

National Cultural Policy Submission

Anonymous

Submitted: On behalf of a not-for-profit arts organisation; As a worker/professional in an industry who uses arts (e.g., art therapist, tour guide); As an individual

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

Youth performing arts provides an opportunity to centre First Nations stories and engagement. Initiatives which enable First Nations people and voices, through self determination and leadership are important. It is also important that there are programs which focus on childhood and access.

There are many studies now which illustrate the value of the performing arts to the mental health, wellbeing and schooling of children. An [Australian pilot study of over 1000 students](#), including 155 ATSI students, found that CAIPE, an arts-based educational intervention, 'closed the gap' in Indigenous students' NAPLAN scores by more than 20% in reading and 17% in writing.

A Place for Every Story

Reflecting the diversity of our stories and the contribution of all Australians as the creators of culture provides a great springboard for opportunity and the sharing of stories.

An important part of that diversity is the voices of young people, and stories for young people. The fostering of a lifelong love of arts often begins with an experience of theatre for your people. Young people's engagement should be a priority in the national cultural policy.

It is essential that the National Cultural Policy recognises the importance of theatre for children and family audiences is crucial not only to the arts ecology of Australia but also to the development of children.

A discreet funding stream for investment via the Australia Council for the Arts would go a long way to ensuring that theatre for young people is given an even chance at funding amidst increasingly competitive rounds.

Reaching the Audience

Youth arts organisations need greater support to ensure that they are reaching as broad an audience as possible. We know that creative learning and arts experiences greatly enrich a child's experience of the world, but also that they are good for mental health, social health, physical health, identity, resilience and even improved learning outcomes (literacy and numeracy).

Cross-portfolio collaboration and promotion could have a powerful impact for young people. A 'health message' for the arts, much like sport has experienced over a sustained period of time, could have a transformational impact both for attitudes to the arts more generally, but importantly, for the young people and participants in the arts. Cross portfolio funding could result in far greater reach of arts and culture into schools all over Australia and be transformational for our education and health systems.

<https://www.uwa.edu.au/schools/allied-health/Arts-and-Health/Good-Arts-Good-Mental-Health>