



**historycouncilnsw**

## National Cultural Policy

**Submission  
13 November 2009**

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The History Council of New South Wales was established in 1996 to serve as the principal advocate of history in this state. In addition to advocacy, the Council seeks to strengthen public awareness of history, to encourage diversity in its practice and appreciation and to promote excellence at every level of its expression. Our corporate members encompass cultural institutions, academia, public and professional historians, educators, community and local historical societies, and we have a significant proportion of highly committed individual members.

The Council acknowledges and applauds the Federal Government's initiative to create a National Cultural Policy. Ongoing government support for the arts sector is crucial to ensuring its sustained vitality. The intentions outlined in the Hon Peter Garrett's recent speech to the National Press Club to maintain and develop cultural institutions; engage existing and new audiences and empower youth are all commendable.

The Council believes that history and a vibrant history sector are integral to any cultural policy and asks you to consider this when creating the new framework. While much attention is paid to history in the education sector, it is also vital that public programming in museums, galleries, libraries and other organisations engages audiences with history in a meaningful and reflective way.

History also needs the ongoing support of governments to ensure it is reviewed and reinterpreted consistently. Young people need to be encouraged into the sector and the expertise of historians can inform. History also reflects the cultural diversity of the community.

The history community sits comfortably within the arts sector, making strong contributions across cultural institutions and community groups. Historians can be found working for, and utilising the services of, libraries, archives, museums, galleries, universities and schools. The Council believes that history is not just about supporting historians, vital as that is. It is also about preserving and documenting society's collective memory, and engaging in public intellectual life and communities. It is ever alert to new opportunities to promote history in the community.

We urge you to write history into this important new framework for National Cultural Policy to reflect its importance in the cultural life of the community.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact our Executive Officer, Zoe Pollock, on (02) 9252 8715 or [office@historycouncilnsw.org.au](mailto:office@historycouncilnsw.org.au).

Prepared and endorsed by the Executive Committee, 10 November 2009.