Julian Leeser MP
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Shadow Minister for the Arts
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AUSTRALIAN CREATORS MUST NOT BE SOLD OUT TO AI

Shadow Attorney-General and Shadow Minister for the Arts Julian Leeser has called for Australian artists and creatives to be front and centre of any changes to regulating big tech and AI companies.

The calls come in the wake of the Productivity Commission's interim report on harnessing data and digital technologies, which canvasses an exception to copyright laws to allow text and data mining (TDM), a technique used to train artificial intelligence systems.

"If tech companies profit from the work of Australian artists and creatives, they should pay fair compensation, just like any other person", Mr Leeser said.

"In the real world, we wouldn't let someone use an artist's work for commercial purposes without paying for it. The virtual world should be no different."

Mr Leeser said while there is broad recognition of the economic potential and benefits of AI, there needs to be balance in our laws.

"Big tech platforms can't just steal the work of Australian artists, musicians, creators, journalists and news media, and then use it for their own ends without paying for it."

"AI is important, and we should embrace it, but there needs to be balance. We want Australian cultural, arts and news media sectors to thrive, and there must be guardrails in place to ensure that can occur."

Leeser also slammed the government's confused approach to AI regulation. He noted that:

- Andrew Leigh called for a phased, light-touch approach to AI
- Michelle Rowland said AI would be included as part of the Government's privacy reforms, which are far-reaching and years in the making.
- Tim Ayres yesterday said the Government had "no plans" to change the Copyright Act in relation to AI
- Ed Husic has publicly called for a dedicated AI Act.

“This government just doesn’t know what it’s doing when it comes to AI, and it has no plan to protect Australian artists.”

“The Coalition stands with Australians who work hard with and deserve to have their intellectual property protected. Labor doesn’t know where it stands.”

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