

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Submitted: 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:

A Place for Every Story A challenge still exists for older women for whom there is no representation but only expectation that they should step aside for younger people with artistic goals. Young artists and arts managers feel no sense of discrimination in the exclusion of older women as peers, they see this discrimination as a right and Australian society largely encourages this behaviour. The voice of older women is considered so irrelevant that it does not command a mention in discrimination clauses.

The Centrality of the Artist Arts practice is susceptible to William Baumol's definition "cost disease" imposed from its reliance on human endeavour to carry out its goals. This reliance cannot be curbed for example a string quartet cannot orchestrate a piece of music using three instruments without detriment to the listeners experience because inflation imposes a cost reduction to enable a viable economic outcome. Therefore, it is necessary that the taxpayer carry this burden because culture is a public good and when supported by the taxpayer enables every citizen access to quality cultural experiences. At the same time an arts policy should ensure a reasonable wage to its highly skilled and dedicated artists who are devoted to cultural goals and should not carry this burden for the taxpayer.

Reaching the Audience When Governments link funding to creative industries, such as gaming they are no longer supporting the arts so much as providing new opportunities for commercial organisations to access public money for commercial development. Prior to 'Creative Australia' commercial organisations raised capital from banks and the release of shares for their commercial endeavours and it was not customary for the taxpayer to foot this bill. Reaching the Audience is a commercial expectation that can adversely impact on cultural benefit.

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:

A Place for Every Story A country bereft of culture is a country that lacks identity. I want to live in a country that has a defined sense of identity, of which I don't believe Australia has. If you look to the nations with the strongest identities, you will find evidence that they support artistic and creative cultures. Not because it is popular to do so but because they recognise the value it contributes to their citizens. Good cultural and artistic policies empower citizens to engage in community and social constructs that develop care, compassion and understanding. As Australian identity is transitioning, we are carving a future together and an arts policy should reflect the diversity of all to make this transition harmless and assist us as a nation to work toward compassionate resolutions that eradicate behaviours of racial intolerance, ageism, and bigotry. Characteristics that were misguided but affectionately endorsed in our 'Larrikin' past.

The Centrality of the Artist Where economic growth is a key driver of creative production it is usually for-profit driven organisations such as advertising agencies. These industries manipulate creative purpose to support commercialism and the culture of monetary benefit. Commercialism is an economic master that asks for profit driven results that can negatively impact social culture

through messages of alienation and greed. Culture facilitated by artistic goals can stamp out bigotry, racism, gender inequality, and many other forms of discrimination as well as pointing a spotlight at inequality, violence, and abuse. Culture in this form keeps us in touch with humanity and from this perspective it is in a nation's best interest to cultivate artistic practices that from its core may ruminate innovation and change that inadvertently bring rewards of economic growth but are not supported with a caveat to do so. I want to live in a country where the artistic voice can challenge the mainstream to ensure there is always balance in shared societal goals.

Reaching the Audience Creative arts are considered globally to be of public good for the intangible qualities they bring to communities, individuals and because artists can constructively analyse our societies. The sector also has the power to define identity, bring joy, democratisation, acceptance, and compassion to individuals, communities, and societies. In Australia where 81% of people engaged in the arts, in 2021, according to the statistics published by the Australia Council, it is evident that the Australian people want to connect with these intangible qualities. Our packed theatres post cultural COVID austerity are a testament to this.

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

I would like to see Arts and Culture retain its own ministry, independent of the department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

I would also like to see more money invested in Arts and Culture to create more jobs and give workers an equitable wage. Where \$48.6 billion is invested annually in defence, and \$34.02 billion is the Financial Reviews valued wealth of one Australian entrepreneur, \$137 million dollars invested in the Australian arts sector that employs close to 200,000 people and contributes \$14.7 billion to the Gross Domestic Product should present evidence enough that the arts sector is grossly underfunded.