ARIA Submission to the National Cultural Policy

Revive: A place for every story, a story for every place.

Executive Summary

- Australian music is a national economic and export asset, generating more than $10.7 billion in revenue and over $1 billion in exports in 2024–25. The talent, businesses and private investment are already here. The policy opportunity now is to ensure Australian music can compete and grow in an increasingly global and technology-driven market.
- ARIA supports the joint music industry submission *Next Generation Now* and welcomes the strong foundations established through Revive, particularly the creation of Music Australia, a dedicated national agency for contemporary music. The next National Cultural Policy should build on this momentum with a sharper focus on industry and artist revenue growth, exports, talent development and long-term global competitiveness.
- Without a strong copyright framework cultural policy becomes irrelevant. Australia's current copyright framework is fit for purpose. It is aligned with global markets; it underpins innovation and is the economic foundation of the creative industries.
- Maintaining strong copyright settings requiring consent and compensation is critical to ensure Australian music businesses and artists share in the economic opportunities from AI.
- Any proposal that allows AI companies to use copyright material without consent will undermine Australian creators, weaken export opportunities, and cut Australian rightsholders out of emerging global licensing markets.
- Commercial licensing markets for the use of copyright material in AI training must be allowed to develop and operate. Access schemes or funds that bypass copyright and remove artist and rightsholder control over use of their music for AI must be ruled out.
- Commercial radio policy should be modernised to ensure local audiences are hearing Australian songs and sounds, Australian music quotas should be elevated to a legislative obligation. They should operate during peak listening hours, with mandatory daytime compliance, independent oversight of format classifications and stronger minimum Australian music requirements across all formats.
- Removal of regulatory barriers to artist and label income should be a priority of this new cultural policy. Radio royalty caps in the Copyright Act on are outdated, distorting the market, and directly suppress earnings for Australian artists and rightsholders. Removing these caps is one of the simplest and most cost-effective reforms available to government to increase creator income, strengthen reinvestment into Australian music and support industry sustainability, at no cost to government.
- To strengthen long-term export capability and ensure Australian artists can compete internationally Australia should increase investment in talent and skills development at the highest levels through a national elite contemporary music academy attached to AFTRS. Elite training schools across the world have recently produced talent like Olivia Dean, Charlie Puth, and Lola Young. Australia should have its own elite contemporary music academy, accessible to all talent worthy of developing into the next recording and production superstars.

- Record labels, major and independent, remain the primary investors in Australian artists, funding talent discovery, artist development, recording, marketing and export growth. Government policy should support this investment ecosystem through stable copyright settings, modern regulation and policies and programs that encourage long-term private investment in Australian music.

Introduction

The Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to a renewed National Cultural Policy to shape the future direction of the creative and cultural sector.

Music connects people from all communities and walks of life, it brings joy and can help to heal – and perhaps most critically for policy-making – it is a legitimate, powerful and proven economic force.

The scaffolding has been laid with the first cultural policy Revive. A new NCP must contain measures to ensure that Australian music reaches its enormous potential, both in Australia and globally.

1. <u>ARIA supports Next Generation Now – the Joint Contemporary Music Industry Submission</u>

ARIA, alongside contemporary music industry colleagues, is a proud signatory to Next Generation Now[1] – a plan to 2030 to make Australia a music powerhouse. The submission represents a unified voice, and we support it in its entirety. In addition to our submission, the following priorities are of particular significance to the recorded music sector.

First Nations Music
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, music businesses, and workers must be prioritised by cross-government portfolios in the next iteration of the National Cultural Policy. We strongly support the proposed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Centres Framework which would create lasting infrastructure in communities historically underserved by mainstream industry structures.

Commercial Radio Content Quotas
Australian music has a well-known discoverability problem. Commercial shares part of the blame. Independent analysis commissioned by ARIA and conducted by Kaizen Media found that commercial radio is systematically content dumping. A practice where they broadcast the vast majority of their required Australian music quotas late at night when audiences are smallest, and far less during peak hours when most Australians are listening. Of 23 stations analysed for the report, 20 delivered substantially more Australian content between 10pm and midnight than between 6am and 6pm. In addition to underperforming for Australian artists, the system is being gamed, through self-determined format categorisation that minimises quota obligations and a voluntary code administered by the industry's own peak body. The 2025 ACMA code review was an opportunity to fix this. It did not. Legislating Australian music content requirements to ensure these shortcomings don't continue, would require no public expenditure. It is a regulatory decision that costs government nothing and delivers direct, measurable benefit to Australian artists and the businesses investing in them.

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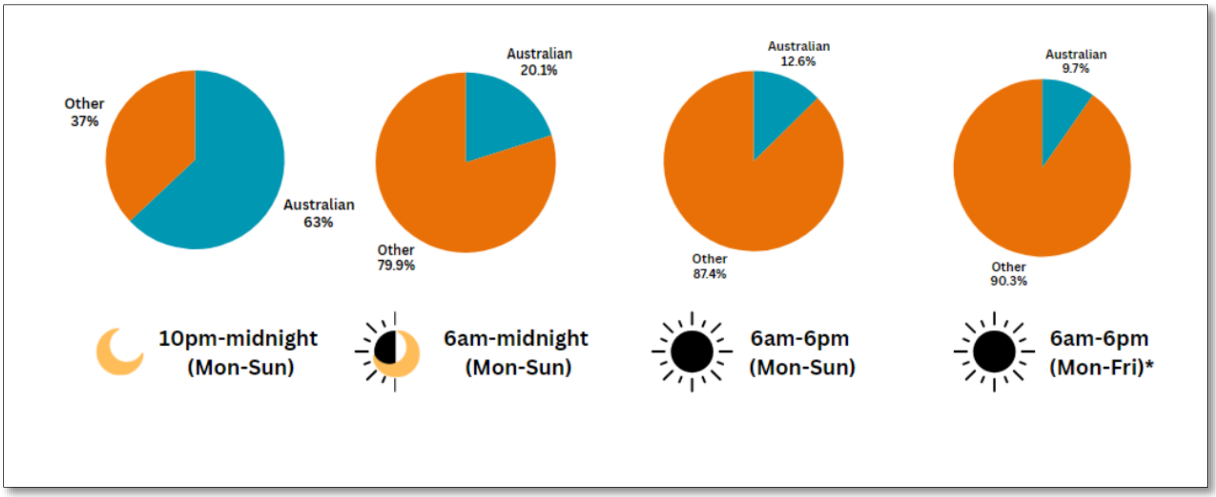
[1] Appendix A Next Generation Now – Joint Music Industry Submission 2026



Source: ARIA Radio Code Submission

We strongly agree with the recommendation to legislate Australian music content requirements under the Broadcasting Services Act with mandatory daytime block compliance to end content dumping, independent oversight of format categorisation, a 25% Australian music floor across all formats, digital radio brought within scope, and the new Australian music quota reframed as a proportion of all new music played in peak rotation.

Michael's Rule

When international touring operators bypass local support acts, they remove a critical career development opportunity available to emerging Australian artists. Lost support slots mean lost audiences, industry exposure, and lost income. ARIA supports restoring this norm through funded promoter incentives and settings that embed Michael's Rule as standard practice.

Music Australia

Music Australia is the most significant structural outcome of Revive for music. ARIA has been a delivery partner for Music Australia programs and can attest to how transformative this office has been for recorded music in this country. The joint submission's call for a renewed mandate and $180 million over four years is proportionate to the ambition and is consistent with what Screen Australia invests in the film industry. Australian music exports exceeded $1 billion in 2024-25. Music Australia must be resourced to deliver research, artists and industry development, and export programs at scale. To be the powerhouse it should be by 2030.

2. ARIA and its role in the Australian Music Ecosystem

ARIA is the peak industry body that represents the Australian recorded music industry, advocating for its interests, building the structures that sustain its success and operating as the only industry body to actively market and promote Australian music to audiences here and around the world. ARIA advocates for Australian music as a highly valuable export and a critical vehicle for local storytelling. It runs the weekly ARIA Charts, produces the ARIA Awards, and runs numerous music industry programs to support and promote recorded music in this country. Australian recorded music is a growth industry with seven consecutive years sales increases, including wholesale sales rising 1.4% to $727 million in 2025[2]. Despite industry growth, breaking a new Australian artist has

[2] ARIA, Recorded music grows in 2025, March 2026 Recorded music grows in 2025 - ARIA

never been harder which is why it's important for ARIA to both celebrate the industry's achievements and address the structural challenges that constrain growth.

ARIA's membership of over 200 businesses spans the recorded music sector; from major labels to local independents, distributors and self-represented artists. Most of ARIAs operating costs are funded directly by Australia's three major record labels; Universal Music Australia, Sony Music Australia and Warner Music Australia. Becoming an ARIA member means joining Australia's most recognised music brand and powerful industry advocate. Members gain access to exclusive events and resources as well as automatically being eligible to enter the prestigious ARIA Awards.

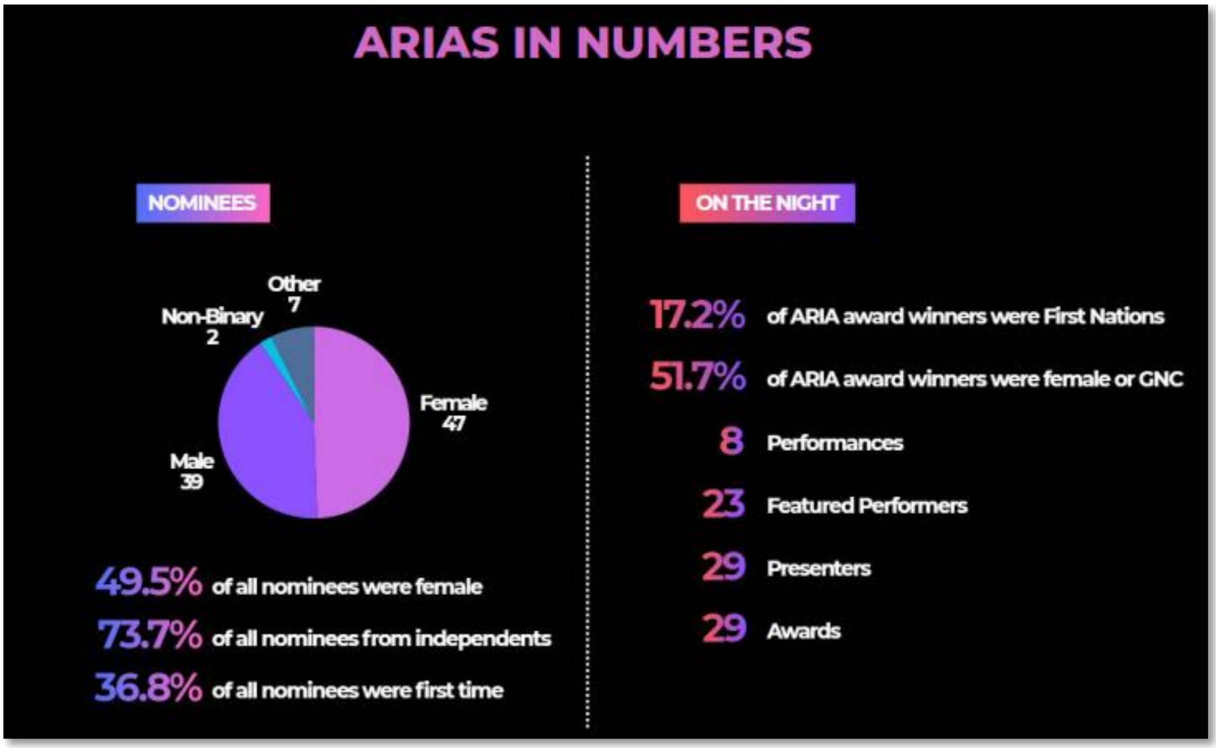
Advocacy, Policy and Regulation
ARIA's advocacy extends beyond policy submissions. ARIA takes artists and industry leaders to Canberra to engage with policymakers directly, working through issues such as copyright and intellectual property, AI regulation, and Australian content quotas. This advocacy has resulted in real policy outcomes including the establishment of Music Australia and Creative Workplaces. ARIA also administers and maintains the labelling code of practice.

Industry Development
ARIA is well established as a delivery partner for public investment in music. Sound NSW funds the industry upskilling program ARIA Innovator. Music Australia funds ARIA Amplified for audience development and ARIA Collab for artist development. Industry advocacy and support is also critical to ARIA's work with partners including Sounds Australia, Support Act, and the Australian Women in Music Awards. Across these programs, ARIA brings industry authority, policy expertise, and delivery capability making it a trusted partner for both industry and government.

Promoting Australian music

ARIA Awards
In their 40th year in 2026, the ARIA Awards continue to grow in reach and impact year on year. Artists gain greater industry and public recognition simply by being ARIA Award nominated, let alone being an ARIA Award winner. Most of the investment in the ARIA Awards comes directly from Australia's major record labels, with annual Destination NSW in recent years also supporting the event. In 2025, 72.6% of all ARIA-nominated artists were independently represented, up from 52.4% in the previous year[3], making the major label investment even more of a demonstration of whole-of-ecosystem thinking.

[3] ARIA Awards 2025



Source: ARIA Awards 2025

A new partnership with Spotify in 2025 also demonstrated how ARIA can leverage its industry position to address one of the most pressing structural challenges facing Australian music, discoverability. The in-app voting provided by Spotify led to over 150% increase on public voting with 696,836 votes recorded which was a 7-year high, and the new out of home campaign reached 114 million impressions. In an algorithm-driven environment, partnerships like this are among the few tools capable of moving the needle at scale.

ARIA Charts

Investment in the weekly ARIA Charts, and most costs associated with the staging and funding of the ARIA Awards, comes directly from Australia's three major record labels; Universal Music, Sony Music, and Warner Music. This investment is just one component of a significantly larger commitment the major labels make to the Australian music ecosystem. They invest knowing that, alongside their own artists, independent artists are also direct beneficiaries of the ARIA Charts and Awards. This commitment to the industry ecosystem ensures a competitive dynamic between labels which helps drive better outcomes for all Australian artists. Major label investment in ARIA is, in effect, a private subsidy for the whole of Australian recorded music, reducing the burden on public funding.

Since 1983, the ARIA Charts has kept a record of Australia's listening habits and cultural tastes. The ARIA Charts are the only aggregator capturing physical sales, digital downloads, and streaming in a single weekly measure in Australia. For artists, the charts are a promotional tool with global reach. For audiences, the charts aim to reflect their community's tastes and trends.

ARIA recently made two significant reforms to the charts in response to the growing concerns around discoverability of new Australian music. Firstly, an all-Australian chart was created showcasing only the best and most popular homegrown talent. And most recently, after considerable testing and benchmarking, both the Australian and general charts have implemented a

2-year cutoff to ensure only the latest music is platformed on the charts. These changes have been widely welcomed by the industry, especially those artists who now find themselves charting on their release week.

Great Southern Nights

Great Southern Nights, detailed in the below case study, is a state-wide music tourism and audience development program delivered at scale. Across each of these, ARIA brings industry authority, policy expertise, and program delivery capability, underwritten substantially by the private industry, making it a trusted partner for both industry and government.

Case Study:

Great Southern Nights. Taking NSW Music to Every Audience

Great Southern Nights demonstrates what a government-industry partnership in the creative industries can deliver at scale. Established through an ARIA x Destination NSW partnership as a COVID-19 recovery mechanism, the program has since generated audiences of over 269,000 across more than 476 venues from Bathurst to Byron Bay, Cronulla to Clovelly. Engaging 3,520 artists and musicians while creating employment across the full tourism supply chain. Critically, the program activates regional centres that would otherwise be unable to attract significant live music events, delivering measurable economic benefit during the shoulder seasons when tourism activity is traditionally subdued. Its cumulative online reach exceeding 1.2 billion across 2022–2025 represents the equivalent of more than $4 million in paid tourism marketing value, built entirely through organic audience engagement. As other states now actively pursue this model, Great Southern Nights stands as proof that NSW's creative industries are not only culturally vital but economically productive, generating tourism revenue, regional employment, and national competitive advantage simultaneously. The program proves the kind of audience-focused, regionally distributed creative investment that the Creative Statement to Parliament exists to measure, recognise, and sustain.

3. Current State of music and the industry & issues

Australian music has achieved growth, but it has unfinished business. Globally, recorded music has grown for a decade straight, with further room to improve as technology, audiences, and business models evolve. In Australia, the story is more complex. The local industry posted its seventh consecutive year of growth in 2025, with wholesale sales rising 1.4% to $727 million[4]. The surge in physical sales shows fans want to engage with music in more visible and tangible ways. Total music industry revenue reached $10.76 billion in 2024-25, contributing $4.28 billion in direct GVA, up from $4.21 billion the previous year[5].

The previous National Cultural Policy Revive, delivered meaningful foundations for music. The establishment of Music Australia and Creative Workplaces within Creative Australia, with dedicated funding was a structural commitment to music that hasn't been seen before. It has supported export development, artists development and audience growth programs, as well as much needed research and ongoing funding for music industry organisations.

[4] ARIA, Recorded music grows in 2025, March 2026

[5] The Base Line, Music Australia, May 2026

But the pace of growth has eased as streaming matures, and breaking a new Australian artist locally, or even earning a living, has never been harder. Only 8% of the top 10,000 artists streamed in Australia are Australian[6]. The share of locally written or composed music streamed in Australia and New Zealand fell 31% over five years to just 9.5% in 2024–25. Despite 5.2% industry revenue growth, artist income grew just 0.9%.

Every new release now enters a crowded global landscape. There are also success stories with the likes of 2025 ARIA Award Winners Amyl and the Sniffers, Ninajirachi, Dom Dolla and Troye Sivan, proving Australian artists can cut through anywhere in the world. The Bass Line Report found that Australians continue to prioritise live music here despite rising costs with attendance at major venues and festivals growing. The talent and drive is here, at every level. Our policy settings should match it.

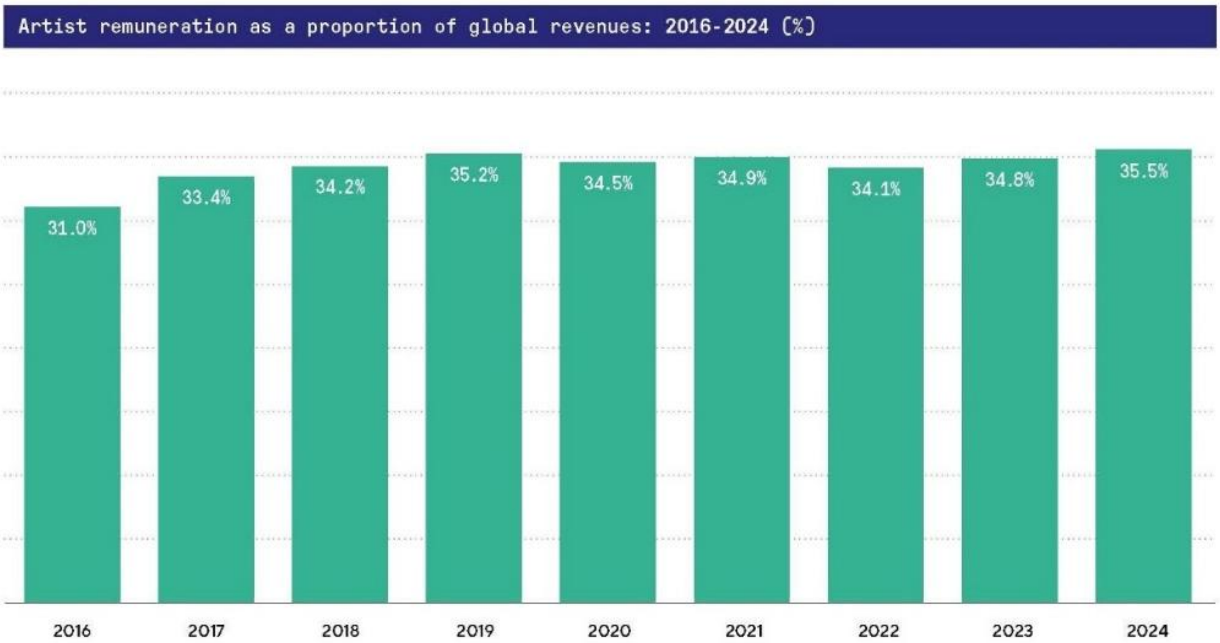
4. Record Labels: The investment and development engine behind Australian music

A record label's mission is to partner with artists and help them reach their greatest creative and commercial potential. Labels discover talent, invest in its development, and bring music to audiences at home and abroad. They sit at the centre of the commercial ecosystem, connecting artists to producers, collaborators, marketers, distributors, broadcasters, digital platforms and audiences. This partnership between artists and the record labels is the engine room of the modern music sector. It is how careers are built, and how Australian culture reaches the world.

Labels back artists with capital, expertise and long-term investment. In 2024, record companies invested US$8.1 billion globally in Artist & Repertoire development (A&R) and marketing[7], finding new artists, developing them, and cutting through a market saturated with global content. Distributors may not fund creative activities, but they still invest in relationships with digital service providers (DSPs) and physical retailers across a global network. Few industries reinvest so heavily in their own creative pipeline. Record labels and the representative bodies they fund also advocate on behalf of the industry to ensure regulatory and policy settings provide maximum opportunity for success. They also invest in innovation to drive the technology led evolution of the industry and lead major licensing discussion frameworks on technology platforms.

Artists share in that growth. Their share of industry revenue has continued to rise with artist remuneration as a share of record companies' physical, digital and synchronisation revenues was 31% in 2016 and grew to 35.5% by 2024[8]. The range of deals on offer to artists has also never been broader. From distribution-only arrangements through to full 360 and multi-rights partnerships, with every level of management and support in between. Today's artists have more choice than at any point in the industry's history.

[6] The Base Line, Music Australia - May 2026
[7] IFPI Global Music Report 2026
[8] IFPI Global Music Report 2026



Source: IFPI

Record labels compete intensely to discover, invest in, and work with artists at every stage of their careers. That competition is what drives growth and rising returns for artists, and the government's role is to preserve it.

In Australia, major and independent record labels are facing a challenging environment in sustaining investment in new music and emerging artists. Removing existing regulatory and policy barriers to financial viability and sustainability for artists and labels should be a priority for the new NCP.

Recommendation: Cross-government cultural policy should enable and facilitate this dynamic marketplace, built on commercial freedom, strong intellectual property rights, and legal certainty. Government programs and policies should be designed to develop all record labels, major and independent. They are all investing in the careers of emerging and established Australian artists recognising that this private investment is the primary driver of artist development. Regulatory barriers to artist and label income must be removed as a priority.

5. Copyright and AI: the defining regulatory decision for the future of Australian music and culture

Artists, music producers, and musicians have always been early adopters of technology. In the studio, on the stage, and in reaching their fans, technology is baked in. This industry is no stranger to technological disruption. From vinyl to cassette to CD, the arrival of the internet and the Napster shock, and the streaming services driving growth today. No other industry has rebuilt its revenue base after the near-total collapse of physical sales the way recorded music has. Far from a threat, technology has powered the reinvention of music time after time.

Generative artificial intelligence represents the next major technological transition for the global music industry, and that transition is already underway. Whether the industry, artists, and audiences can realise the significant opportunities this technology presents will depend on getting the policy settings right at this critical regulatory and political moment.

Critically, Australia's unique First Nations cultural and artistic heritage must not be exploited and be open to appropriation and misuse by AI technologies. Beyond ensuring consent through copyright legislation, this should include at the least, consultation, co-design and community consent protocols. Compensation without consultation or consent is not enough. Cultural rights operate differently than copyright. They are communal rather than individual, perpetual rather than time-limited, and governed by cultural authority that cannot be assigned through standard licensing agreements. Any regulated statutory or regulated collective licensing regime risks enabling inappropriate, harmful, or culturally unsafe uses of Indigenous copyright material.

Artist Quote
"It's the innate human quality of the art and the authenticity that we strive to create, that our audience strives for and expects from us as artists. And, quite simply, all we're trying to do is future-proof that, to make sure we have sustainable careers. Not just for myself, but for the next generation of young black fellas. From Shepparton, from Wagga, Wagga, from throughout the country, you know? And that is, like, paramount to our art." - ***Adam Briggs, Senate Inquiry September 2026***

Australian copyright law is currently fit-for-purpose for AI, aligning closely with global copyright standards including the United States and the United Kingdom.

Copyright is the foundation of the digital economy. It drives innovation and is the currency and the economic value that underpins the creative economy and the music industry. It is the basis of the music business and underpins the livelihood of every artist, business, and person that works in the music industry.

Licensing deals are happening, covering local artists and rightsholders
In this fast-moving and developing market, numerous music licensing deals have already been struck between major and independent record labels and AI companies[9]. As is the usual practice in music, most of these licensing deals are global covering all territories including Australia. Central to many of these deals are consent to the uses that the AI tools can make of sound recordings and its components such as artist voice and likeness. This is a negotiated outcome on guardrails around permitted AI uses agreed between the rightsholder and the AI company. Neither a compulsory licence nor an extended collective licensing (ECL) scheme would permit these critical artist protections. Compulsory or extended collective licensing would remove or restrict voluntary negotiations, diminish the bargaining power of rightsholders, and force the artificial devaluation of works across the board. Without consent generative AI could undermine the entire marketplace for sound recordings by permitting the instant creation of millions of entirely substitutable recordings.

Australian copyright law is consistent with global laws
Australia is not an outlier. No major jurisdiction has expressly legalised the unlicensed use of copyrighted works for commercial AI training.

[9] ARIA, AI Music Licensing Deals, 2026 (APPENDIX D)

Jurisdiction	Position
Australia	No TDM exception. Government confirmed in 2025 that use of copyright content requires permission and agreed terms of use including payment.
United States	No TDM exception. The White House 2026 National AI Policy Framework states that existing copyright law applies and the courts will continue to decide what is fair use. There are currently over 150 active AI copyright lawsuits in the US. Most major AI licensing deals are being struck in the US.
United Kingdom	In March 2026 the UK Govt announced it would not adopt a broad TDM exception. A House of Lords inquiry recommended a licensing-first model, calling creative industries facing a 'clear and present danger' from unlicensed AI training. The final report of that inquiry (May 2026) found that a licensing market is already emerging and reinforced the Government's no TDM decision.
European Union	TDM exception introduced in 2019, pre-dating generative AI. It did not result in innovation or investment inflow. Under review for adequacy in the generative AI era.
Canada / New Zealand	No TDM exceptions. Clear, rights-based frameworks retained.
Japan / Singapore	Broad TDM exceptions introduced pre-generative AI. No corresponding surge in AI investment has followed.

A text and data mining exemption by another name

Cultural funds, levies, or other mechanisms proposed by foreign AI companies should be seen for what they are: self-serving attempts to void copyright law and introduce a text and data mining exemption by another name. Companies and interest groups promoting these schemes as a 'solution' or a 'path forward' should be interrogated as to what attempts they have made to put in place licensing arrangements, or what evidence they have that while all other copyright users can license correctly, it is too hard or complicated for some of the biggest and most powerful companies in the world to do so. These groups and companies are not approaching rightsholder groups to discuss these proposals before going to government because they know what they are seeking has nothing to do with "ensuring creators get paid". They are seeking a quick and holistic bypass of Australian copyright law that will effectively nationalise a class of property asset (copyright) and transfer private economic value from Australian creators to AI platforms while replacing revenue for copyright owners with discretionary public support through some unspecified 'fund' managed by government and paid by taxpayers.

These funds or schemes all have one thing in common: they would permit wholesale copying of all copyright material, including international repertoire, for AI training without consent and with vague commitments to unspecified compensation. Not only would these schemes likely breach all international copyright treaties, making Australia a copyright pariah globally, they would result in Australian rightsholders being cut out of global AI licensing deals and royalty reciprocity arrangements.

While ARIA thanks the government for its strong stance on ruling out a TDM exception to date, we urge all policymakers to remain vigilant in the face of hollow promises and threats from technology companies.

Copyright is the legal mechanism that turns creativity into an asset that can be bought, sold, used, and fundamentally that underpins the music industry. A strong copyright framework doesn't hinder creativity. It is the condition that makes further creation possible through investment.

If copyright settings are weakened or circumvented, what remains is a landscape where creators lose control, cultural material is extracted without consent, and immense economic value flows offshore to fund the valuations of the world's most powerful technology corporations.

Recommendation: The government must rule out any change to the Copyright Act that would allow AI training on copyright materials without requiring consent and compensation of rightsholders and recording artists.

Regulatory changes should be aimed at strengthening, not weakening, the functioning licensing market through meaningful transparency, record-keeping, and disclosure obligations on AI providers to ensure rightsholders can identify uses and enforce their rights effectively.

6. Preparing Australian Talent for the global stage

Australia has a long history of producing global music superstars. but the global music stage has never been more competitive. Only 8% of the top 10,000 artists streamed in Australia are Australia, with 56% coming from the US[10]. Growing music markets in our region are investing heavily in identifying talent and building capability in live and broadcast performance and enhancing songwriting, recording, production, and content creation. These programs are driving global success for their artists.

In Australia opportunities for emerging local artists to practice and perfect stagecraft and performance have diminished while investment in intensive A&R is challenged. Labels are navigating increasing disruption to the market while continuing to invest in artists. Opportunities for new artists to perform in smaller venues and on local festival stages have shrunk dramatically in recent years. Similarly, television broadcasters have reduced music programming, and online content platforms do not yet support a local artist live performance or content development model which is limiting artists' opportunities to learn screen performance techniques. Economic conditions have meant that investing in artist development and allowing the necessary time and resources to write and record music to the highest production standards is challenged.

In combination these factors are making us less competitive. Unless we build new infrastructure to support the development of our talented artists to meet the high global standard, Australian music will be left behind.

Recognising that action is urgently needed and committing to a strategy to ensure our artists and their teams are fully equipped to outperform competitors on global stages and across all music discoverability and consumption platforms is one of the most impactful strategic commitments the new National Cultural Policy could drive.

[10] The Bass Line, Music Australia, 2026.

An elite talent and training school for contemporary music
Elite, government-backed programs around the world like Sweden's Musikmakarna, The BRIT School in the UK, and Berklee College of Music in the United States have built reputations as incubators of exceptional new talent, with graduates powering their countries' music exports. Australia has strong private tertiary music schools, and they remain a natural part of the industry, but what is missing is a flagship elite national institution dedicated to contemporary commercial music. An Australian National Song Academy, backed by government, would deliver the next generation of Australian music talent and power music export into the future. This is the kind of focal point that signals national ambition and works alongside industry investment from labels, just as the government-backed institutions already do for ballet, drama, circus and screen.

Contemporary commercial music is not represented in the eight national arts training organisations the Australian Government has funded for more than 30 years to promote artistic and cultural excellence, known as the ARTS8. The ARTS8 includes two circus schools, a ballet school, a youth orchestra, a classical music academy, a drama institute, a film and radio school, and a First Nations dance college. There is room within this framework for contemporary music. The omission is overdue for correction. These elite schools do so much more for their respective industries than train exceptional talent - they conduct valuable research and industry skills surveys to shape curricula and prepare and upskill the industry for the future. They advocate for their students locally and globally and provide valuable alumni networks that open global doors for young talent to break into the industry. The create valuable programs to create pathways to industry for women, First Nations people, and other underrepresented communities in these industries. They also develop a pipeline of audiences. 56% of Australians who received arts education as children attend live music events as adults, versus 36% of those who didn't[11]. The Australian music industry needs these functions and opportunities at this critical point in our evolution.

The fastest, lowest-risk path is to establish an Australian National Song/Music Academy within the existing Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS). Founded in 1973 with bipartisan support to build Australia's screen industry at a time of crisis for local screen content, AFTRS has since been recognised as one of the top fifteen film schools in the world. Alumni from AFTRS have become integral to Australia's global screen success. Its state-of-the-art facilities *including recording and music studios), well established curriculum in adjacent disciplines like sound design and music composition, and partnerships with more than 60 industry organisations, mean a Song Academy could be stood up quickly, delivered credibly, and graduate its first cohort within three years. Students that attend AFTRS are already likely to be cross-disciplinary artists or practitioners with a love of music, many screen students make music videos while they are studying at AFTRS, The opportunity of having our future screen and radio superstars working and studying with top music students creates exciting opportunities for strengthening collaboration and commitment to local culture.

A Song Academy would anchor existing investment through Music Australia and the broader music education investment outlined in the combined industry submission, securing the next chapter of Australian recording artists and the cultural legacy they leave behind.

[11] The Base Line, Music Australia 2026.

Recommendation: That the Australian Government establish an Australian National Music Academy at AFTRS, dedicated to developing the next generation of Australian recording artists, songwriters and producers. AFTRS offers the fastest, lowest-risk delivery path, with the first cohort graduating within three years.

This investment should sit alongside the broader music education package outlined in the combined industry submission, including federal funding for music teacher training in universities, a minimum 60 minutes per week of classroom music in primary schools, artists-in-schools programs, and increased and sustained investment in Music Australia.

7. Radio Caps

For nearly 60 years, Australian recording artists and rightsholders have effectively subsidised profitable commercial radio and the ABC through legislated caps on sound recordings. Something that doesn't exist anywhere else in the world. There is no policy justification for this. Independent economic modelling found that removing the caps would increase music income for the most-played Australian artists by 78%, could almost double the number of new Australian artists receiving radio royalties, and would leave commercial broadcasters with healthy profit margins still above Australian industry average. The Government agreed in principle in December 2025 to conduct a cost-benefit analysis. This should proceed immediately and deliver a legislative recommendation within this parliamentary term. ARIA refers to PPCA's submission for the full economic and legal case.

Recommendation: Commit explicitly in the next National Cultural Policy to removing Section 152(8) and Section 152(11) of the Copyright Act 1968, ending the statutory cap on commercial radio sound recording royalties and the ABC's per-head-of-population cap. While PPCA commends the Government for committing in principle to a cost benefit analysis, the Cultural Policy must go further than this. The evidence base is well established. A commitment to act is required- and it costs the Government nothing.

Appendix

- **A.** Next Generation Now, Joint Music Industry Submission, 2026
- **B.** ARIA PPCA CRA submission, Code of Practice Review for ACMA, December 2024
- **C.** Economic impact of removing radio caps for sound recordings, Mandala, 2024
- **D.** ARIA, AI Music Licensing Deals, 2026

ABOUT ARIA

The Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) is a national industry association with more than 200 members representing major and independent record producers, manufacturers, and distributors. ARIA acts as an advocate for the Australian music industry, administers the labelling code of practice, and compiles industry information and research. It also produces the ARIA Charts every week and the annual ARIA Awards. Most importantly, ARIA supports Australian music and creates opportunities for it to be heard.

We acknowledge First Nations people as the Traditional Owners and sovereign custodians of the lands on which we work and live. We recognise their continuing connection to Country and their respective nations across this continent and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We also celebrate the unique and inspiring creativity and songlines of the world's oldest living culture and give thanks for the immeasurable influence First Nations people continue to have over the music and art we all enjoy.

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