



**NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
FOR THE
VISUAL ARTS**



**NAVA Action Plan
2023-2025**

Always was. Always will be Aboriginal Land.

NAVA acknowledges the Gadigal, Wangal, Dharug, Dharawal, Kurna, Ngunnawal, Ngambri and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples as the Traditional Custodians and knowledge-holders of the unceded lands on which we live, learn and work.

The NAVA community is based across hundreds of sovereign Nations and unceded lands throughout the continent that has become colonially known as Australia. NAVA pays our deepest respects to all Custodians of Country to whom these lands belong.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first artists and storytellers on this continent, and pay respect to First Nations communities' Ancestors and Elders.

Sovereignty was never ceded.



We're here because of you

NAVA can do good work because it is bolstered by a community of people who give to the cultural and creative industries. Through all our accomplishments across 40 years: *Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design, Indigenous Art Code*, establishment of *Viscopy* now part of Copyright Agency, introduction of *moral rights and resale royalty rights legislation, ATO Income Tax Ruling: carrying on business as a professional artist*, and more, we have been supported and sustained by the voices we seek to foreground.

Mission

NAVA is a Membership organisation which brings together the many voices of the contemporary arts sector to **improve fundamental conditions of work** and practice. We do this through advocacy, education and the Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design.

Vision

The visual arts are vital, sustainable and ethical



Values

Trust and transparency.

To best serve the industry, we must be transparent about the work we can and will do, so our Members and stakeholders can always rely on us to have their backs.

Ethical, representative leadership.

To stand for good practice means we must also embody good practice ourselves. So when we take action for the rights and voices of artists and arts workers, we too must support equitable treatment, professional pay and best practices within our own organisation and with the people we partner with.

Collaboration and consultation.

We consult widely before we take action, knowing that we have a responsibility to centre the voices of artists and arts workers in the pursuit of improving working conditions in the sector.

Where we are

Over the last few years, NAVA has been balancing the completion of major work on the Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design (the Code), while responding to the impacts of ever changing policy settings, Covid-19, and extreme weather events made more frequent and severe from climate change. While responsive work is critical to keeping pace with Members' needs and will always be part of what we do, NAVA will take more time in this strategic period to focus on longer-term initiatives. We will be seeking to engage Members more deeply in our advocacy work and support the uptake of good practices in our sector through broad adoption of the Code.

Key objectives

We hear you asking for a louder, clearer, more collaborative visual arts community, improved standards of professional work conditions, more opportunities to learn and network. Our plan is to meet these needs with you.

Our key objectives for the next three years have formed from direct Member engagement and an understanding of some of the biggest issues facing our sector:

1

To meet good practices as outlined in the Code in our everyday operations and delivery, with key focus on instigating structural change that places equity and sustainability at the core of our work.

The Code recognises that arts and culture very often leads progressive social change. A new section covering Principles, Ethics and Rights reflects the industry's growing concerns with issues of justice, access, fair work and representation. To stand for good practice, we need to embody good practice ourselves.

2

To promote and encourage the adoption of the Code across the sector.

A full revision of the Code was completed in late 2022 and we are currently seeking sector wide endorsement of its recommendations. This involves the development of educational resources, awareness campaigns, on-the-ground government lobbying and advocacy work at local, state and federal levels.

3

To advocate for more equitable working conditions for artists and arts workers.

Currently, many visual artists and arts workers are underpaid, with little opportunity to negotiate their fees and wages. When visual artists and arts workers ask to be paid for their work, and paid decently, it is because the people behind the artworks and experiences that audiences across Australia love, deserve to be compensated for their time and labour. It is time to recognise artists as workers.

4

To engage and mobilise our Membership on issues that impact their work, lives and practices.

Our Members' insights, contributions and stories are invaluable to the work we do, and sector-wide collaboration is essential for building a future where artists' careers and practices are sustained and nourished. A new model of collegiate sector alliances and Member engagement will elevate a greater diversity of voices to find innovative and adventurous solutions for a more sustainable, ambitious and equitable sector.

5

To maintain a high-level of standard in our service provision.

NAVA is working to overhaul our digital systems in order to reduce the level of administration required to manage Memberships and ensure we are more efficient in reaching and involving Members in our work. Engaging a wider range of active voices will strengthen the depth, visibility and impact of our services and advocacy work.

6

To build capacity within the sector through professional development and learning opportunities.

NAVA's established reputation in providing quality professional development tools, workshops and online learning will be expanded to address the arts education gap through a national secondary and tertiary education program. Embedding the Code in strong education and professional development programs is fundamental to building a stronger sector that can sustain and nourish careers over a lifetime.

Our plan at a glance

Program Area	Code of Practice	Membership	Advocacy	Professional Development and Learning	Internal Operations
Aim	To consolidate and broaden the use of the Code within our sector and to embed good practices within NAVA's internal operations.	To improve NAVA's digital Membership system and to proactively engage and mobilise our Members in advocacy work.	To campaign for more equitable working conditions for artists and arts workers and to nurture strong relationships with governments.	To build sustained capacity within the sector by introducing knowledge of good practices to expanded audiences.	To align NAVA's vision, mission and values with day-to-day internal practices and further organisational sustainability.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage First Nations educators to deliver Code programming Develop a First Nations Policy Create accessible resources to embed within the Code Scaffold the Code through education and promotion Review and update Code content regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake the work outlined in the Reconciliation Action Plan Create a Disability Action Plan Update Membership services with a digital system that offers more connection and functionality Develop systems of collaboration and mobilisation with partners and Membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate collectively with the sector for a legislated Award for artists Consistently promote the use and integration of the Code throughout sector operations and government relationships Engage regularly with Membership to understand issues and obstacles Contribute to sector research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with First Nations artists, educators and participants in promotion and programming around the Code Build a professional development program that supports the Code and addresses the needs of the sector Engage with partner organisations on learning initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a framework to support a culturally safe working environment Develop a suite of policies to support NAVA's goals around anti-racism, anti-discrimination and access Establish pathways for staff and board professional development Appoint Member Representatives for increased engagement
Objectives	1, 2, 6	3, 4, 5	2, 3, 4	2, 6	1, 5

Taking a closer look

Code of Practice

Focus	Actions
Engage First Nations artists and communities with the Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission First Nations educators to deliver workshops on the Code to First Nations audiences • Develop a strategy for long-term and sustainable First Nations employment within NAVA • Develop a First Nations Policy • Tailor key recommendations or messaging for remote access via social media • Develop alternative formats of key Code information (i.e. podcasts, animations and infographics)
Encourage organisations, governments and funding bodies to consistently and regularly reference the Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for and promote the Code through online and in-person forums (via established programs and invitations) • Develop an Induction Course that will provide organisations and their staff with knowledge of the Code • Advocate for and promote the endorsement of NAVA payment standards by local, state and federal government funding bodies across Australia through meetings, roundtables, partnerships and collaboration with other bodies and organisations
Provide learning opportunities for artists and arts workers to explore the Code and its application in their professional work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver 'Art is a Real Job' professional development program aimed at presenting and strengthening aspiring artists' understanding and use of the Code • Partner with colleague organisations to present on the Code at local events • Review and update NAVA's existing library of professional learning resources for artists, arts workers and organisations to ensure they reflect the new Code
Maintain the relevancy and accessibility of the Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and develop accessible resources to embed within the Code • Review and update the Code annually to include required amendments such as Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases and legislative changes • Undertake biennial research and publication of new or further areas of content

Membership

Focus	Actions
<p>Improve Member experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate a new customer relationship management system (CRM) into existing services • Undertake a major Membership survey • Maintain a high level of service via our Membership channels
<p>Maintain, grow and support NAVA's diverse Membership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish NAVA's Reconciliation Action Plan and communicate our commitment to reconciliation • Commission First Nations specific resources on professional practice • Create a Disability Action Plan • Develop a growth strategy that activates direct channels of communication between Members on the ground and NAVA • Promote Membership via all NAVA events and programs • Upskill staff in areas specific to access, inclusion and dispute resolution • Campaign to increase new organisation Members as well as educator and early career Members
<p>Establish improved models of collaboration with Members for better decision-making outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with Membership on means of engagement and level of involvement in advocacy and Code activities • Communicate the value and opportunities Members have in partnering with NAVA • Build a comprehensive database in new CRM and investigate how this system can allow for more vital and active Member engagement • Establish a panel of Member Representatives • Explore partnerships with external stakeholders and Membership through a representative model of consultation
<p>Mobilise Membership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renew activation of the advocacy toolkit to provide resources on how to organise, speak to government and build campaigns • Develop online portal to allow for streamlined and rapid Member engagement on advocacy campaigns, NAVA's responses to government inquiries and consultations and on issues of social justice

Advocacy

Focus	Actions
Respond to industry challenges that impact the sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate to and engage with the Government on a legislated Award and industrial reforms for the visual arts, craft and design sector • Work directly with the Government to action the endorsement of the Code within National Cultural Policy – Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place (Revive) • Work with the Government to unpack and develop the details of the initiatives and actions in Revive, ensuring the reach across the visual arts sector • Campaign in response to emerging or unforeseen issues or crises (e.g. natural disasters) • Develop an Advocacy Strategy to guide future action that prioritises consistent Member engagement
Develop and nurture strong relationships with governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain strong connections with government through regular contact and information sharing with policy advisors • Pursue conversations with state and territory government art departments to endorse Code payment standards • Develop and maintain relationships with national, state and territory arts organisations regarding the use and integration of the Code in operational practices • Produce, update and communicate available resources to local government authorities
Understand and communicate Member needs on key creative and cultural issues to Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with Membership to understand issues affecting the sector • Convene sector roundtables on a monthly basis • Participate in cross-artform forums and meetings • Submit responses to relevant inquiries and consultations • Run online campaigns and liaise with MPs, senators and various departments

Focus	Actions
Engage in research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue partnerships and knowledge-sharing activities with research partners including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Arts Work: sustainable strategies for the Australian visual arts and craft sector led by researchers from RMIT University and The University of Melbourne, and industry partners the National Association of the Visual Arts (NAVA), and the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) • Precarious Movements: Choreography and the Museum led by researchers at the University New South Wales (UNSW) and Monash University Museum of Art (MUMA) with industry partners the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), TATE UK, Art Gallery New South Wales (AGNSW) and independent artist Shelley Lasica • Empowering Australia’s Visual Arts via Creative Blockchain Opportunities led by researchers from the University of Wollongong (UoW), University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ) and The University of Queensland (UQ) with industry partners the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA), Australian Network for Art & Technology (ANAT), CSIRO Data61, Copyright Agency and Australian Copyright Council. • Longitudinal studies by Professor David Throsby on the economic circumstances of arts practitioners • The Countess Report, an independent artist-run initiative that publishes data on gender representation in the Australian contemporary art world.

Professional Development and Learning

Focus	Actions
Embed First Nations voices and perspectives in all learning initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speakers and facilitators in all education events and public programs. • Collaborate with First Nations artists, educators and participants in 'Art is a Real Job', the Community of Practice initiative and in the development of learning resources
Help Members and audiences (artists, arts workers, organisations, students and educators) develop the skills and knowledge needed to understand and use the Code effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver and promote Induction Course to organisations in order to upskill and embed the Code within the sector • Deliver the Schools Program which aims to support the learning and skills development of aspiring artists in secondary schools, to participate successfully in the visual arts sector. • Develop and implement education tools centered around the Code for secondary and tertiary markets to enhance expectations for future artists and arts workers • Present 'Art is a Real Job' online conference for students and early career artists led by artists • Bring national educators together through the 'community of practice' initiative to lead national conversation on embedding industry links and good practice in school and tertiary education
Provide professional development opportunities for artists and arts workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver series of seminars and workshops both independently and in partnership with other organisations • Commission and update existing guides and factsheets

Internal Operations

Focus	Actions
<p>Consider and incorporate access and inclusion in organisational operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish and enact the NAVA Reconciliation Action Plan • Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs, including implementing quotas and identified positions • Develop a Disability Action Plan • Develop a First Nations Policy • Develop an Anti-Racism, and Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy • Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Policy • Commission a new WCAG compliant website • Work to ensure NAVA staff and board are representative of the diverse Membership
<p>Align internal processes and procedures with the Code's minimum standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strategic framework for long-term and sustainable First Nations employment within NAVA • Update existing policies and procedures inline with the Principles, Ethics and Rights recommendations • Secure Board approval for new policies and procedures • Update and approve artist and arts worker fee policy

Focus	Actions
<p>Improve succession and organisational sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire a First Nations advisor to co-write a First Nations Policy with the NAVA team to support the subsequent development of a strategic framework for NAVA for the safer employment of First Nations staff within the organisation • Develop a First Nations Advisory Group • Establish mentorship pathways for early career First Nations leaders on the NAVA board • Complete new constitution • Introduce sitting fees for artists on the board • Increase mentorship and professional development opportunities (e.g. governance training) to staff and board • Identify future board members • Develop a funding strategy for diversification of funding sources • Develop a business plan to support the funding strategy and outline income and sustainability measures • Create opportunities for staff to build relationships and form networks, giving rise to collaborative work • Set up an internal working group and system for professional development and wellbeing
<p>Deepen NAVA's ability to understand Member needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Member Representatives to liaise with segments of the sector • Facilitate Code Induction Course for new staff - • Facilitate cultural competency training for all staff and board members • Establish a recording and reporting process for Member and sector feedback and sentiment



We've got this

NAVA is proud of the work we do to achieve recognition, respect and rights for artists. We know that artists are needed. We understand their intrinsic value and worth, and their fundamental social purpose. Artists whose rights are valued and respected can sustain the work and practice that creates Australia's future. This is our focus.

Thank you to NAVA Members – former, current and new – for inspiring and sustaining our work.

Image credits

Cover image

Kay Abude, (DON'T) BE AN ARTIST, 2021, colour paper billboards (a series of five individual paper billboards installed in succession and performed every Tuesday over a five week period from 16 Nov – 21 Dec 2021 at The Hotel Windsor, Melbourne), 310 x 467cm. Presented as part of Flash Forward – Creative Laneways Project, The City of Melbourne. Photo by Nicole Reed.

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Tanushri Saha, Louise Zhang and Dylan Batty at What's Fair? A roundtable discussion about NAVA's Pay Standards for Artists & Arts Workers, Firstdraft Sydney NSW. Photo by Document Photography, 2019.

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Laura Curtis and Terri Janke (Terri Janke and Company), Vanessa Low, Sue Jo Wright, Debra Keenahan, Claudia Chinyere Akole, Connie Anthes, Monique Choy, Lachlan Herd and Penelope Benton. Contributors to the sixth edition of the Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design, at Join the Dots, Marrickville NSW. Photo by Jacquie Manning, 2022.

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David Barker, Dean Cross and Penelope Benton behind the scenes of NAVA's Sit For An Artist campaign, National Art School, Sydney NSW. Photo by Lauren O Photography, 2021.

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Emma Pham and Naomi Segal at NAVA's information stall at Cut N Polish – Artist Car Boot Sale, Carriageworks, Eveleigh NSW. Photo by Donnalyn Xu, 2022.



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