

21 May 2026

The Hon Tony Burke MP, Minister for the Arts

Susan Templeman MP, Special Envoy for the Arts

Dear Minister Burke and Ms Templeman,

Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) is pleased to make this submission to the review of *Revive, the National Cultural Policy*.

Our submission is informed by our work with thousands of Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CaRM), Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD), migrant and refugee artists, creative workers and communities through our programs, research, training, events and advocacy. This includes artists and creative workers with intersecting experiences of disability, sexuality, gender, class, migration and racialisation.

It is also guided by our work across the arts, screen and creative industries, with national peak bodies, grassroots organisations and the Creative Cultural Diversity Network. In preparing this submission, we convened two roundtables to discuss the next phase of *Revive* in a CaRM and CaLD context, and we broadly support the joint advocacy of the Consortium of National Peak Arts Organisations.

It is critical that we work together to build a robust, relevant and inclusive creative sector that reflects contemporary Australia.

DARTS welcomes the opportunity to discuss our submission further and support the department in its rollout of the next phase.

Kind regards,

Lena Nahlous

CEO, Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS)

GLOSSARY

We acknowledge the limitations of imperfect and contested umbrella terminology and respect the rights of individuals and communities to self-identify.

Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CaRM).

DARTS uses CaRM as an umbrella term to refer to communities and individuals who experience structural racial and cultural marginalisation within Australia because of race, culture, ethnicity, language, migration history, refugee experience, religion or perceived difference from dominant Anglo-Celtic norms. It includes underrepresented Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities, People of Colour, racialised migrants, refugees and communities, diasporic communities and members of the Global Majority.

Underrepresented CaLD. Like CaRM, the term focuses on communities that experience structural barriers due to race, culture, ethnicity, language, migration or refugee background.

Global Majority refers to Black, Indigenous and racialised peoples who collectively constitute most of the world's population, yet have been historically marginalised through colonisation, racism and unequal power structures. Used across international anti-racist, cultural and human rights discourse, the term reframes communities often described as "minorities" by recognising their global demographic, cultural and political significance.

Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) is collaborative arts practice that brings together artists and communities to co-create cultural and artistic outcomes grounded in participation, inclusion and shared authorship. It centres community voice and lived experience, using creative process as a tool for cultural expression, social connection, equity and collective change.

Social Cohesion. DARTS sees social cohesion as the conditions that allow communities to participate, tell complex stories, disagree safely, navigate difference, build solidarity, exercise cultural rights and participate in cultural life, rather than assimilation, passive harmony, silence or consensus.

Cultural Diversity and Anti-Racism are terms that are related but not interchangeable. Supporting cultural diversity is essential for representation, participation and cultural rights. Anti-racism is required to address structural barriers, racial hierarchies and institutional practices that determine which stories are valued and funded for programming, reviewing, collecting and protecting.

AI Assessment and Language. DARTS notes that digital tools may be used to review submissions. This makes clear definitions essential and raises concerns about whether such tools may misinterpret or soften community-specific and anti-racist language. DARTS therefore uses explicit terms throughout this submission, including those defined by migrant, refugee, diaspora and forced migration communities.

Embedding Anti-Racism, Cultural Equity and Democratic Participation as Core Creative Sector Infrastructure

DARTS is the national voice for ethno-cultural and migrant racial equity in the Australian arts, screen and creative sectors. Our vision is clear: A creative sector empowered by Australia’s cultural, linguistic and racial diversity. Guided by principles of self-determination, autonomy and social justice, DARTS combines creative production and service provision (resources, events, research, training, advocacy). We act as a broker between artists, industry, educators and government, and commission content from CaRM creative workers to articulate key issues and showcase leading practice. While our focus is on underrepresented CaLD and CaRM communities, we work intersectionally and in partnership with other communities, particularly First Nations, women, and d/Deaf and Disabled people.

INTRODUCTION

Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) welcomes the review of REVIVE as an opportunity to strengthen Australia’s National Cultural Policy and ensure it reflects the realities, complexities and possibilities of contemporary Australia.

REVIVE has delivered key structural reforms and laid important foundations, but its next phase must go further. DARTS strongly recommends anti-racism, cultural safety, climate justice, accountability, multiculturalism, democratic participation, and equity as non-negotiable foundations across all five policy pillars. This requires explicit recognition of CaRM creatives and communities, alongside targeted actions, investment, accessible workforce pathways, and mechanisms to address systemic underrepresentation.¹

Arts and creativity play a critical role in fostering social cohesion through belonging, participation, dialogue and democratic expression during times of increasing social fragmentation, economic precarity, climate instability², global conflict, racism, democratic distrust and rapid technological change. These outcomes are strongest when creative and cultural sectors are equitable, accountable and sustainable. Equity determines who participates, whose stories are seen and valued, who holds decision-making power, and whether the sector remains relevant.

Despite REVIVE’s principles of access and representation, significant gaps remain. To realise its vision of “a place for every story,” CaRM creatives and communities must be explicitly recognised, resourced, supported and empowered to shape its future. Their omission from REVIVE has practical consequences: what is not explicitly recognised in policy is difficult to measure, prioritise, resource or hold accountable.

Multiple reports—including DARTS’ *Shifting the Balance*, Creative Australia’s *Towards Equity*, Media Diversity Australia’s *Who Gets to Tell Australian Stories?*, and Screen Australia’s *Seeing Ourselves*—show that CaLD and CaRM creatives are consistently underrepresented in leadership, workforce, funding, programming, and screen and media roles. For example, over 75% of TV news and current affairs presenters are Anglo-Celtic, and only 18% of main characters in Australian TV dramas are from non-Anglo-Celtic backgrounds. This measurable underrepresentation is ongoing and structural.³

Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) plays a key role in equity-building by creating the participatory infrastructure through which communities engage in creative and cultural life. CACD and

¹ Diversity Arts Australia, *Submission to the Senate Inquiry into the National Cultural Policy*, October 2025; Diversity Arts Australia, *Shifting the Balance: Cultural Diversity in Leadership in the Australian Arts, Screen and Creative Sectors*, 2019; Diversity Arts Australia, *Fair Play Reflections Report*, 2026.

² The Australia Institute, *Vulnerability to Extreme Heat: The Inequitable Impacts of a Warming Australia* (2024); Creative Australia, *Creating Our Future: National Arts Participation Survey* (2023), and Regional Arts Australia advocacy and sector reports relating to community resilience and regional cultural infrastructure.

³ Diversity Arts Australia, *Shifting the Balance: Cultural Diversity in Leadership in the Australian Arts, Screen and Creative Sectors*, 2019; Creative Australia, *Towards Equity: A Research Overview of Diversity in Australia’s Arts and Cultural Sector*, 2021; Media Diversity Australia, *Who Gets to Tell Australian Stories?*, 2020; Screen Australia, *Seeing Ourselves: Reflections on Diversity in Australian TV Drama*, 2016.

participatory practices are essential for addressing challenges shaped by climate instability, economic precarity, and rising inequality. CACD should not be seen as informal outreach, unpaid engagement, or a secondary arts pathway; it is core cultural infrastructure.

REVIVE must also align with broader national frameworks, including:

- The Australian Human Rights Commission's National Anti-Racism Framework⁴;
- The Multicultural Framework Review Roadmap⁵;
- Creative Workplaces, including its role in supporting fair, safe and respectful workplaces across the creative industries;
- Service and Creative Skills Australia's creative workforce development role, including the *Creative Workforce Scoping Study*;
- Equity: The Arts and Disability Associated Plan⁶;
- Emerging national discussions and frameworks on climate justice, artificial intelligence, intellectual property, and democratic participation.

The Multicultural Framework Review, *Towards Fairness: A Multicultural Australia for All*, identifies creative and cultural life as critical to participation, belonging and social cohesion. Its relevant creative sector recommendations include a comprehensive review of community cultural program investments by Creative Australia, a pilot multi-year seed fund for community-driven creative solutions, and funding for multicultural organisations to hire arts and cultural workers. REVIVE should align with this Roadmap and embed its arts and cultural recommendations across policy, funding and accountability frameworks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strengthen First Nations peoples' self-determination and cultural authority, and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) protections across national cultural policy [*First Nations First*];
2. Explicitly name CaRM and underrepresented CaLD communities and set direct, measurable actions to address their systemic underrepresentation [*A Place for Every Story*];
3. Develop and resource a national, industry-led Anti-Racism and Cultural Equity Strategy aligned with the AHRC's *National Anti-Racism Framework and Multicultural Framework Review* [*Strong Cultural Infrastructure; A Place for Every Story*];
4. Establish a CaRM Creator Fund and protected funding streams for CaRM-led organisations, projects and creatives [*A Place for Every Story; Strong Cultural Infrastructure*];
5. Establish a national CaRM Leadership, Workforce and Participation Pathways Strategy across the arts, screen and creative sectors [*Centrality of the Artist*];
6. Protect freedom of artistic and creative expression and establish safe reporting mechanisms for censorship, racism and discrimination [*Strong Cultural Infrastructure*];
7. Embed compulsory anti-racism, cultural safety and equity training and mandate equity action plans and accountability mechanisms for all publicly funded organisations [*Strong Cultural Infrastructure; Engaging the Audience*];

⁴ Australian Human Rights Commission, *National Anti-Racism Framework*, 2024.

⁵ Australian Government, *Towards Fairness: A Multicultural Australia for All*, Multicultural Framework Review Panel, 2024, pp. 56–57, <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/multicultural-framework-review/Documents/report-summary/multicultural-framework-review-report-english.pdf>. *Towards Fairness* identifies arts and culture as critical to participation, belonging and social cohesion. It provides a strategic Roadmap for implementing 29 recommendations that include a comprehensive review of community cultural program investments by Creative Australia, a pilot multi-year seed fund for community-driven creative solutions, and funding for multicultural organisations to hire arts and cultural workers

⁶ Australian Government, *Equity: The Arts and Disability Associated Plan*, 2024.

8. Measure and report on diversity across workforce, leadership, funding, programming, commissioning, collections and audience participation [*Centrality of the Artist; Strong Cultural Infrastructure*];
9. Reform funding, tax and regulatory systems to improve equity and access for CaRM creatives, CACD and small-to-medium organisations [*Centrality of the Artist*]; and
10. Regulate AI industries and develop guidelines specific to the creative sector to ensure equitable participation, cultural and intellectual rights and artist protections in digital spaces [*Centrality of the Artist; Engaging the Audience*].

RECOMMENDATIONS IN DETAIL

1. Strengthen First Nations peoples' self-determination, cultural authority and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) protections across national cultural policy

DARTS strongly supports the prioritisation of REVIVE's foundational pillar *First Nations First*. The policy must recognise First Nations sovereignty, self-determination and cultural authority as central to Australia's cultural life and identity and First Nations People's deep connection to Country. Climate instability and environmental crisis disproportionately affect First Nations communities, regional communities and communities experiencing structural marginalisation, at which times, arts and culture play a critical role in supporting collective resilience, recovery, local knowledge-sharing and cultural continuity.

Anti-racism, diversity and cultural equity work in the arts and creative sectors must foreground First Nations communities and must not conflate experiences of dispossession, colonisation and racism with those of settler-migrant communities. While these experiences may intersect, they are distinct and require different governance, policy and self-determination approaches.

DARTS recommends:

- Ongoing investment in First Nations-led arts and cultural infrastructure;
- Strengthened Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) protections;
- Truth-telling, language revitalisation and cultural maintenance initiatives; and
- First Nations-led governance across publicly funded cultural institutions and programs.

2. Explicitly name CaRM and underrepresented CaLD communities and set direct, measurable actions to address their systemic underrepresentation

Stories and perspectives shape national culture and language shapes institutional priorities and accountability. *A place for every story* must explicitly recognise Australia's CaRM creatives, who remain underrepresented in leadership, commissioning, collections, workforce, programming and funding⁷.

The terms CaRM and underrepresented CaLD must be applied in all policy, funding, evaluation and reporting frameworks and mechanisms. Forced migration, settlement, diaspora identity and intergenerational marginalisation must be recognised as distinct experiences that cannot be collapsed into a single category. Creative pathways and artistic development beyond the showcasing of multicultural art that incorporate more nuanced self-determined approaches to language, participation and representation must be embedded in funding, research, and policy.

3. Develop and resource a national, industry-led Anti-Racism and Cultural Equity Strategy aligned with the AHRC's National Anti-Racism Framework and Multicultural Framework Review

⁷ Diversity Arts Australia, *Shifting the Balance: Cultural Diversity and the Arts Workforce*; Creative Australia and Macquarie University, *Artists as Workers: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia* (2024); Creative Australia, *Creating Our Future: National Arts Participation Survey* (2023).

The Australian Government must fully endorse, resource and implement the recommendations of the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Anti-Racism Framework, including addressing the impact of recent funding cuts on the rollout of critical, research-based anti-racism and social cohesion strategies.

Cultural diversity and anti-racism are related, but not interchangeable. Cultural diversity is essential to participation and representation. Anti-racism addresses the structural barriers, racial hierarchies and institutional practices that determine whose stories are valued, funded, collected and protected.

Anti-racism and cultural equity lenses must frame the review of funding and risk frameworks, examine how 'risk' is defined, and assess how work addressing racism, diaspora politics, human rights, and social justice is evaluated. Publicly funded organisations must be required to implement anti-racism and cultural equity standards and report against them⁸. DARTS initiatives⁹ demonstrate how sustained training, mentoring and equity planning that drive organisational change can be nationally scaled through REVIVE.

DARTS supports the sustained, long-term resourcing of a national, industry-led Anti-Racism and Cultural Equity Strategy aligned with *REVIVE*, the Australian Human Rights Commission's *National Anti-Racism Framework*¹⁰ and the *Australian Multicultural Framework Review Roadmap*¹¹.

The strategy must:

- Establish meaningful sector standards and accountability frameworks beyond self-assessment models;
- Embed anti-racism and cultural safety protocols in workplaces, governance, programming, collections, commissioning and funding;
- Fund research and evidence gathering to generate practical implementation tools, case studies and good practice exemplars.

4. Establish a CaRM Creator Fund and protected funding streams for CaRM-led organisations, projects and creatives

CACD and culturally specific practice methodologies and programs support participatory, community-led cultural practice. They enable communities to shape cultural narratives, preserve cultural knowledge and strengthen belonging and social cohesion and often provide an entry point into the arts, supporting long-term participation and career pathways for new migrant, refugee, and CaRM creatives. The Multicultural Framework Review recommends long-term investment in community cultural programs, community-led initiatives, and embedded arts workers in multicultural organisations, while CACD practice relies on long-term relationships, trust, and sustained engagement that are undermined by short-term funding and ongoing barriers to access and support.

We are consistently told that CaRM-led collectives, creatives, organisations, and initiatives are often structurally excluded from funding systems that favour established organisations and networks; funders report low numbers of CaLD/CaRM funding applicants¹²; and newly arrived creatives face language barriers, limited networks, unfamiliar funding systems, and less access to culturally responsive support¹³.

⁸ See the diversity reporting and inclusion frameworks of the Arts Council England (*Let's Create Diversity*) and the British Film Institute (*Diversity Standards*).

⁹ Diversity Arts Australia, *Fair Play Reflections Report: Learning and Practice for Equity in Australia's Creative Industries*, 2026. The report documents seven years of learning and impact from Fair Play: Equity, Inclusion and the Creative Industries, managed by Diversity Arts Australia and delivered with First Nations and disability sector partners. Working across CaLD, First Nations and disability equity, the program supported 75 organisations, delivered 356 equity training and mentoring sessions, and reached more than 2,000 participants. Available at: <https://diversityarts.org.au/fair-play-reflections-report>; Diversity Arts Australia, *Anti-Racism & the Arts* campaign and resource platform: <https://antiracism.art>

¹⁰ Australian Human Rights Commission, *National Anti-Racism Framework*, 2024.

¹¹ Australian Government, *Towards Fairness: A Multicultural Australia for All – Multicultural Framework Review*, 2024.

¹² Diversity Arts Australia consultations with arts organisations and funding bodies, 2023–2026; Creative Australia peer assessment and workforce diversity discussions referenced through sector consultations.

¹³ Australian Government, *Multicultural Framework Review* (2024); Settlement Council of Australia policy reports relating to employment and participation barriers for newly arrived migrants and refugees.

DARTS recommends the establishment of:

- A dedicated CaRM Creator Fund;
- Protected funding streams for CaRM-led organisations and projects;
- Long-term funding models supporting CACD and culturally specific practice, including devolved funding models, similar to the Regional Arts Australia model, to improve access, cultural responsiveness, and reach into communities currently underrepresented in mainstream funding systems.

5. Establish a national CaRM Leadership, Workforce and Participation Pathways Strategy across the arts, screen and creative sectors

Representation without power, pay and pathways will not deliver structural change. CaRM creatives need sustained access to leadership, governance, commissioning, peer assessment, employment, career development, workforce retention and executive decision-making, alongside fair recognition and remuneration for cultural labour and lived expertise¹⁴. These barriers are compounded for creatives living in culturally diverse, regional, rural and remote areas, d/Deaf and Disabled creatives, and people from working-class backgrounds. Too often, lived experience and cultural labour are extracted without fair recognition or fair pay. Programs such as *Shifting the Balance Leaders*¹⁵ and *Ripple: Disability and Culturally Diverse Internship*¹⁶ demonstrate how targeted leadership development, paid pathways, and industry partnerships strengthen representation and sector sustainability.

DARTS recommends a national career-long CaRM Leadership, Workforce, and Participation Pathways Strategy developed in partnership with SaCSA, Creative Australia, Screen Australia, DARTS, TAFE and training providers, unions and CaRM and other sector organisations. It must build on existing workforce development work and ensure education, training and vocational pathways, including:

- Targeted and remunerated programs for working-class, Disabled, regional, First Nations and CaRM practitioners at all career stages: leadership development, mentoring, paid internships and traineeships;
- Governance pathways and increased representation on boards and decision-making bodies;
- Culturally safe workplaces that retain and support diverse leadership.
- Strengthened and resourced sector standards, codes and benchmarks, including NAVA's Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design, to support fair pay, ethical contracts, safe working conditions and equitable professional practice across the creative workforce¹⁷.

6. Protect freedom of artistic and creative expression and establish safe reporting mechanisms for censorship, racism and discrimination

CaRM creatives are often disproportionately exposed to racism, censorship, public backlash and political pressure or targeting, particularly when engaging with complex social, cultural or geopolitical issues. Existing workplace protections do not extend to precarious, contract- and project-based creative labour,

¹⁴ Diversity Arts Australia, *Shifting the Balance: Cultural Diversity in Leadership in the Australian Arts, Screen and Creative Sectors*, 2019; Creative Australia and Macquarie University, *Artists as Workers: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia*, 2024. These reports identify ongoing cultural diversity gaps in arts leadership and artist pathways, including that 51% of major cultural organisations surveyed had no CaLD leaders, only 9% of surveyed leaders were CaLD Australians, 13% of artists were from non-English speaking backgrounds, and 15% of artists identified cultural or ethnic background as the most important factor currently inhibiting their professional development.

¹⁵ Diversity Arts Australia's pilot Shifting the Balance Leadership Program was delivered in partnership with TAFE NSW, supporting 20 mid-career leaders across NSW. The program included two TAFE NSW microcredentials, workshops, masterclasses, mentoring, and funding to deliver small bespoke leadership projects.

¹⁶ The Ripple program is run by Accessible Arts NSW in partnership with Diversity Arts Australia. Now in its fourth year, the program has placed 32 early-career creative sector workers in paid roles with arts organisations and institutions, alongside mentorship, training and professional development. More here: <https://aarts.net.au/news/ripple-2026-apply-now>

¹⁷ National Association for the Visual Arts, *Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design*, sixth edition, 2022, endorsed in Australian Government, REVIVE: Australia's Cultural Policy, Pillar 3, "Centrality of the Artist," pp. 53–54.

which was recently highlighted in the failure of Australian cultural institutions to adequately safeguard artistic freedom and freedom of expression¹⁸.

Assessment frameworks must recognise that dominant definitions of “excellence” often privilege Eurocentric, institutionally validated or exclusionary cultural hierarchies. DARTS supports robust arm’s length funding principles free from political interference¹⁹. Australia’s creative community must work in spaces where diverse voices can be heard without fear of censorship, silencing or reprisal. Artistic works, including those that challenge, disturb or provoke, must be supported within independent funding frameworks that protect democratic participation and freedom of expression.

DARTS recommends the establishment of:

- Secure, culturally trusted and confidential procedures for raising concerns and safe reporting mechanisms relating to censorship, racism or discrimination; and
- Stronger freedom of expression and artistic freedom protections for artists, contractors and freelance creatives.

7. Embed compulsory anti-racism, cultural safety and equity training and mandate equity action plans and accountability mechanisms for all publicly funded organisations

Meaningful sector change that addresses systemic inequity requires sustained, long-term investment in organisations, businesses, institutions and workers that shape the conditions, cultures and decision-making structures of Australia’s creative and cultural industries. DARTS recommends mandatory equity, anti-racism and cultural safety education for all publicly funded organisations, supported by robust equity action plans, accountability systems, independent evaluation, benchmarking, and nationally coordinated organisational change. DARTS’ Fair Play program²⁰ provides a proven model for embedding equity capability through training, mentoring, practical resources and organisational change support. This could be scaled nationally through alignment with SaCSA’s workforce development role and Creative Workplaces’ remit to support fair, safe and respectful workplaces.

This must move beyond one-off training to:

- Executive, board-level and organisation-wide capacity-building;
- Accountability frameworks;
- Cultural safety protocols; and
- Sector-wide mentoring support and practical tool development and implementation.

8. Measure and report on diversity across workforce, leadership, funding, programming, commissioning, collections and audience participation

That which is not measured is difficult to resource, prioritise and hold accountable. Nationally consistent diversity reporting standards must be implemented for workforce participation, leadership, governance, funding allocation, programming, commissioning, collections and audience participation²¹. Creative Workplaces is well placed to play a supporting role, working with Creative Australia, Screen Australia, DARTS, SaCSA, unions, CaRM-led and First Nations-led organisations and sector partners to develop national anti-racism, cultural safety and equity standards or a sector charter, including guidance on implementation, reporting, referral pathways and accountability.

¹⁸ Diversity Arts Australia, *Response to Creative Australia’s Reinstatement of the Venice Biennale Artistic Team & Governance Review*, July 2025; Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) statements on artistic freedom and political interference.

¹⁹ UNESCO, *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (2005); National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA), *Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design*; [Creative Australia](#) core operational pillars.

²⁰ Diversity Arts Australia, *Fair Play Reflections Report*, 2026.

²¹ Creative Australia, *Towards Equity: A Research Overview of Diversity in Australia’s Arts and Cultural Sector*, 2021. The report found that 16% of people in leadership roles in Australia Council multi-year investment organisations self-identified as CaLD, and that 56% of multi-year investment organisations had no First Nations representation in any leadership roles.

The work must include intersectional, culturally safe and self-determined approaches to diversity data collection, independent benchmarking and evaluation, and public reporting, to recognise that experiences of race, culture, language, migration history and refugee background intersect with disability, gender, sexuality, class, age, geography, religion and other forms of structural marginalisation. Evaluation must focus on consistent sector-wide accountability, reporting, and structural change through meaningful participation, co-authorship, cultural safety, community trust and equitable decision-making²².

9. Reform funding, tax and regulatory systems to improve equity and access for CaRM creatives, CACD and small-to-medium organisations

Tax reform is a cultural equity issue. Policy must treat creative work as integral to Australia's cultural fabric, not only as an economic commodity, and recognise that it warrants sustained public support. Creative workers remain among the most financially precarious workers in Australia²³. They experience insecure and irregular income, reliance on short-term projects and limited access to long-term employment protections²⁴. These conditions are unevenly distributed. CaRM creatives, community-based practitioners and small-to-medium organisations face structural racism, reduced access to mainstream networks and limited core funding. Long-term, place-based, and intermediary funding are needed to support community participation, organisational sustainability, and CACD practice.

DARTS recommends:

- Strengthening tax incentives for small-to-medium and community-led cultural organisations;
- Reforming non-commercial loss provisions affecting creative workers;
- Broadening and simplifying income averaging for artists and creative freelancers;
- Exempting government grants, fellowships and prizes from taxable income; and
- Exploring rebate models supporting CACD and underrepresented CaRM creatives.

10. Regulate AI industries and develop guidelines specific to the creative sector to ensure equitable participation, cultural and intellectual rights and artist protections in digital spaces

Artificial Intelligence and digital technologies are rapidly reshaping the creative industries. Rather than impartial tools, they can reproduce racial bias, enable cultural extraction and exacerbate existing inequities. Policy must regulate emerging technologies to support Indigenous data sovereignty, cultural sovereignty, cultural equity, community-led digital participation, online storytelling and culturally diverse innovation. Risks, particularly for First Nations and CaRM creatives, relate to unauthorised use of cultural material, exploitation of creative work and unpaid labour, loss of cultural sovereignty²⁵, and amplification of racial bias.

DARTS recommends that cultural policy embeds creative sector-specific AI guidelines in digital spaces that ensure:

- Informed consent and transparency;
- Cultural rights protections;
- Fair compensation;
- Oversight and accountability; and
- Equitable participation.

²² Arts Council England, *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Review 2018–23, 2025*; Arts Council England, *Diversity Data*; British Film Institute, *BFI Diversity Standards*.

²³ Throsby, D., & Petetskaya, K. (2024). *Artists as Workers: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia*. Creative Australia and Macquarie University.

²⁴ Eltham, B., Gu, X., & Badham, M. (2025). "Artists as workers? Re-imagining cultural policy for insecure and precarious artists and cultural workers." *Journal of Sociology*.

²⁵ Creative Australia, *Principles for Generative AI and Creative Work*; Australian Government, *Australia's AI Ethics Principles*.



In short, DARTS supports the development of a National Cultural Policy that reflects the full complexity and diversity of contemporary Australia through the following principles: explicit recognition; sustained investment; meaningful accountability; independent oversight; equitable participation; protection of artistic freedom; arm's length governance; and long-term commitment to cultural equity across the entire creative ecosystem.