

INNOVATION REVIEW

Submission

ART EDUCATION AUSTRALIA Inc.

Art Education Australia (AEA) is the peak body not for profit professional association representing and supporting visual art education in government, catholic, private and independent education institutions at all levels of formal education providing a national focus within Australia. Membership consists of individuals, faculties, schools, tertiary institutions and affiliated state associations.

AEA supports research in Australian art education through research conferences, seminars and the publication of an internationally peer reviewed journal. AEA acts as an advocate for Australian art education nationally and internationally, is affiliated with and actively contributes to the International Society for Education through Art (InSEA)

Visual Art has long been integral to any understanding of Innovation, or the outcomes of creative activity. Its products enhance our world, shape the built environment and add immeasurably to our quality of life. They are at the core of multi-million dollar industries through the role design plays in every aspect of our lives and the vast gallery network which feeds the visual needs of the community; artists and designers are central to the economy and pivotal in the formulation of culture. Historically we have turned to visual culture to exemplify creativity and to demonstrate the highest levels of cultural achievement; to invest in art is to demonstrate the value of our own culture. While creativity is broader than any art activity, art and the arts in general, are central to what creativity means.

Central to the provision of an Innovation environment is education in the visual. The National Education and the Arts Statement maintains that "the arts foster imagination, risk taking and curiosity-important aspects of creativity" and elsewhere, "Rigorous academic arts subjects and experiences in the senior years act as pathways to the ever increasing range of career opportunities in the creative industries". This emphasises the preparatory role for the Innovation process, education in the arts makes and in visual art specifically, as the popular paradigm for what creativity means. It further draws attention to the pivotal role visual art plays in enhancing our world and shaping our surrounds.

This submission focuses on people and the development of who they are, rather than what they do. It addresses teachers, those who have responsibility for the development and require appropriate resources to do this task, and on students, those who will use their creativity to Innovate in the future. It is predicated on the idea that people are our greatest resource and to maximise their potential to be innovative, is to build our national and international future.

- It is necessary to provide resources for art education through early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary studies and to create the opportunities for research in the visual through to the PhD
- It is necessary to resource Teacher Education, including Professional Development and build research in Art Education,
- Art and design education and research should be funded at a level commensurate with other technology and laboratory intense disciplines

Creativity is central not just to Innovation, but to sustaining and defining who we are as a nation, through enhancing and developing our human capital. It develops skills to address with imaginative solutions, the myriad of problems which a modern community faces, including immigration, health care, environmental concerns, security, economic development, housing, social welfare, etc.. Creativity should be embedded in our education system so that all aspects of economic and community life are better addressed through a creative work force.

- Art Education should be integral to all education to foster creativity in and feed innovation in all disciplines
- Innovation and creativity should become major research priorities with access to NCG research funding
- The Review of Visual Education should be released publicly and its recommendations implemented

Whatever our perspective on Innovation, it cannot be considered independently of creativity and the fostering of creativity is the core business of the arts. With the ever increasing diversity in communication and its massive reliance on the visual, art has evolved as a fundamental component of modern understanding and interaction; this role makes education in the visual even more crucial to the processes of Innovation; not only does it, and other art forms, foster individual creativity to feed Innovation, but visual art provides a large part of the network of communication through which Innovation is understood, generated and dispersed throughout the world. It is a basic aspect of the development of any Innovation environment.

Tania Tickyj, President tickyj.tania.t@edumail.vic.gov.au

Dr.Wesley Imms, Vice-President w.imms@unimelb.edu.au

Marian Strong, Secretary marian.strong@aev.vic.edu.au

Arda Culpan, Treasurer a.culpan@rmit.edu.au

Associate Professor Bernard Hoffert, Research Director

Bernard.Hoffert@artdes.monash.edu.au

Professor Ian Brown, Journal Editor ibrown@uow.edu.au

Professor Elizabeth Grierson, InSEA representative

elizabeth.grierson@rmit.edu.au

Graham Nash, InSEA representative graham.nash@acgs.qld.edu.au

AEA Executive
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