



NAVA's NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS AGENDA

NAVA's vision is that visual culture is central to Australian life.

As the national peak body for the Australian visual and media arts, craft and design sector, NAVA works through advocacy and service provision to achieve a flourishing sector and a more vibrant, distinctive and ethical cultural environment. Central to NAVA's work is the professional well being of Australian artists as visionaries, interpreters and commentators on our national zeitgeist and the creators of the cultural legacy of our time and place for the future.

In the 21st Century we have gone well beyond the archaic notion that artists have to suffer to make great art. Artists influence every aspect of our lives and the way we view ourselves as individuals and as a nation. They are increasingly recognised as contributors to the social and economic well-being of the community; a group of dedicated professionals with comparable rights & responsibilities to other citizens.

Artists' careers embrace a variety of different types of work. They tell the stories which make sense of human life, science, technology and politics as well as offer a critique which can challenge current orthodoxies. Increasingly artists' creative capabilities are having effect in very broad areas of public and private sector enterprise: in health; the environment; manufacturing and industry; urban development; object, industrial, graphic and fashion design; media and advertising. Indeed their capacity for innovation is influencing almost every area of endeavor.

While the primary purpose of the arts is cultural, social and intellectual, they also generate a substantial economy. Together it is estimated that the creative industries contributed \$31.1 billion to GDP in 2008-09; provided 4.8 per cent of total employment and made a larger contribution to GDP than a number of traditional industry groups, such as agriculture, forestry and fishing, electricity, gas, water and waste service¹. The arts present Australia with new commercial opportunities to grow our creative capital, realising the economic benefit of innovation and ideas. However, to realise this potential also requires the maintenance and building of stronger infrastructure support mechanisms.

Currently in Australia, creating visual arts and crafts is the most popular form of cultural activity for Australians, with one in five participating:

- over 2 million people are involved in visual arts activity, and just under 2 million participate in craft activity;
- 1.2 million kids are engaged in making arts and crafts themselves;
- around 11 million people a year visit galleries (more highly attended than Australia's most popular spectator sport, Australian Rules Football)².

¹ Centre for International Economics Analysis (CIE Report)

² Art Facts Visual Arts – Australia Council <http://artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/visual-arts>

Australia could be recognised internationally as one of the great arts nations, if the arts were to form the core of Australia's national identity and be better understood to express our human potential and our social wealth.

NAVA believes that the following plan of action will greatly enhance the capacity for the Australian visual and media arts, craft and design sector to reach its potential and deliver increased benefits for all Australians.

NAVA'S 3 POINT PLAN

1. Art and artists are highly valued

Objective:

A diversity of excellent visual and media arts, craft and design creators and their work are valued by key decision makers and the public for their contribution to all aspects of Australian cultural, social and economic well-being.

Strategies:

Recognition - there is an annual Prime Ministerial Visual Artist Award and excellent artists are revered and rewarded as Living National Treasures celebrating and promoting the diversity of communities and places.

Government – art is integrated across the government sphere and there will be at least 51% of politicians at all three levels of government who have a genuine commitment to the arts. We need iconic artist politicians like Vaclav Havel, playwright and poet & first President of the Czech Republic, Michael Ignatieff, author and academic & leader of the Liberal Party in Canada and poet and writer, Pablo Neruda, (winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971) Senator for the Chilean Communist Party and adviser to President Salvador Allende).

Funding - all levels of government support the arts through at least doubling their budget allocations to at least reach parity with New Zealand and Canada. Australian arts funding will be doubled from 0.084% to 0.17% of GDP (to approach that of New Zealand at 0.198% of GDP and Canada at 0.156%) and distributed equitably across all artforms to support artists and arts organisations.

Rights - 'Status of the Artist' legislation provides national recognition of the value of artists. This legislation will enshrine a range of social and economic rights in law; to ensure that the diversity of artists (including Indigenous artists) are treated respectfully, protected from exploitation, guaranteed freedom of expression and equitably financially rewarded through a number of means for the contribution they make to Australia's cultural life. This legislation and other associated regulations support artists' enterprise across all areas of application of their ideas and skills including through:

- tax incentives for the purchase of work by living Australian artists
- implementation of an interest free staged payments scheme for purchase of artwork by living Australia artists modelled on Tasmania's 'Collect' scheme
- all grants to artists being tax free
- income for artists from their arts practice being tax exempt
- the ATO's public ruling 'Income tax: carrying on business as a professional artist' being included in Status of the Artist legislation
- artists being exempt from the 'Non-commercial losses' legislation
- a superannuation scheme for artists being set up possibly based on

investment in artworks

- social security arrangements being adopted by Centrelink which enhance artists' ability to secure work by drawing on their arts skills
- artists' freedom of expression being protected, and their copyright, moral rights & resale royalty rights always being respected.

Where breaches of these rights are identified, artists have affordable access to justice.

Education - creative studies form an integral part of the offerings of all education institutions because they are embraced as an essential driver of ideas and enterprise. In particular, visual creativity is part of everyone's education through provision of a high quality arts curriculum at school which teaches visual arts and design sequentially and in-depth at all levels to encourage improved art and design critique and reflection, appreciation, participation and practice, ensuring that creative thinking is central to all young people's development. The implementation of a new national arts curriculum in schools provides a unique opportunity to raise standards in arts teaching and learning and to develop a culture of creativity and innovation in schools that nurtures young people's learning capacity in the 21st century.

Reporting – there is regular intelligent reporting and analysis and balanced critical comment about the arts across all media platforms especially through daily inclusion of arts items in the news to enhance public understanding and interest.

Appreciation - art is a critical part of our social exchange through diverse communities appreciating and having easy access to art itself, to information and ideas about art and being actively engaged in dialogue about art and culture.

Participation - interested people have opportunity to participate in the creative process themselves through there being provision of locally accessible teaching and resource hubs.

2. Professional artists have sustainable careers

Objective:

Artistic creators have viable careers across their lifetimes through provision of excellent education and training, financial support, expanded professional opportunities in all aspects of public and private life and the upholding of their rights.

Strategies:

Funding - artists receive generous support at double the current level for their professional development, innovative projects and enterprise initiatives from all three levels of government.

Fellowships - a three year fellowship scheme is established for 20 selected mature art practitioners/per annum at the level of \$80,000/yr indexed.

Education - artists can secure affordable, high quality in depth education for their profession through choice from a breadth of offerings at university arts schools and TAFEs which reflect the scope of what is needed to practice in any medium or a range of mediums across the disciplines. To achieve effective preparation for a career in the arts, the Australian Government should be undertaking research on the consequences of diminishing resources being invested in the provision of tertiary art, craft and design education with a view to taking any identified actions needed to ensure that high quality education is offered and is affordable for students wanting to become professional visual and/or media art, craft or design practitioners.

Professional Development - practitioners will have access to continuing professional development opportunities both in Australia and overseas through a greatly increased number and variety of residencies, mentorships, master classes and extra study opportunities both face to face and online.

Targeted investment – will triple from the public and private sectors for the provision of career opportunities for artistic creators.

Agencies - national brokerage agencies are created to assist art practitioners to secure work, employment, commissions, develop projects, tender for projects and establish their own enterprises, both in cultural and in other industries.

Industry agreements - written contracts are used in any agreement for exchange of goods and services between artists and those with whom they deal professionally. Artists' payment entitlements are protected through adoption of trust accounts, full value recompense for works on consignment in case of insolvency, loss and damage protection and expert maintenance of works in others' ownership, custody or control.

Remuneration – all creative practitioners are appropriately remunerated for their work at least at art industry standards including for sales of their artwork, loans for exhibitions, commissions, pitching for competitions, use of their intellectual property or provision of related services like writing, teaching or giving talks and workshops and for any professional advice or mentoring.

Space - creative practitioners are assisted to secure healthy, safe and affordable accommodation for making and/or presenting their work. In every major new development artists will be provided with free or very low cost work & presentation space under a 'Percent for Art Space' scheme. Examples in the US are in Baltimore where living space for artists is provided by local government & in New York where artists are given equity in or subsidy for their work spaces, post gentrification.

Creative Industries - there will be an injection of new support for provision of brokerage services between artists and potential employers and commissioners to open opportunities for these creative thinkers and makers to contribute to innovation and the evolution of the economy. This will enable many exciting opportunities to be opened up for Australian artists & designers within the creative industries and beyond, including all aspects of design, gaming, robotics, 3D printing, the audio-visual industries including animation, website design and online visual communication and new areas of technology that we don't even know about yet.

3. Australia has strong national and international arts infrastructure

Objective:

The art infrastructure of public and private presenting and service organisations facilitates a healthy and interconnected arts ecology around the country which supports the work of artists and brings their work to audiences, participants and buyers. This infrastructure includes public and private funding bodies, education institutions and groups, public and private galleries and other presenting institutions of all types and scales both urban and regional, major events like biennales and art fairs, art and craft centres, auction houses, retailers and shops, agents and brokers, and a great variety of other service providers and networks.

Strategies:

Organisations

Australia will be modelling a spectrum of excellent, sustainable art organisations

which will:

- secure adequate government and private sector funding;
- provide strong support through being a platform for artists and their work;
- reflect and celebrate the diversity of Australian culture;
- offering a conducive and critical context for engagement between artists and those interested in art;

- be dynamic and engaging for artists, audiences, participants, buyers, commissioners and the interested general public;
- collaborate appropriately to share objectives and resources;
- operate ethically in supporting artists, meeting industry standards of fair trade and fair dealing and the benchmarks in the latest edition of NAVA's Code of Practice for the Professional Australian Visual Arts, Craft and Design Sector including providing appropriate payment for service, funding and other forms of support for artists;
- undertake and make publicly available the findings of arts focused research;
- create/facilitate international exchange opportunities for artists and their work.

New bodies

- Australia will have a body similar to the UK's National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) whose mission is "to make the UK more innovative through investing in early-stage companies, informing policy, & delivering practical programmes that inspire others to solve the big challenges of the future".

- Government will fund a new interdisciplinary arts/science/technology centre in Australia similar to that in Banff, Canada, where exceptional artists and leaders in other disciplines from around the world "create and perform new works of art, share skills and knowledge in an interdisciplinary environment, and explore ideas and develop solutions in the arts and leadership".

International

Increasingly, the changes in technology and ease of travel open international opportunities for cultural experience and exchange through: Australian cultural creators getting themselves and their work overseas; the import/export of artworks; dialogue, training/education opportunities, networking and collaborative work between cultural professionals; touring; and exhibitions and festivals.

Federal and state/territory governments increase targeted assistance for arts organisations to achieve greater dissemination and appreciation of Australian art through building direct relationships and working collaboratively with their peers internationally so they can increase industry and audience development and artist exposure and networking.

This is facilitated through all Australian embassies having cultural attachés to engage in cultural diplomacy, not just to foster trade but to secure engagement around the world with Australian art and artists and help build strong arts exchange relationships, especially in our region.

To meet the same objectives, Australia will have a government supported International Cultural Council which will operate at arm's length from government.

Overseas artists will be vying for residencies in Australia at urban and regional art hot spots with a comparable profile to Berlin, New York and Finland today.

Australia's art fairs, biennales and festivals will be meccas for new work that expresses the movement and complexities of people and environment in a globalised world.

Australia will have the top selling artists, the most informed dealers, critical writers and curators with vision and integrity that are in demand internationally.