

Creative practice research *is scholarly research.*

CONTEXT

In 2026, the Australian Council of Deans and Directors of Creative Arts (DDCA) published a sector-wide framework for evaluating creative practice research — the most comprehensive national attempt to address how this work is assessed in Australian universities. The FASS NTRO Working Group has reviewed this framework and broadly supports its direction.

OUR POSITION

Where the DDCA framework tends to argue for discipline-specific instruments that distinguish creative practice research from other research, we argue it maps onto existing scholarly frameworks. Positioning ourselves as a special case has held the field back. We meet the same standards — we need better tools to make that visible.

We speak the same language.

RESEARCH VALUES

Like HASS

Our work is question-driven, situated in existing scholarly discourse, and makes a contribution to knowledge that can be clearly articulated.

It shares the interpretive, critical, and conceptual language of the humanities and social sciences — and it is evaluated by expert peers within that tradition.

MODE OF INQUIRY

Like STEM

The studio is our laboratory. We begin with a proposition and test it through making. The process is iterative, material, and responsive — exactly as experimental research is in any empirical discipline.

We do not simply produce objects. We generate, test, and refine knowledge through practice.

PEER REVIEW + IMPACT

Already happening

Exhibition selection is peer review. A curator occupies the same role as a journal editor — expert evaluation by a credentialed peer. This is not an analogy; it is a structural equivalence we have simply failed to name.

Impact is measured by cultural resonance and influence on practice over time — as in any significant research field.

Peer review. Already.

Exhibition selection is peer review. When a work enters a major public gallery or a significant curated exhibition, it has been evaluated by a credentialed expert against the field — and selected.

The curator occupies exactly the role of a journal editor: contextualising the contribution, positioning it in relation to existing work, and lending their expert authority to its significance.

This is not an analogy. It is a structural equivalence. We have simply failed to name it as such.

IN PRACTICE

Representation by your gallery is a credentialed peer judgment - expert evaluation of the work against the field.

Selection into a public commission involves a competitive expert panel: the same process as journal peer review, with the same function.

A curator of the standing of Alexie Glass-Kantor, for example, situating work in an exhibition of national or international is performing expert peer assessment — contextualising the contribution and attesting to its significance.

Impact. Already.

Impact in creative practice research operates through channels that are different in form but equivalent in function. Cultural resonance, critical uptake, influence on practice, and public engagement are all measurable forms of research impact.

The question is not whether our work has impact. It is whether we have developed the instruments to document and articulate it in terms the university can read.

Impact measures for creative practice exist. We need to name them, apply them consistently, and connect them to existing frameworks rather than treating them as exceptional.

IN PRACTICE

A work acquired by a major collecting institution represents documented cultural impact - the field has assigned permanent significance to the artworks research contribution.

Critical writing that cites or builds on an artist's practice is impact evidence; it's the same mechanism that tracks uptake in textual research.

Influence on subsequent artistic practice: in our students, peers, and the sector; is the equivalent of the citation trail in STEM: traceable, documentable, significant.

Citation. Already.

Creative practice research is cited. Exhibition catalogues, critical essays, artist monographs, curatorial texts, and subsequent artworks all constitute a citation network. The infrastructure exists.

When another artist builds on your proposition, when a curator situates your work in a genealogy, when a critic traces your contribution to a discourse — that is citation. We have simply not named it as such.

The citation infrastructure for creative practice research does not require invention. It requires recognition, documentation, and translation into terms already legible within the university.

IN PRACTICE

An artist monograph published by a reputable press is a citable record of research contribution — equivalent in function to a book chapter in HASS.

A curatorial essay that traces the lineage of a practice performs the same function as a literature review: situating the contribution within existing discourse.

Works held in major public collections generate ongoing citation through loans, exhibitions, and catalogue entries — a citation trail that spans decades.