

A New Approach (ANA)

22 September 2023

The Review Panel
Multicultural Framework Review
(via submission form)

Multicultural Framework Review

A New Approach (ANA) welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the Multicultural Framework Review. ANA recognises the efforts of the Review Panel and Reference Group.

ANA is Australia's leading think tank focused on arts and culture. Through credible and independent public leadership, ANA helps build an ambitious and innovative policy and investment environment for arts, culture and creativity. We work to ensure Australia can be a great place for creators and audiences, whoever they are and wherever they live.

Below, we also provide the Review with insights from ANA research and other sources of relevant evidence. In our role as a philanthropically funded, independent think tank, ANA is ready to provide further information about the response in this submission and would welcome the opportunity to discuss. We confirm that this submission can be made public.

Warm regards,



Kate Fielding, CEO, A New Approach (ANA)

Insights from ANA

ANA's national focus group study shows that middle Australians took pride in Australian arts and culture and viewed it as a natural avenue to grow interest in contemporary Australia not just for tourists but for those looking to come to Australia for other opportunities such as work. They also saw arts and culture as a critical way of reassuring those coming that it is a nation that embraces diversity. Middle Australians believe that arts and culture helps express identity and the diversity of thought that comprises their complex and nuanced sense of belonging.

Middle Australians also value First Nations cultural and creative practice in Australia, with young middle Australians expressing a belief that First Nations arts and culture has a critical role in shaping Australia's national identity and setting Australia apart from other nations.¹

ANA notes governments across Australia already value and support multicultural arts and culture. For example, the Commonwealth, states and territories fund in the order of 1000 grants for multicultural events each year.²

ANA also highlights the importance of information to inform government decisions under a future Multicultural Framework. We note that of the 930 data requests to ABS 2026 Census topic review, 'cultural diversity' is the second most requested theme, accounting for more than one in four data requests.³

¹ ANA's middle Australia series is a three-year national focus group study on attitudes towards arts, culture and creativity amongst people from low- and middle-income households in regional or outer suburban locations. These people are from a range of cultural backgrounds, politically unaligned, predominantly living in swinging federal electorates, and not working in arts and culture. Kate Fielding and Jodie-Lee Trembath, "A View from Middle Australia: Perceptions of Arts, Culture and Creativity," Insight Series (Canberra: A New Approach and the Australian Academy of the Humanities, May 2020), <https://newapproach.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/3-ANA-InsightReportThree-FullReport.pdf>. For further information, see the forthcoming one-pager, 'Intergenerational arts and culture: Lessons across middle Australia', scheduled for publication on our website in October 2023.

² ANA identified over 900 grants from the ACT (96 in [2023](#)), SA (139 in [2022-23](#)), WA (40 in [2022-23](#)), QLD (115 in [2022-23](#)), VIC (417 in [2022-23](#)), NSW (110 in [2021-22](#)), and the Commonwealth (in [September 2022](#) and [February 2023](#)). ANA also identified a range of grant programs but not grant recipient figures for TAS or NT.

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, "2026 Census Topic Review: Phase One Directions," July 27, 2023, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/research/2026-census-topic-review-phase-one-directions>.

Other sources of information

We also note other Australian perspectives connecting multiculturalism to arts and culture:

- the Australian Government's national cultural policy, Revive, which says:

'Australia's multicultural heritage means that our stories are told in many languages. Reflecting this diversity in our national stories helps to express our modern, inclusive national identity and promote culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia and overseas.'⁴
- A national study on audience diversification.⁵ This study acknowledged underrepresentation of First Nations people and people from different cultures in audiences, and identified ways for arts organisations to diversify their audiences.

⁴ Commonwealth of Australia, "Revive: A Place for Every Story, a Story for Every Place - Australia's Cultural Policy for the next Five Years," January 2023, 44, <https://www.arts.gov.au/publications/national-cultural-policy-revive-place-every-story-story-every-place>.

⁵ Hilary Glow et al., "Changing Organisations to Diversity Arts Audiences: Summary of Findings from National Survey," 2023, <https://blogs.deakin.edu.au/audience-diversification/research/survey/>.