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Point no. 6 in the Federal government's discussion framework for a National Cultural Policy states:

The culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is the unique backbone of Australian identity; it brings meaning to our nation with a culture unbroken in song, dance and stories over millennia.

However, it is the view of the Musicological Society of Australia (MSA) – the pre-eminent organisation for music research in Australia – that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance traditions are in jeopardy. As a result, adequate funding and resources are required for their survival and development. Specifically the MSA asks the National Cultural Policy to:

1. Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance traditions are part of educational curricula at primary, secondary and tertiary levels across all Australia.
2. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in music teaching at all levels.
3. Provide platforms and venues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance traditions, such as festivals, concerts, tours and residencies.
4. Support capacity building and nurture leadership for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance artists by:
 - a) Broadening access routes for higher education in music for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders;
 - b) Funding postgraduate scholarships in music for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders;
 - c) Funding immersion programs for students to learn Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance traditions;
 - d) Providing funding for collaborative documentation and recording of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance traditions; and,
 - e) Providing adequate financial support for organisations that are supporting and promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance arts.

Yours sincerely,

Winthrop Professor Jane W. Davidson
President of the Musicological Society of Australia