Creative Technology in Australia
A Foresight Lab Policy Snapshot

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The CoSTAR Foresight Lab

Driven by the UK's leading Creative Industries experts, the CoSTAR Foresight Lab is researching the adoption, use and impact of new, emergent and convergent technologies in gaming, TV, film, performance and digital entertainment.

Our findings will inform research, development and innovation across the Creative Industries, including the R&D taking place through the convergent screen technologies and performance in real time (CoSTAR) programme, the UK R&D network for creative technology.

CoSTAR is a £75.6 million national R&D network of laboratories that are developing new technology to maintain the UK's world-leading position in gaming, TV, film, performance, and digital entertainment. Delivered by the UKRI Arts and Humanities Research Council, the programme is supporting new innovations and experiences that will enrich the UK's creative industries, economy, and culture. The network comprises the National Lab, the Realtime Lab, the Live Lab, the Screen Lab and the Foresight Lab. CoSTAR is funded through UK Research and Innovation's Infrastructure Fund, which supports the facilities, equipment and resources that are essential for researchers, businesses, and innovators to do groundbreaking work. You can find out more by visiting www.costarnetwork.co.uk.

Foresight Lab partners and contributors

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Introduction

This Policy Snapshot is one of several short studies being undertaken by the CoSTAR Foresight Lab, aiming to provide information and insights on policies being developed to support the adoption of technologies in the Creative Industries (CIs)[1] in overseas territories. These are intended to provide a high-level overview of some of the key policy developments and initiatives related to film, television, games, performance and digital entertainment as they relate to convergent technology R&D and innovation – helping to build understanding of both international developments and opportunities for UK trade and collaboration.

These studies, which are being conducted between June 2025 and September 2026, include studies of India, Japan, Australia, ASEAN and the Philippines, South Korea and Canada. They are complemented by our regular International Scans. These Scans, undertaken in partnership with Olsberg·SPI, aim to track industrial developments as well as emerging policy signals, and should be read in parallel with these snapshots.

This policy snapshot on Australia presents a high-level summary of policies and strategies related to the CIs and convergent technology innovation. This snapshot report will present:

  · policy overview;
  · an overview of CIs and CIs policies;
  · an overview of the technology sector, technology adoption and regulation.

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1   See the Annex, which provides a glossary on terminology.
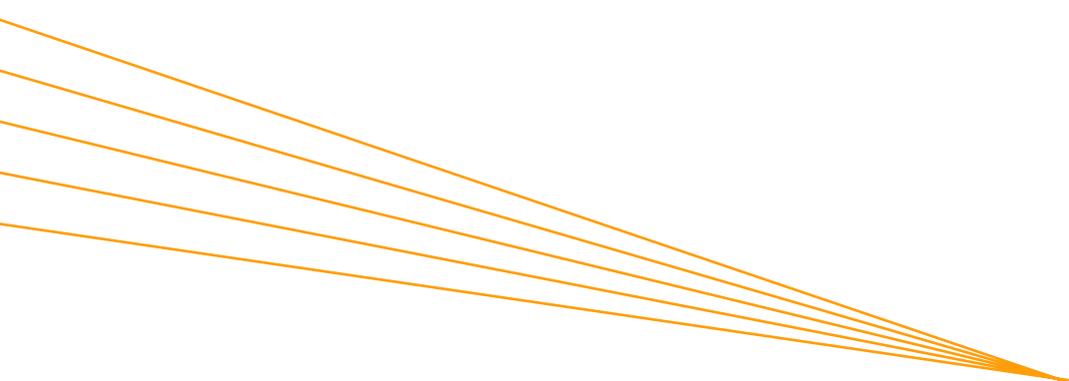
Overview

This analysis assesses Australia's policy and strategy relating to CIs, critical and emerging technology strategies, and AI governance. While these policy domains are articulated through distinct strategies, institutions and instruments, they are interlinked through a set of aligned objectives and priorities: building national capability, supporting workforce development, strengthening innovation ecosystems, and ensuring that technological and cultural change delivers broad public benefit.

Australia's strategic agenda relating to CIs, articulated through *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*[2], focuses on strengthening cultural production, improving creative careers, and embedding equity, particularly for First Nations peoples, across the sector. At the same time, Australia's technology policies prioritise the development and adoption of critical and emerging technologies (most notably AI and quantum technologies) through large-scale investment, infrastructure development, skills strategies and international partnerships. These agendas overlap in areas such as digital capability, data governance, workforce development and innovation ecosystems, which support both cultural production and technology-driven economic growth.

Across these domains, the policy landscape reflects an ambition to foster responsible, inclusive and future-oriented development. This integrated approach positions Australia to support creative and technological innovation while responding to social, cultural and economic impacts, with particular attention to First Nations leadership, equity of access and long-term national resilience.

Across Australia, bodies involved in regulation, funding and support for both CIs and technology sectors include the following:

- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts[3];
- Australian Communications and Media Authority[4];
- Department of Industry, Science and Resources[5];
- Creative Australia[6];
- Screen Australia[7];
- Other independent organisations such as Ausfilm[8] and The Australian Children's Television Foundation[9], receiving key funding from government and providing important support to the creative sector.

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2   Australian Government (2023) Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place. Available at: https://www.arts.gov.au/publications/national-cultural-policy-revive-place-every-story-story-every-place

3   https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/

4   https://www.acma.gov.au/

5   https://www.industry.gov.au/

6   https://creative.gov.au/

7   https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/

8   https://www.ausfilm.com.au/

9   https://actf.com.au/
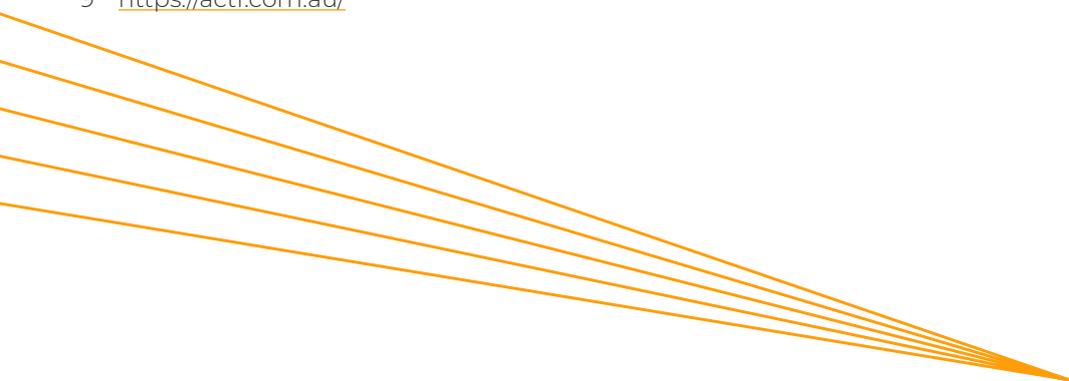
A defining feature across these policy domains in recent years has been the primacy afforded to First Nations peoples, cultures and knowledge systems. Australia's national policy relating to CIs positions First Nations stories, cultural authority and creative labour at the centre of cultural life, while technology and AI policies recognise the need to protect Indigenous data sovereignty, cultural and intellectual property, and to address disproportionate risks and harms arising from digital systems. This emphasis demonstrates that the Australian public policy recognises First Nations peoples as foundational contributors to cultural production, economic participation and innovation.
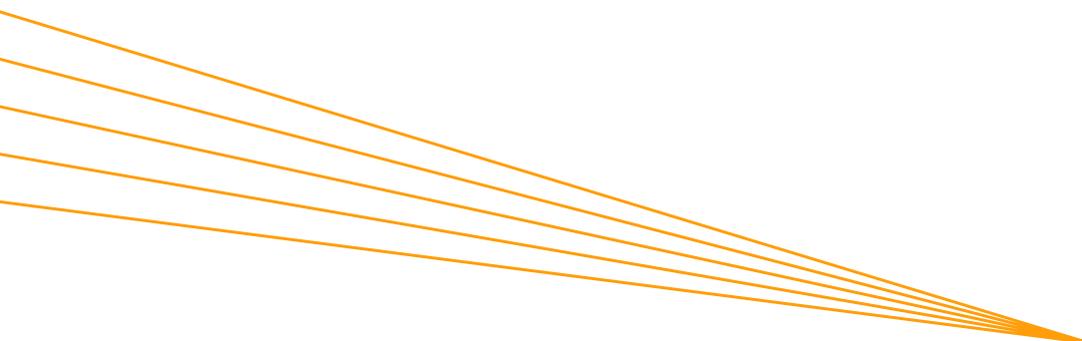
Creative Industries Policies

Overview of Creative Industries landscape in Australia

Australia was an early pioneer in CIs[10] policy, indirectly shaping UK policy in 1998 by linking publicly funded arts and culture with commercial, popular, and technology-oriented activities.[11] Early policy initiatives in the 1980s and 1990s – particularly *The Australian Cultural Industry report and Creative Nation policy*[12] – expanded the remit of cultural policy by linking artistic creativity with technological change, innovation and national economic competitiveness. *Creative Nation* policy, which anticipated the 1998 UK CIs policy agendas in many areas[13], explicitly referenced the economic contributions of the cultural sector as well as the emphasis on information technologies. This period expanded CIs policy beyond arts and heritage, recognising creativity both as a source of social value and as an economic input across the wider economy.

During the 2010s, statistical models developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and subsequent research further formalised this convergence through binary classifications that distinguished – as separate but overlapping – cultural activities and creative activities. These distinguished between cultural activities, i.e. those producing symbolic meaning, and creative activities, where human creativity is a key input, highlighting that creativity extends beyond the CIs into other industries.[14] Later models[15] further mapped CIs around skills, occupations, and service-based domains, distinguishing cultural production (e.g. film, TV, radio, music, visual and performing arts, publishing) from creative services (e.g. advertising, marketing, architecture, design, software, digital), while maintaining their interdependence. Across these shifts, Australian policy has consistently recognised two intertwined logics: culture as a source of socially valued outputs and identity, and creativity as a transferable capability essential to innovation across the broader economy.

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10   Australia's Government uses the term 'Cultural and Creative Industries', but this text uses 'Creative Industries' as a synonym, as it is more familiar to UK audiences.

11   Cunningham, S., Brook, S., McCutcheon, M. (2023) Definitions of CCI. Bifrost University. Available at: https://www.bifrost.is/media/1/report-2-definitions-final.pdf

12   Department of Communication and the Arts (DCA) (1994) Creative Nation: Commonwealth Cultural Policy. Commonwealth Government, Canberra. Available at: https://apo.org.au/node/29704

13   Gross J (2020) The Birth of the Creative Industries Revisited: An Oral History of the 1998 DCMS Mapping Document. London: King's College London. Available at: https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/resources/reports/the-birth-of-the-creative-industries-revisited.pdf. P.11

14   Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013) Discussion Paper: Cultural and Creative Activity Satellite Accounts. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra. P.8. Available online: https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/5271.0.55.0012013?OpenDocument

15   Higgs, P. and Lennon, S. (2024) Australian Creative Employment in 2011 - applying the NESTA Dynamic Mapping definition methodology to Australian Classifications. Queensland University of Technology. Available at: https://eprints.qut.edu.au/92726/1/Applying%2BNESTA%27s%2Bdefinition%2Bto%2BAustralian%2BCensus%2BData.pdf

Since 2014, Australia has measured Cultural and Creative Activities (CCAs) across the economy[16], with recent updates narrowing the scope to activities generated through cultural and artistic production.[17] CCAs are now understood to occur as specialised, support, and embedded activities, reflecting their presence both within CIs and across other sectors.[18] The economic values and other statistics related to CCAs are examined through production-focused measures, such as domestic output, Gross Value Added (GVA), GDP, employment estimates. In 2022–23, CCAs contributed $63.7 billion to the Australian economy (2.5% of GDP), with particularly strong growth in areas such as digital games.[19] The sector comprises predominantly small businesses, employs around 2.4% of the workforce[20], and is geographically concentrated in New South Wales and Victoria. In 2023, there were approximately 95,753 CIs businesses, encompassing 3.7% of all Australian companies, with literature, creative and performing arts and visual arts and crafts having the biggest share within these industries, representing over 30% of CIs businesses.[21]

16   Australian Government (2024) Cultural and Creative Activity in Australia, 2008–09 to 2022–23. Available at: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/cultural-and-creative-activity-in-australia-2008-09-to-2022-23-methodology-refresh-statistical-working-paper-december2024_0.pdf

17   Australian Government (2024) Cultural and Creative Activity in Australia, 2008–09 to 2022–23 (Methodology Refresh)—Statistical Working Paper. Available at: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/media/publications/cultural-and-creative-activity-australia-2008-09-2022-23-methodology-refresh-statistical-working

18   CCAs are defined as 'the economic activity generated from the production and support of goods and services created by cultural and artistic means'. CCAs are grouped by 15 domains, including: 1. Literature, creative and performing arts; 2. Visual arts and crafts; 3. Music production and distribution; 4. Museums and galleries; 5. Film and television activities; 6. Radio broadcasting; 7. Internet publishing and broadcasting; 8. Libraries and archives; 9. Print media and publishing (excl. internet); 10. Architecture Services; 11. Design and fashion; 12. Advertising and promotion; 13. Events (arts); 14. Arts education; 15. Digital games development.
The new framework identified CCAs in three categories:
- Specialised activity: Cultural and creative products produced within CIs, accounting for 71.2% of total CCA GVA in 2022–23.
- Support activity: Non-cultural products within CIs (e.g. advertising), accounting for 9.4% of CCA GVA.
- Embedded activity: Cultural and creative products produced outside CIs, accounting for 19.4% of total CCA.

19   GDP in digital games development has increased significantly from $24 million in 2008–09 to $344 million in 2022–23. In comparison, CCA GDP in literature, creative and performing arts has increased by 57.2% from $1.5 billion in 2008–09 to $2.4 billion in 2022–23, while GDP in film and television activities has increased by 18.1% from $5.8 billion in 2008–09 to $6.8 billion in 2022–23. See: Australian Government (2024) Cultural and Creative Activity in Australia, 2008–09 to 2022–23 (Methodology Refresh)—Statistical Working Paper. Available at: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/media/publications/cultural-and-creative-activity-australia-2008-09-2022-23-methodology-refresh-statistical-working

20   In comparison, UNESCO estimated the CIs employment to be 6.2% of global employment in the same year. See: UNESCO (2022) Reshaping Policies for Creativity: Addressing Culture as a Global Public Good. UNESCO. Paris.

21   Australian Government (2024) Analysis of the Cultural and Creative Sector. Available at: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/analysis-of-the-cultural-and-creative-sector-revive-sectoral-analysis-december2024.pdf

National Creative Industries policy

Australia's CIs policy landscape combines a strong national framework with locally tailored state strategies, aimed at strengthening access, equity and participation in the creative sector while supporting a sustainable, future-focused creative ecosystem. National efforts prioritise elevating First Nations cultures, improving creative careers and workplace conditions, expanding arts access for people across all regions and backgrounds, investing in cultural infrastructure, digital capability and regional engagement. The Government is also advancing measures that safeguard cultural knowledge, enhance disability inclusion, modernise remuneration and lending systems, and strengthen arts education. Across states and territories, governments pursue similar goals, emphasising long-term planning, stronger creative workforces, community wellbeing, and locally driven cultural development, ranging from boosting regional vibrancy and heritage protection to supporting economic growth, innovation and post-pandemic recovery.

The most significant national governmental policy which addresses CIs – *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*[22] (below referred to as *Revive*) – was published in January 2023, defining the country's CIs policy for the subsequent five years. The five-year plan aims to renew and revive Australia's CIs.[23] It has five strategic objectives:

- 'First Nations first': Recognising and respecting the crucial place of First Nations stories at the centre of Australia's CIs.

- 'A place for every story': Reflecting the breadth of Australia's stories and the contribution of all Australians as the creators.

- 'Centrality of the artist': Supporting artists as workers and creators.

- 'Strong cultural infrastructure': Providing support across the spectrum of institutions which sustain Australia's CIs.

- 'Engaging the audience': Making sure Australia's stories connect with people.

The central measure of Revive was reform of the Australia Council for the Arts, the principal national investment and advisory body. The Australia Council for the Arts was rebranded as Creative Australia, expanded to incorporate philanthropic and partnership functions, and restructured with new divisions focused on priority areas including First Nations, workplace conditions, live music, and writing. Under the Revive policy, it received $199 million in reinstated and additional funding, while retaining the Australia Council for the Arts name for its Board to reflect its institutional legacy.

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22   Australian Government (2023) Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place. Available at: https://www.arts.gov.au/publications/national-cultural-policy-revive-place-every-story-story-every-place

23   Revive uses the following terms interchangeably: 'cultural and creative sector', 'arts, culture and heritage', 'arts and culture', 'creative economy', 'creative industries and practice'. Revive set a goal to update the methodology of capturing CCAs used by ABS to better capture the contribution of CCAs. As a result, BCARR published a paper in 2024 providing a methodological update on measuring economic contributions of CCAs.

First Nations first

In September 2024, the First Nations Board (with $35.5 million of funding) was established within Creative Australia, with the aim to support artistic voices of First Nations people and strengthening capacity across all aspects of the First Nations culture sector. It includes supporting First Nations arts and culture projects and ensuring decisions are guided by First Nations principles. Across Departments, Australia's Government provides additional funding to support First Nations arts and culture by funding galleries and facilities that foreground First Nations culture, with further investments committed for 2025-26.[24] For several decades, Screen Australia's dedicated First Nations Department has provided specific and holistic support for First Nations screen stories and storytellers.[25]

Access, equity and participation

Across current cultural policy in Australia, including *Revive*, there is a clear emphasis on expanding access, equity and participation in CIs for all Australians, ensuring that the CIs belong to everyone and encouraging participation from underrepresented voices. The policy increases support for regional CIs by investing in the Regional Arts Fund of $8.5 million over 4 years from 2023-24.[26] The Australian government's Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program (rPPP) provides investment of $400 million over the period of 2024-2027 to support transformative investment in regional, rural and remote Australia.[27] Revive mentions investments in improving the National Broadband Network to increase digital connectivity and access to CIs for communities in regional and remote areas.[28] Under Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31, *Equity: Arts and Disability Associated Plan*, $8.1 million investment was released in November 2024 to enable people with disability to access and participate in CIs.

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24   For example, it provides $80 million to found a National Aboriginal Art Gallery in Alice Springs , $5 million to training facilities at NAISDA Dance College's Kariong campus, and $1.5 million to support professional development and training opportunities for First Nations artists and arts workers.

25   Screen Australia's First Nations Department has provided a model for other nations, in part inspiring the creation of Canada's Indigenous Screen Office.

26   Australian Government (2025) Regional arts. Available at: https://www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/regional-arts

27   Australian Government (2024) Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program. Available at: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/regional-australia/regional-and-community-programs/regional-precincts-and-partnerships-program

28   The Regional Connectivity Program and the Mobile Black Spot Program enable digital access and provide connectivity solutions to regional communities, supporting increased access to arts and cultural activities.

Centrality of creative workers

Revive prioritises arts businesses and creative workers, aiming to improve working conditions, safer and secure workplaces, better training and sustainable career pathways. The Centre for Arts and Entertainment Workplaces, now known as Creative Workplaces[29], is formed within Creative Australia to recognise creative workers contribution to the sector.[30] It provides advice to workers on pay, safety, and welfare in the arts and entertainment sector. By providing $2.6 million funding, the policy supports specialist in-school arts education programs that draw from cultural and creative sector expertise, through the delivery of five arts subjects (dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts) under the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts*. The Government supports financial wellbeing of seven national performing arts training organisations by providing additional $115.2 million over 2024–28 (including $23.2 million for the Australian Film, Television and Radio School) and a further $36.4 million from 2028–29.[31]

Incentives and initiatives

The Australian Government supports the screen sector by funding the national broadcasters, providing tax offsets and direct funds via grants and investments. *Revive* delivered five-year funding terms for national broadcasters the ABC and SBS, and reinstated indexation for ABC funding.[32] It committed to introducing content obligations for streaming services in Australia, and obligations were legislated at the end of 2025. The Australian Government also reformed the Location Offset, a tax rebate for international film and TV production in Australia, in June 2024, another action foreshadowed in *Revive*. Australia provides tax offsets for Australian film and television, international projects, and standalone post-production, animation and digital and visual effects work. Direct funding is provided by national government agency Screen Australia, which is the screen sector's equivalent to Creative Australia. *Revive* provided Screen Australia with an additional $12 million over four years to support small and medium independent games studios,[33] complementing the Digital Games Tax Offset, which was introduced in 2023 and which supports games development at larger scale.

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29   The Centre for Arts and Entertainment Workplaces receives $8.1 million of Government funding.

30   Creative Workplaces (2025) Available at: https://creativeworkplaces.gov.au/

31   Australian Government (2025) Investing in our future artists and arts workers. Available at: https://www.arts.gov.au/news/investing-our-future-artists-and-arts-workers

32   Five-year funding agreements for the ABC and SBS commenced on 1 July 2023. Under these arrangements, the ABC will receive $6.0 billion and SBS $1.8 billion through to 30 June 2028. This funding includes an additional $103.8 million to provide ongoing support for three measures that were previously due to end. Of this, the ABC will receive $55.6 million to support enhanced news gathering and audio description services, while SBS will receive $48.2 million for media sector support and audio description. In addition, the ABC has been allocated a further $8.5 million over four years from 1 July 2023 to expand transmission services in the Pacific as part of the Indo-Pacific Broadcasting Strategy. See: Australia's Government (2023) 2023 - 2024 Supplementary Budget Estimates. Available at: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/foi24-204-documents-released.pdf

33   Screen Australia (2025) Games. Available at: https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding-and-support/online/gamesScreen

State level CIs policies

In addition to the national CIs policy implemented on the federal level, there are several policies adopted at the state level which are relevant to or encompass CIs.[34] The state and territory policies share several unifying themes while expressing local priorities. Across these jurisdictions, there is a strong commitment to elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, expanding equitable access to CIs, strengthening the creative workforce, and supporting sector recovery and resilience, as they align with the priorities established at the national cultural policy *Revive*. State level strategies emphasise long-term planning (typically 10-year horizons), whole-of-government coordination, and the importance of creativity to community wellbeing, identity, and economic growth.

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34   Some of the state level CIs policies include: the Australian Capital Territory's (ACT) *Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital - Arts, Culture and Creative Policy 2022–2026*; New South Wales's (NSW) *Creative Communities: NSW Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy 2024–2033; Northern Territory Arts Strategy 2034; Queensland's Time to Shine: a 10-year strategy for arts and culture 2025-2035; A Place to Create: A 10-Year Cultural Policy for all South Australians*; Tasmania's *Cultural and Creative Industries Recovery Strategy: 2020 and Beyond*; Victoria's *Creative State 2028; Western Australia's Creative WA: A 10-Year Vision to Grow and Sustain our Creative Ecosystem 2024.*
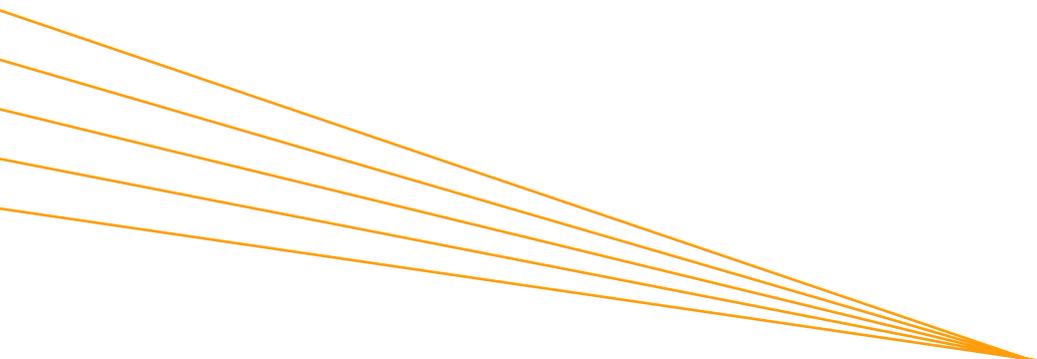
Technology adoption and regulation

Overview of the technology sector

Australia's technology sector is a major driver of national productivity and innovation, functioning as the country's third-largest industry and seventh-largest employer, with 861,000 workers and a $167 billion (8.5%) contribution to GDP in 2021.[35] This includes $76 billion in direct output from technology industries and an additional $92 billion stemming from their indirect economic impact.[36] A strong domestic startup ecosystem has emerged, producing more than 20 unicorns valued over $1 billion and over 100 firms valued above $100 million, while the market remains highly concentrated, with platforms such as Google/Alphabet, Apple, Meta, and Microsoft dominating online services.[37] This duality – high entrepreneurial performance alongside concentrated market power – shapes much of Australia's technology governance landscape.[38]

Overview of technology policies

The Australian Government's technology policy framework focuses on advancing critical and emerging technologies while safeguarding national interests. Across initiatives, there is a strong emphasis on balancing economic prosperity, national security and social cohesion, recognising both the opportunities and risks posed by fields such as AI, robotics, quantum technologies and advanced manufacturing. The Government aims to encourage technology adoption across the economy, support R&D activities, facilitate local and international investment, build resilient supply chains, strengthen regulatory safeguards and risk management, and deepen international partnerships. The Government's technology policies aim to position Australia as a global leader in critical technologies while ensuring their adoption benefits all Australians.

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35   These estimates show that the technology sector's economic impact extends beyond the tech sector itself, as it underpins the operations of nearly every industry. From the creative sector to finance, retail, construction and more, businesses depend on digital tools to manage finances, collaborate, schedule staff and market their products. The data is from: Tech Council of Australia (2021) The economic contribution of Australia's tech sector. Available at https://techcouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/TCA-Tech-sectors-economic-contribution-full-res.pdf

36   Tech Council of Australia (2021) The economic contribution of Australia's tech sector. Available at https://techcouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/TCA-Tech-sectors-economic-contribution-full-res.pdf

37   Tech Council of Australia (2024) The state of Australia's tech ecosystem. Available at: https://techcouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/SouthStart-Report.pdf

38   Flew, T., Fitzgerald, S., McTernan, C. & Nicholls, R. (2024). Media and Internet Concentration in Australia, 2019-2022. Global Media and Internet Concentration Project. doi.org/10.22215/gmicp/2024.9

Critical technologies

Recognising the strategic and economic importance of advanced technologies, the Australian Government identifies critical and emerging technologies that could significantly affect national interests. Priority fields include, among others, AI technologies, advanced information and communication technologies and quantum technologies.[39] The *Critical Technologies Statement*, published in May 2023, summarises how Australia's Government supports critical technologies while safeguarding national interests across three dimensions: economic prosperity, national security, and social cohesion.[40] The Critical Technologies Hub within the Department of Industry, Science and Resources provides expert advice on scientific, economic and national security issues. Several Government initiatives support critical technologies, for example:

- The *Trailblazer Universities Program* provides $362.5 million from 2022-2026 to support R&D activities in six universities.

- The National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy supports Australia's cutting-edge national research infrastructure by investing $4 billion from 2018-2029.

- The National Reconstruction Fund provides $15 billion of investment, which is dedicated partially ($1 billion) for critical technologies such as AI, robotics and quantum technologies.

- The Digital and Tech Skills Compact outlines the Government commitment to address skills shortages and grow the tech sector.[41]

- The Australian Cyber Security Strategy for 2023–2030 is a roadmap to realise the Government vision of Australia becoming a world leader in cyber security.[42]

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39   The full list of critical technologies includes the following:
- advanced manufacturing and materials technologies
- artificial intelligence (AI) technologies
- advanced information and communication technologies
- quantum technologies
- autonomous systems, robotics, positioning, timing and sensing
- biotechnologies
- clean energy generation and storage technologies.

Australian Government (2025) Technology. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/science-technology-and-innovation/technology#contact-footer

40   Australian Government (2023) Critical Technologies Statement. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/critical-technologies-statement

41   *Ibid.*

42   *Ibid.*

Quantum technologies

The Australian Government has placed high emphasis on building a globally competitive quantum industry by 2030.[43] Supported by the $60 million fund, the *National Quantum Strategy* aims to leverage quantum technologies to modernise the economy, create high-value jobs, and protect national interests while encouraging responsible and inclusive development. Extensive national consultation informed the strategy, revealing both major opportunities, such as research strength, economic growth, and attracting talent, and key challenges, including commercialisation barriers, capital needs, infrastructure access, and skills shortages.

The Australian Government is advancing its *National Quantum Strategy* through major investments, ecosystem-building initiatives, and industry-research partnerships.

- Australia's Centre for Quantum Growth, funded with $18.4 million and hosted by the University of Sydney, coordinates national quantum development.[44] The centre supports commercialisation of quantum technologies, fosters collaboration across the quantum ecosystem, promotes public awareness, and strengthens responsible innovation.

- The Australian and Queensland Governments are investing nearly $1 billion in PsiQuantum to build a utility-scale fault-tolerant quantum computer in Brisbane.[45] The initiative establishes PsiQuantum's Asia-Pacific headquarters, creates up to 400 high-skilled jobs, expands supply-chain opportunities, and supports research partnerships. The investment is projected to yield major economic benefits, positioning Australia at the forefront of global quantum computing.

- The Quantum Meets initiative, led by the former Chief Scientist with CSIRO, uses sector-specific workshops to raise industry awareness, stimulate collaboration, and identify real-world challenges addressable by quantum technologies.[46]

- Under the Critical Technologies Challenge Program, the Government has awarded $5.2 million to 14 consortia pursuing early-stage quantum solutions to national challenges.[47]

Together, these initiatives demonstrate a strategic approach to technology governance that combines capability building, commercialisation, infrastructure development to accelerate the growth of Australia's quantum industry.

43   Australian Government (2023) National Quantum Strategy. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/national-quantum-strategy

44   Australian Government (2024) New national centre to grow our quantum industry. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/news/new-national-centre-grow-our-quantum-industry

45   Australian Government (2024) Leading quantum company chooses Australia as site for its groundbreaking utility scale quantum computer. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/news/leading-quantum-company-chooses-australia-site-its-groundbreaking-utility-scale-quantum-computer

46   Australian Government (2024) Quantum Meets workshop series. Available at: https://www.chiefscientist.gov.au/news-and-media/quantum-meets-workshop-series

47   Australian Government (2024) $5.2 million for quantum solutions to solve key national challenges. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/news/52-million-quantum-solutions-solve-key-national-challenges

AI technologies

The Australian Government recognises AI as critical technologies that could significantly affect national interests and therefore become a policy priority field. Government AI policy reflects a coordinated effort to position Australia as a global leader in ethical AI innovation by building national AI capability, promoting safe and responsible AI adoption, supporting best practices in AI use, and strengthening international collaboration on AI development and deployment. These policy interventions signal an ambition not only to accelerate AI adoption but also to shape its trajectory toward responsible innovation and inclusive economic growth.

A central institutional actor within this strategy is the National AI Centre (NAIC), established in 2021 under the Department of Industry, Science and Resources.[48] NAIC serves as a national hub to advance the development and adoption of trusted, secure, and responsible AI. NAIC operates through four core functions: supporting AI adoption among SMEs by addressing systemic barriers; fostering growth within the Australian AI industry; convening stakeholders across the national AI ecosystem; and promoting safe and responsible AI practices. Key programmes of NAIC[49] aim to build national expertise, enhance collaboration, and disseminate knowledge through industry partnerships, events, and training. NAIC also develops and commissions key resources and tools that underpin Australia's responsible AI agenda.[50]

Published in December 2025, the *National AI Plan* (referred as *AI Plan* below) outlines the Australian Government's strategy to build a competitive, productive and resilient AI-enabled economy that delivers benefits across all regions and communities.[51] Centred on three goals - capturing economic opportunities, spreading benefits broadly and keeping Australians safe - the plan focuses on boosting infrastructure and investment, supporting workforce skills and adoption, and ensuring strong regulatory and ethical safeguards. The *AI Plan* emphasises coordinated government action to guide responsible AI development, attract global partnerships, strengthen workforce transitions, and maintain public trust.

The *AI Plan* focuses on building the foundations of a world-class AI ecosystem by investing in smart infrastructure, strengthening local capability, and attracting major domestic and global investment. Central to this effort is the development of robust digital and computing infrastructure, especially data centres, high-speed connectivity, and secure cyber systems, to support advanced AI development and ensure Australia remains a competitive regional hub. The government is backing sovereign AI capability through targeted investment (more than $460

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48   Australian Government (2025) National Artificial Intelligence Centre. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/national-artificial-intelligence-centre

49   Such as the Responsible AI Network (RAIN), the AI Industry Connections Forum, AI Month, the AI Leadership Summit, and the CEDA AI Community of Best Practice.

50   These include the Voluntary AI Safety Standard (VAISS), the AI Impact Navigator, the AI Adopt Tracker for SMEs, and a range of AI ecosystem research reports.

51   Australian Government (2025) National AI Plan. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-12/national-ai-plan.pdf

million[52]), improved access to high-quality datasets, and new initiatives such as GovAI[53] and an AI Accelerator program[54] to boost commercialisation. These actions aim to scale Australia's AI industry, create high-value jobs, and strengthen national resilience while ensuring sustainable growth in digital infrastructure.

The Australian Government focuses on ensuring every Australian can share in the advantages of AI, including people in regional areas, disadvantaged communities, and groups at higher risk of digital exclusion (around 40% of First Nations people, and one in 5 Australians remain digitally excluded)[55]. Achieving this requires broad capability building across workplaces, education systems, community organisations and not-for-profits, alongside targeted support for First Nations people, women, people with disabilities, and remote communities.

The Government emphasises scaling AI adoption, particularly for SMEs, which face uneven uptake across metropolitan and regional areas (only 29% of regional organisations in Australia are adopting AI compared to 40% in metropolitan areas)[56]. The NAIC[57] and the AI Adopt Program[58] provide practical guidance, training and tailored assistance to help organisations implement AI safely, while initiatives such as the First Nations Digital Support Hub and Network of Digital Mentors[59] work to close digital inclusion gaps.

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52   The funding includes: over $362 million in targeted grants from the Australian Research Council, Medical Research Future Fund, National Health and Medical Research Council, and Cooperative Research Centres; $47 million for the Next Generation Graduates Program; $39.9 million to strengthen Australia's AI ecosystem, which includes expanding the NAIC; $17 million for the AI Adopt Program to support SMEs.

53   GovAI is a centralised platform that hosts AI services, offering agencies a secure, local environment to build tailored AI solutions at a low cost.

54   The AI Accelerator is a dedicated funding round within the Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) program designed to speed up the development and commercialisation of AI, helping businesses and researchers across Australia turn innovative ideas into practical solutions.

55   Australian Government (2025) National AI Plan. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-12/national-ai-plan.pdf

56   *Ibid.*

57   In October 2025, the NAIC published a set of materials – *Guidance for AI Adoption* – designed to help organisations integrate AI responsibly into their operations. Aimed at businesses of all sizes, the package offers hands-on tools to lower barriers to AI uptake. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/guidance-for-ai-adoption

58   The AI Adopt Program, supported by $17 million of government investment, provides SMEs with tailored advice, capacity-building support, and practical resources to help them implement AI technologies responsibly across Australia. Available at: https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/artificial-intelligence-ai-adopt-program

59   Australian Government (2025) First Nations Digital Support Hub and Network of Digital Mentors. Available at: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/have-your-say/first-nations-digital-support-hub-and-network-digital-mentors-draft-combined-grant-opportunity

The Australian Government is strengthening its approach to AI safety by building on existing legal and regulatory frameworks while establishing new capabilities to respond to emerging risks. A key initiative is the creation of the AI Safety Institute (AISI), which will assess advanced AI systems, monitor risks, and support regulators with independent, evidence-based advice[60]. To maintain public trust, the government is prioritising protections that uphold fairness, privacy, and accountability. Existing laws are being reviewed and updated to ensure they remain fit for purpose as AI evolves. Targeted actions address AI-enabled crime, online harms, deepfakes, copyright issues, and risks to First Nations peoples, including data misuse and cultural harm.

The Government is also promoting responsible AI practices across industry by clarifying how existing laws apply, providing practical guidance, and supporting transparency measures. New resources published by the NAIC aim to streamline responsible innovation and support uptake by SMEs, educators, and regulators.[61] These practical measures sit alongside Australia's non-binding guidance and policy frameworks that steer AI development and use toward ethical and responsible deployment.[62]

This ambition is articulated through the *AI Ethics Principles*[63], first published in 2019, and the *Voluntary AI Safety Standard*[64], released in September 2024, which were the foundation for the *AI Plan*. The *AI Ethics Principles* set high-level expectations for human, societal and environmental wellbeing, including fairness, privacy, security, reliability, safety, transparency, explainability, contestability and accountability, particularly where AI systems may have significant social or environmental impacts. The *Voluntary AI Safety Standard* builds on these principles by operationalising them through ten voluntary guardrails, requiring organisations to establish accountability structures, undertake ongoing risk assessments, ensure strong data governance

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60   Australian Government (2025) Australia establishes new institute to strengthen AI safety. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/news/australia-establishes-new-institute-strengthen-ai-safety

61   Some of the resources include the following documents:
- The *Guidance for AI Adoption*, published by NAIC in October 2025, provides 6 essential practices to embed safety, transparency and ethical conduct into AI development and deployment. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/guidance-for-ai-adoption
- The *Being clear about AI-generated content* guide, published by NAIC in November 2025, advises businesses on how they can improve trust by clearly signalling when AI has been used to create or modify content. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/being-clear-about-ai-generated-content
- The *Policy for the Responsible Use of AI in Government*, published by the Digital Transformation Agency in December 2025, promotes transparency, accountability and oversight. Available at: https://architecture.digital.gov.au/policy/responsible-use-of-ai-in-government

62   Moretto M., Dedman, J., Openshaw, E., Cobb, P., Williams, V., Hitchen, G., Tarnovskaya, E (2025) AI Policy and its Impacts on the Screen Sector Across the Globe. A CoSTAR Foresight Lab Report prepared by the Olsberg SPI.

63   Australian Government (2025) Australia's AI Ethics Principles. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/australias-artificial-intelligence-ethics-principles/australias-ai-ethics-principles

64   Australian Government (2024) Voluntary AI Safety Standard. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/voluntary-ai-safety-standard

and testing, maintain meaningful human oversight, promote supply-chain transparency, enable contestation pathways, and engage stakeholders to address bias and unequal impacts. Additionally, *Guidance for AI Adoption*, published in October 2025, extends this governance logic to organisational practice.[65] The guidance promotes accountability, transparency, and continuous monitoring, but its emphasis falls on organisational processes rather than technical safeguards. It articulates six practices for responsible AI governance that should be implemented across businesses to receive the benefits of AI while managing its risks. It recommends appointing senior governance owners, establishing channels for contestability, maintaining AI registers, and developing human-override mechanisms. Its focus on documentation, engagement, and ongoing risk review signals a governance approach that adapts to changing systems, uses, and impacts.

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65   Australian Government (2025) Guidance for AI Adoption. Available at: https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/guidance-for-ai-adoption
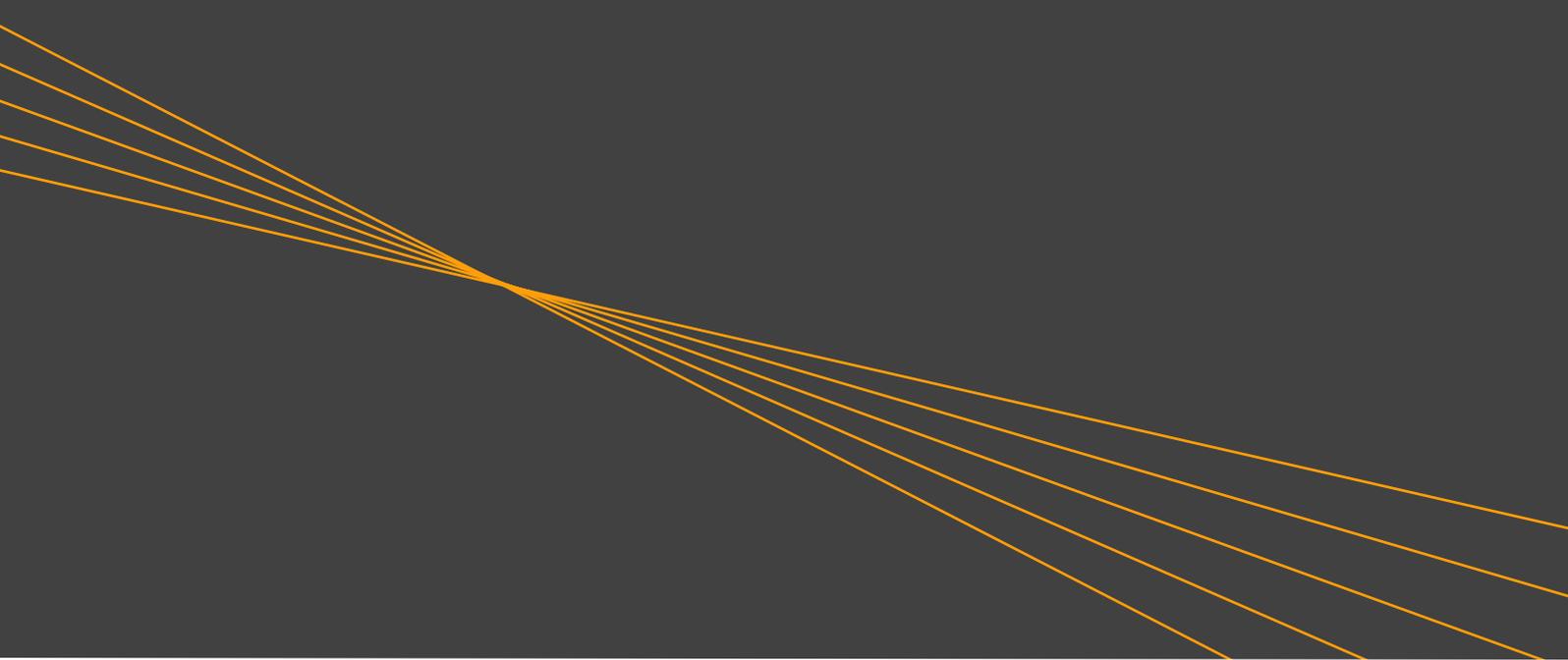
Conclusion

Australia's policies reveal a cohesive effort to position creativity, culture and advanced technology as drivers of economic prosperity and social inclusion. At the centre is *Revive*, the national cultural policy, which establishes the centrality of artists, First Nations leadership, cultural infrastructure and audience engagement, while recognising that technology-enabled creative industries are essential to Australia's cultural and economic life. In addition, the Government's technology and AI policies, covering critical technologies, quantum, and responsible AI, provide the regulatory frameworks to ensure the innovation is safe, ethical and globally competitive. These policies show a coordinated approach that values creative expression, promotes fair and sustainable careers, and invests in responsible development of advanced technologies. These cultural and technology policies position Australia to foster its creative industries in a way that is future-ready and grounded in equity and ethics.
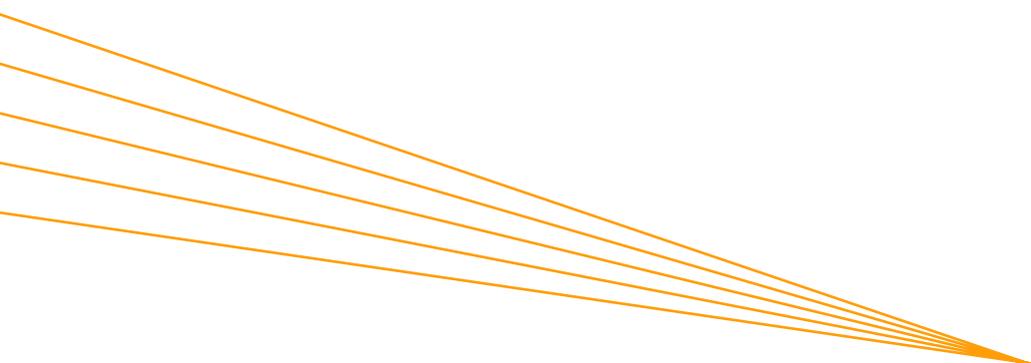
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