

# National Cultural Policy Submission

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Submitted: 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**

**Challenges** – I've worked with First Nations artists in remote and more urban settings, and I think it is great that First Nations people and arts and cultural practices are receiving more attention across all spheres. The diversity of lived experiences and needs in the Aboriginal Arts sector is broad and should be considered.

**Opportunities** - There are so many different experiences and ways of being First Nations and I think this should be respected and celebrated. First Nations people should be involved in decision making when it concerns them (nothing about them, without them).

## **A Place for Every Story**

**Challenges** – Outside of capital cities, arts infrastructure and opportunities can be fewer and of lower quality. Local councils and regional galleries provide some arts activities in regional areas. Perhaps this policy can find a way to support local governments and regional arts more.

**Opportunities** – Regional touring that includes skills development, networking and sharing opportunities across regions. Finding ways to create spaces for underrepresented groups (young people, CALD people, First Nations, people with a disability, LGBTIQ+ etc).

## **The Centrality of the Artist**

**Challenges** – My partner and I both work in the arts and we have described that choice as ‘taking a vow of poverty’. It shouldn’t be that way. The arts sector as a career is insecure, low paid and often gig based. I have become an ‘artworker’ to gain some regular employment to balance the insecurity of my partner’s work. Arts work is work and research and development need to be recognised and valued as part of the creative process.

**Opportunities** – Investigate UBI for artists, find ways to ensure more secure work environments for artists – arts sector unions, make payment of superannuation to sole traders and contractors compulsory (and enforceable), education programs for artists and employers about work conditions and entitlements. Should Superannuation be paid on grant supported artist fees?

Arts funding for orgs needs to support smaller/more regional/ more diverse orgs. Arts funding for individuals needs to acknowledge emerging artists, not always be project based, and recognise R&D phases of creative practice.

### **Strong Institutions**

**Challenges** – Arts education from primary school to tertiary offerings have become weak – a second thought or a frill on the side. The arts have the potential to be integral to learning – thinking, problem solving, creativity. I have heard some countries require all tertiary courses (even health and engineering degrees) to include arts subjects.

There is very little relevant tertiary education options available for arts workers. Most arts workers have qualifications in an art form, but those courses don’t often teach the myriad of skills you need as an arts worker (project planning, marketing, business skills, finance etc).

Review the Australia Council. All government funded big orgs need to support the development of their sector

**Opportunities** – Improve arts education from primary school on and make it a valid career path (so many younger students choose “sensible” career paths as the arts is insecure and doesn’t pay well). Imagine if Australia was actually known around the world to be a leader in the arts sector.

## Reaching the Audience

**Challenges** – In my 30 years of working in the arts, I have seen a push to make arts activities more broadly accessible. While I appreciate the intention behind this move, I think there is also a possibility that art that involves higher thought, challenges ideas may not get made/seen/supported in the plethora of Instagram worthy experiences. There can be a danger of dumbing arts down to be attractive to the masses (e.g. block buster exhibitions, paintings to match the lounge suite).

**Opportunities** – In a degree of counterpoint to my comment above, I think it is great that more diverse voices are being shared through arts projects and that arts activities are becoming more accessible for participation by people who may have been excluded in the past. Public institutions could be encouraged/made to include more diverse programming (by artists from currently underrepresented groups).

### Are there any other things that you would like to see in a National Cultural Policy?

I have two children in tertiary education who are pursuing creative paths. With both of their parents with careers in the arts sector, we know what a hard choice this is when you are considering your future opportunities and financial security. I hope this cultural policy and its implementation and the leadership it will provide to state and local government, peak bodies and large arts institutions means our children will have more security and opportunities than we have had. The arts sector has not received the recognition and support it deserves from the federal government for way too long.