



National Cultural Policy

Creative Australia submission to the Environment and Communications References Committee

10 October 2025

Creative Australia welcomes the Environment and Communications References Committee's inquiry on the Australian Government's National Cultural Policy, *Revive: A place for every story, a story for every place*.

As the Australian Government's principal arts investment and advisory body, Creative Australia invests in and champions creativity. We have a legislative mandate to provide advice on matters connected with the arts.

This submission responds to the Committee's Terms of Reference:

- (a) the National Cultural Policy released on 30 January 2023; and**
- (b) any other related matters.**

In addition, this submission provides evidence and insights on matters of particular interest to the Committee:

- (a) potential tax reform and ways to boost the productivity of Australia's arts and creative sectors; and**
- (b) any opportunities, risks and challenges for Australia's arts and creative sectors associated with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI).**

We trust this submission is useful to the Committee's inquiry and look forward to its final report due in June 2026.

Attachment

- Creative Australia's *Principles for Generative AI and Creative Work*

The National Cultural Policy released on 30 January 2023

Announced in January 2023, the Australian Government's National Cultural Policy, *Revive: A place for every story, a story for every place*, provides a pathway for arts and culture to contribute to whole-of-government outcomes.

As the centrepiece of *Revive*, Creative Australia was established in mid-2023, building on the legacy of the Australia Council for the Arts and expanding our remit to be a bigger, bolder champion of arts, culture and creativity.

Creative Australia has now completed the establishment of the new entities and functions set out in *Revive*, including:

- **First Nations Arts**, a new dedicated body guided by the First Nations Board to centre First Nations voices, uphold cultural authority and advance self-determination in First Nations arts and culture. Since its establishment in 2024, First Nations Arts put in place a new Investment Framework for First Nations Arts and Culture; and expanded our suite of strategic investments to support First Nations artists, creative workers, organisations and businesses.
- **Music Australia**, a new body to support and invest in contemporary Australian music. In its first two years of operation, Music Australia has invested over \$29 million in Australian musicians, songwriters, music organisations, recording, export capability and market development. To inform its work and broader sector needs, Music Australia has also undertaken multiple research and data collection initiatives around key issues, including festivals, artists, businesses and venues.
- **Writing Australia**, a new body to support and invest in Australian literature. Writing Australia was established in July 2025 and will invest \$26 million over three years to support to the literature sector to grow local and international audiences for Australian books. This is in addition to the \$7.8 million that Creative Australia invests annually for literature projects.
- **Creative Workplaces**, a new body to champion fair, safe and respectful creative workplaces. With support from the states and territories, the Creative Workplaces website was launched in 2025 as a national resource hub designed to support fair, safe and respectful workplaces across Australia's arts and culture sector.
- **connecting private and philanthropic investment with arts and cultural activity.** *Revive* facilitated the transfer of the functions of Creative Partnerships Australia to Creative Australia to encourage collaboration with private sector support in the arts. As part of this, Creative Australia has continued to explore new investment models and partnerships that leverage additional funding for creative practice; deliver innovative private investment capability programs; facilitate private investment in the arts through the Australian Cultural Fund; and develop public awareness campaigns such as the upcoming AusArt Day which will take place on 23 October 2025.
- **collaborating with the Office for the Arts on the development of the Arts and Disability Associated Plan**, an associated plan under the National Disability Strategy and a commitment of the National Cultural Policy. *Equity: The Arts and Disability Associated Plan* was released in November 2024 and Creative Australia has commenced work on implementing the plan's key actions.

A full summary of Creative Australia's latest activity can be found in our [2024–25 Annual Report](#).

Opportunities, risks and challenges for Australia's arts and creative sectors associated with emerging technologies such as AI

In consultation with the sector, over the past few years Creative Australia has been exploring the opportunities, risks and challenges of AI, particularly generative AI (GenAI).

Digital innovation in AI offers transformative opportunities for artists to generate new creative concepts. There are many uses and applications for AI, presenting new possibilities for artists integrating AI technologies into their creative practice. The scale and complexity of the use of AI in artistic work will continue to grow, as the technology further evolves.

The proliferation of AI, particularly generative AI applications, provides a critical opportunity for artists and creative industries to exploit their IP in a global context. This technology can support the generation of new forms of revenue, and enable artists to maintain authority, and sustain and maximise their work in a global economy.

However, there are complex issues surrounding AI and the arts and cultural sector. Issues include IP protection for artists in both the inputs and outputs of AI systems, specific potential harms to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultures, and regulatory questions on ownership, copyright, consumer protection and trust.

Creative Australia's broad position is that to promote a thriving creative industry centred on human creativity, policy settings must protect the intellectual property of copyright owners and mitigate against harms of AI. This in turn will incentivise creation, help to generate opportunities for a broad a range of practitioners and businesses, and support artists to engage in creative practice. This will also ensure that the broader benefits that flow from arts and creativity to Australia's economy, cultural identity and people are not lost.

As part of this work, Creative Australia has developed a set of ***Principles for Generative AI and Creative Work*** that provide guidance on using GenAI for creative output. These principles will continue to evolve as the technology progresses and discussions on regulatory and policy settings advance. We have attached the principles to this submission. For more information, see our [website](#).

Creative Australia has also responded to a number of inquiries on matters connected to the impacts of AI on artists and our arts and culture more broadly, including:

- The Productivity Commission's inquiry into [Harnessing Data and Digital Technology](#) (2025). See Creative Australia's two submissions to the inquiry process: [submission to the consultation](#) and [submission to the interim report](#).
- The Treasury's [Review of the Australian Consumer Law consultation](#) (2024). See [Creative Australia's submission](#).
- The Department of Industry, Science and Resources' consultation on [Mandatory guardrails for safe and responsible AI](#) (2024). See [Creative Australia's submission](#).
- The Attorney-General's Department's [Copyright Enforcement Review 2022–23](#) (2023). See [Creative Australia's submission](#).

We have also published research exploring the opportunities and challenges of AI on the arts and cultural sector, including the Listening In research series. The second report in the series, *Insights on music discovery and engagement*, provides research and insights on the ways AI and algorithmic selection are impacting the discovery of and engagement with Australian music.

In addition, Creative Australia's upcoming 2025 National Arts Participation Survey is exploring public perceptions of, and engagement with, AI and creativity. The research seeks to understand Australians' attitudes towards AI-generated art and the perceived benefits and concerns of AI and creativity. The results from the survey will be published in mid-2026.

Potential tax reform and ways to boost the productivity of Australia's arts and creative sectors

Creative Australia understands economic constraints are limiting growth and hindering business viability for artists and arts and cultural businesses. These economic constraints have been profoundly sensed, particularly as COVID-19 deeply weakened the sector leaving artists, businesses and workers more vulnerable than ever.¹

In order to unlock growth, the sector would like to see cultural tax reform at all levels of government. The tax system intersects with creative practice across all levels of activity, and in a multitude of ways. The sector is advocating for reforms to Australia's tax system to better support and enable the viability of creative practice and creative businesses, and unlock the potential of those who make and create culture.

Creative Australia has been participating in the NSW Government's consultation on cultural tax reform. As a participant of the Cultural Tax Reform Steering Committee, we are working closely with the NSW Government on this agenda. We prepared a [submission to the consultation process](#) and provided evidence, analysis, concepts and advice directly to the committee.

Creative Australia also attended the Art of Tax Reform Summit on 25 September 2025. Key ideas discussed at the summit were exempting arts prizes from taxable income, tax offsets for performance, greater incentives for philanthropic donations and extending incentives that exist in other sectors to the cultural sector.

In our submission we highlighted that while well-designed tax reform measures can address some of the sector's challenges, we recognise alternative approaches may also be needed to overcome these challenges.

About Creative Australia

Creative Australia is the Australian Government's principal arts investment and advisory body. We invest in and champion Australian creativity.

We invest in creative people and organisations and help build audiences and markets for Australian creative work, both in Australia and internationally. Our establishing legislation, the *Creative Australia Act 2023*, requires us to uphold and promote freedom of expression in the arts and to support Australian arts practice that reflects the diversity of Australia. As a result, we invest in artists and organisations that represent a range of voices, perspectives and stories.

Endnotes

¹ See Creative Australia 2022, [Impacts of COVID-19 on the Cultural and Creative Industries](#). See also Throsby D and Petetskaya K 2024, [Artists as Workers: An economic study of professional artists in Australia](#).



Australian Government

**Creative
Australia**

Generative AI and creative work

Creative Australia Principles

Context

The use of generative AI for content creation marks a step change for the role of AI in culture and creativity. AI systems have been shaping cultural consumption for some time, for example through personalisation algorithms on streaming platforms. However, as readily accessible consumer products have entered the market in recent years, there has been a strong increase in the use of generative AI systems for content creation and to produce creative works.

There are many uses and applications for AI, presenting new possibilities for artists integrating AI technologies into their creative practice and for institutions to connect audiences with content. However, as this technology continues to develop, clear principles need to be applied to policy development to ensure the creative work that has been used to train generative AI systems is appropriately acknowledged, and the potential impacts of generative AI on our culture and creativity are understood and managed.

The development of AI technologies, our adoption of them and attitudes to them, are a fast-moving and rapidly evolving landscape. Policies and guidance for ethical use of AI need to be responsive to this changing landscape. There is a need for clear principles to be applied to the development and use of AI technologies now, and as they continue to develop.

IP protection for artists

Unlike other new technologies that have developed over time, the success of generative AI systems relies on both technology and the large datasets they are trained on. For generative AI applications designed to produce creative outputs, these datasets are drawn from existing creative work which have been used predominantly without permission and with no recognition or remuneration for the original creator.

In addition to principles of fairness and the legal right to be remunerated for the use of creative work, this has broader implications for the future of creative work in an AI age. Creative work can now be produced by anyone, with significant potential impact on the financial viability of creative careers, and this content is being produced off existing creative work without compensation.

Ownership of generative AI

Concentrated ownership of AI applications further compounds the potential impact on revenue models for artists. The top four companies in the world by market capitalisation are technology companies, all of which own platforms and technology integral to cultural production and distribution. Generative AI systems are the latest frontier in an ongoing trend of concentrated ownership of technology by a small group of global tech companies which have altered traditional revenue models for artists and led to a significant transfer of revenue away from creative sectors.

The computing power and technology capability required to train large language models has meant advances in this area are largely industry-driven, led by global technology companies. These companies have significant control over the evolution and future direction AI technology will take. Their size, power and global nature present challenges for regulation. This requires careful consideration, because without any intervention, the current trajectory of developments in generative AI has widespread implications for culture and creative output.

In addition to the impact on revenue models for artists, AI presents challenges to Australia's cultural identity and unique creative output. Many AI applications used for creative output are global in their scope and use and much as recommendation algorithms have made it harder for artists to be surfaced locally, the global nature of AI has implications for Australian culture and creativity. This can be seen in AI created Indigenous styles of art produced without attribution or the consent of First Nations communities, following cultural protocols on how art styles can be used and by who, or recognising the connection of Indigenous art to communities and Country.

AI within creative practice

As with previous new technologies, artists are integrating AI into their creative practice in a range of ways, adopting a variety of approaches and generating a broad scope of artistic work. The scale and complexity of the use of AI in artistic work will continue to grow, as the technology further evolves. Ethical frameworks and guidance are required for artists who are using AI and want to engage with best practice across areas such as copyright and ethical use of datasets, and education has an important role to play in sharing learnings and adoption.

Regulation

Regulation is often framed as while potentially necessary, inevitably a handbrake on innovation within AI technology. But regulation can also be proactively used to provide a clearer direction for the evolution of AI which maximises the positive potential of AI and achieves more broadly shared benefits.

In the case of generative AI there is a gap in the protections for the creatives whose data is being used to train the models without their consent or remuneration.

Competition law is a key tool for addressing a concentration of market power to maintain a dynamic and innovative market for consumers and small businesses.

Competition law seeks to guard against abuse of market power however this can have limited efficacy in a global business context. Also, it is not consumers who are experiencing the harm – in fact the consumer is benefiting from access to free generative AI tools. Rather it is the creatives (i.e. the originators of the data) that are losing out. Whilst competition law in Australia provides protections for small businesses, this is a costly, lengthy, and uncertain route to take, and its jurisdiction does not extend to capture corporations operating outside Australia.

Whilst copyright law has traditionally provided protection for creatives, the scale of datasets used in generative AI is challenging the effectiveness of copyright to protect creative IP.

Principles guiding the use of generative AI for creative output

The following principles have been developed to underpin policy and guidance on the development and use of generative AI applications for creative output. They are intended to promote a thriving environment, centred on human creativity, that generates opportunities for a broad a range of practitioners and businesses and supports artists to engage in creative practice. These must be founded in the fundamental principles of fairness, ethics and transparency, and the centrality of human creativity.



Value the human creative inputs used to build AI applications

Recognise that human creativity is central to our culture. Existing creative work used to build AI applications should be recognised and remunerated, either through individual or collective models.



Support artists and users to ethically engage with AI

Develop a clear and accessible framework for ethically engaging with AI.



Uphold the transparency of AI usage

AI generated creative output must be clearly identified.



Support policy approaches that enable innovation and support the unique identity of Australian culture and creative work

Adopt policy approaches that provide direction for the ongoing evolution of AI that benefits Australia and Australian creativity.



Recognise the impact of global ownership of AI technologies on accountability and government capacity to shape ethical development of AI technology

Inform government responses to the impact on artist revenue and the capacity to protect existing creative IP of concentrated and global ownership of AI systems.



Include creative leaders in policy design and decision-making for key developments in AI

Involving creative leaders in design and development will support future AI technologies that positively contribute to Australia and Australia's creative industries.