

National Cultural Policy Submission

Adelaide Festival Centre

ADELAIDE FESTIVAL CENTRE | The arts and entertainment heart of the festival city, Adelaide.

Adelaide Festival Centre is a program led arts centre with a focus on inclusivity and 'Arts for All'.

Celebrating 50 years in 2023, Adelaide Festival Centre takes seriously its cultural leadership and social responsibility to the community, providing access and diversity through comprehensive programming, unique festivals, significant exhibitions, and diverse engagement projects.

Our history is significant to our future. Don Dunstan visioned and delivered Australia's first multipurpose arts centre, supported by the commonwealth and opened by Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam on Saturday 2 June, 1973. A triumph of governments working together.

As Australia's first performing arts centre and only permanent festival site in the country, we have an ongoing responsibility to play a central role in entertaining, engaging, educating and inspiring communities all year-round.

Centres, like ours, have a significant role to play in a national and global network for touring, education, staff exchange and creation of new work. For example, the Adelaide Festival Centre leads the Association of Asia Pacific Performing Arts Centres, is a Board Member of the Global Cultural Districts Network, is on the Executive for the Australia Singapore Arts Group and has led Asia Pacific UNESCO Creative City initiatives. We acknowledge our important role in joining with likeminded institutions to provide a strong and supportive base for the presentation of all artforms.

We play an important role in maintaining and strengthening cultural practices and offer artists opportunity, accessibility, and elevation at all stages of their careers.

We are large scale employers and have a trusted relationship with audiences.

Our place in the city is fundamental for enabling creativity and connection.

Adelaide is a UNESCO City of Music. As an active programming and presenting house, we proudly support musicians from down the street and across the globe, ensuring the designation is the centrepiece of our city.

THANK YOU

The opportunity to contribute to national cultural policy is exciting and timely.

We are a constantly evolving centre with a wonderful history, committed staff and fire in the belly for the future. We are also a solid, reliable, critical part of the arts ecology in Adelaide and a leader in the Asia Pacific Region. King William Road Adelaide South Australia 5000

This document demonstrates our support for outcomes across the five cultural policy pillars identified. Specifically, we seek assistance to strengthen the cultural landscape in Adelaide and Australia through the following important outcomes:

- Supporting First Nations artists to be self-determined and thrive
- Developing our cultural institutions network to collaborate and provide pathways for artists across Australasia
- Further realising the UNESCO Creative City of Music Designation by delivering Adelaide a much-needed Music Centre
- A program led organisation providing 'Arts for All'
- Funding our Festivals to be the best platforms for artists and audiences to connect
- Supporting a living wage for artists
- Enhancing connections with tertiary education centres and arts organisations, thereby playing our part in developing the next generation of artists and arts workers.
- Supporting our local companies to thrive and make new Australian work
- Support our much-loved 50yr old building to modernise and embrace digital technologies and state-of-the art equipment and facilities

We address each pillar in reference to our responsibility:

FIRST NATIONS:

- Recognising and respecting the crucial place of these stories at the centre of our arts and culture
- We recognise that Australia's First Nations culture is 75,000 years old and that connection to country, storytelling and expressions of culture are unique to our country We acknowledge that enabling First Nations culture to thrive is fundamentally important for the future of our country
- Adelaide Festival Centre has a significant role to play by:
 - Deepening our understanding of local First Nations culture and ways of working, including taking the time required
 - Delivering a deeply considered Reconciliation Action Plan and ensure ALL employees are engaged with the deliverables
 - Supporting thriving and self-determined First Nations artists
 - Ensuring all venues and spaces are used for First Nations cultural presentations
 - OUR MOB exhibition of South Australian Aboriginal artists has been delivered by the Adelaide Festival Centre for 16yrs. To take it to the next level we will endorse it as a 'festival' to incorporate OUR WORDS and OUR STORIES and elevate all elements of delivery.
 - We will engage First Nations artists to develop outdoor work for the new Festival Plaza

- We support significant investment in First Nations companies, artists and arts support networks.

A PLACE FOR EVERY STORY: reflecting the diversity of our stories and the contribution of all Australians as the creators of culture.

- We believe in 'Arts for All' and that everyone has a unique story to share
- We acknowledge that culture enhances civic society through understanding
- Adelaide Festival Centre has a significant role to play by:
 - Providing unique festival platforms for multicultural engagement and genre specific niches, such as: OzAsia – Australia's leading contemporary arts festival engaging with Asia, Adelaide Guitar Festival, DreamBIG Children's Festival, OUR MOB and the Adelaide Cabaret Festival
 - Investing in collaborations with international and national projects, art centres and artists
 - Supporting local companies to have access to and technically well-provisioned, safe sustainable accessible venues and spaces
 - Supporting experimentation
 - Leading in workplace creativity, safety and inclusivity

We support an up-lift in investment for the creation of work and for festivals that enable presentation platforms to share 'every story'.

THE CENTRALITY OF THE ARTIST: supporting the artist as worker and celebrating their role as the creators of culture.

- We work with artists in every stage of career and scale. This week, for example Adelaide Festival Centre is hosting a sold-out Disney musical, the launch of the OzAsia festival program, an Adelaide Symphony Orchestra artist in residence exhibition and artist talk, Paul Kelly, an exhibition of Children's work, The State Theatre Companies new Australian comedy, and the install of over 70 works by South Australian Aboriginal Artists for the OUR MOB exhibitions.
- Some of this activity we programmed, some we venue hired.
- We work with artists to provide options to present and scale their work.
- To continue to play a significant role in Adelaide, we will:
 - Use our resources to support the presentation of art by employing artists and arts workers
 - Play a role in tertiary education – and develop local and international networks to support learning and the love of the arts
 - Create unique festivals to provide a focussed platform for audiences
 - Develop new platforms – such as the Festival Plaza
 - Nurturing artists is central to sustaining Australia's cultural expression and developing our identity into the future. We investment to ensure artists are supported to create work at all stages of their career

STRONG INSTITUTIONS: providing support across the spectrum of institutions which sustain our arts and culture.

- We exist to ensure culture thrives
- We acknowledge our significant role as a local and international cultural leader and trusted partner
- We work with artists, organisations, audiences, business community and supporters to provide exceptional experiences
- We acknowledge the importance of the UNESCO designation to our city and the need for us to program and present music based artforms
- To ensure we are a relevant and strong institution into the future, we will;
 - Work collaboratively with arts organisations globally to commission work for our festivals
 - Work collaboratively with the arts ecology in Adelaide to present exceptional programming to audiences
 - Employ artists, technicians, arts workers, hospitality and front of house staff and provide them with a positive organisational culture built on collaboration and creativity
 - Lead the Association of Asia Pacific Performing Arts Centres to share information, projects and people
 - Work with the Global Cultural District Networks to share information, projects and people
 - Continue to build Australasian and global networks that benefit all
 - Work with arts teaching and training organisations

We support significant investment in our cultural institutions to provide the necessary platforms for audiences and artist to intersect

REACHING THE AUDIENCE: ensuring our stories reach the right people at home and abroad

- We acknowledge the important responsibility we have for the role we play in the lives of all South Australians - 'Arts for All'
- We reach hundreds of thousands of people through offering an accessible, reliable, welcoming experience for audiences from across the population
- We program festivals, shows, exhibitions and projects to ensure our centre demonstrates a commitment to multiculturalism, reconciliation, education and artists development, and in doing so, reach new audiences and demographics
- As a commitment to nurture existing audiences and continually thrive to engage with new audiences, we will:
 - Grow audiences by delivering rewarding customer experiences by being responsive to the consumer landscape
 - Embrace digital transformation for artists and audiences
 - Work with the tourism sector to engage new audiences
 - Develop our education programs and youth engagement to continue to connect with young people
 - Up-date technical functionality to enable patron accessibility

We support national awareness raising of the importance of the role of art in the lives of all Australians, and investment in mechanisms to reach audiences.