

## **Submission on National Cultural Policy**

**Name:** Jim Lemon

**Submitted:** As an individual

I am currently pursuing creative writing as an avocation and perhaps a new profession. I have previously written a substantial amount of scientific material, principally as research publications. In the past few years I have written and self published two books, one fiction and one popular science. This work has been challenging and rewarding. I am currently a member of the Australian Society of Authors and the Fellowship of Australian Writers NSW.

A creative work may be the product of an individual, a collaborative group or those who compose a work from the products of other individuals or groups. The motivations behind creative works may be varied, but they are a part of those works. Tampering with those motivations influences the works produced. I do not endorse the view that a proper function of government is to shape the culture of the people.

I consider ancient cultural artefacts to be equal to the cry of thanksgiving of a migrant struggling ashore. All have reasons to come to and stay in Australia. The deep expressions of those reasons are a central part of their Australian nature.

As artists produce their art, so those who attend to it determine its place in public culture. Art is valued and preserved by the beholder. Whether it is the work of a few admirers or the overwhelming approval of many, art should earn its place in public culture.

Government funding may become a vacuous promotion of approved mediocrity or even political vanity. Funding infrastructure like performance spaces is tolerable. Funding individual artists is a dangerous business.

Scholarships are a good place for funding. Individual commitment and motivation are tested and the aspiring artist is not blocked by lack of funding. Offering publishing services (production, distribution, advertising) again distorts the relationship between the artist and the audience.

I feel that the minimal preservation of literary works by the government is warranted, along with the collection of information about authors and the publishing industry. It is a very competitive field, but much more valuable than an appendage of the public service.

This submission may be published.