

National Cultural Policy Submission

Professor Clint Bracknell

Submitted: On behalf of a for-profit arts business

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

As a worker/professional in an industry who uses arts (e.g. art therapist, tour guide)

As an artist

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

Language and cultural traditions are the wellspring for Indigenous creativity and unique to Australia, yet they are continually underfunded and undervalued by Australian cultural institutions. After decades upon decades of persecution and denigration, significant locally tailored investment is required to build capacity and sustainability in languages, song, and performance traditions. Currently, Australian and international audiences are wanting to embrace Indigenous performing arts, but there is little to no understanding of, or support for, the intellectual and community-focused work that underpins world-class Indigenous arts practice.

Conservatoria and performing arts institutions continue to train the multitudes in European traditions and pay only tokenistic attention to anything Indigenous. There are very few university courses that teach Indigenous languages and most cultural learning occurs unfunded, outside of institutions. Even with the push to increase teaching of Indigenous languages, most languages do not have dictionaries, published grammars, or other resources. Funded research and training in Indigenous languages cultural traditions is the only way to respond to Australia's legacy of purposeful cultural and linguistic erasure. This must be led and designed by knowledgeable and qualified Indigenous people.

Currently, Australia's building and construction industry receives too much Arts and Culture funding. Employment in the Indigenous performing arts sector, like the rest of the performing arts sector, is dominated by administrators not artists. Even the most critically acclaimed and culturally grounded Indigenous work can still struggle to find support from companies and festivals, placing unrealistic administrative burden on artists who should be encouraged to create, teach, and inspire.

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

If Indigenous arts practices do not survive and thrive in Australia, they will cease to exist in the universe. Unless Australia acts quickly to deeply appreciate and invest in creatives, knowledge-holders, and artists themselves, the depth and ecological connectedness of Australian arts will continue to rapidly diminish.