

The Hon Stephen Jones MP
Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Financial Services
Australian Government – The Treasury
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

25 January 2024

Dear Minister

RE: 2024-5 PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION: EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR THE ARTS AND CREATIVE SECTORS

Please accept this Pre-Budget Submission for the 2023-2024 Federal Budget from Diversity Arts Australia. Our submission provides guidance on ensuring that the arts, screen and creative sectors are representative of the *whole* Australian community, and that underrepresented people can access employment in our industries.

Diversity Arts congratulates the Federal Government for its work on the implementation of the National Cultural Policy, Revive. We recognise the importance of this work in rebuilding the creative sector.

This submission is informed by our work with thousands of culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD)¹, culturally and racially marginalised, migrant and refugee artists, and creative workers via our programs, talks, research, advocacy, and events. This submission is also informed by years of research and advocacy and our work facilitating the Creative Cultural Diversity Network.

Our submission draws guidance from collaboration with various national peak and grassroots organisations in the arts, screen, and creative sectors. Our recommendations are shaped by our collective advocacy through the Creative Cultural Diversity Network (which

¹ Our use of the term “culturally and linguistically diverse” is inclusive of people who are first, second or third generation migrants or members of ethnic communities. This includes Australia-born people who may self-identify or engage with the languages, customs or cultural specificities of ancestral heritages that differ from those of Anglo-Australians. This also includes people from refugee backgrounds and people on temporary visas. However, we understand the limitations of this term, including that people tend not to identify as “culturally and linguistically diverse”. We use CaLD while acknowledging that the term can’t capture the nuance and lived experience of different people based on culture, ethnicity, residential status, language, class, gender and sexuality. At times we refer to people, communities and creatives of colour to further emphasise that non-Anglo-Celtic communities experience the sector through the framework of race and of being negatively racialised people. We also at times refer to “culturally and racially marginalised” people, communities and artists.

we facilitate) and with the Consortium of National Peak Arts Organisations, whose submissions we endorse². It is critical that we work together to create a robust, relevant and inclusive creative and arts sector.

About Diversity Arts Australia

Diversity Arts Australia is the peak national organisation promoting racial equity across the arts, cultural and screen sectors. Diversity Arts works to build a creative sector that reflects Australia's true cultural diversity and believes creative expression is a fundamental human right, which strengthens and connects communities.

We are committed to working for ethno-cultural and migrant cultural equity and our work is underpinned by principles of human rights and the belief that a truly diverse creative sector is fundamental to a democratic, inclusive, sustainable society.

Diversity Arts combines service provision — resources, events, research, training — with creative production. We act as a broker between artists, industry, educators and government, and commission content from artists that articulates key issues and showcases best practice. While our focus is on cultural and linguistic (CaLD) diversity, we work intersectionally and in partnership with other communities to deliver programs.

The following recommendations draw on our extensive consultations with CaLD artists and creative workers, arts and screen organisations, and people working on advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism in the sector. This submission is also informed by years of research and advocacy.

Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse population and their underrepresentation in the arts, cultural and screen sectors

- The Federal Government should have an expectation that the work of the organisations and companies they fund, particularly those who receive the majority of financial support, reflect the diversity of contemporary Australia.
- Australia is one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world, and this trend has increased in recent years. Prior to 2021, and according to the Australian Human Rights Commission, 39 percent of the Australian population were Culturally and Linguistically Diverse. More recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics tells us that this has increased: in the 2021 Census, Australia saw a surge in its overseas-born population to over 7 million (28%), up from 6.1 million in 2016. Additionally, the number of people speaking a non-English language at home increased from almost 5 million (22%) in 2016 to around 6 million (23%) in 2021.

² These organisations are: APRA/AMCOS, Ausdance National, Australian Museum and Galleries Assoc, Australian Music Centre, Australian Writer's Guild, BlakDance, Live Performance Australia, Moogahlin Arts Centre, National Association for the Visual Arts, Performing Arts Connections Australia, Regional Arts Australia, Screen Producers Association, Symphony Services Australia, Theatre Network Australia, Diversity Arts Australia.

Notably, over half of the population (51.5%) are either born overseas (first generation) or have a parent born overseas (second generation).³

- CaLD Australians are more likely to attend live performances, and creatively participate in the arts, than the national average⁴.
- However, the diversity is not reflected on our screens, main stages or at the Board and executive levels of leading companies, universities and government departments. As of 2018, CaLD Australians were under-represented across every leadership role in every cultural sector, organisation type and jurisdiction⁵.
- People from a non-English speaking background account for only 10 percent of the arts workforce, compared to 18 percent of the general workforce. This suggests there are not enough employment and professional pathways for CaLD artists and creative workers.⁶
- In 2023, Screen Australia’s research found that almost half of all Australian TV dramas had zero to one main character who was **not** Anglo-Celtic.⁷
- In 2021, Media Diversity Australia released the first comprehensive picture of who tells, frames and produces stories in Australian television news and current affairs. It found more than 75% of presenters, commentators and reporters have an Anglo-Celtic background while only 6% have an Indigenous or non-European background.⁸
- In 2021, Creative Australia released research demonstrating that Australia’s arts and culture does not yet reflect the diversity of our population.⁹
- In summary, despite comprising over 40% of the population, research tells us people from CaLD backgrounds are underrepresented across all areas in the creative sector, from leadership to the stories that get told¹⁰. The Australian arts and creative sectors need investment which ensures people who experience structural and systemic exclusions have opportunities to meaningfully participate in this economy.

³ [Australian Bureau of Statistics - 2021](#)

⁴ Australia Council for the Arts, *Creating Our Future: Results from the National Arts Participation Survey* (2020) <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/creating-our-future>

⁵ Diversity Arts Australia, *Shifting the Balance Report* (2019) <http://diversityarts.org.au/app/uploads/Shifting-the-Balance-DARTS-small.pdf>

⁶ Australia Council for the Arts, *Making Art Work Report* (2017) <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/making-art-work/>

⁷ Screen Australia, *Seeing Ourselves 2* <https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/fact-finders/reports-and-key-issues/reports-and-discussion-papers/seeing-ourselves-2>

⁸ Media Diversity Australia, *Who Gets To Tell Australian Stories?* (2021) https://www.mediadiversityaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Who-Gets-To-Tell-Australian-Stories_LAUNCH-VERSION.pdf

⁹ Australia Council for the Arts, *Towards Equity: A research overview of diversity in Australia’s arts and cultural sector* (2021) <https://australiacouncil.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Towards-Equity-Report.pdf>

¹⁰ This is documented in reports such as Diversity Arts’ *Shifting the Balance*, Media Diversity Australia’s “Who Gets to Tell Australian Stories”, Creative Australia’s “Towards Equity” and Screen Australia’s “Seeing Ourselves: Reflections on Diversity in Australian TV Drama”



In this context, Diversity Arts Australia is calling for:

1. Equity-tested funding which reflects the demographics of the Australian population, with at least 40 percent of all arts and creative sector funding allocated to be earmarked for CaLD artists and creatives, CaLD-led organisations and other organisations that support CaLD creatives.
2. A longer-term investment of \$16.07 million in building CaLD capacity in the arts, screen and creative sectors.

Recommendations

1. Ensure all arts and creative sector funding is equity tested

Diversity Arts makes the case for equity tested funding to increase CaLD participation in the arts and creative sectors. There is great economic value in arts-based participation for CaLD and migrant communities, including in maintaining wellbeing, professional development and employment. Due to the lack of employment pathways for diverse Australians in the creative industries, there is much untapped potential to generate income for the Australian economy. Migrant and diasporic communities have international connections, translating into international marketplaces. These communities' skills, talents and connections must therefore be properly utilised. Diversity Arts Australia recommends:

Diversity Arts Australia recommends:

- To reflect the Australian population, **40% of Federal funding in the arts and creative sectors should be allocated to CaLD, migrant and refugee productions, artists and creative workers.** This should also include professional development, employment pathways and also funds to assist in meeting increasing demands related to workplace health and safety, mental well-being, climate change offsets, and other sustainable practices for underrepresented artists and creative workers.
- **Equity tested funding to support the economic futures of young, marginalised artists and creative workers. 45% of young¹¹ Australians are either first- or second- generation migrants.¹²** CALD young people need to be supported during the pandemic recovery. Therefore 40% of CaLD arts funding should be allocated to support skills development and professional opportunities for young, underrepresented CaLD people working in the arts and creative sectors.

¹¹ Young people are here defined as 12-24 year olds.

¹² Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network adapted from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016).



2. Invest \$16.07million in building CaLD capacity in the arts, screen and creative sectors

Provide a dedicated **\$16.07 million investment** in building cultural and linguistically diverse capacity in the arts and creative sectors, including via creating a **CaLD Employment and Participation Pathways Strategy**, developing **cultural diversity archives** and systems to record and recognise the historical contributions of CaLD artists to our nation’s creative history, and invest in future-proofing the arts and creative sectors by supporting a national sector-wide capacity and training program in equity and inclusion.

We acknowledge the Government's commitment to multiculturalism and anti-racism, evident in initiatives like the Multicultural Framework Review and the investment of \$7.5 million in the Australian Human Rights National Anti-Racism Framework. The arts and creative industries are well positioned to play key roles in enacting these frameworks. Additionally, a robust Multicultural Framework can actively prioritise artistic, employment, and leadership opportunities, as well as cultural safety for individuals from CaLD and CaRM backgrounds within the creative sector. However, we cannot promote multiculturalism without a commitment to supporting the principles of racial equity, self-determination and cultural rights for CaLD and CaRM creatives and communities. This must be articulated across all policies and embedded into program design.

Our Lost Work Surveys and Report found that CaLD and First Nations workers in the creative sector were already more likely to be in precarious employment prior to Covid, and that this was only further exacerbated by the lockdowns.¹³ This investment will strengthen underrepresented CaLD employment in the creative sector.

This investment is outlined as follows:

Description	Term ¹⁴	Amount
<p>National Equity and Inclusion Program. Support for a national equity capacity-building program delivered to key arts and creative organisations nationally to strengthen and future-proof the sector. A Victorian-based program has been successfully trialed with 39 organisations by Diversity Arts to date.</p>	4 years	\$3.7 million
<p>CaLD Employment and Participation Pathways Strategy. Support for Diversity Arts Australia and its partners to develop a 10-year national strategy and framework to increase CaLD employment across the arts and creative sectors, with a focus on increasing historically excluded people's access to leadership</p>	2 years	\$530,000

¹³ Diversity Arts Australia, Lost Work 2.0 Report: The impacts of the pandemic on creatives of colour and First Nations creatives; https://diversityarts.org.au/app/uploads/Full-Report_Lost-Work-2.0.pdf

¹⁴ This is our recommended term based on our extensive experience in undertaking similar projects.

and key creative roles.		
CaLD Employment and Participation Pathways Implementation. Beginning implementation of a 10 year national strategy and framework to increase CaLD employment across the arts and creative sectors, with a focus on increasing historically excluded people's access to leadership and key creative roles.	4 years	\$3.6 million
CaLD Employment Fund. A CaLD fund is established and administered by Diversity Arts Australia with support from Creative Australia and Screen Australia, to provide additional funding and support to CaLD organisations, groups and individuals and organisations whose work is focused on CaLD communities.	4 years	\$4.24 million
CaLD Digital Cultural Archives. Development of a national CaLD cultural archive to be rolled out by Diversity Arts Australia and its partner organisations. Collection and curation of artefacts of national significance relating to archives, recordkeeping and cultural heritage documenting the historical contributions of our culturally and linguistically diverse and migrant communities within the arts and cultural sectors. In 2024, Diversity Arts CEO Lena Nahlous will undertake a Churchill Fellowship to research the establishment of the Archive.	4 years	\$4 million

We urge the Federal Government to support these recommendations as there is an economic imperative to support access to the arts for over 40 percent of the Australian population.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss the contents of this Submission with you further.

Kind regards

Lena Nahlous
CEO
Diversity Arts Australia