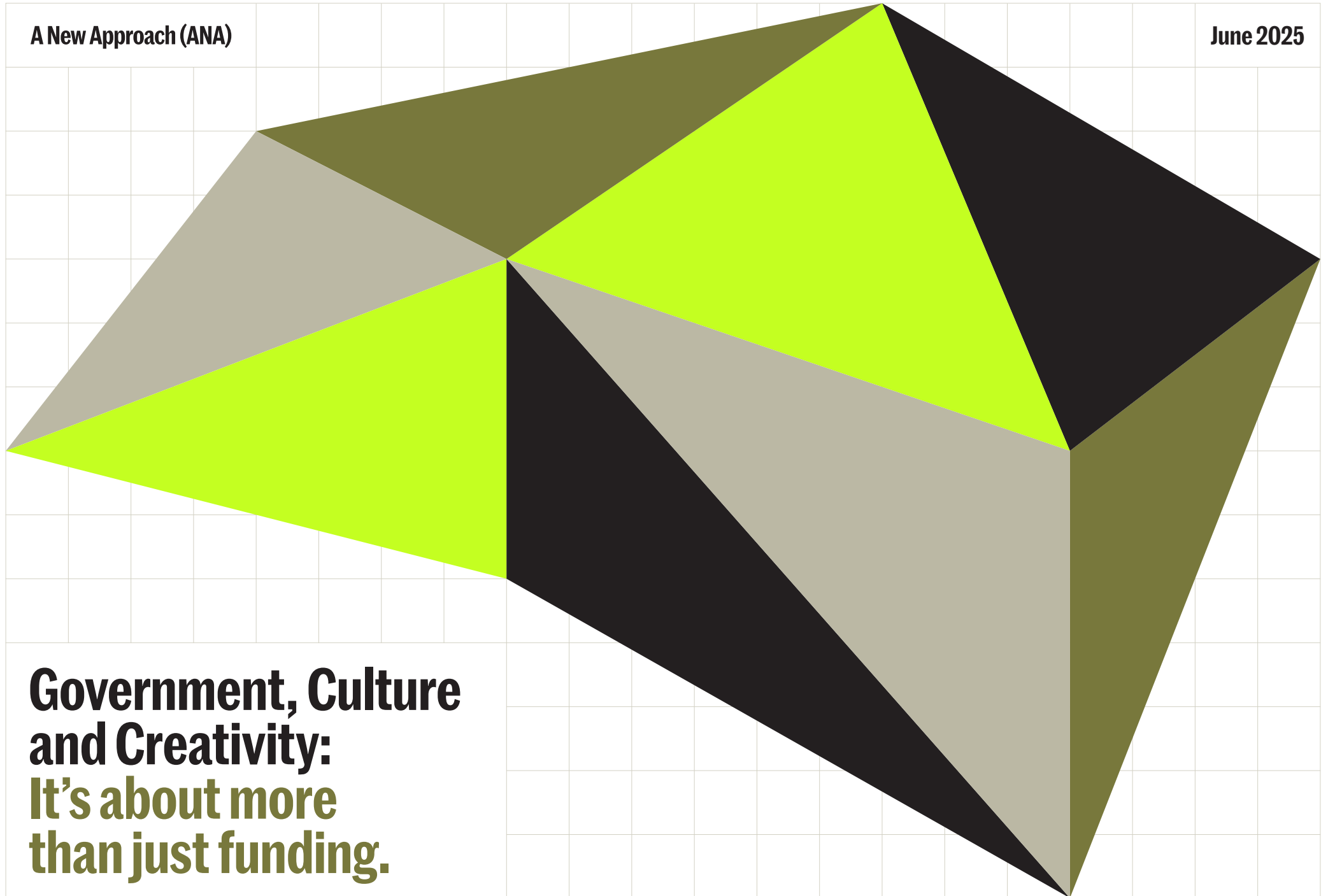


**A New Approach (ANA)**

**June 2025**



**Government, Culture  
and Creativity:  
It's about more  
than just funding.**

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# About ANA

A New Approach (ANA) is Australia's national arts and culture think tank. We believe Australia can become a cultural powerhouse whose creativity is locally loved, nationally valued and globally influential.

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.

ANA acknowledges the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia and their continuing cultural and creative practices in this land.

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ANA is supported by a unique collaboration of 14 philanthropic organisations across the country. This national coalition comprises:



# About this Insight Report

## ANA Paper No. 2025-01, June 2025

This report was produced by ANA. This report was written by Dr Sari Rossi, Dr Angela Vivian and Kate Fielding from ANA. Policy input provided by ANA's former Director of Policy Dr Alan Hui (while still employed by ANA) and current Director of Policy Sarah-Jane Bennett.

ANA thanks everyone who generously reviewed early drafts of sections of this Insight Report and its inventory of enablers for their time and excellent feedback, including: Subhadra Mistry, Arts and Culture Strategic Lead, City of Casey; Simon Booth, Director Policy, Australian Local Government Association (ALGA); Caroline Fulton, Executive Branch Manager, artsACT; Eliza Tee, Manager Partnerships and Investment, Arts Queensland; Kate Mackie, Manager Special Projects and Industry Development, Arts Tasmania; Bonnie Dalton, Director, Strategy and Insights, Creative Victoria; Marty Cunningham, Director Special Projects, Creative Industries, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (Western Australia); Dr Christen Cornell, Research Fellow and Manager, Research Partnerships, Creative Australia; Matthew Higgins, State Manager Development and Partnerships

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The opinions in this Insight Report do not necessarily represent the views of ANA's Philanthropic Partners, the individual members involved in governance or advisory groups, or others who have provided input.

If, through your work, you have designed or adopted a pro-culture enabler that you think might be of interest to ANA, please write to us at [hello@newapproach.org.au](mailto:hello@newapproach.org.au).

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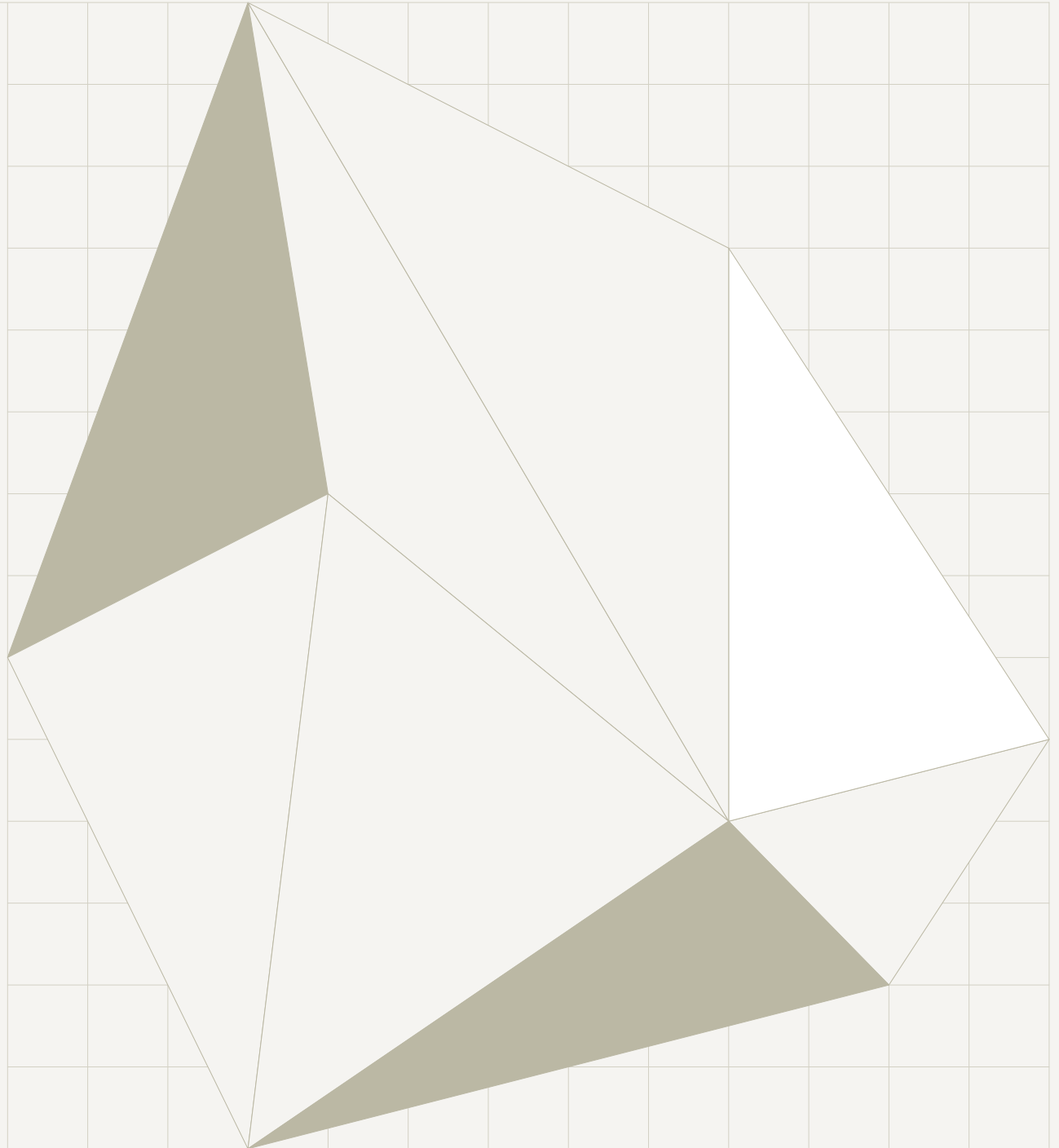
## The Insight series

This report is the 15th in ANA's Insight series. Our Insight Reports provide a deep dive into research and analysis of a particular arts and cultural policy topic or other areas of interest.

Explore our previous work at [www.newapproach.org.au](http://www.newapproach.org.au).

Contact us about this work via [hello@newapproach.org.au](mailto:hello@newapproach.org.au).

# Executive Summary



It's a challenging economic environment, with high cost of living and international uncertainty all putting pressure on budgets, including government budgets.

But even when times are tough, people in Australia still want to enjoy creative and cultural experiences,<sup>1</sup> including Australian-made content – and they expect all three levels of government to help make that possible.<sup>2</sup>

Across Australia, cultural ministers and policymakers are asking, 'What are the no and low-cost ways we can stimulate cultural and creative activity to complement and enhance the direct investments that governments already make?'

The **primary purpose** of this Insight Report is to showcase the broad range of actions governments can take to strengthen cultural access and foster robust cultural industries *in addition* to direct funding.

This report describes the 'pro-culture' enablers that are available to governments, including options that may prove themselves to be cheaper, easier and more effective than direct funding. It provides examples from different parts of Australia that could be adopted more broadly, as well as ideas from overseas that Australian governments could try. Often, these enablers are *uniquely* available to governments.

This Insight Report is geared towards informing decisions about how governments get full value from their direct funding dollars already invested in arts, culture and creativity. It focuses on actions that governments can take to complement (not replace) these direct investments so that people in Australia can continue to access, enjoy, create and benefit from cultural opportunities.

Governments are generally interested in fostering creative and cultural engagement because they want people to have a sense of belonging and connection, for local industry to thrive, and for Australian stories to be told on the world stage.

More broadly, international and domestic evidence shows that cultural and creative engagement can assist Australia in tackling some of our biggest public policy challenges, including reconnecting our communities, strengthening our economies, building social cohesion and helping us lead healthy, safe and sustainable lives.<sup>3</sup>

## What we conclude

This research reveals there are eight types of pro-culture enablers for governments in Australia to consider (see **Exhibit 1**). These eight enabler types can serve at least three functions:

- facilitate financial inflows
- facilitate operations
- increase engagement opportunities.

We also found that, while many governments use some of these enablers, there are ample opportunities to consider additional measures, including learning from other jurisdictions. Enablers can be tailored by jurisdictions to suit their circumstances.

## What do we mean by enablers?

For the purpose of this report, enablers are distinct from direct funding. They include:

- **no or low-cost actions**, which we recognise may incur set-up, maintenance, staffing and training costs
- **revenue forgone** (e.g. resulting from tax concessions), which we recognise also has a cost

Refer to the **Glossary of Terms** for further details about the terminology used in this report.

## Why discussing pro-culture enablers is important

Direct funding by governments is a crucial part of the overall revenue for organisations in the cultural and creative industries and is relatively well documented.<sup>4</sup>

But there is less understanding of the other ways that governments enable arts, culture and creativity.

This report makes this important information visible and accessible across jurisdictions and cultural industries, all of which are navigating difficult operating conditions.

All forms of government action merit attention as we strive to secure Australia's position as a cultural powerhouse and optimise investment and activity for cultural purposes and economic and social returns (including improving productivity, health and cohesion).

Learning about the pro-culture enablers identified in this report can:

- improve access to cultural and creative experiences for people in Australia with benefits for national economies
- underline the mix of policy and regulatory measures needed in a pro-culture legislative, regulative and leadership environment
- equip people and organisations with information about national and international enablers they can harness to grow creativity.

This Insight Report provides a foundational knowledge on what governments are *already* doing and highlights what else they *could* be doing based on examples from other portfolios and overseas. While this report identifies actions and quick wins that governments can take right now, ANA will also undertake and publish further analysis and guidance for governments asking 'what *should* we be doing?'

## What ANA examined

Overall, this research examined the following questions:

1. What government enablers are currently available – outside direct funding – to grow cultural and creative engagement and strengthen cultural and creative industries?
2. What international examples of pro-culture enablers exist that are different to Australian examples?
3. What are some key benefits and drawbacks of the identified enablers?
4. What are the enabler-based opportunities that sit outside traditional domestic cultural policy?
5. What are the opportunities based on these findings?

We consulted across all levels of government and a wide range of cultural industry bodies to identify examples and better understand the national enabling environment.

## What ANA recommends

It is clear from this research that there are many no and low-cost things governments already do to stimulate cultural and creative activity, to improve cultural access and to strengthen our cultural industries. We recommend strengthening, safeguarding and expanding existing enablers across the country to support Australia in securing its place as a cultural powerhouse.

Governments face many resourcing constraints. In this context, ANA encourages governments, now and in the future, to consider how the identified pro-culture enablers and international examples can form part of their full suite of actions. This ought to include agencies working proactively together (within each tier of government, as well as across tiers of government).

This report examines the opportunities arising from the inventory of enablers in the following five focus areas: access, infrastructure, innovation, production and protection. These focus areas of governments and this Insight Report cross traditional boundaries between ministers' portfolios and the federal, state and territory, and local levels of government.

Noting this boundary-spanning, each level of government can play to their strengths and established responsibilities when designing and expanding pro-culture enablers. To coordinate this work, we recommend the establishment of a Ministerial Council reporting to the National Cabinet focused on cultural access and participation and the cultural and creative industries.

Other practical suggestions recommended in this report are:

- to engage with the recommendations about enablers described by international organisations, including the Organisation for Economic Cooperation (OECD), United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
- to leverage Australia's existing biannual survey of cultural funding with a question about government action beyond direct funding.



**Exhibit 1: ANA reveals there are eight types of pro-culture enablers available to Australian governments distinct from direct funding, and provides examples (items in **bold** are most likely to be cheaper and easier).<sup>5</sup>**

<p><b>1</b>    <b>Fit-for-purpose and streamlining measures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘One-stop shops’ to improve access and reduce red tape delays</li> <li>• <b>Preapproved plans for events</b></li> <li>• <b>Procurement guidelines and principles</b></li> <li>• <b>Permits to access specific government sites/facilities for cultural purposes</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>2</b>    <b>Legislation, regulations and standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Copyright and IP legislation</b> and protections</li> <li>• <b>Tax system legislation</b></li> <li>• <b>Night-time economy legislation</b> and regulation</li> <li>• Local content quotas and rules</li> <li>• Signatory to international conventions (e.g. UNESCO)</li> <li>• <b>Industry codes of practice and standards</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>3</b>    <b>Measures to develop skills, career pathways and knowledge sharing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and advisory services (including capability building, skills development, job pathways and networking opportunities)</li> <li>• Collecting and <b>publishing data</b> on arts, culture and creative sector outcomes and widening access to research and data infrastructure</li> <li>• Updates of training packages or fee structures that incentivise creative learning</li> <li>• <b>Inclusion of Australian texts in the curriculum</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>4</b>    <b>Measures that facilitate co-investment and collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships, intermediation and harmonisation (including intergovernmental, intragovernmental, public-to-private and cross-sector)</li> <li>• Facilitated access to finance (e.g. blended finance, such as impact investing, and access to public loans)</li> <li>• <b>Creative industries expertise to shape relevant government policies</b> (e.g. participation on advisory groups and co-design approaches)</li> </ul>
<p><b>5</b>    <b>Non-commercial rates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free or reduced cost to use/ access infrastructure, assets or facilities (e.g. free parking, property rentals, community venue access and entry fees)</li> <li>• Access to specialist equipment</li> <li>• Co-working hubs</li> </ul>	<p><b>6</b>    <b>Indirect industry assistance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax concessions, including deductions, exemptions and offsets</li> <li>• Operating the authorising and administrative mechanisms for donations</li> <li>• Administering copyright and rights compensation mechanisms</li> <li>• Co-production agreements</li> </ul>	<p><b>7</b>    <b>Information, promotion and marketing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Streamlined information about arts and culture events and activities</b></li> <li>• Localised promotion and marketing campaigns</li> <li>• National promotion initiatives (e.g. Arts Week and National Giving Day to the Arts)</li> <li>• Awards programs</li> <li>• <b>Convening, consensus-building and community engagement</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>8</b>    <b>Special consideration for eligibility and exemptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exemptions to efficiency dividends</li> <li>• <b>Ensuring arts and cultural activities and institutions are eligible within existing voucher/subsidy programs where appropriate</b></li> <li>• Improving digital and telecommunications connectivity as platforms for cultural participation and access</li> </ul>

## Summary of findings

## 1

Governments at all levels take actions to enable cultural and creative activities beyond direct funding mechanisms.

## 2

There are eight types of pro-culture enablers available to Australian governments beyond direct funding:

1. Fit-for-purpose and streamlined initiatives
2. Legislation, regulations and standards
3. Measures to develop skills, career pathways and knowledge sharing
4. Measures that facilitate co-investment and collaboration
5. Non-commercial rates
6. Indirect industry assistance
7. Accessible information, promotion and marketing
8. Special consideration for eligibility and exemptions.

## 3

Pro-culture enablers span at least three broad functions, which may overlap:

1. Facilitating financial inflows
2. Facilitating operations
3. Increasing engagement opportunities.

# Summary of opportunities

- 1 Each level of government can play to its strengths and established responsibilities when designing and expanding pro-culture enablers.

Steps to implementation:

- Identifying new enablers based on other jurisdictions' actions and experiences.
- Reviewing the enabling environment of arts, culture and creativity beyond the traditional boundaries of 'domestic cultural policy' (i.e. drawing on other portfolio and international examples). International organisations and reports are key sources for knowledge that can inform this review.
- Embedding enablers in diverse policies and through focus areas and agendas for access, infrastructure, innovation, production and protection.

- 2 The cultural and creative industries can leverage and work with governments to expand existing pro-culture enablers that strengthen access and foster robust industries.

Implementing this would involve:

- Harnessing the options from the inventory in **Part 1**, where industry organisations and people are already eligible.
- Discussing enabler options with government colleagues, including through ongoing advocacy for no and low-cost options and sharing evidence about drawbacks and benefits.

- 3 To maximise opportunities to learn, co-deliver and collaborate, the National Cabinet should establish a Ministerial Council of Cultural Ministers, including a seat for a representative of Australian local governments.

This will strengthen collaboration and knowledge sharing across jurisdictions, including about the types of enablers described in this report.

- 4 Government leadership can be strengthened by instating an Assistant Minister for Arts and Culture at the federal level and introducing equivalent roles for state and territory jurisdictions.

Extending this governance model, currently found in the Northern Territory and Queensland,<sup>6</sup> to other jurisdictions could assist Australia in resolving any overlapping interests between ministries at the state and territory and federal levels.

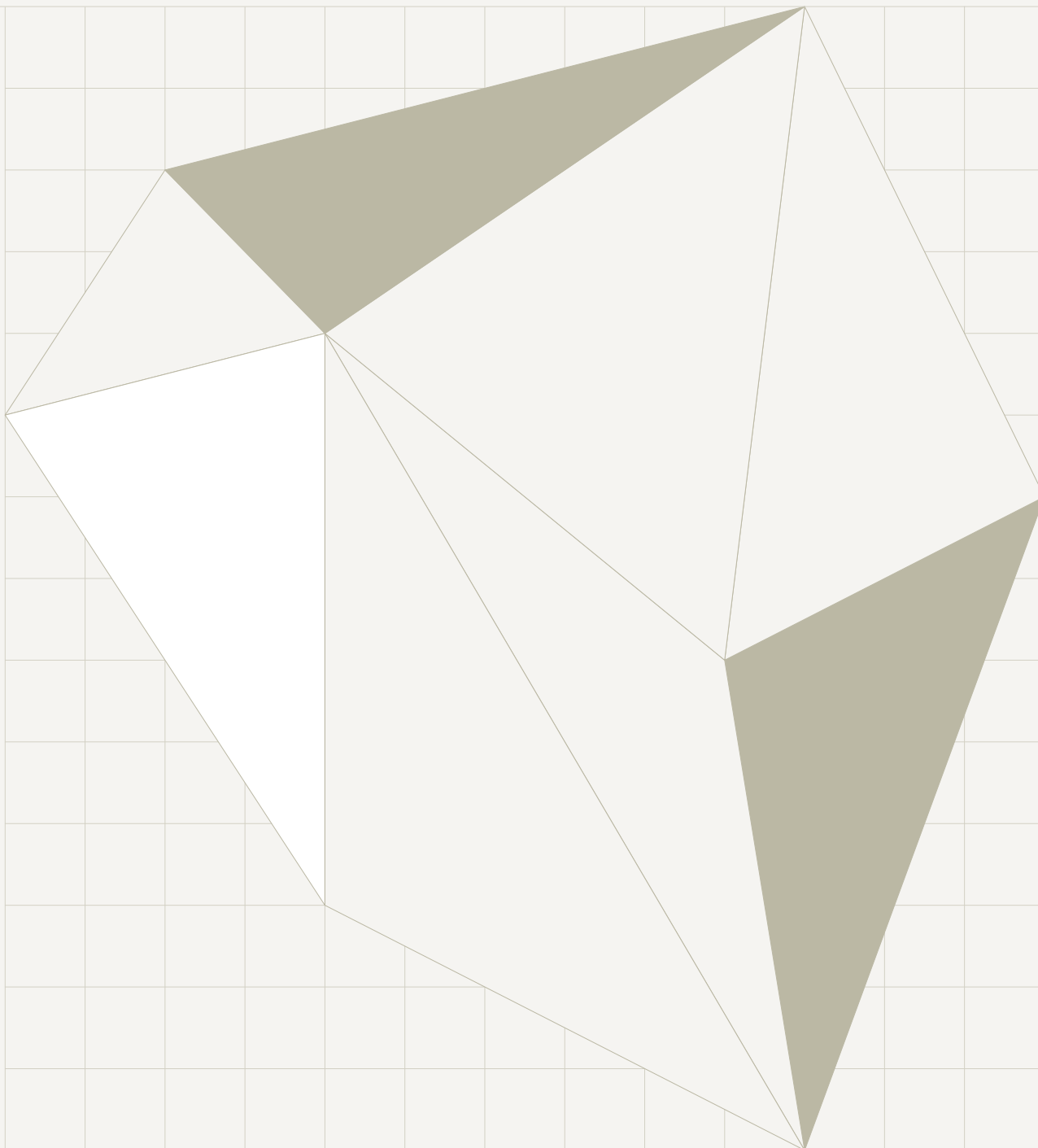
- 5 Develop a consistent approach to evaluate pro-culture enablers. This would inform decision-making and action across jurisdictions by strengthening the evidence base.

Implementing this could involve choosing a selection of enablers that justify formal evaluation from across the eight broad enabler types identified by ANA.

- 6 To increase awareness of enabler prevalence and options across jurisdictions, existing data collection mechanisms can be adjusted.

One practical action is to include a survey question in the ABS's next national data collection for the Cultural Funding by Government (CFG) survey asking jurisdictions about enablers beyond currently reported expenditure.

# Introduction



# Introducing this report

Fostering a pro-culture legislative, regulatory and leadership environment is an essential component of becoming a cultural powerhouse.<sup>7</sup>

Achieving this ambition requires making good use of all forms of government action, including enablers outside direct funding, which are the primary focus of this report.

In 2022, the OECD highlighted a global shift in government action in arts and culture in its report *The Culture Fix*:

**'The role of public finance is shifting from direct support to intermediation.'**<sup>8</sup>

The OECD examples include tax relief, leveraging private finance (e.g. through public loan guarantees) and matching funding to leveraging private investments and local government-backed crowdfunding initiatives.<sup>9</sup>

Australian governments are already using these enablers, making them available to the cultural industries.

Building on the OECD's work, ANA's 2023 report *To Scale: Mapping Financial Inflows in Australian Arts, Culture and Creativity* showed that indirect expenditures (e.g. tax concessions) are in use as a form of public finance distinct from direct funding.<sup>10</sup>

This Insight Report – *Government, Culture and Creativity: It's about more than just funding* – again extends the analysis and understanding of government actions. It identifies international and Australian government actions that seek to grow cultural and creative engagement and

strengthen the cultural and creative industries (i.e. pro-culture enablers).

Specifically, this research examines the following questions:

- What government enablers are currently available – outside direct funding – to grow cultural and creative engagement and strengthen cultural and creative industries?
- What international examples of pro-culture enablers exist that are different to Australian examples?
- What are some key benefits and drawbacks of the identified enablers?
- What are the enabler-based opportunities that sit outside traditional domestic cultural policy?
- What are the opportunities based on these findings?

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

**Part 1** presents an inventory of enablers by level of government in Australia. It describes the example enablers as serving three main functions.

**Part 2** examines the opportunities for governments to grow the enabling environment alongside evaluating some of the benefits and drawbacks of identified enabler types.

To better understand how these opportunities may cross traditional boundaries between ministers' portfolios and the responsibilities of the federal, state and territory and local levels of government, we explore opportunities in the following focus areas:

- access
- infrastructure
- innovation
- production
- protection.

**Part 2** also highlights international examples that were not found in the Australian enabling environment for consideration across these focus areas.

Australian governments can continue to expand their use of enablers to strengthen access to arts, culture and creativity and foster robust cultural industries.

# Glossary of terms

This brief glossary clarifies key terms and concepts as they are understood and referred to in this report.

**Arts, culture and creativity** is the inclusive and broad umbrella term that ANA adopts in this report for a range of activities, such as: attending cultural events; visiting cultural venues; creating or performing something; and engaging with arts, culture and creative content in your home. It also comprises activities performed in industries and occupations that may be less obvious, such as advertising, design and architecture. ANA's definition is informed by input from Australia's CFG data series, the UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics and UNCTAD's Creative Economy Program.

**Concessions/concessional charges** include 'discounts, rebates and subsidies provided by the government that improve access to, and affordability of, a range of services; concessions where all consumers pay a price below full cost of service.'<sup>11</sup> Whilst technically a type of revenue forgone, for the government these are distinct from tax concessions (defined below).

**Direct funding** is the term used in this report to refer to government expenditure, including the funding calculated through the CFG survey. The CFG survey captures 'recurrent' and 'capital' expenditure on cultural and creative organisations, individuals and activities of all scales across remote, regional and metropolitan Australia.<sup>12</sup> Direct funding has also been elsewhere referred to as 'budgetary outlays,' 'grants' or 'subsidies.'<sup>13</sup>

**Enablers** are defined as government actions excluding direct funding (as described above). In some instances, enablers are no or low-cost. However, depending on the enabler type, it is recognised there may be substantial costs involved, including initial set-up costs, ongoing maintenance costs, staffing and training costs or revenue forgone (e.g. resulting from tax concessions or concessions/concessional charges). In this report, enablers also refer to government loans.<sup>14</sup>

**Engagement** is a term that encompasses access to as well as attendance and participation in arts, culture and creative activities.

**Night-time economy (NTE)** refers to economic activities occurring between 6pm and 6am. A lively NTE encompasses '[c]aptivating entertainment, delicious food and drink, and a thriving arts scene'<sup>15</sup> and includes both core and non-core sectors.<sup>16</sup>

**Tax concessions** arise when the tax treatment of a group of taxpayers or activity differs from the standard tax treatment. From the government perspective this type of enabler involves revenue forgone. Types of tax concessions include rebates and offsets, deductions, lower tax rates, special tax exemptions and deferrals.<sup>17</sup>

**The tax system** in Australia consists of both direct and indirect taxes that are levied by the federal government as well as by state and territory governments (depending on the type of tax).<sup>18</sup>

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# How to use this report

We recommend using this report to understand government actions in arts, culture and creativity distinct from direct funding, including several cheaper and easier options. By reading this report, you will gain insights into the mixture of government actions for a pro-culture environment.

---

## For elected members and policy advisers

Use this report to better understand Australian and international enablers for cultural and creative engagement and the cultural and creative industries. This may illuminate new policy ideas to consider and cost.

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## For cultural and creative organisations and individuals

Use this report to understand how all levels of Australian government are enabling arts, culture and creativity beyond direct funding.

This evidence may assist your thinking about what else you can harness for your work and discuss with governments to implement.

---

## For philanthropists and sponsors of arts and culture

Use this report to understand broader functions of governments in arts, culture and creativity beyond direct funding. These insights may help inform your own investments, donations and partnerships with government.

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## For researchers and educators

Use this report as a resource on the ways that Australian and international governments enable arts, culture and creativity beyond direct funding.

This information may provide you with references to include in your work and assist you in identifying areas for further enquiry.

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## For the media, content creators and platforms for creative content

Use this report to better understand the industries and activities of Australian arts, culture and creativity. Contact ANA about media opportunities using the details on page 2.

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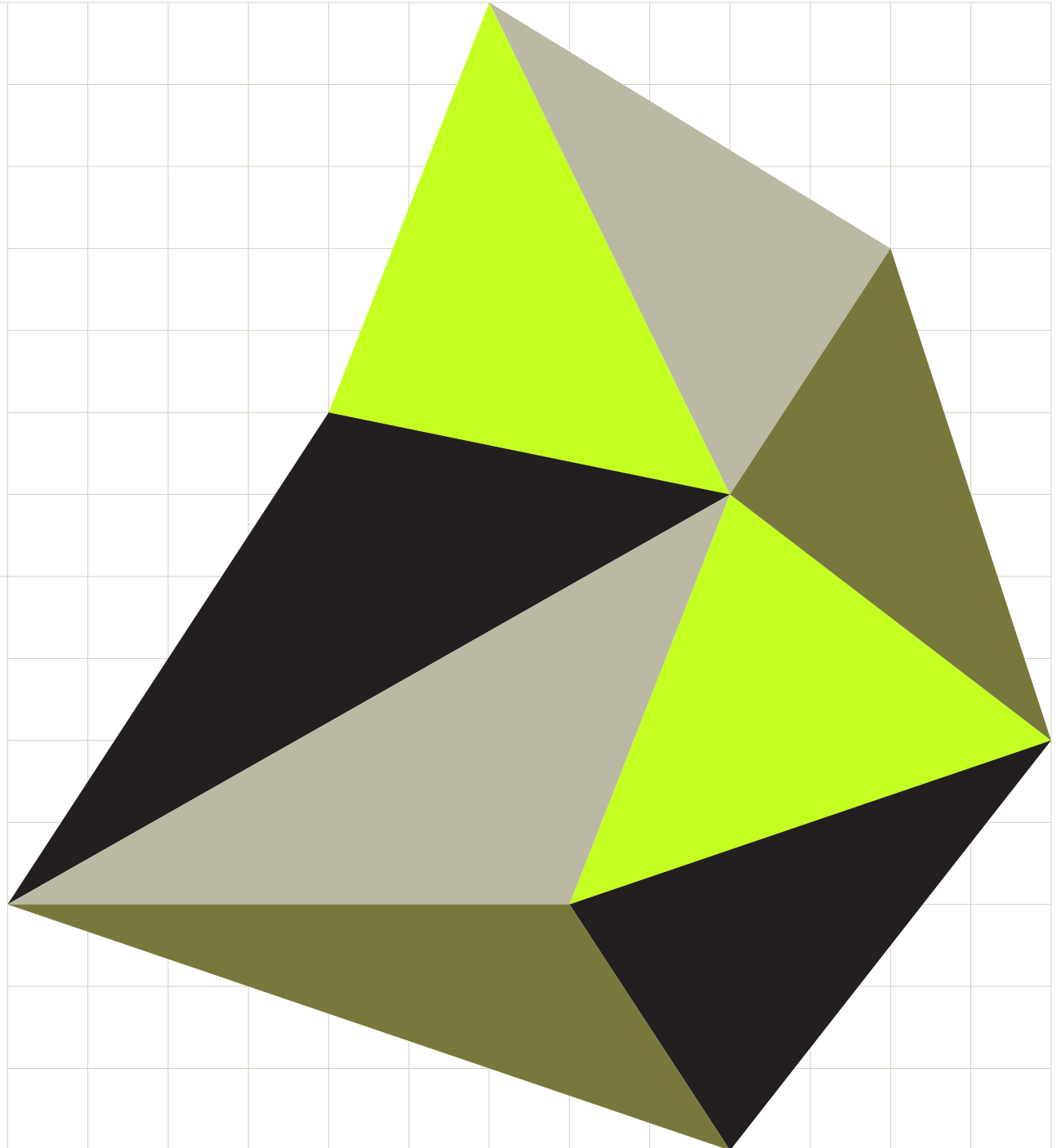
## For international audiences

Use this report to understand the variety of ways that Australian governments at all levels enable cultural and creative engagement and cultural and creative industries.

This information can provide you with comparison points for your governments' actions in arts, culture and creativity.

# Part 1:

**What are  
governments  
in Australia  
already doing?**





---

**What enablers are currently available – outside direct funding – to grow cultural and creative engagement and strengthen cultural and creative industries? This section outlines our inventory at all three levels of government in Australia: local, state and territory, and federal.**

As demonstrated in **Exhibit 1**, examples were found for eight types of enablers.<sup>19</sup>

ANA's analysis also found that the enablers support arts, culture and creativity through three broad functions:

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**1. Facilitate financial inflows:**

measures that facilitate investment, enable compensation and grow business income.

---

**2. Facilitate operations:**

measures that build capacity and capability, increase access to resources and infrastructure, and reduce business expenses.

---

**3. Increase engagement opportunities:**

measures that facilitate access, participation and inclusion opportunities.

The following sections use these functions to describe the enabler examples at all levels of government.

# Local government enablers

There are over 500 local governments in Australia classified as cities, rural cities, shires or boroughs.<sup>20</sup> The roles and responsibilities of Australia's local governments in relation to arts and culture include:

- Owning, funding and operating a significant proportion of arts and culture facilities.<sup>21</sup> This includes libraries, art centres, museums and community halls.
- Managing a range of recreational infrastructure and event sites, such as parks.
- Establishing and administering many local processes, by-laws and permits relating to cultural events and other activities.
- Managing cultural grant programs.
- Providing cultural goods and services to the people of their local area.

Coupled with proximity to community, a strength of local governments is being able to respond to community needs.<sup>22</sup>

## How local governments use the eight enabler types

Local governments, like governments at all levels, use enablers to **facilitate financial inflows**. This includes leveraging their existing purchasing powers in the procurement of goods and services. For example, the Creative Hoardings Program (City of Sydney) involves commissioning artworks for construction sites.<sup>23</sup>

Some local governments assist commission processes by connecting artists with property owners. An example is the Perfect Match Street Art Program (Inner West Council).<sup>24</sup>

Many local governments use enablers to **facilitate operations**. Examples include capability building and training initiatives such as:

- Arts Connect (Fairfield City Council)<sup>25</sup>
- Makers Entrepreneurship Program (Brisbane City Council)<sup>26</sup>
- The Business Innovation Program (City of Sydney).<sup>27</sup>

Another way to **facilitate operations** is with partnerships. Examples include intergovernmental partnerships between local governments and state and territory governments for film production – state and territory government agencies identifying

local government areas to be ‘film-friendly councils’<sup>28</sup> – and implementation of NTE reforms.

Examples of NTE actions by local governments around Australia include:

- waiving fees for land use and hire for events and festivals (City of Adelaide) during COVID-19 recovery
- removing or reducing permit fees for events and festivals (Brisbane City Council)
- activation of vacant shopfronts (City of Hobart)
- implementing free parking after 6pm (City of Perth)
- implementing later trading hours (City of Sydney).<sup>29</sup>

Some local governments **facilitate operations** by streamlining application and approval services. Examples include the City Laws Approvals Unit (City of Gold Coast)<sup>30</sup> and the Events Local Law (City of Moreton Bay).<sup>31</sup>

Local governments also collate information about pre-approved sites for events, for example, the Events Toolkit (City of Wollongong),<sup>32</sup> or through planning strategies such as the Central Geelong Live Music Action Plan (City of Greater Geelong).<sup>33</sup>

Another way that local governments **facilitate operations** is by charging non-competitive rates when entities access resources and infrastructure. One example is the Film Permit Guidelines (City of Port Phillip), which charges reduced or no fees for eligible projects, including documentaries specific to the area's cultural heritage.<sup>34</sup> The Creative Live and Work Spaces program (City of Sydney) also allows creative workers to apply for non-competitive rates when leasing housing and creative facilities.<sup>35</sup>

Some local governments also **facilitate operations** by collecting and publishing data on arts, culture and creative sector outcomes. One example is the State of the Arts in Cairns.<sup>36</sup>

More broadly, many local governments **facilitate operations** for community organisations – including those focused on arts, culture and creativity – with in-kind support policies (e.g. City of Darwin,<sup>37</sup> Alice Springs Town Council<sup>38</sup> and City of Moreton Bay<sup>39</sup>).

Local governments use enablers to **increase engagement opportunities** by providing accessible information about activity in their areas, including:

- online information hubs and directories (e.g. the Arts Network Townsville, the ArtsCoast platform on the Sunshine Coast<sup>40</sup> and the Yarra City's Live Music Locator)<sup>41</sup>
- arts and culture maps (e.g. the Cairns Arts and Culture Map,<sup>42</sup> the Brisbane City Centre Heritage Place Trail,<sup>43</sup> the Art in Adelaide interactive map,<sup>44</sup> the Public Art Collection online map in Perth<sup>45</sup> and the Public Art Map in Alice Springs<sup>46</sup>)
- localised promotional platforms (e.g. Hello Hobart,<sup>47</sup> What's on Townsville<sup>48</sup> and What's on Brisbane<sup>49</sup>)
- magazines (e.g. *Vibrance Magazine* in Cairns<sup>50</sup>).

Some local governments **increase engagement opportunities** through marketing campaigns to promote local arts and culture offerings. An example of this is the Victorian Creative Cities Network campaign.<sup>51</sup>

In some instances, local governments **increase engagement opportunities** through rejuvenation initiatives.

Examples include:

- Creative Places Initiative (City of Maribyrnong)<sup>52</sup>
- Adelaide Art Walls (City of Adelaide)<sup>53</sup>
- Artforce (Brisbane City Council)<sup>54</sup>
- First Nations NBN Box Art (City of Greater Geelong).<sup>55</sup>

Dialogue with community is a further enabler, as discussed in **Box 1**.

### **Box 1: Interpersonal communication, the role of local government and community building**

'Local government's strength is its closeness to the community and its ability to take account of, and to respond to, local views and ideas.'<sup>56</sup>

In some instances, the initial enabler is government's willingness to engage in dialogue with community members and listen impartially. The following quote describes the role of dialogue for cultural projects in the City of Armadale:

'The community cultural development dialogues in Armadale began predominantly between two individuals, one being an employee of the City of Armadale and the other a local resident. [...] Clear open communication was vital to lay the foundations for trust between the parties. It was transparent that there was a City agenda at play, but there was also a genuine interest in moving from an 'I' City-focussed perspective to a 'We' collaborative model of cultural development.'<sup>57</sup>

Another example is the City of Canterbury-Bankstown's NTE initiatives, which prioritise community engagement and inclusivity.<sup>58</sup>

# State and territory government enablers

The roles and responsibilities of Australia's six state and two territory governments in relation to arts and culture include:

- making and managing laws
- owning, funding and operating state cultural institutions and organisations
- managing cultural grant programs
- providing cultural goods and services to the people of their state or territory.<sup>59</sup>

## How state and territory governments use the eight enabler types

This research found that several states and territories **facilitate financial inflows** by offering film and digital games industry tax offsets.<sup>60</sup> **Box 2** describes tax offsets, while **Part 2** outlines their drawbacks and benefits.

### Box 2: What are tax offsets?

For the purpose of this report, tax offsets are a type of tax concession used by governments to encourage investment in particular types of activities. The investor becomes eligible for a reduction<sup>61</sup> of tax paid on their taxable income. For more information about tax concessions, refer to the **Glossary of Terms**.

Another way that state and territory governments **facilitate financial inflows** is by developing procurement guidance, including for commissioning public art. Examples found in New South Wales (NSW) include the Procurement Policy Framework,<sup>62</sup> the Public Art Toolkit<sup>63</sup> and the Public Art in Transport Infrastructure guidance document.<sup>64</sup>

In some states and territories, an agreed percentage of the budget for government constructions is allocated for commissioning public art. Examples include the Art Site Scheme in Tasmania (Tas)<sup>65</sup> and the Percent for Art Scheme in Western Australia (WA).<sup>66</sup> These types of schemes are examples of whole-of-government industry strategies.

State and territory governments can also **facilitate financial inflows** by providing finance options such as public loans.<sup>67</sup> Examples of public loans include:

- low-interest loans in Tas for capital improvements or equipment purchase<sup>68</sup>
- the COLLECT Art Purchase Scheme in Tas for eligible consumers purchasing artwork<sup>69</sup>
- the Revolving Loan Facility in South Australia (SA) for eligible film and television productions.<sup>70</sup>

Many state and territory governments **facilitate operations** with professional skills training and capability-building initiatives. Some of the examples identified are specific to arts and culture, while others sit across many different sectors and industries.

Examples include:

- Growing Pains in the Arts (Tas) provides free skills development workshops.<sup>71</sup>
- The Roving Curators program (Tas) gives museums, galleries and collections access to the expertise of museums professionals.<sup>72</sup>
- Uptown Accelerator (NSW) teaches participants to learn pitching skills and form collaborations.<sup>73</sup>
- Service NSW Business Connect includes workshops presented in partnership with Creative Plus Business.<sup>74</sup>
- Creative Exchange (Victoria) is a professional development and networking program.<sup>75</sup>
- The Canberra Business Advice and Support in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) provides free tailored business advice.<sup>76</sup>
- The Canberra Institute of Technology (ACT) offers specialist training in audio, lighting and mechanical production.<sup>77</sup>
- A Pathway to Jobs in Live Music: The Weasle Eicke Scholarship is a partnership between Creative Victoria and CrewCare.<sup>78</sup>

Some state and territory governments **facilitate operations** by increasing safety at events. In SA, for example, health and security services are provided at festivals as part of coordinated harm-reduction policies.<sup>79</sup>

Partnerships are another way to **facilitate operations**. Examples include:

- Australian Cultural and Creative Activity: A Population and Hotspot Analysis, a research collaboration between two universities and five state government agencies<sup>80</sup>
- the Arts in Health program, a partnership between Arts Queensland and Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service and Children's Health Queensland.<sup>81</sup>

State and territory governments frequently **facilitate operations** through knowledge sharing. This includes collecting and publishing data and analysis on arts, culture and creativity. For example, state and territory governments contribute to the CFG dataset.<sup>82</sup>

State and territory governments also **facilitate operations** by streamlining or simplifying services. Examples include:

- The Film Friendly programs in various jurisdictions streamline approval processes for film production companies.<sup>83</sup>
- Some practical aspects of the 24-hour economy Vibrancy Reforms (NSW) include simplifying entertainment noise regulations and reducing barriers to hosting events.<sup>84</sup>
- The NTE reform package (ACT) includes amendments to the *Liquor Act 2010* that support a flexible and responsive regulatory environment for NTE businesses.<sup>85</sup>
- *The Liquor Amendment Act 2020* changes to planning instruments (NSW) have introduced low-impact entertainment as exempt development and special entertainment precincts.<sup>86</sup>
- A commitment to establish streamlined navigation of government arts and culture-related services has been made in several state jurisdictions, including the Cultural Front Door service (NSW)<sup>87</sup> and Create SA.<sup>88</sup>

State and territory governments **facilitate operations** by charging non-commercial rates for use of resources and infrastructure. This includes lease rental discounts<sup>89</sup> and lending programs. An example of a lending program is the Collections Care Toolkit (Tas), which allows small museums with heritage collections to access tools of trade.<sup>90</sup>

Some state and territory jurisdictions provide tax concessions that **facilitate operations** by reducing tax liabilities (i.e. reduce expenses) for arts and culture entities. Examples of these include the Payroll Tax Exemption in SA<sup>91</sup> and the Payroll Tax Rebate in Queensland (Qld).<sup>92</sup>

Government decisions about the administrative, governance and portfolio arrangements for arts and culture can additionally **facilitate operations**. For example, in two current state and territory governments, specific arts and cultural responsibilities have been allocated to assistant ministers, as follows:

- the Assistant Minister for Sport and Culture (Northern Territory)
- the Assistant Minister for Creative Industries (Qld).

These roles are in addition to the Minister for Arts in each jurisdiction.

Some state and territory governments **increase engagement opportunities** by ensuring eligibility of creative activities in health and social services. For example, arts and culture activities are included in several jurisdictions' children's voucher programs.<sup>93</sup>

Finally, state and territory governments **increase engagement opportunities** through free or reduced entry fees to visit state and territory-owned museums, galleries and performing venues.<sup>94</sup>

# Federal government enablers

The roles and responsibilities of Australia’s national government in relation to arts and culture include:

- owning, funding and operating national cultural institutions and organisations
- managing cultural grant programs
- providing cultural goods and services to people in Australia.

The federal government makes and implements laws that apply across the whole of Australia.<sup>95</sup> Reasons for their actions include legislative or regulatory responsibilities, responsibilities stemming from agreements between governments, and other broader commitments.<sup>96</sup>

## How the federal government uses the eight enabler types

Several federal government-level enablers that **facilitate financial inflows** relate to the tax system. These include deductible gift recipient (DGR) status for a range of entities,<sup>97</sup> which provides tax incentives for donors.<sup>98</sup> In connection, initiatives such as the Australian Cultural Fund (ACF)<sup>99</sup> allow participating arts and culture professionals and organisations to benefit from the ACF’s DGR status.

Another way that the tax system **facilitates financial inflows** is through the following kinds of film industry tax concessions:

- the producer tax offset<sup>100</sup>
- the location tax offset<sup>101</sup>
- the post, digital and visual effects (PDV) tax offset.<sup>102</sup>

The federal government also **facilitates financial inflows** by allowing national collecting institutions discretion to manage their own investment activities.<sup>103</sup>

As with local and state and territory governments, procurement policies and *guidelines* at the federal level **facilitate financial inflows**.<sup>104</sup> This includes artwork acquisition plans and policies, such as the Artbank Collection Plan<sup>105</sup> and the National Gallery of Australia’s Acquisition Policy.<sup>106</sup>

Similarly, the Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material<sup>107</sup> provides a framework for acquiring or borrowing cultural items.

The following tax concessions **facilitate operations** by reducing or levelling out assessable tax income:

- income tax exemption for NFP entities (including NFPs with a cultural purpose)
- exemptions from fringe benefits tax on entertainment expenses for NFP entities<sup>108</sup>
- income tax exemption of certain Prime Minister’s prizes (including the prize for Australian history and the literary award)
- the Cultural Gifts Program<sup>109</sup>
- the digital games tax offset
- the R&D tax offset
- income averaging for authors, inventors, performing artists, production associates and sportspersons
- non-commercial losses exception rules for primary producers and artists.

**Table 1** summarises selected legislation that in many cases results in the practical outcomes of **facilitating financial inflows** and **facilitating operations**.

**Table 1: Selected legislation with an explicit enabling function for arts and culture**

Title	Purpose
<i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1936 and Income Tax Assessment Act 1997</i> (ITAA 1936 and ITAA 1997)	The ITAA 1936 and ITAA 1997 set out the key rules for how income tax works in Australia and outline several tax concessions that are identified as arts and culture enablers.
<i>National Collecting Institutions Legislation Amendment Act 2021</i> (the NCI Act) <sup>110</sup>	<p>The NCI Act ‘amends the six enabling Acts for National Collecting Institutions (NCI enabling Acts listed below) to introduce consistent categories for financial transactions and associated thresholds.’ The six Acts are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Australian National Maritime Museum Act 1990</i></li> <li>• <i>National Film and Sound Archive of Australia Act 2008</i></li> <li>• <i>National Gallery Act 1975</i></li> <li>• <i>National Library Act 1960</i></li> <li>• <i>National Museum of Australia Act 1980</i></li> <li>• <i>National Portrait Gallery of Australia Act 2012</i></li> </ul>
<i>Copyright Act 1968</i>	The Copyright Act safeguards the owners of literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works, as well as sound recordings and films. <sup>111</sup>
<i>Resale Royalty Right for Visual Artists Act 2009</i> (RRR Act)	The RRR Act facilitates a 5% royalty for visual artists on qualifying resold commercial artwork. <sup>112</sup>
<i>Public Lending Right Act 1985</i> (PLR Act)	The PLR Act legislates the Australian Lending Rights Schemes. These schemes enable book publishers or creators to receive compensation for lost income ‘through the free multiple use of their work in Australian public and educational lending libraries.’ <sup>113</sup>
<i>Broadcasting Services Act 1992</i>	The Broadcasting Services Act broadly relates to content regulation and media ownership. One of its functions is to empower the regulator to make standards for children’s programming and Australian content. <sup>114</sup>



The federal government **facilitates operations** through capability and training initiatives. Examples include:

- Screen Australia's skills development initiatives<sup>115</sup>
- Creative Australia's Creative Workplaces initiative, fundraising programs and services, digital culture programs and leadership programs<sup>116</sup>
- Yearly updates to the Australian Apprenticeships Priority List<sup>117</sup>
- Service and Creative Skills Australia's (SacSa) workforce planning report for the arts and its work to begin addressing critical workforce challenges in the arts, personal services, retail, tourism and hospitality sectors.<sup>118</sup>

Providing resources that improve efficiency and planning is another way that the federal government **facilitates operations**. Examples include Screen Australia's plans and templates (e.g. the Film Finance Plan, Feature Film Recoupment Schedule and Strategic Plan Template)<sup>119</sup> and the CSIRO-developed standardised tool for climate adaptation (Climate change toolkit for World Heritage properties in Australia).<sup>120</sup>

The Climate Action for World Heritage through Capacity Development Project is an example of a federal government partnership **facilitating operations** by developing climate-related resources for heritage sites.

It is a partnership between the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, UNESCO and the World Heritage advisory bodies.<sup>121</sup>

Like state and territory governments, the federal government **facilitates operations** by charging non-commercial rates for use of resources and infrastructure. Examples of this include access to defence locations,<sup>122</sup> equipment and other government-owned locations such as the Australian Parliament House for film and television activities.<sup>123</sup>

The federal government also **facilitates operations** by using a very specific further enabler: exemptions to efficiency dividends. In Australia, most government agencies are required to reduce public sector spending by annually identifying savings or efficiencies by a set percentage.<sup>124</sup> Selected arts and cultural agencies are granted an exemption to the efficiency dividend.<sup>125</sup>

The federal government also **facilitates operations** by collecting and publishing data on arts, culture and creative sector outcomes, and supporting its use in research, policy and practice. Examples include Screen Australia's Drama Report<sup>126</sup> and Creative Australia's National Arts Participation Survey.<sup>127</sup>

Examples of accompanying data infrastructure include:

- the Occupation Standard Classification for Australia codes
- the Occupation Shortages Analysis
- the HASS and Indigenous Research Data Commons.<sup>128</sup>

Several examples of codes of practice and standards developed and reviewed with federal government involvement **increase engagement opportunities**. These include the Indigenous Art Code, which is a voluntary industry code of conduct for engaging with First Nations artists and their art.<sup>129</sup> Another example is codes and standards for television and radio broadcasters seeking to ensure their industries' practices, content and captioning are in line with community expectations.<sup>130</sup>

As with state and territory governments, ensuring eligibility of creative activities in health and social services can **increase engagement opportunities**. One example is the list of social and recreation activities that the National Disability Insurance Scheme supports participation in (e.g. dance, art classes or quilting).<sup>131</sup>

At the broadest level, the National Broadband Network **increases engagement opportunities** for Australians to access and participate in arts, culture and creativity through digital connectivity.<sup>132</sup>

Local content rules and quotas for broadcasters also **increase engagement opportunities** for people living in Australia with local television and radio content.<sup>133</sup>

Another example of **increasing engagement opportunities** is the addition of cultural institutions to the allowable list of institutions in the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate program to enable the cultural and creative engagement of children.<sup>134</sup>

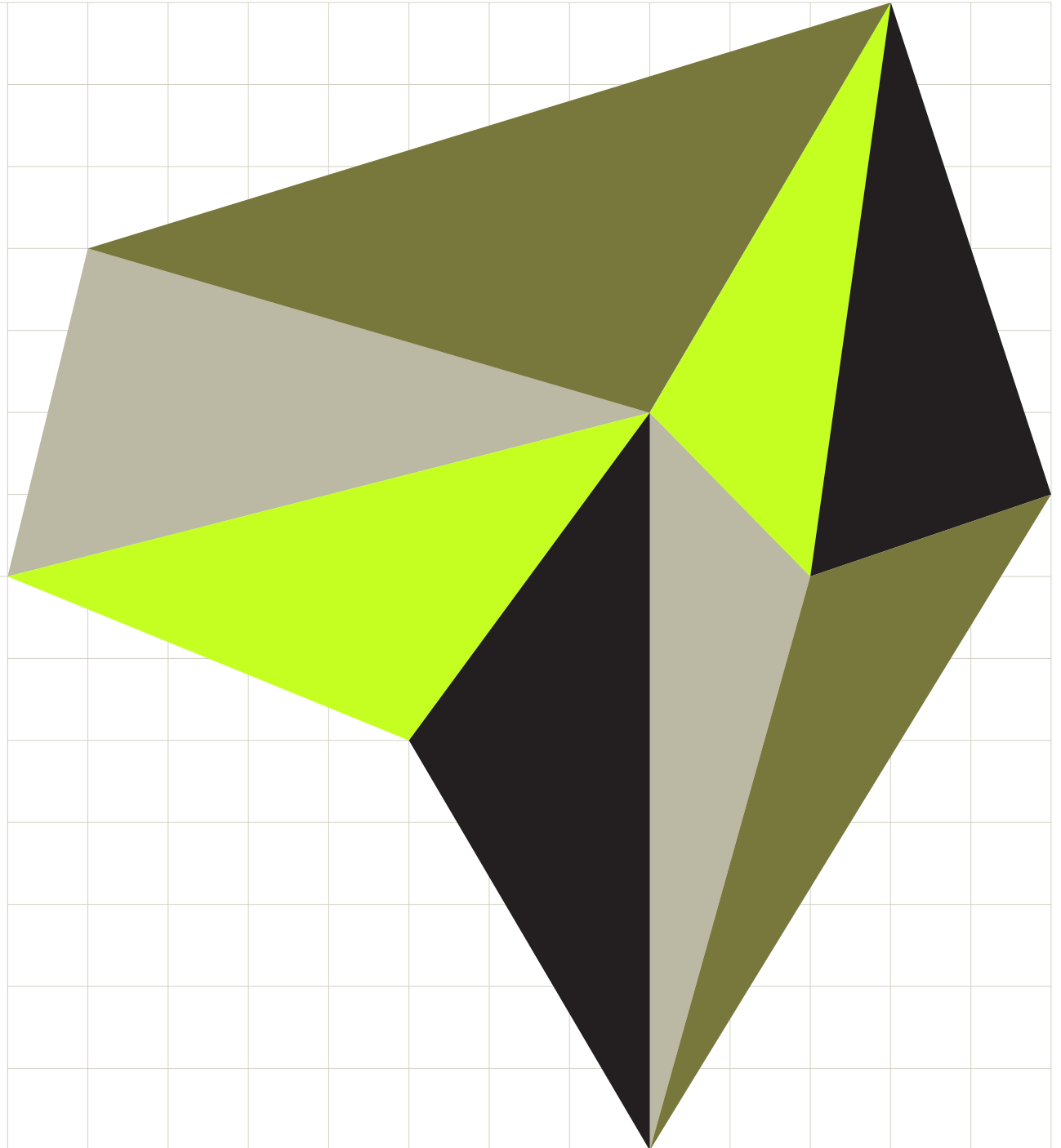
Like local governments, the federal government uses co-design strategies to **increase engagement opportunities** by including the perspectives of those impacted by policies and plans. Recent examples include:

- Equity: the Arts and Disability Associated Plan (Office for the Arts)<sup>135</sup>
- National Indigenous Visual Arts Action Plan 2021–25 (Office for the Arts)<sup>136</sup>
- Youth: the Creative Industries Youth Advisory Group (Office for Youth and Office for the Arts).<sup>137</sup>



## Part 2:

**Spanning  
boundaries:  
What else could  
governments  
be doing?**



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**Part 1 established that governments at all levels in Australia have ways to enable cultural and creative activities beyond direct funding mechanisms. It identified eight types of enablers and three main functions for these enablers, highlighting that governments can learn from each other's successful ideas and strategies.**

**Part 2 is specifically aimed at helping governments and industry look for 'quick wins'<sup>138</sup> and new ideas for enablers that sit outside the boundaries of traditional domestic cultural policy. It draws on international examples as well as opportunities in other portfolio areas.**

**Part 2** explores how these enablers relate to the focus areas that typically (a) cross traditional boundaries between ministers' portfolios and the federal, state and territory, and local levels of government and (b) connect government roles, responsibilities, commitments and aspirations beyond direct funding. These focus areas are:

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**Access**

how easily the community can obtain a good or service (physical, digital or virtual)

---

**Infrastructure**

the physical, digital and cultural structures and facilities available to the community

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**Innovation**

new ideas, methods or forms, and their diffusion across the economy

---

**Production**

the act of producing, creating or manufacturing goods and services

---

**Protection**

safeguarding tangible and intangible goods and services

The following sections outline opportunities that sit outside traditional domestic cultural policy in these focus areas.

# Access

**‘The proven benefits of access to arts, culture and creativity should be available to everyone, wherever they live and whoever they are.’<sup>139</sup>**

ANA's Insight Report *Transformative Edge 2024: How arts, culture and creativity impact our prosperity, cohesion, security, health and sustainability* reveals that creating and encouraging opportunities for people to experience arts, culture and creativity assists populations to live well – with prosperity, cohesion, security, health and sustainability.

Capitalising on these impacts requires addressing access barriers for people in Australia who would like to engage in creative and cultural activities more than they currently do but are limited by a range of factors. National research indicates that the main barriers to arts attendance, for example, are cost and location.<sup>140</sup>

In **Part 1**, we identified key enablers that aim to reduce cost and location barriers. These include free or subsidised parking for event attendance and free or reduced entry prices to public venues.

Enablers identified in **Part 1** to consider for access – that is, how easily the community can obtain a good or service (physical, digital or virtual) – also include:

- digital inclusion (e.g. digital literacy skills, platforms and connectivity)
- co-design strategies for policy development
- industry codes of practice developed in line with community expectations, regularly reviewed by governments<sup>141</sup>
- low-impact entertainment areas exempt from development.

An international review of transportation and access to arts amenities has highlighted another opportunity for governments to consider: a protected zone for local commerce and artists. The review describes this measure as follows: ‘Under this zone [in the City of Paris], building use on the ground level is only allowed for local businesses and artists, and changing them to residential condominiums or franchise businesses is prohibited.’<sup>142</sup> In tailoring and considering this zoning example for Australia, ANA acknowledges the research undertaken by the Productivity Commission, which describes planning and development responsibilities as shared across decision-making bodies and levels of government.<sup>143</sup>

With the goal of improving cultural access, Australia can consider improving parking access for people living with a disability to complement recent venue access reforms<sup>144</sup> and forthcoming transport standard reforms.<sup>145</sup> An international example is the European Disability Card, which, among other special conditions such as rights to preferential parking, increases access to a range of cultural, leisure and sports venues and events.<sup>146</sup>

In **Part 1**, sharing knowledge and accessible information were identified as broad enabler types. There is an opportunity to expand access to existing datasets, such as the ABS QuickStats reporting by federal electorate, by increasing the level of detail about population groups.<sup>147</sup> Increased access to detailed data can provide a valuable enabler to improve understanding of specific population groups, including people living with a disability and First Nations people. This can help governments and industry to better provide accessible arts and culture activities according to the needs of the population.

UNESCO has summarised member state actions that aim to increase access to arts education opportunities for policymakers to consider. They include:

- opportunities to share best practices and teaching approaches (e.g. workshops and seminars)
- an up-to-date national qualification framework that reflects relevant training and job market demands
- continued availability and expansion of arts subjects
- cross-disciplinary competencies in education (e.g. intercultural understanding and critical thinking skills)
- specialised committees to refine arts education and ensure relevance and effectiveness of curricula.<sup>148</sup>

# Infrastructure

**‘[Our urban places] should be vibrant and welcoming and support connection to cultural and community pursuits.’<sup>149</sup>**

**‘Social infrastructure delivers substantial direct and indirect benefits to the nation’s economy.’<sup>150</sup>**

These statements from national policies<sup>151</sup> demonstrate the value governments place on social and cultural infrastructure.

*Transformative Edge 2024* also reveals that statements about the impacts and importance of Australia’s physical cultural infrastructure have a basis in the evidence. For example, one Australian study showed that cultural heritage infrastructure supported income diversification in Central West Qld when that region was affected by long-term drought.<sup>152</sup> These types of case studies highlight the importance of considering cultural infrastructure as ‘in scope’ for government planning and investment processes focused on social and economic development, including in regional and outer suburban growth areas.

The findings in **Part 1** identified examples of enablers that target physical infrastructure, including:

- access to governments’ assets, including facilities for arts and culture activities
- streamlined approval processes for use of government-managed sites, such as parks and streets
- engaging with stakeholders on revitalisation projects that activate vacant premises.

In terms of digital infrastructure, the findings in **Part 1** identify that high-speed broadband stands out as an enabler increasing engagement opportunities.

The OECD’s global analysis of cultural and creative sectors foregrounds two ways that policymakers can support digital transitions among cultural and creative businesses and use this enabling infrastructure as they grow:

- partnerships between the public sector and technology companies – of which it provides no specific examples
- digital skills training programs – which it identifies as existing in a sample of countries including Jamaica, France, South Africa, Mexico and Guatemala.<sup>153</sup>

The above-mentioned UNESCO report provides a long list of measures and initiatives in the focus area of ‘Digital technologies in the culture sector’, including:

- public-private-civil society collaborations on digital cultural projects
- cross-sector networks to address digital challenges collaboratively, bringing together various stakeholders for shared solutions.<sup>154</sup>

In addition, creating design standards or infrastructure briefs that proactively consider self-service and flexible service (e.g. after-hours library returns) can assist sustainability in providing particular infrastructural services.

Finally, cultural infrastructure includes cultural relations institutions as enablers of soft-power diplomacy. ANA's Analysis Paper *Pathways to becoming a cultural powerhouse* identified that among the 15 largest world economies, Australia and Canada are the only countries that do not yet have a dedicated cultural relations institution (and Canada has been exploring establishing one). As outlined in detail in that paper, there is an opportunity in Australia to explore options for establishing an international cultural relations institution.<sup>155</sup>

# Innovation

**‘Many new-to-the-world or new-to-the-firm production techniques, ideas and technologies originate in Australian cultural and creative industries.’<sup>156</sup>**

ANA's Insight Report *Accelerate: Reframing culture's role in productivity* affirmed the relevance of innovation as an underlying determinant of productivity with a range of connections to cultural and creative activities.<sup>157</sup> ANA's *Transformative Edge 2024* also notes that new technologies tend to drive productivity gains. One topical example is how artificial intelligence (AI) is being used across arts and culture. The OECD affirms the contribution of the cultural and creative industries to 'innovation, and in turn productivity'.<sup>158</sup>

At the time of writing, the OECD is specifically examining good practice in innovation and productivity policy for the cultural and creative sectors. It will offer data and recommendations for countries, regions and cities to 'better capitalise on the innovation and productivity potential of [cultural and creative sectors]'.<sup>159</sup> The project is also considering initiatives such as R&D tax credits, creative vouchers and creative hubs/incubators.

Targeted R&D support, including R&D tax offsets, is widely associated with promoting innovation. However, research on this topic has shown that official R&D definitions 'used by governments worldwide exclude the arts, humanities and social sciences.'<sup>160</sup> Other sources claim that specific activities and entities of the cultural and creative industries are ineligible for targeted R&D support.<sup>161</sup> This suggests an opportunity to comprehensively examine the contribution of the cultural and creative industries to R&D in the review of the federal government's R&D system.<sup>162</sup>

**Box 3** articulates some of the considerations regarding R&D tax offsets.

### **Box 3: R&D tax offset benefits and drawbacks**

To be eligible for R&D tax offsets in Australia, an entity must meet certain criteria related to legal status, be an R&D entity and have 'incurred notional deductions of at least \$20,000 on eligible R&D activities.'<sup>163</sup>

Research in the social sciences, arts or humanities is listed as an excluded R&D activity but could qualify as a supporting activity if accompanied by an eligible R&D activity.<sup>164</sup>

Arguments in favour of increasing R&D incentives targeted at culture and creativity include flow-on benefits that range from skills training and job creation to increased co-investment and greater partnership opportunities.<sup>165</sup>

Drawbacks for governments considering an R&D tax offset (across all industries) include the risks that the financing activity would have occurred regardless and that entities receiving this form of support could relabel other types of expenses as R&D costs.<sup>166</sup>



ANA's Analysis Paper *Guide, Steer, Repeat: Applications of AI in arts, culture and creativity and how Australia should respond* outlines examples of how AI is being used across arts and culture. **Box 4** details opportunities identified from this Analysis Paper.<sup>167</sup>

**Box 4: An excerpt of selected opportunities focused on innovation diffusion and a proactive approach to AI's potential benefits and harms from ANA's Analysis Paper *Guide, Steer, Repeat***

**Opportunity 1**

*Noting that Australians are using AI across arts and culture, but with some caution*

**1.1** Cultural policies at all levels of government should explicitly acknowledge the real impacts of AI on arts and culture, both in production and consumption contexts, and commit to addressing these impacts.

**1.2** Government agencies responsible for AI policy and government use of AI should consider and address the impacts relevant to arts and culture when making policy.

**Opportunity 2**

*Noting governments and cultural and creative industries are responding*

**2.2** Major galleries, libraries, archives and museums should actively share knowledge and the benefits of AI with smaller institutions to help ensure uses of AI are beneficial for arts and culture in all communities.

**2.3** Governments should harness the knowledge of Australian industry regarding the impacts of AI in arts and culture, including insights from generative AI developers, to inform domestic policy and engagement with overseas regulators of AI.

**Opportunity 3**

*Noting there is untapped potential to use arts and culture to steer AI*

**3.1** Equip Australians to apply AI in safer, more innovative and inclusive ways by using cultural and creative activities as an accessible means to improve awareness and understanding.

Additionally, given that Australian arts and culture professionals may face difficulty scaling their innovative work for international audiences – for example, due to high transport costs or restrictive trade barriers in the global market – there is an opportunity, highlighted by the OECD, for governments to play a leading role in the commercialisation process of innovation in cultural and creative industries.<sup>168</sup>

Towards this end, Australia's existing Industry Growth Program supports small to medium-sized businesses and startups in scaling up and profiting from their ideas. The program's current priority areas are renewables and low-emissions technologies; medical science; transport; value-add in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors; value-add in resources; defence capability; and enabling capabilities.<sup>169</sup> The federal government can consider whether the 'tailored advice of program advisors' under this program could be extended to small to medium-sized businesses focused on arts, culture and creativity.

# Production

**‘Overall, the analysis of [the UNESCO survey] uncovers a complicated panorama of challenges in the field of culture and economy.’<sup>170</sup>**

In 2022–23, cultural and creative activity accounted for an estimated 2.5% of gross value added (GVA) in Australia. By this GVA measure – defined by the federal government as the contribution to domestic production made by an individual producer, industry or sector in the economy – cultural and creative activity is comparable to the size of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry, also at 2.5%, or the Accommodation and Food Services industry at 2.4%.<sup>171</sup>

In Australia, production challenges for arts and culture may nonetheless stem from a combination of factors, including:

- limited access to finances<sup>172</sup>
- workforce/skills shortages<sup>173</sup>
- small domestic market<sup>174</sup>
- geographic isolation.<sup>175</sup>

Key enablers identified in **Part 1** relevant to production include procurement guidelines for commissioning public art and tax concessions that currently accompany direct funding by all levels of government.

Internationally, we identified the following tax concessions as areas of consideration:

- The United Kingdom’s Creative Industry Tax Reliefs and Expenditure Credits allow qualifying corporations to claim deductions on expenditures directly related to producing and developing various arts and cultural outputs, including films, video games and museum or gallery exhibitions.<sup>176</sup>
- In Ireland, the Artists’ Exemption from Income Tax has been described as fostering ‘innovation and economic growth within the arts sector.’<sup>177</sup>
- In Turkey, law no. 5225 is intended to promote cultural investment and encourage involvement of businesses, including corporations, to invest in cultural activities.<sup>178</sup>

**Box 5** highlights some of the benefits and drawbacks of tax concessions for governments to consider.

### Box 5: Key benefits and drawbacks of selected tax concessions

Eligibility of tax concessions varies across industries, with some examples relevant for all industries. For example:

- Simplified depreciation rules and the unincorporated small business tax discount<sup>179</sup> provide material benefit for eligible small businesses, including arts and culture professionals registered as sole traders.
- Some tax concessions are only available for large businesses that engage in certain activities.

Tax deductible donations are a tax concession frequently discussed in relation to arts and culture. To receive a tax deduction, the donation must be made to organisations that have DGR status. DGR status appears to be relatively well used in the cultural and creative industries: 59% of registered NFPs with a cultural purpose have DGR status, compared to 42% average across all NFPs.<sup>180</sup>

Some proponents view these tax deductions as a fairer form of arts and culture investment compared to direct funding.<sup>181</sup> The rationale is that decision-makers involved with administering direct grants are likely to consist of a smaller group of people with specific tastes. In comparison, taxpayers that donate to arts and culture who receive a tax deduction are likely to represent a larger array of donors with various tastes.<sup>182</sup>

This is especially pertinent given the rise of philanthropic initiatives including giving days, giving circles and government crowdfunding giving initiatives such as the Australian Cultural Fund.<sup>183</sup>

Film industry tax offsets are another tax concession example. Cited benefits include attracting financial inflows, improving market responsiveness, increased employment opportunities and improved global pathways (e.g. co-production opportunities).<sup>184</sup>

Despite the perspective that tax concessions can provide a fairer form of investment, the connected costs for governments (i.e. revenue forgone) require scrutiny.<sup>185</sup> The Treasury found, for example, that the total revenue forgone in 2020–21 (across all industries) from donations to DGRs was estimated at \$2 billion, demonstrating the significant material impacts.<sup>186</sup> The arts and culture amount represents a much smaller portion, estimated at \$69 million.<sup>187</sup>

More broadly, there are significant pressures on government budgets to justify how specific tax concessions are offset by savings.

International trade in creative goods and services is known to boost production, including through the export revenue it generates for nations and industries. The following themes emerged in export promotion strategies of UNCTAD-surveyed countries and could serve to inspire Australia:

- formulated export priorities and aims
- strategies to increase promotion of specific creative goods and services, including digital cultural and creative activity directories
- cross-portfolio information and collaborations by ministries and commissions about creative exports
- cross-cultural communication assistance
- establishment of an Export Development Board for market research and maintaining export relationships
- promotion of the jurisdiction where products are made.<sup>188</sup>

# Protection

**‘Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which [they] are the author.’<sup>189</sup>**

Protection can apply to both tangible arts and culture (e.g. physical artworks and cultural sites) and intangible arts and culture (e.g. intellectual property). It may also encompass environmental protection.

To provide one example of protected tangible arts and culture, a National Archives of Australia collection safeguards films by and about Australia’s defence agencies, showcasing the country’s military history and its evolving role in global and regional security now and for future generations.<sup>190</sup>

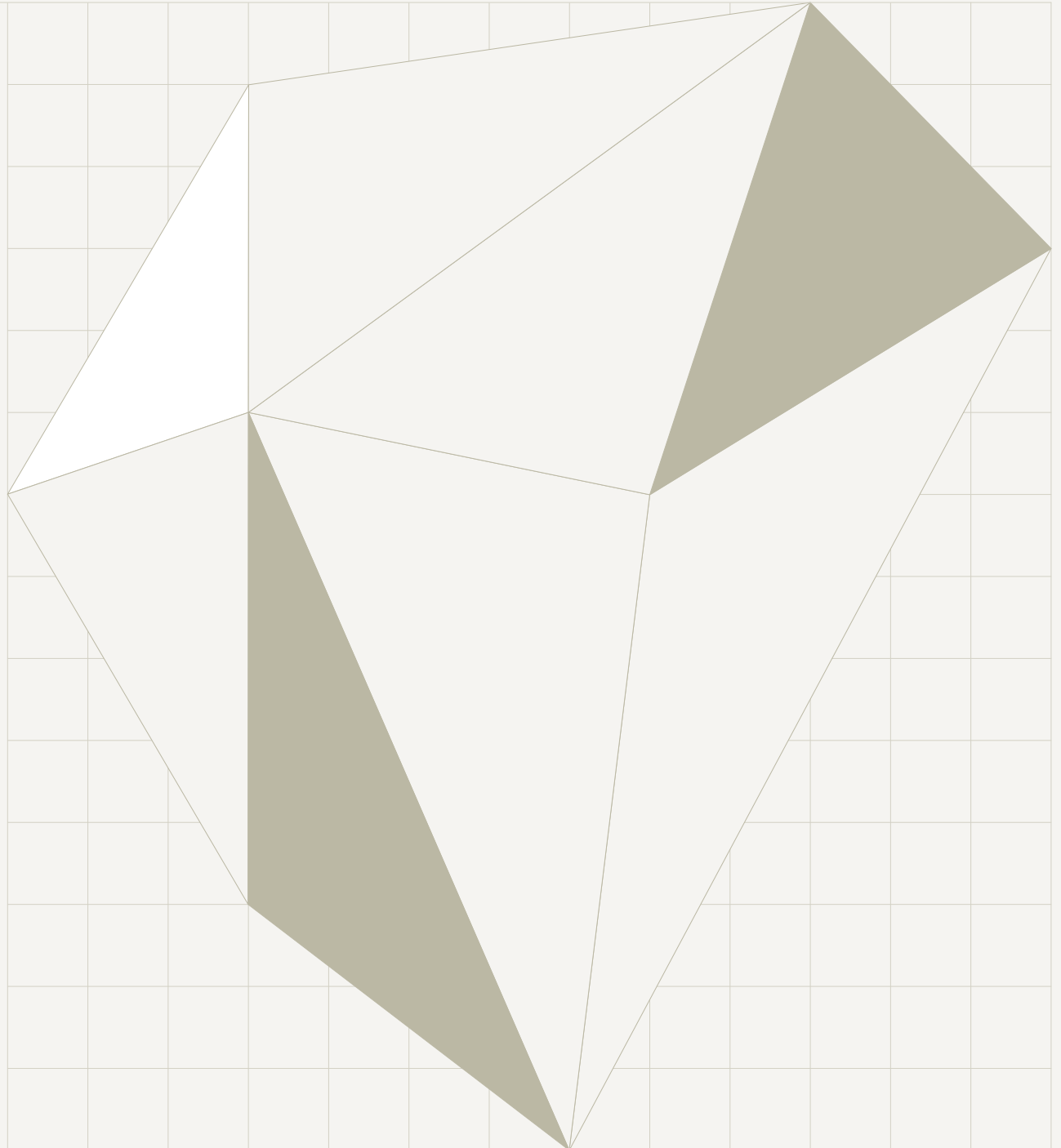
Relevant examples in **Part 1** include local content rules, the *Copyright Act 1968* and the Cultural Gifts Program. Of these, the Cultural Gifts Program relates to Australia’s tangible cultural inheritance by encouraging donations of cultural items to public collections. As outlined by ANA elsewhere, the program could be further promoted to advance Australia’s cultural inheritance.<sup>191</sup>

In Australia, new laws are currently being developed to protect Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property, which encompasses Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ cultural heritage, including traditional knowledge and cultural expressions.

At a global level, protective initiatives include the UNESCO’s *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, introduced in 2005. Australia has been a party to this Convention since 2009.

Finally, it is worth noting that Australia has been internationally recognised for its protection enablers. UNESCO recently highlighted Australia’s standardised guidance and toolkit to assist in taking climate action for World Heritage properties, along with expanding lending rights to cover digital formats (such as e-books and audiobooks).<sup>192</sup> Governments have an opportunity to promote these tools with industry and internationally, supporting a range of objectives shared by governments.

# Concluding words



**To achieve a pro-culture legislative, regulatory and leadership environment all forms of government action require attention. *Government, Culture and Creativity: It's about more than just funding* contributes to this by showcasing the broad range of actions governments can take to strengthen cultural access and foster robust cultural industries, *beyond* direct funding.**

This research established that all levels of government have a variety of pro-culture enablers in place. The examples range from tax concessions that encourage investment and capability-building programs that increase professional skill, to reduced-cost parking that improves access to events.

This research has identified enablers from other portfolio areas as well as from overseas that Australian cultural policymakers can learn from and consider introducing to optimise opportunities. Policymakers can gather further evidence about these other portfolio and international examples and work with industry to consider the practical problems of implementation.

This Insight Report has demonstrated that all levels of government have a distinct role to play in designing and incorporating enablers. Effective use of these enablers alongside direct funding can foster a pro-culture environment to help grow cultural and creative engagement and strengthen cultural and creative industries.

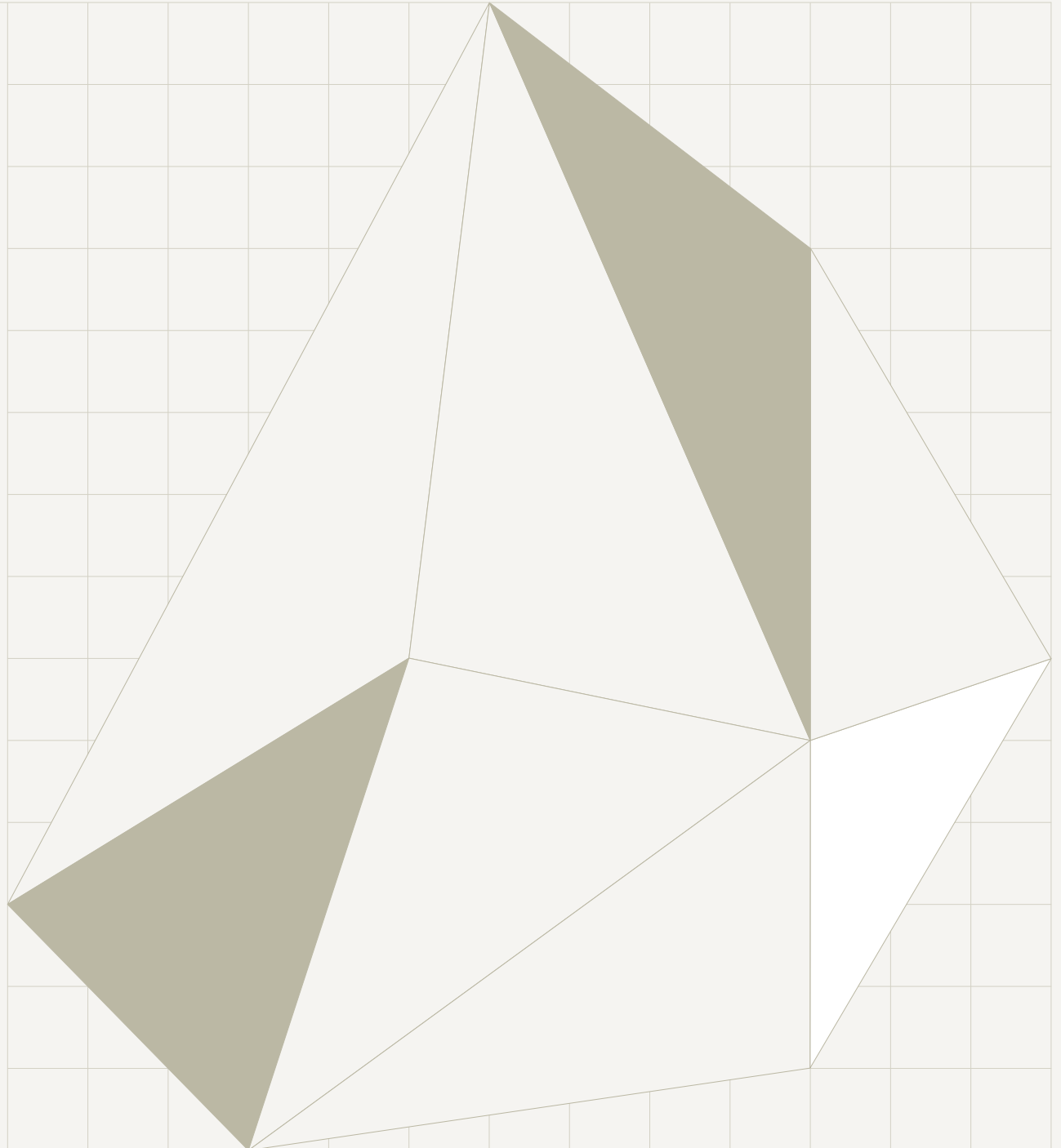
As a non-partisan, evidence-based think tank, ANA's Insight Reports provide research and analysis into arts and cultural policy topics. To help inform policy discussions, this report has highlighted practical examples of the various ways that governments enable arts, culture and creativity.

To ensure continued creative and cultural engagement for all people in Australia, whoever they are and wherever they live, *Government, Culture and Creativity: It's about more than just funding* suggests the following strategic actions:

- Each level of government can play to its strengths and established responsibilities when designing and expanding pro-culture enablers.
- The cultural and creative industries can leverage and work with governments to expand existing pro-culture enablers that strengthen access and foster robust industries.
- To maximise opportunities to learn, co-deliver and collaborate, the National Cabinet should establish a Ministerial Council of Cultural Ministers, including a seat for a representative of Australian local governments.
- Strengthen government leadership by instating an Assistant Minister for Arts and Culture at the federal level and considering equivalent roles across state and territory jurisdictions.
- Develop a consistent approach to evaluate pro-culture enablers. This would inform decision-making and action across jurisdictions by strengthening the evidence base.
- To increase awareness of enabler prevalence and options across jurisdictions, existing data collection mechanisms can be adjusted.

Numerous enablers can strengthen cultural access and foster robust cultural industries to benefit all. While this Insight Report provides a foundational knowledge of what governments are *already* doing and *what else* is possible, ANA will also undertake and publish further analysis and guidance for governments asking **what we should be doing.**

# Appendices and Endnotes



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# Appendix 1: Local government areas

To provide context, **Box 6** outlines key insights about local government areas in Australia.

## **Box 6: Local government areas in Australia**

Australia has over 500 local government areas (LGAs).<sup>193</sup> Terms used to describe LGAs include councils or municipalities. They are classified as either a city, rural city, shire or borough. LGA boundaries change from time to time. Approximately 55% are regional, rural or remote councils.<sup>194</sup>

- Australian Capital Territory has no LGAs
- New South Wales has 128 LGAs<sup>195</sup>
- Northern Territory has 17 LGAs<sup>196</sup>
- Queensland has 77 LGAs<sup>197</sup>
- South Australia has 68 LGAs<sup>198</sup>
- Tasmania has 29 LGAs<sup>199</sup>
- Victoria has 79 LGAs<sup>200</sup>
- Western Australia has 137 LGAs<sup>201</sup>



# Appendix 2: Methodology and limitations

ANA's research began with a scoping-focus on government actions distinct from direct funding. We were particularly curious about what government actions already exist outside those reported as expenditure of the CFG. An initial inventory of enablers was developed using the following sources:

- government budget papers
- tax expenditure and insight statements
- tax expenditure and concessional charges statements in state and territory budget papers
- published academic and grey literature.

We prioritised enablers explicitly intended for arts and culture but also considered those with notable impact even if they had broader focus.

Scoping challenges that we encountered included:

- Costings or evaluations were unavailable for most identified enablers, making any robust assessment of the costs difficult.
- Most governmental action has a cost attached to it.
- Recurrent and capital expenditure types of the CFG survey are aggregated statistics, not reported as specific measures or initiatives.

The inventory was shared with representatives at all levels of government and with industry representatives (including national peak body representatives) with the invitation to provide input. Many representatives generously shared their insights and examples with ANA to support the project and a national understanding of the enabling environment.

To address the scoping challenges outlined above, ANA took a pragmatic approach. We scoped out some examples suggested by advisors (e.g. specific spending programs). We used judgment about which options to consider. In these decisions, we prioritised extending understanding of the enabling environment and making reasonable suggestions for government action in arts, culture and creativity in Australia.

For the discussion in Part 2 we were informed by Part 1's inventory of enablers, which are explored alongside examples of international enablers, with particular focus on those described by the OECD, UNCTAD and UNESCO.

# Endnotes

- 1 'A recent analysis of national household data reveals that, for people in Australia, attending "events that bring people together, such as fetes, shows, festivals or other community events," is the single highest contributor to community participation – other than spending time with family and friends – and attending events is the strongest contributor to civic engagement.' Alan Hui and Kate Fielding, *Belong, Trust, Connect: Policy opportunities for social cohesion through arts and culture* (Canberra: A New Approach, March 2025), 4, <https://newapproach.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/A-New-Approach-Analysis-Paper-Belong-Trust-Connect-2025.pdf>.  
See also: Roger Wilkins et al., *The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey: Selected Findings from Waves 1 to 22* (2024), 170–72, [https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/5229912/2024-HILDA-Statistical-Report.pdf](https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/5229912/2024-HILDA-Statistical-Report.pdf).  
In addition, a recent poll by Essential Research regarding summer activities found that 50% of respondents planned to read a book over summer, 77% planned to catch up with friends and family, 51% planned to go to the beach, and 29% planned to watch cricket. Essential Research, *The Essential Report: 17 December 2024*, accessed April 16, 2025, <https://essentialreport.com.au/reports/17-december-2024>.
- 2 This aspect is discussed in ANA's Middle Australia Insight Reports, for example: Jodie-Lee Trembath and Kate Fielding, *The Next Generation of Voters: Young Middle Australians Talk Arts, Culture and Creativity*, Insight Series (Canberra: A New Approach, August 2021), <https://newapproach.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ANA-InsightReportSix-Fullreport-6.pdf>.  
In addition, the National Arts Participation Survey found that 'seven in ten Australians want access to free or low-cost arts events prioritised in funding decisions.' Australian Government, Creative Australia, *Creating Value: Results of the National Arts Participation Survey*, September 2023, <https://creative.gov.au/research/creating-value-results-national-arts-participation-survey>.
- 3 Angela Vivian, Kate Fielding and Sari Rossi, *Transformative Edge 2024: How Arts, Culture and Creativity Impact Our Prosperity, Cohesion, Security, Health and Sustainability* (Canberra: A New Approach, 2024), <https://newapproach.org.au/insight-reports/transformative-edge-2024/>; Kate Fielding, Aakanksha Sidhu, and Angela Vivian, *Intergenerational Arts and Culture: Lessons across Middle Australia* (Canberra: A New Approach, October 2023), <https://newapproach.org.au/analysis-papers/intergenerational-arts-and-culture-lessons-across-middle-australia/>.
- 4 We have data on 15 years of cultural funding by governments. Direct funding is a crucial part of the revenue mix for the cultural and creative industries including for not-for-profits with a cultural purpose. Kate Fielding, Angela Vivian and Sari Rossi, *To Scale: Mapping Financial Inflows in Australian Arts, Culture and Creativity*, Insight Report (Canberra: A New Approach, 2023), [https://newapproach.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/ANA-64088-To-Scale-Report-Combined\\_AW.pdf](https://newapproach.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/ANA-64088-To-Scale-Report-Combined_AW.pdf).
- 5 This table provides examples of enablers that (1) currently exist in Australia, (2) may be relevant to multiple jurisdictions, (3) are beyond direct funding (e.g. grants and subsidy mechanisms). ANA has not undertaken its own costings of these enablers, and government costings may conclude the enablers are not 'low or no-cost' to implement.
- 6 ANA found that in two current state and territory governments, specific arts and cultural responsibilities have been allocated to assistant ministers, as follows:
  - the Assistant Minister for Sport and Culture (Northern Territory)
  - the Assistant Minister for Creative Industries (Qld).These roles are in addition to the Minister for Arts in each jurisdiction.
- 7 Rupert Myer, *National Press Club Address - Becoming a Cultural Powerhouse* (Canberra: A New Approach, November 15, 2023), <https://newapproach.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Rupert-Myer-AO-National-Press-Club-Address-2023.pdf>.
- 8 OECD, *The Culture Fix: Creative People, Places and Industries*, Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) (OECD, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1787/991bb520-en>.
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- 10 The terms indirect expenditure and direct expenditure are defined in: Fielding, Vivian and Rossi, *To Scale*.
- 11 For example, refer to Appendix A: Concessions statement in: Queensland Government, *Budget Strategy and Outlook: Budget Paper 2024–25 No. 2*, 2024, <https://www.treasury.qld.gov.au/resource/state-budget-2024-25/>.
- 12 Reports are prepared by a consultant from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and analysed by ANA in our Big Picture series and dashboard. For example, see Angela Vivian, Alan Hui, Kate Fielding, Tim Acker and Sari Rossi, *The Big Picture 4: Expenditure on Artistic, Cultural and Creative Activity by Governments in Australia in 2007–08 to 2021–22* (Canberra: A New Approach, May 2024), [https://newapproach.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/A-New-Approach-The-Big-Picture-4\\_rev1.pdf](https://newapproach.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/A-New-Approach-The-Big-Picture-4_rev1.pdf).
- 13 The distinction between direct funding and other types of government investment (including tax concessions) is also defined in: Sari Rossi, *From Survivorship to Sustainability? The Role of Federal Government Support for the Arts Sector* (PhD diss., Queensland University of Technology, 2023), [https://eprints.qut.edu.au/240355/7/Sari\\_Rossi\\_Thesis.pdf](https://eprints.qut.edu.au/240355/7/Sari_Rossi_Thesis.pdf).
- 14 While some definitions of budget outlays are defined as including loans, the most comprehensive data available on direct cultural funding by government is silent on whether this includes loans. For our purpose of increasing the viability of different enabling mechanisms available to governments, we have included loans within our definition of enablers.
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- 26 Brisbane City Council, "Maker Entrepreneurship Program," accessed April 1, 2025, <https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/business/business-support/business-services/maker-entrepreneurship-program>.
- 27 City of Sydney, "Join our business innovation program," accessed April 1, 2025, [https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/opportunities/join-business-innovation-program?utm\\_medium=content&utm\\_source=cosnews&utm\\_campaign=bip24](https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/opportunities/join-business-innovation-program?utm_medium=content&utm_source=cosnews&utm_campaign=bip24).
- 28 For example, the Film Friendly Pathways Program in Qld. Screen Queensland, "Queensland – Australia's Film-Friendly State," accessed March 11, 2025.
- 29 Edwards, License and O'Donnell, *Measuring the Australian Night Time Economy*.
- 30 The City Laws Approvals Unit is self-described as a 'one-stop shop' for all filming and still photography permits and provides support including:
  - liaising with stakeholders on behalf of the applicant
  - supports the application process and the filming process
  - provides a nil application fee for applicants that either own, rent or lease a rateable property within the City of Gold Coast or are an eligible not-for-profit
  - film attraction program support, which includes location assistance, access to facilities, connections, and industry advice on financial incentives.
- 31 The Events Local Law aims to make it easier and quicker to apply to hold varied events in local parks and facilities and 'brings all the rules relating to events (including assessment and approval processes, review processes and offences) into one place'. City of Moreton Bay, "Events Local Law 2023: Explanatory Notes," 2023, 3, <https://www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/2/services/local-laws/events-local-law-2023-explanatory-notes.pdf>.
- 32 The toolkit details the process for applicants looking to host an event, things to consider (e.g. insurance, recommendations for number of bins) and site plan requirements. Wollongong City Council, *Events Toolkit*, [https://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0023/3974/Events-Toolkit.pdf](https://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0023/3974/Events-Toolkit.pdf).
- 33 City of Greater Geelong, "Live music venues and event planning," accessed April 15, 2025, <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/musicgb/article/item/8d982632c4e4cf3.aspx>.
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  - NFP organisations
  - projects that demonstrate local community benefit
  - documentaries specific to the cultural heritage of the local government
  - producers or directors classified as emerging (defined as having made no more than two films)
  - students conducting course work.City of Port Phillip, *Film Permit Guidelines*, accessed December 17, 2024, <https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/csndqcp1/guidelines-filming-permit.pdf>.
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- 37 The City of Darwin's endorsement of an in-kind Support Policy provides a range of in-kind equipment, facilities, services, and programs. City of Darwin, "In-Kind Support," accessed April 1, 2025, <https://www.darwin.nt.gov.au/in-kind-support>.
- 38 Alice Springs Town Council, "Living in Alice: Community Support- grants, event sponsorship, in-kind support," accessed April 15, 2025, <https://alicesprings.nt.gov.au/about-alice-springs/living-in-alice-springs/community-grants-sponsorship>.
- 39 Moreton Bay Regional Council, "In-Kind Support to Community Organisations Policy," accessed April 1, 2025, <https://www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/5/services/policies/in-kind-support-policy.pdf>.
- 40 Sunshine Coast Council, "ArtsCoast," accessed April 1, 2025, <https://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/experience-sunshine-coast/arts-and-culture/arts-news>.
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- 44 City of Adelaide, "Art in Adelaide," accessed April 1, 2025, <https://www.experienceadelaide.com.au/visit/things-to-do/arts-culture-music/art-in-adelaide/>.
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  - the WA Production Attraction Incentive (WAPAI)
  - the WA Regional Screen Fund (WARSF)
  - the Screen Tasmania Production Incentives
  - the NSW Digital Games Rebate
  - the SA Video Game Development (VGD) Rebate
  - the Victorian Production Fund - Games
  - the Screen Queensland Digital Games Incentive.
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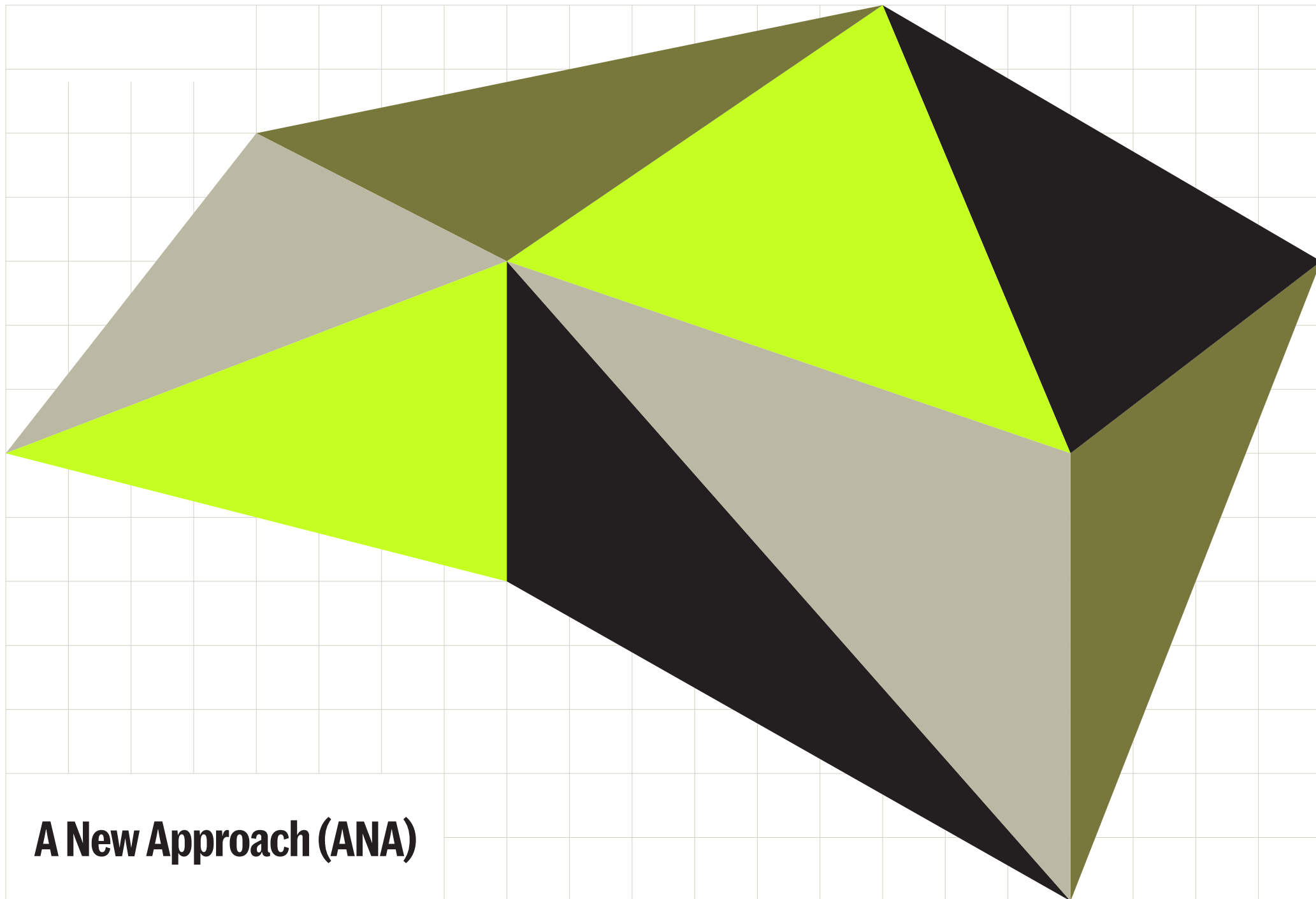
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