

# Senate Inquiry: National Cultural Policy

# A New Approach (ANA)

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

8 March 2023

To the Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications,

Australia's leading arts and culture think tank A New Approach (ANA) welcomes Australia's new cultural policy *Revive*.

Please find **additional information** attached in two submissions ANA has prepared subsequent to the national cultural policy consultation process, as well as our original submission:

- [Pre-budget submission 2022-23](#), January 2023
- [Measuring What Matters submission](#), January 2023
- [National Cultural Policy consultation submission](#), August 2022

We have also provided some comments on the new cultural policy and recommended next steps for implementation.

In our role as a philanthropically funded, independent think tank, ANA is available to provide further information about the recommendations outlined in this submission and would welcome the opportunity to discuss them.

Warm regards,

Kate Fielding  
CEO, A New Approach (ANA)

Contact

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## Comments on Australia's new cultural policy, *Revive*

ANA's research and analysis shows that Australians from every walk of life participate in and benefit from arts, culture and creativity. In focus groups right across the country, middle Australians aged 18 to 75 have identified wide-ranging positive outcomes for individuals and communities, including benefits to the economy, health, social cohesion and productivity.<sup>1</sup> These views align with Australian and international research which demonstrates these benefits.<sup>2</sup>

Informed by these insights, ANA believes Australia can become a cultural powerhouse whose compelling creativity is locally loved, nationally valued and globally influential. The release of the new cultural policy is a meaningful step towards Australia fulfilling this creative promise.

ANA welcomes the clear intent and recognition within the new policy that arts, culture and the creative industries are key participants in the nation's well-being, playing a role in our economy and more importantly our national sense of self and community. We see the new policy as an important foundational platform that the sector, working alongside governments and other investors, can use to achieve the policy, performance and funding goals we all agree are critical. With thoughtful and collaborative implementation and investment, the new cultural policy can deliver opportunities for cultural experiences and creative expression for all Australians, regardless of who they are or where they live.

## Recommended steps for implementation

Public investment in culture is already an intergovernmental and cross-portfolio effort, with potential gains from purposeful coordination. Better coordination will also unlock more effective private and philanthropic investment, strengthening Australia's cultural and creative activity and improving access for all Australians.

The actions recommended in this submission provide a scaffold for more effective collaboration between the three levels of government and both commercial and philanthropic investors, as well as providing a clearer operating environment for a sector that relies on the long-term development of skills and products. These will assist in more effective implementation of cultural policies at all levels of government, including the *Revive* policy.

1. The bipartisan proposal for a Productivity Commission inquiry 'into the legislative arrangements which govern funding of artistic programs and activities at all levels of government'<sup>3</sup> should proceed. The terms of reference should include:
  - A cost-benefit analysis of the cross-sectoral enablers of productivity identified in the 5-year productivity inquiry, as they specifically apply to arts and culture.
  - Identifying a target for prescribed government expenditure (re Recommendation 2)
  - Consideration of the benefits of including art and culture government services in the Report on Government Services.<sup>4</sup>
  - To 'preserve' and 'strengthen' the financing of culture – declared a "global public good" – review other examples of outstanding public investment, focusing on those countries that invest above the OECD average.
2. In the context of the new cultural policy, existing patterns of cross-portfolio investment and the international evidence of impacts across broad public policy agendas, the government should prescribe that a percentage of total government expenditure be directed towards cultural funding in a coordinated and intentional manner. The aforementioned Productivity Commission inquiry should provide a recommended target percentage.
3. To support the inclusion of cultural measures within the [Measuring What Matters Statement](#), and the implementation of the new [National Cultural Policy](#):
  - Conduct an environmental scan that builds and regularly updates our shared understanding of the dynamic health and economic pressures on Australian arts and culture (both supply and demand), and where the investments will be most effective.
  - Survey cultural funding by governments and quantify the economic contribution of cultural and creative activity every year. To enhance transparency of these investments, experiment with reporting on the National Cultural Policy's performance and deepen the granularity of the data collection and reporting instruments (e.g., add reporting 'by portfolio' and 'by postcode').
  - Include in forward estimates a funding envelope to support delivery of a multi-decadal plan to establish an infrastructure and workforce development pipeline (specifying short, medium, and longer-term goals and minimum required investment over multiple decades).

## About A New Approach (ANA)

A New Approach (ANA) is Australia's leading think tank focused on arts and culture.

Rigorous research shows arts, culture and creativity enriches our lives, unites our communities, and ignites our economies. ANA works to turn evidence into belief and action using its independent, trusted voice and engagement with respected local, national and international networks.

Through credible and independent public leadership, ANA helps build an ambitious and innovative policy and investment environment for arts, culture and creativity. We work to ensure Australia can be a great place for creators and audiences, whoever they are and wherever they live.

ANA is led by a Board of Directors chaired by Rupert Myer AO who, along with ANA's Reference Group and staff, contribute credible and independent leadership to turn evidence into belief and action so Australia can reach its potential to become a cultural powerhouse by 2035.

ANA is made possible by a unique collaboration of 11 philanthropic partners: The Myer Foundation; Sidney Myer Fund; Tim Fairfax Family Foundation; The Ian Potter Foundation; Neilson Foundation; Minderoo Foundation; Besen Family Foundation; Spinifex Trust; The Keir Foundation; Aranday Foundation; and The Yulgilbar Foundation.

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Submitted by: A New Approach (ANA)

Contact: [hello@newapproach.org.au](mailto:hello@newapproach.org.au)

[www.newapproach.org.au](http://www.newapproach.org.au)

## Endnotes

- 1 See ANA's middle Australia series, a three-year national focus group study on attitudes towards arts, culture and creativity amongst people from low- and middle-income households, living in regional or outer suburban locations, who are politically unaligned (they have changed their vote between the major parties more than once, and at both state and federal elections). The participants in the middle Australia focus groups were predominantly living in swinging federal electorates, from a range of cultural backgrounds and don't work in arts and culture. Series available at <https://newapproach.org.au/insight-reports/>
- 2 A New Approach, Transformative: Impacts of Culture and Creativity, 2019. <https://newapproach.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2-ANA-InsightReportTwo-FullReport.pdf>
- 3 Parliamentary Inquiry into Cultural and Creative Industries and Institutions by the Standing Committee on Communities and the Arts, 2021. [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/House/Communications/Arts](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Communications/Arts)
- 4 Arts and cultural services may meet the criteria for inclusion in the RoGS process. <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/criteria-for-selecting-service-provision-sectors>

## Additional material attached below

1. [Pre-budget submission 2022-23](#), January 2023
2. [Measuring What Matters submission](#), January 2023
3. [National Cultural Policy consultation submission](#), August 2022