

# National Cultural Policy Submission

## Artlink

Submitted: On behalf of a not-for-profit arts organisation

**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:**

## First Nations

- Invest in First Nations-led education, training, mentorship and skills development programs with small to medium arts organisations to support First Nations artists and writers
- Develop new employment opportunities through representation in middle-tier jobs, leadership roles, boards, and Aboriginal advisory groups
- Recognise that growing appetites and expectations around First Nations leadership means First Nations Elders, Board members, consultants and practitioners are being called on more and more – and they are often over stretched
- There is a small pool of individuals for a growing number of First Nation job opportunities – there needs to be greater alignment between individuals funded along pathways – and organisations (including small to medium) who provide the arts opportunity and professional development experience.

## A Place for Every Story

- Increase investment toward independent practitioners and the small-to medium (S2M) sector
- A new national Cultural Policy needs to work in concert with State, Territory and Local Governments that values regional, remote and metropolitan cultural producers
- Invest in developing an understanding of our diverse multicultural histories through storytelling in all media, as well as preserving, documenting and activating our collective archives

- Expand creative agency and generate authentic inclusion of physical, neurological and intergenerational diversity in the art world.

## **The Centrality of the Artist**

- Raise the allocation for arms-length peer-assessed arts funding for independent practitioners and small-to-medium organisations through the Australia Council and increase long term funding commitments.
- Ensure public funding is contingent on the payment of artists and artworkers at minimum awards and that funding levels of organisations support those payments, while retaining funding for the very unsexy core expenses to prevent burnout
- Introduce tax incentives for individuals and companies to buy and commission the work of Australian artists, writers and cultural producers
- Invest in existing small to medium arts organisations, including peak bodies, support agencies and service organisations to increase professional development programs for artists and arts workers
- Key artforms are core and mandatory in the national curriculum for children at all levels and that critical and rigorous writing about art and the arts ecosystem is included as a key artform
- Secondary schools are properly resourced with specialist arts teachers, writer and artist in residence programs and aligned across curriculum
- Provide resources for arts organisations at all scales in metro, regional and remote contexts to collaborate and develop teacher resources that align with curriculum
- Affordable housing and studio space for artists and writers is included in urban and regional master planning
- A funded and supported Writer and Artist in residence program is attached to private development projects, local councils and arts organisations and

resourced programs are ready to roll out in communities in need.

## **Strong Institutions**

- Expand the thinking definition of 'institutions' to include small to medium, community oriented, artist-led and First Nations cultural organisations
- Invest in the idea of fearless institutions which are informed and culturally safe, but not hidebound by bureaucracy, policy and process
- Strike a balance between where 'risk averse' and 'bold ideas' create a space for different perspectives and stories to co-exist
- Embrace excellence as a goal – in ideas and writing, conversations, collections, and all cultural productions and exchanges
- Implement policy that encourages large institutions to invest in working collaboratively with small to medium sector and independent artists

## **Reaching the Audience**

- Increase support for arts publications to research, develop, market and diversify their offering
- Reaching and building audiences is about creating connections and community, delivering stories and exchanges that generating a collective dialogue. Organisations need to be adequately funded to market, document, promote and share the process, as well as deliver the work and engage with its reception
- Respect diverse readers and audiences' intelligence and offer a range of entry points and experiences through diverse editing, curating, writing and programming
- Fund 'stepping-stones' for the 'art-curious' to connect to difficult art, new and challenging ideas, and ways of thinking through these challenges and opportunities. Invest in the arts and humanities education at every level and

across a wide range of platforms

**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**

- First Nations are at the heart of 'the nation' and First Nations art practice and writing are and have been highly effective and successful in brokering wider understandings of shared histories and cultural values. As a contemporary art publication, supporting and developing this discourse is core business.

### **A Place for Every Story**

- Through its publishing model, Artlink aspires to reflect and extend the reach of the extraordinary diversity of Australian artists, art writers, scholars, curators and communities.

### **The Centrality of the Artist**

- Ensure public funding is contingent on the payment of artists and artworkers including writers at minimum awards and that funding levels of organisations support those payments, while retaining funding for the very unsexy core expenses to prevent burnout

### **Strong Institutions**

- Developing and preserving our collective conversations about the issues and art practices of the day—documenting ideas, fostering creative risk—allows institutions (including publications) to learn from history and recognise patterns of change and continuity.

### **Reaching the Audience**

- Recognising that 'growing audience numbers' is not the same as 'reaching' audiences: KPIs that are all about increase, expansion and quantitative data dismiss some of the most important audiences of all. A small audience can be a vital audience.

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

- A respect for the work that 'creative artists' – in the broadest sense of the word – do in shaping the 'nation', and that without acknowledging and supporting the wide-ranging contribution that 'we' make to 'culture', there is no nation to speak of.
- It be long term, bipartisan, integrated and uncompromised.