

Games and play sector National Cultural Policy submission drive

brought to you by your mates at **Freeplay** 

Instructions

We need as many studios, gamemakers and sector support organisations to put in submissions to the [National Cultural Policy review](#).

This is the single most important arts and culture consultation in Australia. It defines what our national arts, culture and screen strategy is for the next five years – and flows down into how state screen agencies conduct their own funding. If you've ever wondered how new cultural institutions or funding buckets get made (or unmade), it's usually through national cultural policies.

Please write a short submission — **ideally around 500 words**. What's important right now is the number of similar submissions we get in, not that any one is comprehensive.

Your submission needs to tell the panel **why games are important** and what they can do to make gamemaking in Australia stronger.

Submissions must be made using the [official form here](#).

Submissions can either be directly into [the form](#) if it's less than 500 words — or uploaded as a PDF.

Submissions **close Sunday 24 May 2026**.

Tips for an impactful submission

- lead with **who you are, what you want** and **how that will change things** for you and your community
- **be a problem-solver** — frame things as problems and solutions and highlight any specific recommendations or asks
- you don't have to say everything, **focus on issues most important to you**
- write in whatever style you are most comfortable with but **keep your language active**
- length doesn't matter — what matters is making **a compelling case**, even one paragraph will make a difference
- you **don't need to evidence or justify your points** — but if you have an example or data to underline a point, include it
- **personal case studies are useful** — the panel likes to quote people describing the challenges they face in their own words
- after you've submitted it, **send it to your local state and federal MP** and ask to meet with them to talk about games
- try to **use similar but not identical language** to the messages below because they use an AI tool to summarise submissions
- **you don't have to use our messages or ideas!** if you've got a cracking idea or program, pitch it!

Key narrative messages

- Games — and the broader ecosystem of games culture and interactive art — is one of the artforms most often engaged with by Australians of all ages, with four out of five people playing digital games regularly and well over nine out of ten playing any game.

- Games employ between 2,500 and 10,000 people nationwide or around 10% of those employed by film and television production, and generated \$600 million in domestic sales last year or 65% of film and television's sales — but only gets 3% of the funding film and video production gets.
- The federal government funds the majority of other screen content but leaves the lion's share of games funding to states — resulting in gamemakers being forced to move cities to pursue even brief opportunities.
- The majority of games — including most of Australia's most successful games — are made by very small studios.
- Gamemakers' first game is often very experimental and rarely profitable but often still expensive. That first independent project defines that gamemaker's voice, practice and viability for investment in future projects — but is out of reach for many gamemakers to pursue.
- Decision-makers from other arts and screen sectors do not understand gamemaking which often leads to games programmes being devalued or misallocated. Decisions about games — whether that's policies, strategies or funding — should be made at least in part by gamemakers, not for them.
- The lines between commercial and non-commercial games and between games and other arts are blurring.
- Games let people actually live Australian stories rather than merely watch them. Their complexity and bringing together many artforms means that we can tell Australian stories written in Australian voices without becoming a pastiche of ourselves.

Key asks

- ◆ Governing boards and executive teams responsible for promoting, funding and policymaking for games must appoint at least some people with games industry experience or research background involved.
- ◆ The majority of appointees to peer assessment or funding decision-making panels responsible for games should be working gamemakers.
- ◆ The federal government should top up games funding to make sure games get at least 10% of what film and television production gets nationally — or at least \$20 million a year.
- ◆ Set up a dedicated national games agency led by people with gamemaking experience to manage games programs and funding, build sector capacity, champion Australian games globally. and act as an interface between the games, play and interactive arts sectors and state and territory screen, arts and cultural agencies.
- ◆ Create a dedicated category of “interactive arts” in Creative Australia to make sure non-digital games have access to funding and program support they cannot access through screen agencies.
- ◆ Expand local content requirements that apply to broadcasters and streamers to games shopfronts to boost investment in local gamemaking.
- ◆ Regulations to ensure harmful, anti-social or anti-worker “artificial intelligence” technologies are not used in or in the development of publicly-supported games projects.

More inspiration

- ★ [National games and play working group draft submission:](#)

☰ 2026 05 - A National Cultural Policy for Games and Play

- ★ [National games and play working group brainstorming](#)

- ★ [Games leader Lucy Mutimer's submission](#)
- ★ [Arts leader Kate Larsen's draft submission](#)
- ★ [Emerging Writers Festival's submission](#)
- ★ Submissions to last National Cultural Policy in 2023 from:
 - [Australian Writers Guild](#)
 - [Australian Screen Industry Guilds](#)
 - [QUT Critical Games Studies group](#)
 - [Interactive Games and Entertainment Association](#)

If you're an especially keen bean, [the review to Modernise the National Classifications Standards](#) closes on **29 May too**. This review will determine if the rules that mean that games that show drug use are banned in Australia get abolished or not. You can read [Freeplay's submission](#) here for key points to echo.

Freeplay