



**Submission to the National Cultural Policy Consultation 2026
May 2026**

Made Here. Heard Everywhere.

Contemporary Music, Building Australia's Creative Century

Index

A Creative Century	3
Foreword	4
About APRA AMCOS	5
What Our Members Said	6
The Intersecting Lines	7
Executive Summary	8
The Detail	11
The Foundation	11
The Space	14
The Platform	17
<i>Case Study: SongMakers</i>	20
The Next	21
The Invitation	26

A Creative Century

Australia stands at the beginning of a creative century. Forces are reshaping the world, artificial intelligence, digital fragmentation, social and community cohesion. They are the reason culture matters more than ever.

Music teaches children to think critically, to collaborate, to make something from nothing. These are precisely the capabilities the AI economy will reward and that no algorithm can replicate. Music holds communities together at the moment when social media is pulling them apart. It is the space where we come to remember that we are not alone, and in an age of epidemic loneliness, that space is not a luxury. It is infrastructure.

Australian music is also an economic force of extraordinary and underleveraged potential. A \$10.76 billion industry. More than \$1 billion in exports. Forty thousand workers. An international royalty performance revenue growing year on year. Creative intellectual property that belongs to Australia and earns for Australia long after it is first made.

An Australian Creative Century is renewed ambition. It is an opportunity to build the IP wealth of a nation, to invest in the human capabilities that will define the decades ahead, to keep open and build on Australia's stages where Australian music is honed, perfected and exported - from local to global, live gig to digital hit. And through that process, building connection and audiences across communities, nationally and internationally.

This submission is a programme for that century. Built for the artist, the audience, and every Australian in between.

Foreword

August 2020, and six months into COVID. Live music venues were dark and the industry had come to a stop. The touring circuit had collapsed overnight. Songwriters, musicians, crew, festival workers, venues, and everyone who makes live music happen had stopped.

It was at that moment that APRA Chair, singer and songwriter Jenny Morris stood at the National Press Club in Canberra. She did not talk about the current crisis, the masks, social isolation or the pandemic. She asked the industry to look up at the horizon for just a moment, and to imagine. What could Australian music become in the decade ahead if we really dreamt big.

She made four asks: a whole-of-government commitment to Australia becoming a net exporter of music. Equity of access to music education in every school. Protection of live music venues as essential cultural infrastructure. And genuine visibility for Australian music on every platform.

“We need a clear vision. And I think that vision should be for Australia to become a net exporter of music. This won't happen overnight and it could well take a decade. But you need a clear vision in order to start change now.”

Jenny Morris MNZM OAM
National Press Club, 5 August 2020

Revive was Australia's first National Cultural Policy since Creative Australia in 2013, the successor to Creative Nation in 1994. *Revive* made a commitment and delivered on the establishment of Music Australia, the first national music development agency the sector had ever had. Australia then became a world leader by rejecting a copyright exception for AI training. The live music inquiry made a tax offset its first recommendation. Music Australia's Bass Line Edition 2 confirms \$10.76 billion in sector revenue, \$1.08 billion in exports, \$4.28 billion in direct gross value added, and more than 40,000 workers.

Jenny Morris' vision is no longer aspirational; it is a credible vision. We now have the opportunity to finish the job.

This submission is our answer. Every recommendation passes a single test: does it serve the artist, and does it serve the audience? The songwriter who needs to know her work will be protected. The kid who needs to hear a live show. The First Nations musician whose songs carry his community's lore across generations. The teenager in a regional town who has never had a music lesson but can hear something in herself that needs to come out.

They are why APRA AMCOS exists. They are why this submission exists. And they are why, in our centenary year, we are asking government to partner with us to build an Australian Music Powerhouse over the next decade.

This submission is informed by the direct responses of 839 APRA AMCOS members who participated in our National Cultural Policy consultation survey in May 2026. Their priorities are clear: AI copyright protection, live music, local music visibility on commercial radio and streaming platforms, and the sustainability of creator livelihoods.

This submission is made on behalf of APRA AMCOS. While it reflects the policy position of the organisation, it does not purport to represent the individual views of every member.

Dean Ormston

Chief Executive, APRA AMCOS
Chair, CISAC

About APRA AMCOS

APRA AMCOS is Australasia's largest music rights organisation. We were established in 1926, six months after the first radio broadcast in Australia, by music publishers who understood that a new technology had arrived that could use the creation of songwriters, and that they needed an organisation to ensure they were paid when it did.

A hundred years later, we represent 128,000 songwriters, composers and music publishers. We distributed almost \$700 million in royalties in 2024–25 to our members and affiliates around the world. These record results reflect not just Australia's appetite for music, but also the global appetite for Australian music around the world with our members earning a record \$98.8 million in international performance royalties, up 14.8% year on year.

The Australian music industry, fully measured in Music Australia's Bass Line Edition 2, generated revenues of \$10.76 billion and contributed \$4.28 billion in direct gross value added to the Australian economy in 2024–25. Music exports exceeded \$1 billion. These are extraordinary numbers.

The Bass Line report also tells a harder story: growth is difficult to achieve, and retaining value is harder still. Despite 5.2% revenue growth, industry GVA grew by only 1.5%. Artist incomes grew by just 0.9% which is a decline in real terms. The median Australian artist income is \$14,800 a year.

APRA AMCOS Chief Executive Dean Ormston also serves as Chair of CISAC, the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers, the world's leading network of authors' societies representing over four million creators worldwide. APRA AMCOS does not just advocate for Australian and New Zealand creators domestically, we help set the international norms on AI, Indigenous IP, streaming and digital rights that govern how Australian music is treated everywhere it is heard.

APRA AMCOS has been present at every technology inflection point in Australian music's history, from the arrival of radio and the introduction of cassette tape, through the digital download era and the transition to streaming. The challenge posed by AI is the most significant of all of them. Our response to it, and our response to the structural pressures on live music, local content, education and export infrastructure, will determine whether Australian music grows or contracts across the decades ahead.

What Our Members Said

In May 2026, APRA AMCOS surveyed its membership to ensure this submission reflected the priorities of the people it represents. 839 members responded with songwriters, composers and music publishers from every state and territory, every genre, every career stage.

The priorities are unambiguous

Asked which issues the next National Cultural Policy should address, members identified three clear priorities. Generative AI and copyright protection was the dominant concern, selected by approximately three quarters of respondents. Local music visibility on streaming platforms was second and live music opportunities was third, selected by around half.

Commercial radio airplay, protecting Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property, exporting music internationally, career pathways and universal access to music education all registered strongly. Every recommendation in this submission corresponds to a priority identified by our members.

AI copyright protection is the defining issue

When asked which recent APRA AMCOS advocacy wins mattered most to them personally, AI copyright protection was again the overwhelming first choice, selected by approximately three quarters of respondents. This is a membership that has watched the AI debate unfold and understands what is at stake.

Live music is under real pressure

More than half of respondents reported that rising fuel and transport costs are directly affecting their ability to gig and tour. Members reported cancelling gigs because travel costs make them unviable, limiting themselves to local performances because they cannot afford to tour regionally, and absorbing fuel costs to the point where live performance income is barely worth it. The open responses paint a vivid picture: interstate touring ruled out entirely, support act opportunities declined, regional festivals losing audiences because of costs.

Community Music Hubs have strong support

Approximately 60 per cent of respondents rated Community Music Hubs as either extremely valuable or very valuable to their music career or practice. The responses reveal the opportunity: affordable rehearsal and recording space, networking and collaboration, mentorship, and a local anchor for music communities. Regional members were particularly clear about the value of place-based infrastructure.

A sustainable career remains out of reach for most

Asked to describe what a sustainable career as a music creator looks like, the most common response was simple: being able to pay the bills. Across nearly 600 open responses, the overwhelming theme was that most Australian music creators cannot support themselves from music alone. Members described juggling day jobs, operating at a loss, watching streaming income fall, and seeing decades of professional skill rendered economically invisible.

These are not the responses of people who lack ambition or talent. They are the responses of people who have spent years, often decades, developing a craft that Australian audiences love and that the Australian economy benefits from.

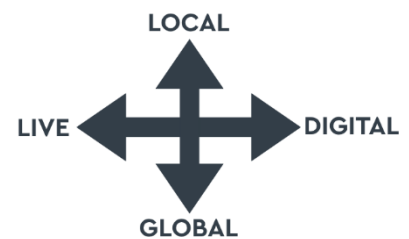
Source: APRA AMCOS National Cultural Policy Member Survey, May 2026. 839 respondents. Full results available from APRA AMCOS on request.

The Intersecting Lines

APRA AMCOS views the music industry as a set of intersecting lines. Not a hierarchy. Not linear. Not a series of discrete sectors. A set of relationships, crossing and recrossing, with the artist and the audience always at the centre.

Two axes define the territory. Live to digital, the spectrum from the physical, embodied experience of a live venue or concert to the invisible, algorithmic world of streaming. Local to global the spectrum from the pub in a regional town to the festival stage in Berlin, from the community radio station in Alice Springs to the sync placement in a Korean drama reaching forty million viewers.

Every policy priority in this submission sits on those lines. Some are about ensuring the artist and audience relationship is not undermined by AI ingestion, algorithmic suppression or inadequate rights frameworks. Some are about investing in the infrastructure that moves Australian music from local to global, from live to digital, from the first song to the world stage.



All of them are about ensuring that Australian music, wherever it lives, can sustain the people who make it and reach the people who need it.

Underpinning the policy priorities identified in this submission is a foundational investment in Music Australia, the national music development agency established under *Revive*, and the institution through which many of these recommendations are delivered.

“The human act of making something from nothing. From a classroom. From a bedroom. From a first gig of twenty people. Through community radio and commercial radio and streaming and live music and back again. That loop is where Australian music comes from. Protecting it at every stage, with the right regulation, the right investment, the right settings for risk and experimentation. That’s the work.”

Dean Ormston

Music Data and Insights Summit, Melbourne, 19 May 2026

Growth Investment: Music Australia — \$180 million over four years

Music Australia was established under *Revive* as the first dedicated national music development agency Australia had ever had. Guided by the Music Australia Council and built on deep industry consultation, it works across the full spectrum of the contemporary music ecosystem — investing in First Nations music, artist and industry development, market and audience growth, music education, research, discoverability and policy development.

In the years since its establishment, it has become the institution through which the evidence base for Australian music policy is built, the programmes that develop Australian artists are delivered, and the accountability for government investment in music is held. Continued investment of \$180 million over four years ensures that work can be sustained and built on across the decade ahead.

Executive Summary

This submission is organised around four elements to support the sustainable growth of Australian contemporary music in partnership with Australian Government priorities.

The Foundation establishes the rights and regulatory framework that makes everything else possible, ensuring creators are central to the success story of AI and technological development, securing First Nations cultural and intellectual property, and ensuring screen composers are supported and recognised for the intellectual property they generate.

The Space is where music is made and experienced, the venues, hubs, festivals, studios and centres where artists write, record and perform, and where communities come together around live music experiences. It is the link between creation and encounter.

The Platform addresses the channels through which Australian music reaches local audiences and the world, streaming platforms, commercial radio, community radio, and the international export infrastructure that connects Australian artists to listeners in every market. Whether the barrier is an offshore algorithm, a music supervisor defaulting to an international catalogue, a curator unfamiliar with Australian repertoire, a funding framework that hasn't kept pace with how music travels, or a policy setting that hasn't been updated since Australians listened differently, the question is the same: can Australian music be found?

The Next is about renewal, the education, training and institutional infrastructure that produces the next generation of Australian creators across every genre, and the audiences and communities built around that excellence.

The Foundation

What protects the conditions for creation and builds Australia's IP wealth

Revive pillars: *Centrality of the Artist · First Nations First · A Place for Every Story*

Recommendation 1: AI Copyright Framework, ICIP Carve-out and Emergency Creator Relief

Embed a voluntary licensing scheme founded on three non-negotiable principles: transparency, consent and remuneration. AI platforms using Australian copyright material in training must obtain a licence. Establish a time-limited emergency relief package for Australian creators, funded by generative AI providers, while a licensing framework evolves.

Recommendation 2: Digital ICIP Protection

Apply the fake art principles from the 2022 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts report to digital Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property, establishing community consent protocols, a Cultural Provenance Register and a dedicated ICIP Protection Fund to enable legal and dispute resolution access to communities.

Recommendation 3: Screen Music SAC Test and Pilot Fund

Amend the Significant Australian Content test to elevate screen composers alongside writer and director as primary creative contributors. Commission a pilot between Music Australia and Screen Australia to incentivise Australian music composition and sync, with future royalty flows informing a longer investment pipeline.

The Space

Where music and community meet the public

Revive pillars: *All five pillars*

Recommendation 4: Live Music Tax Offset — Australia Live

A refundable tax offset of 10–20% of eligible live music expenditure for venues, festivals and touring artists. Oxford Economics modelling confirms \$636–920 million in GVA uplift, up to 10,800 jobs created, and \$90–120 million in additional tax revenue.

Recommendation 5: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Centres

An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Centres framework modelled on the IVAIS network, building on existing community radio infrastructure, with \$15 million in foundation funding.

Recommendation 6: Michael's Rule for local support acts

APRA AMCOS endorses Michael's Rule, named after the late artist manager Michael McMartin, and calls for its national adoption. The policy incentivises international touring artists to include Australian support acts on their Australian tour dates, creating proven career pathways for emerging Australian artists onto the world's biggest stages.

Recommendation 7: Community Music Hubs

Six hubs in year one, scaling progressively. Co-located with existing infrastructure. Soundproof studios, instrument access, rehearsal space. APRA AMCOS SongMakers as the program thread. At least \$1 million per hub as foundation investment.

Recommendation 8: Support Act \$8 million over four years

Industry-specific mental health and crisis relief services for music and creative industry professionals, extending to all live music workers. Support Act is a founding APRA AMCOS partner initiative.

The Platform

How Australians find their own music

Revive pillars: *A Place for Every Story · Engaging the Audience · Centrality of the Artist*

Recommendation 9: Audio Streaming Green Paper on Discoverability

Commission a music-specific Green Paper on algorithmic discoverability. Availability is no longer enough and local music discoverability is the next policy frontier. Examine algorithmic transparency obligations, Australian content investment requirements, interface obligations and free-trade agreement obligations on music quotas.

Recommendation 10: Commercial Radio Australian Content Prominence

Legislate local content obligations for commercial radio under the Broadcasting Services Act, with ministerial oversight, lifting Australian music content out of a voluntary code to modernise the format settings and time of day requirements to reflect contemporary listening habits, and extend the obligations to digital radio as the 2012 Convergence Review recommended.

Recommendation 11: Community Radio Multi-Year Funding and Music Director Support

Multi-year operational funding for community radio music stations and paid Music Director roles at all high-intensity music stations. APRA AMCOS is a named partner organisation on the Monash University and Griffith University research confirming \$153.1 million in annual value, 390,960 hours of Australian music broadcast, and \$5.55 returned for every \$1 invested.

The Next

Local and global pipeline, career, and the world

Revive pillars: *All five pillars*

Recommendation 12: National Song Academy at AFTRS

Establishment of a National Song Academy at the Australian Film, Television and Radio School as the apex of the contemporary music artist pipeline. Two-year intensive programs in songwriting, composition, recording, production and screen music composition. Competitive scholarships for regional, low-income and First Nations students.

Recommendation 13: Music Education Reform

Mandatory sequential music education in all Australian primary schools. Increased Initial Teacher Education hours for music which has currently fallen from 17 hours in 2009 to 8 hours in 2022. A National Music Pathways Framework for secondary students.

Recommendation 14: National Music Export Strategy

A National Music Export Strategy through Austrade and the trade portfolio. Trade mission support through Sounds Australia — 51 events, 14 countries, 320 outcomes in 2025 alone. Priority markets: India, Asia Pacific, Latin America, Mexico. Music Diplomacy through DFAT. Reciprocal cultural touring agreements.

Recommendation 15: Music As Development

When the right policy and infrastructure are in place, music is not only a cultural force but an economic development tool. APRA AMCOS advocates for the Commonwealth to include music ecosystem development as a component of Australia's Pacific development program, working through DFAT, Austrade and the arts portfolio to build IP frameworks, training infrastructure and digital distribution capability that generate employment, strengthen people-to-people links, and position Australia as a leader in an emerging global conversation about music as development.

Recommendation 16: The National Songbook

APRA AMCOS proposes to establish the National Songbook in partnership with the National Film and Sound Archive, a living collection and annual ceremony of national significance, inducting the great Australian songs and compositions across every genre and period into a permanent record of cultural achievement. Classical and contemporary. Screen and television. Anthems and jingles. The ancient and the experimental. We ask the Australian Government for a modest annual investment to support the ceremony and maintain the collection.

The Detail

The Foundation

What protects the conditions for creation and builds Australia's IP wealth

Revive pillars: *Centrality of the Artist · First Nations First · A Place for Every Story*

Australia's creative intellectual property is a national asset. The songs, scores, compositions and cultural works created by Australian artists generate royalties, sync fees, publishing income and performance revenue that flow to Australian creators and Australian businesses not once, but for decades. The stronger the rights framework that governs their creation and use, the more that asset is worth.

A robust AI licensing framework means Australian creators participate in the most significant technological shift in the history of the music industry rather than being consumed by it. Strong ICIP protections mean the world's oldest living creative culture generates economic sovereignty for First Nations communities. An elevated SAC test means Australian screen music grows as an export category, with royalties flowing back to Australian composers for the life of the work.

Recommendation 1: AI Copyright Framework and Emergency Creator Relief

“Winning the legislative argument isn't the end. It's the starting line.”

Dean Ormston

Music Data and Insights Summit, 19 May 2026

The unlawfulness of using copyright material to train generative AI is the most current issue for global intellectual property frameworks. The licensing market has secured some significant deals for rights holders but so far with a limited return or application to Australian creators. Meanwhile the major large language model developers continue to avoid licensing negotiations in Australia while litigation continues in key global markets.

Meanwhile, Australian songwriters, composers and publishers face an immediate structural threat to their business models with AI-generated content entering the market and displacing some artist-commissioned work. The cost assumptions that made professional creation economically viable are being undermined. APRA AMCOS's own modelling puts \$519 million of Australian creators' revenues at risk under that scenario within the term of the next government.

Creators are the most vulnerable participants in the creative economy and Australia cannot afford to lose skilled creators while the longer-term structural solution is worked out. To lose them is to hollow out Australian culture and to deprive creators of their essential business asset: intellectual property.

Voluntary Licensing Framework

The immediate policy priority is to embed a voluntary licensing scheme founded on three non-negotiable principles: transparency, consent and remuneration. AI platforms using Australian copyright material in training must obtain a licence. Creators must be compensated.

Consent: No Australian copyright material may be used in AI training without the rights holder's consent, expressed through a licensing arrangement. Silence is not consent.

Remuneration: Licence fees must reflect the commercial value of the works ingested.

Transparency: Platforms operating compliant licensing arrangements should provide transparency on dataset use for the application of licensing distributions.

ICIP carve-out: Collective licensing arrangements cannot override Indigenous cultural protocols. Bespoke, culturally specific licensing agreements developed with and governed by First Nations communities are required as part of any licensing framework, ensuring that community consent and cultural authority are embedded in the structure of the arrangement rather than treated as an addendum to it.

Emergency Creator Relief

In parallel with the longer-term adoption of voluntary licensing frameworks, government must establish a time-limited emergency relief package for Australian creators. This package should be funded by providers of generative AI services operating in this market. This relief is a bridge, not a destination. It must not interrupt or delay the work toward permanent structural solutions including legislation, licensing frameworks, and court processes where these are pursued.

Recommendation 2: Digital ICIP Protection

“Yolŋu Matha is not a language family that happens to have songs. The songs are the language. They carry knowledge of Country, of law, of relationship, of history. When those songs are used without consent, sampled, replicated, reproduced by an AI system trained on recordings made without community agreement, what is taken is not just intellectual property. It is living cultural system.”

Dean Ormston

Music Data and Insights Summit, 19 May 2026

The Productivity Commission's 2022 report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Visual Arts and Crafts recommended dedicated legislation to recognise and protect Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property formally acknowledging that existing copyright law is inadequate to protect First Nations cultural assets. The Australian Government supported that recommendation in principle in its November 2025 response.

That legislation must urgently extend to digital platforms to protect the ICIP contained in music, screen and other content available online.

First Nations musical works present specific and urgent challenges in the digital environment. AI systems trained on recordings made without community consent are replicating elements of First Nations music including melody, rhythm, language, ceremonial content, without authorisation, without attribution and without payment.

- A Digital ICIP Protection framework applying the fake art principles to music: mandatory disclosure of First Nations cultural elements in commercially released works; prohibition on the reproduction or simulation of First Nations musical elements without community consent.
- Australian Government support for a Cultural Provenance Register for First Nations musical works, administered in partnership with First Nations community organisations and APRA AMCOS's Alyelhentye Nawu department.
- A dedicated ICIP Protection Fund of \$20 million to support communities in documenting, protecting and asserting rights over their cultural musical heritage in the digital environment.

Recommendations 3: Screen Music SAC Test and Pilot Fund

Australian screen music is an underleveraged segment of the Australian screen export economy. Productions claiming the Producer Offset frequently commission foreign composers and licence existing international recordings rather than commissioning original Australian scores, a pattern that exports creative opportunity and imports cultural influence simultaneously.

The SVOD local content obligation, with its ACCTS post-production requirements, is creating a significant new opportunity for Australian screen composers and sync music. The next step is to ensure the Significant Australian Content test reflects what screen music actually is: not a line item in a production budget, but revenue-generating intellectual property that earns royalties, sync fees and performance income for Australian creators long after a production wraps. Elevating screen composers and key music roles in the SAC test hierarchy is how government signals that Australian screen music is worth investing in and ensures that the productions claiming the Producer Offset are genuinely building Australian IP, not just Australian content.

SAC Test Amendment

The SAC test must be amended to elevate screen composers and key music professionals, including Head of Music and Director of Music roles, to the highest tier of the SAC assessment hierarchy, commensurate with writer and director. These are the roles with the greatest opportunity to generate high-value screen music and return ongoing royalty revenues to the Australian economy for decades. Screen music is the emotional architecture of Australian storytelling and the sync rights, publishing rights and performance royalties it generates flow to Australian creators long after a production wraps.

Screen Music Pilot

A pilot program, jointly commissioned by Music Australia and Screen Australia, to provide incentives for producers claiming the Producer Offset to engage Australian composers and use Australian music in sync. The pilot would test investment models, track royalty flows, and build the evidence base for a longer investment pipeline in which screen music royalties help sustain the fund.

The Space

Where music and community meet the public

Revive pillars: *All five pillars*

There is a moment every music lover knows. The lights go down. The room goes quiet, not silence exactly, but a lull, a rustle, the breath held before a note begins.

That moment doesn't belong to the music industry. It belongs to everyone who has ever been in the room.

It belongs to the nurse who saves up for three months to see their favourite band. The teacher whose student picks up a guitar and starts showing up to school. The kid in a regional town whose first live show cracks something open that wasn't there before. The Elder whose songs carry lore and knowledge across generations. The teenager who walks into a Music Hub and finds out, for the first time, that she has something to say.

Music Education research confirms that children who received arts education are 56% more likely to attend live music as adults. The community radio research confirms that 1.6 million Australians discovered a local or emerging artist through community radio. The Bass Line confirms that 62% of Australians say music is really important to their lives, and 71% of music-engaged Australians feel pride when they hear Australian music. These are not cultural statistics. They are public health and social cohesion statistics.

When a venue or a festival closes, something irreplaceable goes with it. Not for the industry. For the community. For the people who needed it and found it there. The recommendations in this key element are about keeping the room open, for everyone who has ever needed it.

Recommendation 4: 'Australia Live' Music Tax Offset

Live music is where artists become artists and audiences become audiences. The teenager who goes to her first live show, stands in a crowd and feels the sound is not the same person afterwards. That experience is the beginning of a lifelong relationship with music, and with the communities that form around it.

The 2025 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications and the Arts made the live music tax offset its first recommendation. The economic case has been thoroughly established by Oxford Economics modelling commissioned by APRA AMCOS for the full analysis; we refer government to that report. The headline: \$636–920 million in GVA uplift, up to 10,800 jobs created, 322,500 additional gigs annually, and \$90–120 million in additional tax revenue before a single cultural benefit is counted.

The Bass Line Edition 2 tells the rest of the story. Live music revenue grew 7.3% in 2024–25 but growth was driven almost entirely by major international touring acts. GVA as a share of live music revenue fell from 30% to 27% as the economics of international touring compressed returns for local operators. Attendance at pubs and clubs, the grassroots circuit where emerging Australian artists develop, is declining. 48% of venue operators report expenses growing substantially faster than income.

The offset covers three interconnected layers of the live ecosystem:

Venues

A refundable tax offset of 10–20% of eligible live music expenditure for venues meeting minimum Australian artist programming criteria. Enhanced rates for venues with a higher proportion of emerging artist programming and young audiences to grow the circuit that emerging artists, and their fans need to develop.

Festivals

Festival producers to access comparable offsets based on Australian artist programming, with specific provisions for regional festivals bringing live music to communities that would otherwise have no access to professional performance; emerging artist showcases functioning as national launching platforms.

Touring Artists

A refundable offset on eligible travel and logistics expenditure for touring performances outside an artist's home area. Investment in regional circuits allows artists to develop national audiences and that delivers cultural access to communities currently without it. The artist who can only afford to play Sydney and Melbourne never becomes a national artist. The audience in Townsville, Esperance or Wagga Wagga never gets to see them.

“Before Tones and I achieved global fame, she was busking on the streets of Byron Bay, drawing crowds so large the police took away her permit. What a perfect illustration of how we’ve always treated our music: publicly adored but rarely supported.

We cannot afford to repeat this pattern.”

Jenny Morris MNZM OAM

National Press Club, 5 August 2020

Recommendation 5: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Centres

APRA AMCOS has operated the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Office (NATSIMO) since 2020. APRA previously had an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Office. In 2026 we established Alyelhentye Nawu as a dedicated department within APRA AMCOS for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members, a world first for a collecting society. Through Leah Flanagan's leadership, this work has built relationships across communities, administered development funding, and ensured Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creators are represented within our member services.

The scale of the challenge, and the scale of the opportunity, now demands a national response. We propose an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Centres framework modelled on the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) network that has been transformative for visual art communities.

The 2026 Monash and Griffith University research into community radio confirms that Indigenous community radio stations already comprise nine of Australia's top 39 most music-intensive broadcasters. Seven of the top 20 stations for Australian music airplay are Indigenous. In remote communities, Indigenous radio stations often provide the only recording and rehearsal space available to local musicians.

- Foundation funding to establish the framework, with ongoing operational support modelled on the IVAIS structure.
- Community governance, community-controlled, with cultural authority over programming, partnerships and use.

- Integration with the Digital ICIP Protection framework and the community radio infrastructure already serving these communities.
- Connection to the APRA AMCOS SongMakers programs, ensuring the pathway from community music-making to professional career is available.

Recommendation 6: Michael's Rule for local support acts

Michael's Rule is named after the late artist manager Michael McMartin, who championed Australian artists throughout his career. The initiative is straightforward: when international artists tour Australia, they should bring Australian artists with them as support acts.

The career case is well established. Kita Alexander gained international exposure supporting Dua Lipa's 2025 Australian tour. The Preatures built a 40-date regional tour off the back of supporting Harry Styles in 2018. The biggest stages in the country are currently reserved almost entirely for international artists. Michael's Rule changes the conditions of access to those stages.

- APRA AMCOS calls on the Australian Government to amend visa requirements for international touring artists to stipulate that support act programming must include Australian artists. When the world's biggest acts come to Australia, the conditions of their visit should ensure that Australian artists come with them.

Recommendation 7: Community Music Hubs

One of the biggest barriers for younger musicians is having a space to practice together. For many young Australians, particularly those from low-income households, regional communities, or backgrounds where music equipment and lessons are beyond reach, that barrier is absolute. We know the talent is there, but the pathways to access are limited.

Community Music Hubs address that limitation directly. Co-located with existing community infrastructure, YMCAs, community centres, existing venues and TAFE campuses, each hub provides soundproof studios, instrument access and rehearsal space. APRA AMCOS's SongMakers program would be able to connect professional mid-career artists and trainers to young people in the communities where they live.

The Community Music Hubs are the first step in a pathway that runs through this entire submission. The child who walks into a hub and finds out she's a songwriter is the same kid who needs sequential music education in her school, a secondary pathway that develops her craft, and ultimately an institution like the Song Academy at AFTRS where that talent reaches its full potential.

Recommendation 8: Support Act \$8 million over four years

APRA AMCOS is a founding partner of Support Act. Support Act provides crisis relief and mental health services to music and creative industry professionals, an industry workforce that faces elevated psychosocial risks including financial volatility, irregular hours, touring pressures, harassment and burnout that generic mental health programs are not designed to address.

We advocate for \$8 million over four years to expand Support Act's capacity, extending its services to all live music workers not just artists, but crew, technicians, venue staff and production workers whose mental health is equally at risk and who have no equivalent support infrastructure. Support Act's Wellbeing Helpline delivered 3,857 counselling hours across 3,737 sessions in its most recent reporting period.

The Platform

How Australians find their own music

Revive pillars: *A Place for Every Story · Engaging the Audience · Centrality of the Artist*

“The algorithm is now the gatekeeper. It decides what music you hear, which artists you discover, whose career gets a chance. And it is making those decisions based on a logic that has nothing to do with Australian culture.”

Dean Ormston

Music Data and Insights Summit, Melbourne, 19 May 2026

Local music accounted for just 9.5% of streams in Australia and New Zealand in 2024-25, a 31% fall over five years. Only 8% of the top 10,000 artists streamed in Australia are Australian. The algorithm, not the listener, is making the choice.

And yet Australian music is among the most successful creative exports in the world. The international demand is demonstrable. The domestic discovery problem is not about quality or appetite. It is about what the algorithm serves up when an Australian opens a streaming platform for a Sunday lunch playlist, a workout, a mood. That passive, lean-back listening moment, when someone lets the platform choose for them, is where Australian music is most consistently absent.

The policy conversation about music distribution has focused almost entirely on availability. The question that has not been answered is whether Australian music can be found in those everyday moments of passive listening, when the platform is curating rather than the listener choosing.

The evidence of latent demand is powerful. One million Australians say community radio is their only source for the Australian music they want to hear. 1.6 million Australians discovered a local or emerging artist through community radio. 1.5 million looked an artist up on a streaming platform after hearing them on community radio first. When Australian music is served up, Australians engage with it. The gap between what they would choose and what the algorithm shows them is a policy failure, not a preference failure.

Recommendation 9: Audio Streaming Green Paper on Discoverability

APRA AMCOS proposes a Green Paper on discoverability, focused on whether Australian music, once made and made available, can actually be found by the audiences who would choose it, including in those lean-back listening moments when the algorithm is doing the curating.

Discoverability is distinct from availability. Availability asks: is the music on the platform? Discoverability asks: when someone puts a platform on, will they hear Australian music? The answer is increasingly no. Not because Australians do not want it, but because the algorithm does not show it to them.

- Commit a music-specific Green Paper examining algorithmic transparency obligations, Australian content investment requirements, interface and surfacing obligations.
- Require major audio streaming platforms to report annually on Australian music streaming share, algorithmic treatment of Australian content, and Australian artist development investment.

- Integrate the community radio evidence into the Green Paper's baseline assessment of latent demand, using it to establish what Australian audiences actually want when given the choice.

Recommendation 10: Commercial Radio Local Music Prominence

Commercial radio has been one of the most important vehicles for Australian music discovery for decades. Triple M demonstrated what is possible when a network genuinely commits to Australian music, winning Licensee of the Year at the 2023 APRA Music Awards with stations regularly exceeding 30% local music. Their audiences love them for it.

The framework governing Australian content is a relic. APRA AMCOS expressed its disappointment at the registration of the Commercial Radio Code of Practice 2026 by the Australian Communications and Media Authority. Despite a comprehensive review process, the local music provisions were not meaningfully updated. The code continues to allow stations to meet their Australian music obligations by scheduling local content outside peak listening hours, and digital radio services remain entirely outside the content obligations framework, nearly fifteen years after the Convergence Review recommended otherwise.

The talent is undeniable. International revenue for Australian songwriters and composers hit a record \$98.8 million last financial year, up nearly 15% and more than doubled since 2019. Music Australia's Listening In research confirms that audiences are ready. 71% of music-engaged Australians feel pride when they hear Australian music. Two in three want to hear more. One in four still turn to radio to discover new music.

Commercial radio stations are local businesses. Australian music is a local product. The opportunity to rediscover that great Australian soundtrack, from Bega to Broome, from across the nation and across the decades, has never been clearer.

- Bring Australian content obligations within the Broadcasting Services Act with ministerial oversight. Update the framework so that Australian music is genuinely present in the commercial radio diet rather than scheduled where it can be counted but not heard. And extend those obligations to digital radio.

Recommendation 11: Community Radio Multi-Year Funding and Music Director Support

Community radio is doing more for Australian music than any other broadcast sector in the country and it is chronically under-resourced.

APRA AMCOS was a partner organisation in a three-year Australian Research Council Linkage study, Community Radio and Australian Music: Building the Music-Media Ecosystem, published in May 2026 by researchers from Monash University and Griffith University.

Australia's 292 community radio music stations broadcast 390,960 hours of Australian music annually, more than double the entire commercial radio sector's Australian music output. They generate \$153.1 million in annual value for the Australian music industries. For every \$1 invested, up to \$5.55 is returned in socio-economic value.

1.6 million Australians, or 30% of weekly community radio listeners, discovered a local or emerging artist by listening to community radio. 1.5 million looked an artist up on Spotify after hearing them on community radio first. 1.3 million bought tickets or music or merchandise after hearing an artist on community radio. One million Australians say community radio is the only broadcaster that plays the Australian music they want to hear.

Community radio's Music Directors perform classic A&R functions by finding, championing, interviewing and introducing artists to audiences that algorithms cannot replicate. Former triple j Music Director Richard Kingsmill started at 2SER. Bridget Hustwaite and Zan Rowe started at SYN FM. Yet 44% of community radio music stations have no paid staff at all, and a further 13% have only one. The Music Director role is frequently unpaid.

Nine of the top 39 high-intensity music stations are Indigenous. Seven of the top 20 stations for Australian music airplay are Indigenous. First Nations community radio is punching above its weight in every measure and operating on the most precarious resourcing of all.

- Multi-year operational funding for community radio music stations, as recommended by the Monash/Griffith research, with dedicated support for Music Director roles at all high-intensity music stations.
- Resource CBAA and AMRAP to upgrade digital infrastructure, improving discoverability of Australian music for listeners, artists and broadcasters.
- Integrate community radio into the Streaming Green Paper process, using the community radio evidence as the baseline for what Australian audiences actually want when the algorithm is not making the choice for them.

"Australians are unusually good at making music. More than good. We're exceptional. Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised. For tens of thousands of years the songlines of First Peoples shaped this sacred land. There's something about this place."

Jenny Morris MNZM OAM
National Press Club, 5 August 2020

CASE STUDY

SongMakers: The Evidence for Investing in Songwriting in Schools

An independently evaluated APRA AMCOS program, funded by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, delivering proven outcomes across education, industry development, social cohesion and wellbeing.

1,090 young participants (2024–25)	95 schools across Victoria	75% more confident writing songs	100% of teachers more confident to teach
--	--------------------------------------	--	--

The program

Launched in 2013 by APRA AMCOS, SongMakers pairs professional songwriters and producers with secondary school students in intensive two-day workshops where young people write, record and produce original songs. The Victorian Government, through Creative Victoria, invested in the program from 2024 to scale it across the state. In 2024–25, SongMakers engaged 95 schools across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria, from Sunraysia and Shepparton to the Great Ocean Road, with 1,090 unique young participants and 165 teachers. The program also operates in NSW with state government investment, and nationally through APRA AMCOS. Since inception, SongMakers has connected close to 5,000 young people at more than 350 schools, creating over 1,400 original songs.

What the independent evaluation found

NSF Consulting conducted a rigorous outcomes and impact evaluation across 2024–25, with 620 research interactions across surveys, in-depth interviews and observations. The findings are striking across every dimension the next national cultural policy should care about.

<p>Industry pipeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 54% of participants reported increased interest in a music career; 65% felt more confident finding a pathway into the industry • 73% were still writing songs six weeks after the workshop; of these, 28 had collaborated, 25 had recorded, and 2 had released publicly • All eight Academy participants interviewed are actively pursuing music post-program <p>Education system change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 93% of teachers followed through on writing and producing more music with their students after the workshop • Fills a structural gap schools cannot close on their own: industry knowledge absent from all but VET Music curricula 	<p>Social cohesion and wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% reported collaborating more with others; 100% of teachers observed improved collaboration • 93% of teachers observed improved self-expression; 64% observed better emotional regulation in their students • Flexible Learning Program teachers documented improved attendance and self-regulation among disengaged young people <p>Regional and community reach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reached schools in remote Sunraysia, Shepparton, Ballarat, Great Ocean Road and across regional Victoria • Teacher engagement and school repeat bookings growing year on year
<p><i>“They transcended their anxiety, depression, school refusal, poor attendance, limited engagement and are totally present, human, contributing and being the best versions of themselves. Quite incredible.”</i></p> <p>— Teacher, SongMakers Core program</p>	

The case for national investment

SongMakers demonstrates what government investment in songwriting education can achieve at scale. The Victorian Government’s funding through Creative Victoria produced independently verified outcomes across every measure that matters: industry pipeline development, teacher capability, student wellbeing, social cohesion and regional access. NSW has now also invested in the program.

This is the evidence base for the Revive commitment to increased creative practice in classrooms and songwriting initiatives in schools. SongMakers is a proven, scalable model that works. National investment through the next phase of Australia’s cultural policy would extend these outcomes to every state and territory, building the foundations for the next generation of Australian songwriters, composers and music industry professionals, while delivering measurable benefits in education, wellbeing and community connection.

Source: SongMakers Evaluation, NSF Consulting, April 2026. Full report available from APRA AMCOS.

The Next

Local and global pipeline, career, and the world

Revive pillars: *All five pillars*

The Next is both here and now, and the legacy we build. It is the primary school classroom in Toowoomba where a child first picks up an instrument. The Song Academy at AFTRS where a First Nations songwriter from Darwin discovers she can compose for screen. The festival stage in Berlin where an Australian artist performs to an audience that found her through an algorithm, followed her for two years, and saved up to be in that room.

The pipeline from The Space to The Next is where Australian music either develops or doesn't. Where careers are made possible. The education system that produces the next generation of Australian creators and audiences. The institutions that train them at the highest level. The export infrastructure that connects their work to the world.

In the age of AI, the pipeline matters more than it ever has. When everything can be generated, what is made by human hands and human voices and human intelligence becomes the most valuable thing there is. With our extraordinary depth and diversity, Australia can lead the world.

Recommendation 12: National Song Academy at AFTRS

Australia has a long and proud tradition of investing in apex training institutions for the performing arts. The Australian Ballet School, NIDA, NAISDA, ANAM, AFTRS and their ARTS8 partners have for decades produced the dancers, actors, directors, composers and screen practitioners who carry Australian artistry to the world. The Commonwealth's \$115.2 million investment in the ARTS8 group in the 2024-25 Budget was a recognition that these institutions are not luxuries. They are the infrastructure of a creative nation.

Contemporary music has no equivalent. And yet the tradition it draws on is extraordinary. Australian music reaches back 60,000 years through the world's oldest living songlines. It runs through a century of art music, experimental composition, rock, country, electronic, folk, jazz and every hybrid form in between. It is a tradition of restless innovation, of songs that travel, that find new places and new people, that sound like nowhere else on earth. Today that tradition is filling stadiums in Los Angeles and London, scoring films and television series watched by hundreds of millions, soundtracking video games played across every continent, finding its way into the playlists of cities and regions that have never heard of the artists who made them.

The songwriters, screen composers, recording artists and producers who carry that tradition forward, whose work generates the royalties, sync fees and streaming revenues that flow back to Australia for decades after a song is first written, have no national apex training institution dedicated to their craft. Ballet has one. Drama has one. Circus has one. Contemporary music does not.

That is the gap the Song Academy fills.

It is not for the already-successful. It is for the songwriter in Toowoomba who writes songs in her bedroom and has no idea how to get from there to a professional career. The young Aboriginal artist in Darwin who wants to compose for screen but has no pathway into that world. The kid who, without this, would simply never know the door exists.

- Two-year intensive programs in songwriting, composition, production, recording, music business and screen music composition.

- A competitive scholarship model ensuring access for students from regional and low-income backgrounds, with a dedicated First Nations scholarship stream.
- An industry advisory board including APRA AMCOS, the AGSC, Music Australia, ARIA and the Association of Artist Managers.
- Integrated projects with AFTRS’s existing screen production programs.

Recommendation 13: Music Education Reform

Australia has an extraordinary music education problem, which is much more than an ordinary policy gap. More Than Notes on a Page, Music Australia’s 2024–25 education report, documents what practitioners already know: music education is in structural decline at every level of the system.

Average music education training hours in primary Initial Teacher Education fell from 17 hours in 2009 to 8 hours in 2022. In a NSW survey of 1,603 primary schools, 82% said their ITE did not equip them to teach music to Year 6. 70% use pre-recorded video lessons. Senior secondary music enrolments are down 16% nationally since 2012, 45% in Queensland, 44% in Western Australia. More than 40 creative arts university courses have been discontinued since 2018.

The report describes a ‘polycrisis’, a set of mutually reinforcing failures across teacher training, curriculum, resourcing and pathways that compound each other. No single intervention resolves it. The programme requires coordinated action across every level of government with the weight of every education and arts department around the nation.

The stakes of this crisis extend beyond the music sector. Music education builds the capabilities that the AI century demands: critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, resilience, the capacity to make something from nothing. Children who receive sequential music education are not just more likely to become music audiences. They are better equipped for everything the future requires of them.

- We endorse the submission from Albert’s Music ‘Right from the Start’ for mandatory sequential music education in all Australian primary schools, delivered by qualified music educators, developed with state and territory education authorities and the Australian Music Education Coalition.
- A national target for minimum Initial Teacher Education hours in music, reversing the decline from 17 to 8 hours documented in the research.
- A National Music Pathways Framework for secondary students, connecting school music to VET, conservatorium and industry pathways.
- A Music Education Infrastructure Fund for instruments, facilities and professional development, with equity loading for regional and low-income schools.

“We need a whole-of-government commitment to Australia becoming a net exporter of music. Equity of access to music education in every school. Protection of live music venues as essential cultural infrastructure. And genuine visibility for Australian music on every platform. These are not aspirations. They are policy choices.”

Jenny Morris MNZM OAM
National Press Club, 5 August 2020

Recommendation 14: National Music Export Strategy

Australian music is a globally competitive export, with over 45 billion streams in the US alone in 2024 and more than 80% of royalties now earned offshore. Music stands alongside education, agriculture and wine as a high-value export sector, delivering both economic dividends and cultural impact.

Government support for music export must be complemented by a serious reform of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade to unlock full market potential. Trade missions, like those delivered by Sounds Australia, are proven vehicles for accelerating international outcomes. In 2025 alone, Sounds Australia facilitated 51 events across 14 countries, delivering 320 negotiated outcomes and 157 performance slots, with inbound delegate growth up 120%.

Digital platforms now function as core trade infrastructure, allowing Australian repertoire to scale efficiently across priority markets. India, Asia Pacific, Latin America and Mexico are the hyper-growth markets where Australian rights-holders must be embedded now, right at the moment these markets are forming their listening habits and their licensing relationships.

- A National Music Export Strategy developed jointly by Austrade and the trade portfolio, with dedicated export investment and trade mission infrastructure through Sounds Australia.
- Priority market engagement in India, Asia Pacific, Latin America and Mexico — the hyper-growth markets where Australian repertoire has the greatest opportunity to establish long-term presence.
- A Music Diplomacy program within DFAT requiring Australian embassies in priority export markets to incorporate Australian music showcases in their cultural calendar.
- Reciprocal cultural touring agreements to reduce visa and work permit barriers for Australian artists in priority international markets.

Recommendation 15: Music As Development

Music is not only a cultural force. When supported by the right policy and infrastructure, it is an economic development tool of extraordinary reach and accessibility.

The evidence is global. Nations that have invested in music ecosystem infrastructure, from intellectual property registration systems to venue networks and training programs, are seeing measurable returns in employment, exports and tax revenue. Nigeria, Zimbabwe and the Philippines have incorporated music and the creative industries into their national economic development strategies alongside agriculture, manufacturing and technology.

The World Bank and the African Export-Import Bank have begun recognising music ecosystems as eligible sectors for development finance. The Center for Music Ecosystems and Global Citizen have established the Music Economy Development Initiative specifically to build the data and research demonstrating that music, when treated as the economic sector it is, delivers jobs and growth.

Australia is uniquely positioned to lead this conversation in our region. The Pacific is a place of extraordinary musical culture and creative talent. It is also a region where Australia has committed to sustainable economic development, resilient communities and stronger people-to-people links. Music sits at the intersection of all three.

Australia's Pacific Regional Development Partnership Plan 2025-2029 identifies sustainable economic development and wellbeing as core objectives. A music ecosystem development program, delivered in partnership with Pacific nations, would directly serve both. It would build local IP frameworks, training infrastructure and digital distribution capability that generate employment and export income in partner economies. It would strengthen the cultural and people-to-people connections that underpin Australia's relationships across the region. And it would position Australia as a genuine leader in an emerging global conversation about music as development.

APRA AMCOS member David Bridie has been a pioneer of this work for decades. Through his own artistic practice and as a founder of the Wantok Musik Foundation, David has built genuine, sustained relationships with artists and communities across Oceania, supported First Nations Australian artists in the region, and worked with DFAT to deliver cultural projects that demonstrate what a more formal partnership between the arts and foreign affairs portfolios could achieve. His submission to the first Revive consultation made the case clearly: cultural engagement with our region should be a foreign policy priority, with matching budget allocation. The Wantok Musik Foundation has shown what is possible with limited resources. It is now time to build the infrastructure that makes this work systemic rather than exceptional, and to extend its reach across the entire Pacific region.

We are also seeing self-determined models emerge from within the region itself. The Musik Blok program in Goroka, Papua New Guinea, founded and led by APRA AMCOS member Ngaiire, is building music education and creative development infrastructure from the ground up. Programs like Musik Blok demonstrate that the most effective development work is led by artists with deep cultural connection to the communities they serve, and that Australia's role should be to support and resource these models rather than impose external frameworks.

APRA AMCOS, through CISAC and its 227 collecting society partners across 120 countries, has the international infrastructure to support this work. We are not proposing to export Australian music policy. We are proposing to share the expertise, the systems and the relationships that have taken a century to build, in service of a region that is ready to benefit from them.

- APRA AMCOS advocates for the Australian Government to include music ecosystem development as a component of Australia's Pacific development program, working through DFAT, Austrade and the arts portfolio to design a program that serves both Australian strategic interests and Pacific development priorities.

Recommendation 16: The National Songbook

Australia has produced songs of extraordinary beauty, power and cultural significance. Songs that have defined moments in our national life, carried communities through grief and celebration, travelled the world and returned transformed. Songs that reach back through 60,000 years of the world's oldest living musical tradition and forward through every genre, every era, every form of expression this country has produced. Classical and contemporary. Screen and television. Anthems and lullabies. The ancient and the experimental.

There is no permanent, dedicated home for these works. No hallowed space where the greatest Australian songs are recognised, collected and celebrated for what they are: a national inheritance.

APRA AMCOS proposes to establish the National Songbook in partnership with the National Film and Sound Archive, Australia's custodian of the nation's audiovisual heritage. The National Songbook will be a living collection and an annual ceremony of national significance, held in the

nation's capital, inducting the great Australian songs and compositions across every genre and period into a permanent record of cultural achievement.

The National Songbook is not a chart. It is not a popularity contest. It is a considered, curatorial act. A statement that Australian songs matter, that the work of our songwriters and composers across every tradition deserves to be named, honoured and preserved.

APRA AMCOS and the National Film and Sound Archive will design and deliver the National Songbook. We ask the Australian Government for a modest annual investment to support the ceremony and maintain the collection, ensuring this living record of Australian musical achievement endures for generations.

The Invitation

A shared foundation for Australia's Creative Century

For most of its history, Australian music has succeeded in spite of the system rather than because of it. The talent found its way through instinct, a music teacher who stayed late, a community radio station that took a chance, a venue that kept the stage open when the economics said close it. The results were extraordinary, but it's been fragile.

Australia is a country of extraordinary natural gifts. The land, the light, the diversity of its people and its cultures. And underneath all of it, a sound. From the city centres to the remote, from the oldest living musical tradition on earth to a kid in her bedroom making something the world has never heard before, there is a beat that is distinctly, unmistakably Australian. A convergence of place and people and possibility that produces music unlike anywhere else.

And what that music does when it is properly supported is something no other industry can replicate. It brings people together in rooms and fields and streets and stadiums. It sits at the centre of our towns as a source of enterprise, of night-time economy, of community life. It moves through our schools building the cognitive and creative capacities that no algorithm can teach. It supports the mental health of those who make it and those who hear it.

It is a thread of cohesion in communities that everything else seems to be pulling apart.

This submission is about building something worthy of that sound. Not with goodwill or encouragement or the occasional grant, but with the architecture of a country that has decided music matters. A rights framework that holds. Spaces where creation can happen. Platforms that carry Australian music to Australian audiences and to the world. Institutions that train the next generation to the standard of excellence this tradition deserves.

The Creative Century is not an aspiration. It is a decision. A decision that the next generation of Australian creators gets to stand on a foundation that was built for them, not scramble across one built for everyone else.

This submission is an invitation. For government, industry and the public. Not to fund an industry. To back a country. The world is not waiting for Australia to prove itself. It is waiting for Australia to back itself.

“The whole world is waiting for us, and they want to hear more. We need to back ourselves. The potential reward is nation defining.”

Jenny Morris MNZM OAM
National Press Club, 5 August 2020

Made here. Heard everywhere.