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Submission:

The Institute for Cultural Diversity is a national non-government organisation dedicated to the promotion of cultural diversity as the basis for a democratic, creative and productive Australia. The Institute is currently developing a national web-based forum on cultural diversity and the arts. From this perspective it is a matter of concern that cultural diversity does not appear to be identified as a core issue for the arts panel, and we wish to address this absence. While recognising the important place of Indigenous culture as part of Australia's cultural diversity, the government has remained effectively silent on the role of other non-Anglo cultures.

The Institute recognises the critical role played by "creative cities" as part of economic development – in generating creative industries, building on Australian creativity, and attracting creative people from around the world. We note that the creative cities literature stresses the importance of cultural diversity and the role given to valuing and facilitating the creativity that emerges when cultures interact. We note the central role that diversity has been given in the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad and regret that Australia has yet to accord cultural diversity the same centrality in Arts policy. Australia's future will become increasingly diverse, with immigration increasing and younger generations more "multicultural" than those before them. The Institute is also aware of the role that the arts can and should play in building "bridging social capital" and in producing the enormous energy that is released through hybrid cultural experimentation.

The Institute wishes to propose that:

- a) the government produce a statement on cultural diversity and Australian identity, and ensure that this takes full cognisance of the broad range of the arts and creativity, and the full range of cultures in Australia
- b) the arts culture and heritage functions currently spread widely should be brought together in a Ministry of Culture, such as that in New Zealand, with its core business the promotion of the value and values of cultural diversity within an integrated national framework and identity
- c) SBS be seen not just as an international and multilingual broadcaster, but as a model for contemporary Australian production, as demonstrated in its many local productions
- d) the development of digital arts technologies ensure full involvement from across the diversity of Australia, so that an Arts-divide does not reinforce any pre-existing culturally-inflected Digital-divide
- e) the government support the development of national conversations about cultural diversity and the arts, and ensure the wide dissemination of ideas about innovation, documentation of projects, and opportunities for collaborative partnerships.