**

Performance is for an audience so it's critical. However the audience should be participating rather than passively listening.