

National Cultural Policy Submission



OUR REF: VW:vw

Friday, August 12, 2022

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Acting Arts and Culture Manager
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PO Box 152
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To the Honourable Tony Burke MP,

Re: National Cultural Policy Submission

Thank you for opening this important national discussion on the future of Commonwealth Cultural Policy. Arts and Culture are vital to healthy regional development, for both the community and the economy.

Local Government Authorities are central to delivering cultural services, providing venues, and facilitating community and audience development. We are connected directly to our local communities, industries and job creators, education and training providers, as well as a vast network of venues, artists, curators, producers, and other industry professionals through peak bodies such as the Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres (VAPAC) the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMAGA), Regional Arts Victoria (RAV), the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Music Victoria and many, many more.

Commonwealth support for LGAs and these peak bodies delivers immense value to taxpayers by tapping into existing efficiencies and the strength of networks, knowledge, and process.

Issues that we would like to see addressed in the policy include:

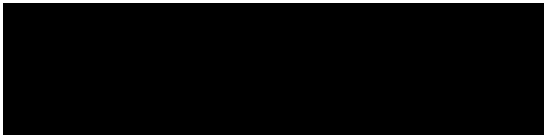
- **Skills shortage:** there is a dire need to attract and retain skilled arts workers – especially technicians. The industry has seen a mass exodus of qualified sound, lighting and mechanical technicians. When the live event industry ground to a halt due to the pandemic, many of these staff reskilled and redeployed into other industries. In doing so, many found better wages, better conditions, and far less burn out than in the demanding world of events. Our venues are now facing staff shortages and soaring wage or contractor costs – and events are being cancelled at the last hurdle due to staff illness with no back up staff to rely on. **We would like to see more training pathways and wellbeing measures put in place to secure the sustainability of the technical services industry.**
- **First Nations Peoples:** we are working hard to develop our relationships with First Nations artists and audiences in our region and listening to find better ways to break down barriers of entry to venues and events. We acknowledge the deep connection to Arts and Culture that our traditional owners hold, and want to work with indigenous artists and companies in ways that are respectful,

reciprocal, and relevant. We understand the importance of story sovereignty, and that if aboriginal stories are being told, they must have meaningful and significant input from first nations people in key creative roles. **We would like to see Commonwealth support for First Nations arts companies, and traineeships in arts production, arts administration, and museum curatorship and conservation made available to First Nations people.**

- **Regional development:** our regions are growing at an incredible rate, and infrastructure is running to catch up. Theatres, galleries, museums and public art all serve essential roles in community building, job creation, tourism and liveability to ensure this growth and decentralisation is sustainable, and we that we don't see our growing regional populations snap back to the cities. **We would like to see significant investment in regional cultural centres and projects.**

We look forward to the new National Cultural Policy, and to working with the new Commonwealth Government on the future of the creative industries.

Yours sincerely



Virginia Winter

Acting Arts and Culture Manager