

30 April, 2025

A Creative Sector that Reflects Us All

Recommendations for the 2025 Federal Election

Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) is the national voice for ethno-cultural and migrant racial equity in the 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, Diversity Arts combines service provision —resources, events, research, training, advocacy— with creative production. We act as a broker between artists, industry, educators and government, and commission content from culturally and racially marginalised (CaRM) creatives that articulates key issues and showcases leading practice. While our focus is on underrepresented cultural and linguistic diversity (CaLD), we work intersectionally and in partnership with other communities to deliver programs, in particular with First Nations, women, gender diverse communities, and people with disability.

As the next federal election approaches, Diversity Arts Australia urges the incoming Government and Members of Parliament to commit to the following key priorities:

- 1. Continue championing First Nations creative and cultural self-determination**
- 2. Address the exclusion and under-representation of CaRM creatives in Australia's creative sector**
- 3. Uphold principles of peer review, arm's length funding, and freedom of artistic expression**
- 4. Implement the recommendations from the Multicultural Framework Review Report and the National Anti-Racism Framework**



1. Continue championing First Nations creative and cultural self-determination

Building on the existing commitments in *Revive*, Australia's cultural policy, and the recent legislative action establishing *First Nations Arts*, **we call on the Australian Government to continue championing First Nations self-determination across the arts, screen and creative sectors.** The establishment of First Nations Arts, overseen by a dedicated First Nations Board, marks a significant step forward. We believe, however, that to truly uphold the promise of **First Nations First**, the incoming federal government should make a renewed commitment to the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* and deliver on Voice, Treaty and Truth. Together with Parliament, the Government should develop policies and legislation that ensure the protection of Indigenous rights and address ongoing marginalisation, exclusion and racism towards First Nations communities.

2. Address the exclusion and under-representation of CaRM creatives in Australia's creative sector

Australia's cultural, linguistic, and racial diversity is one of its greatest strengths. Yet, Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CaRM) creatives continue to face systematic exclusion across leadership, workforce participation, and creative production. Addressing these disparities requires a sustained and strategic commitment to increasing representation, building career pathways and expanding leadership opportunities for CaRM artists and communities. Additionally, there is an underrepresentation of CaRM creatives receiving grants from government arts and screen bodies. **DARTS calls for targeted action to ensure that CaRM artists and cultural workers can thrive and develop sustainable practices in a creative sector that should reflect us all.** Specifically, we recommend the following actions for immediate consideration*:

- Establishing a CaRM Creator Fund
- Developing and Implementing a CaRM Employment and Participation Pathways Strategy
- Developing an equity-tested framework for the creative sector

**Detailed information about these proposed actions can be found in our [2025-2026 Budget recommendations](#).*

3. Uphold to principles of peer review, arm's length funding, and freedom of artistic expression

Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of a healthy, democratic society and must be protected across all forms of artistic and public discourse. Historically, significant positive change in the arts and cultural landscape have been triggered by robust experimentation and brave critical discourse. In Australia, this principle is recognised in the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth), which provides protections for statements and artistic works made reasonably and in good faith in the pursuit of art, education, or public interest. Upholding artistic freedom ensures that a plurality of voices, experiences, and perspectives can continue to shape Australia's evolving cultural narratives. Similarly, the principle of peer review is essential to maintaining the integrity, fairness, and independence of Australia's creative sector. The arm's length funding model safeguards decision making from political interference, ensuring that artistic merit and community impact guide investment in the arts. **We urge the incoming Government to uphold the principles of peer review, arm's length funding, and freedom of artistic expression, ensuring that, in Australia, creativity can flourish without fear of censorship or interference.**

4. Implementing the recommendations from the Multicultural Framework Review Report and the National Anti-Racism Framework

The *Multicultural Framework Review Towards Fairness: A Multicultural Australia for All*, and the *National Anti-Racism Framework* outline pathways to promote equity and inclusion for all Australians, while highlighting that systemic and structural racism remain deeply embedded within our communities. DARTS calls for a commitment to implementing the recommendations included in both frameworks, and to securing long-term funding for their full realisation. Indeed, both frameworks highlight the arts and media as key areas of action, which requires dedicated investment to address systematic racism effectively.



Diversity Arts Australia urges the incoming Government and Members of Parliament to build on the foundations already established through “Revive”, the Multicultural Framework review report, “Towards Fairness: A Multicultural Australia for All”, and the “National Anti-Racism Framework”. We call on upholding and strengthening these commitments, and embedding equity, inclusion, and systemic change at the heart of Australia’s creative future.

We also know that Australia can and must do better. We need bold and wide-ranging policy development and a firm commitment to work together in building a diverse, representative, fair and sustainable creative sector. While Australia’s cultural landscape continues to change and grow, grounded in First Nations sovereignty, creativity and living heritage, the incoming Federal Government and Members of Parliament must actively commit to dismantling systemic barriers that prevent everyone from fully enjoying their cultural rights.

Diversity Arts Australia Chairperson, Professor Cecilia Anthony, said:

"Our collective freedom of expression in any medium, be it the media, public protest, broadcasting, academic or artistic works, must be protected and upheld. This includes ideas or creative works that others may deem unpopular or shocking. As a democratic nation, everyone has the right to not agree. We must be vigilant in the maintenance of freedom of artistic expression and of creative diversity as part of the foundations of a free and democratic society."

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