

# National Cultural Policy Submission

Poetry Sydney

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Poetry Sydney is an independent literary organisation committed to a presence for poetry in our culture. We advocate the social benefits of poetry and poetry experiences and the intrinsic value this literary art form provides our communities.

## National Cultural Policy Submission:

The word 'national' and what this can mean in the context of a new National Cultural Policy, is a term to unpack. While we feel tangentially with national objectives, we believe that local and specific contexts are more important. The **concept of national heritage**, which is historically grounded is a term we align with, and is why we consider First Nations poetry to be of great significance. There is a sense that heritage is everything and is everywhere, since all that exists is in the past. It makes sense to start with more First Nations People representation.

Government support for the arts has been materially declining since the 2013 Creative Australia National Cultural Policy. Literature has demonstrably borne a disproportionate burden of these cuts. Within literature, poetry has been the most neglected. The effects from the pandemic have only heightened the **imbalance**. In a society where all funding has seen strictures there is a fundamental advantage that larger cultural institutions have which is the capacity to lobby professionally. This capacity is largely absent with literary organisations and certainly with the individual creators.

Establish a wider appeal for poetry **audiences** to attract more interest from attendees, readers, viewers, listeners, learners and participants.

We consider strong **cultural and educational institutions** should have the tools to manage the skills required for artists to make a living, to take on leadership positions, innovate, build broad partnerships and employ an insistence that the arts are central to what we want.

## Our recommendations:

- More national heritage funding support for poetry that is both local and national.
- Increase funding for poets and poetry in the literature sector.
- Help poetry organisations make long-term commitments that enhance engagement and grow audience numbers.
- Reverse the decision to increase university fees for arts and humanities courses.

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