

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Submitted: On behalf of an organisation with arts-components (e.g. community organisation, tourism, venue, health, education etc)

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:

Strong Institutions

Tertiary educators train future teachers, writers, media workers, publishers, professionals, business people, politicians, and engaged citizens. Academic studies of literature serve to orient our understanding of our own society and other societies with which we are necessarily in open and ongoing conversation. Insights into the capacities and effects of language have shaped our culture and how we communicate with, influence and persuade one another. English, alongside Mathematics, is a compulsory course in primary and secondary education, and it is a pillar of our education system. Sophisticated literacy skills underpin Australia's future success and its ability to meet the UN Sustainability Goals. It is essential that the Jobs Ready Graduates package be reviewed and wound back in order to best support the future of Arts education in Australia.

Literature is a mainstay of the creative and cultural industries, which contributed \$63.5 billion to the Australian economy in 2016-17. It operates in the economy in many nuanced ways, since writers are "primary producers" of creative content. Our literary culture is cherished in Australia and is regarded as a major public good. The national cultural policy should prioritise an appropriate level of research funding to ensure that such literary culture continues and is further developed.

In order to protect academic freedom and expertise, the new national cultural policy should introduce policy and process regarding research funding that supports the Haldane principle. The Australian Research Council has a rigorous grant funding process, which includes the expertise of assessors and members of the College of Experts. The power of the minister to veto recommended projects based on their failure to meet, in the minister's opinion, the national interest test (NIT) needs to be limited to a veto to those funding decisions made by the ARC and NHMRC related to proven breaches of process as outlined in their respective Acts. Only 70% of recommended grants in literary studies were approved in the recent DP22 round (9 out of 13) as against 98.9% of projects overall. **On average, it is nearly thirty times more likely that a grant in literary studies will be refused than for other fields of research**

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

One of the core values of the Australian University Heads of English is inclusivity and diversity.

Strong Institutions

Please see above