

National Cultural Policy Submission

Anonymous

Submitted: On behalf of a for-profit arts business

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 I am a film producer and rely on the government rebate (The Producer Offset) to be able to compete in a global market place and to deliver consistent employment opportunities within the Australian sector. This rebate is currently administered by Screen Australia who have been appointed the Film Authority by government, as opposed to the other government film rebates (location and PDV offsets) which are administered by the Office for the Arts. Screen Australia's appointed Producer Offset and Co-Production Unit (POCU) who manages this for Screen Australia is not, in my opinion, delivering an efficient nor impartial execution of its duties as the Film Authority. Notably they are now taking 9 months plus to process applications when it is meant to be 12 wks. This means producers are forced into default on loans used to cashflow the producer Offset and are going into debt due to delays or worse – having to cease trading. POCU are also at odds with many of the Producers in the field who have lodged a number of reviews of their recent decisions at the AAT. Personally the reviews we have lodged are due to inconsistencies across projects in the decisions made by POCU and the reliance by POCU on opinions from their appointed assessors who do not have recent relevant experience in relation to the assessments they are doing. These AAT reviews have been seen as hostile by POCU and been met with an extensive use of taxpayer funds to defend their position through extensive delay tactics as well as threats to further reduce the amount of Producer Offset applicable across a project if a Producer seeks a review of one element of the decision made by POCU. This behaviour is aggressive and non-conducive to a thriving eco-system that produces opportunities for artists in this country. I urgently request a review of this system by government and would recommend that Screen Australia be removed as the Film Authority and instead have the Office for the Arts administer the Producer Offset alongside the other two offset it already manages.

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:

Strong Institutions The film world is highly competitive with many countries offering strong incentives to attract production and for local content. Without a strong national body who is consistent, transparent and fair we cannot operate and grow a business.