

REGIONAL
ARTS
VICTORIA

WHAT IT MEANS:
**A CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES
STRATEGY FOR
SOUTH WEST
VICTORIA**

2020-24

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

This Strategy will impact upon lands and waters over which a number of First Nations' Traditional Owner and language groups hold custodianship. Registered Aboriginal Parties and Native Title Holders in the region include the Barengi Gadjin; Eastern Maar; Gunditj Mirring; and Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation.

Traditional Owners and language groups in the South West include people who identify as Bunganditj, Djabwurung, Djargurdwurung, Gunditjmarra, Jardwadjali, Kirrae Whurrung, Kuurn Kopan Noot Maar, Peek Whurrung, Tjap Wurrung, Yarro waetch (Tooram Tribe), Wadawurrung, and Wotjobaluk.

Each has individual and interconnected stories, sites, practices and ambitions for their communities stretching back millennia.

We acknowledge the land on which we live and work, and pay our respect to the First Peoples on all of these lands and those that surround them.

THANK YOU

The development and delivery of this Strategy is supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, Regional Development Victoria and Aboriginal Victoria; City of Warrnambool; Corangamite Shire; Glenelg Shire; Moyne Shire; Southern Grampians Shire; and the Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Board. Regional Arts Victoria acknowledges (and is extraordinarily grateful for) the expert advice provided by these supporters through the Project Control Group. Regional Arts Victoria's ongoing involvement in South West Victoria is supported by the Federal Government's Regional Arts Fund.

Future Tense led the process of reviewing the local creative ecology; Cultural Development Network supported the writing of the Strategy; and a number of organisations co-delivered consultation sessions or otherwise supported this work, including the Public Galleries Association of Victoria; Screenworks; Australian Museums and Galleries Association (Victoria); Writers Victoria; Regional Arts Australia; Multicultural Arts Victoria; Express Media; The Push; Australian Theatre for Young People; Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres; National Association for the Visual Arts; Design Institute of Australia; Australian Fashion Council; Music Victoria; Arts Access Victoria; Circus Oz; and Arena Theatre Company.

To the artists and communities living in the South West who provided submissions or attended sessions in the development of this Strategy, you made it possible. Thank you.



2020-24

MYITPAN LIKKAЕ NUUNG KARMA

Gnata! Ngatanwaar warti pa kakay.

Kalo garrakit wanuung tiammino mayumba gnuuteung maar likkae nuung karma.

Karma wambakae gnuuteung likkae nuung maar.

Kiiambaa gnatuhatt maeaering-u maar likkae nuung karma tiammino gnarra nuyu wannuung.

Karma muyaba pinieitch maar. Karma yungnaama wayapa maar pa taarndeetch guammateetch.

Muyaaba meeng gnuuteung kullo taarndeetch guammateetch wumba kunuunuung maeaering.

Karma yu gnaama kuurneii tiammano yu gnaama pa gnarrakkituun kiiamba gnatuhatt.

Maar wumba gnuuteung likkae nuung taalin, lirpeen, koipa koae pa karma.

CREATIVITY WITHIN ART

Hello! Brother and sister.

Today we learn Indigenous people make good within Art.

Art bring good health within tribe of Indigenous people.

The connection to land with art gives Indigenous people to know who they are.

Art make strong Indigenous people. Art give to join Indigenous people and Non-Indigenous people.

Make wound good after Non-Indigenous people take over land.

Art give young to know and give family relationship.

Indigenous people take good within Language, Song, Story and Art.

This introduction in Peek Wooroong, including the translation, is from Gunditjmara Elder Uncle Locky Eccles. You can read more about Uncle Locky's work in sharing culture through the Peek Wooroong language here: www.education.vic.gov.au/about/news/Pages/stories/2019/stories_UncleLocky.aspx. The English translation has been preserved in its literal, poetic form.

Any intellectual, moral and cultural rights inherent in this introduction text remain with the author, and not Regional Arts Victoria or the project partners. Any grammatical errors made in the presentation of the text are Regional Arts Victoria's alone.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

The Councils in South West Victoria have worked together for many years, and we are pleased to be partnering again on this Creative Industries Strategy.

Across Corangamite, Moyne, Warrnambool, Glenelg and Southern Grampians, our creative individuals and organisations play a vital role in our civic, economic, and social life.

Council plays a critical role in supporting creative activity in the region. All five councils partnering on the delivery of this Strategy already support outcomes at a local level, and welcome this opportunity to do the same at a regional level, in partnership with State and Federal Government as well as key not-for-profit organisations such as Regional Arts Victoria.

We commend the work of the organisations and creatives who have brought this Strategy together, and look forward to progressing it alongside them.

- City of Warrnambool
- Corangamite Shire Council
- Glenelg Shire Council
- Moyne Shire Council
- Southern Grampians Shire Council

VICTORIAN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES MINISTER

South West Victoria is home to the UNESCO-protected Budj Bim, drawcard festivals, galleries, and performing arts centres, a vibrant street art scene and many creative businesses and practitioners. It's a creative sector that is distinct, diverse and rightly proud of its events, attractions and community spirit.

So, when representatives of the Great South Coast Regional Partnership told the Victorian Government that creativity was important to the region, we listened and proudly supported the development of this strategy.

This strategy is testament to the valuable and valued role the creative industries play across the South West – and their important cultural, social and economic impact. It also demonstrates the willingness and commitment of many partners to work together to ensure that creativity thrives and the whole community gets to share in the benefits.

While this strategy was conceived before the pandemic, the need for a strategic approach is ever more vital to support the creative sector to recover and emerge even stronger than before.

The South West Creative Industries Strategy responds to the needs and opportunities unique to the region and will also feed into the development of Victoria's next statewide creative industries strategy.

Along with my colleague Jaclyn Symes, Minister for Regional Development, I congratulate everyone involved in the development of this strategy.

We look forward to working with you to build on the creative strengths of the past to shape a new creative future for South West Victoria.

Danny Pearson
Minister for Creative Industries

FEDERAL ARTS MINISTER

I am pleased to mark the release of the South West Victoria Creative Industries Strategy.

The Regional Arts Fund is an Australian Government Program that supports sustainable cultural development in regional and remote communities in Australia. The program is designed to benefit regional and remote arts practitioners, arts workers, audiences and communities.

In South West Victoria, the Regional Arts Fund has helped resource the placement of a cultural worker in the region for a number of years, in addition to providing funds for many projects and programs from artists and organisations.

The Regional Arts Fund prioritises outcomes that are locally-driven, because we know that regionally-led initiatives, such as those outlined in this Strategy, have the best chance of sustaining our creative industries across Australia.

The arts has a place in the lives of every Australian. I want to see a vibrant arts and creative industries sector in South West Victoria – as in every part of Australia. That is why I am so pleased to see the bold ideas and the creative thinking in this strategy document.

I congratulate the communities of South West Victoria on their work in bringing this Strategy to fruition.

The Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

ARTS INDUSTRY COUNCIL OF VICTORIA

The Arts Industry Council of Victoria (AICV) is the State's independent voice for the arts. Convened by industry peak bodies, AICV represents individual practitioners and arts organisations ranging from small independent companies to large state cultural institutions.

A number of our Member organisations contributed to the development of this Strategy, and we welcome the opportunity to continue supporting it through the delivery stage.

At the time of writing, our sector is facing significant upheaval as we deal with the challenges posed by COVID-19. Though this may mean we must adapt the way we work, it does not change the vision that drives this Strategy – that our creative industries are more likely to thrive when we all work together to advance them.

We commend the artists, institutions, community organisations and government partners involved for the ambitions outlined in this Strategy. We look forward to realising them with you.

Simone Schinkel & Joe Toohey
Co-convenors
Arts Industry Council of Victoria

GREAT SOUTH COAST REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The Great South Coast Regional Partnership is proud to support this Creative Industries Strategy for south west Victoria and excited by the opportunities it represents for our region.

Central to the approach taken was the need to work collaboratively with the local community, industry, and all levels of government. A similar spirit of collaboration has been evident throughout the development of this Strategy, from the moment it was first identified as a local priority through the Great South Coast Regional Assembly in Port Fairy in 2016.

We all have a part to play if we are to realise the full social, economic and cultural potential of the creative industries in south west Victoria. This Strategy will be a vital tool in coordinating this effort and it will also serve to support our community's positive response to current and post-pandemic challenges.

I thank everyone who has contributed to this process to date. The Great South Coast Regional Partnership looks forward to progressing the Strategy alongside you, as we build on the benefits offered by the creative industries in our region.

Lisa Dwyer
Chair, Great South Coast Regional Partnership

A WORD FROM A LOCAL ORGANISATION

The F Project is a self-funded, not for profit arts organisation based in Warrnambool, dedicated to arts development and advocacy.

For over a decade, The F Project has been a driving force in shaping cultural and creative life in South West Victoria. Our work is directed and driven by a committed volunteer workforce, a 200 strong membership and support from local business, government and philanthropy.

Several of our members have been involved in the development of the South West Creative Industries Strategy. We have been impressed by the rigour of its processes and excited by the potential value of its outcomes.

We are confident that the rollout of these new strategic initiatives will be of great benefit to our members, our community and our State.

We commend Regional Arts Victoria and its partners in achieving this Strategic Plan, and look forward with renewed optimism to its implementation.

Gareth Colliton
On behalf of The F Project

CONTEXT STATEMENT

June 2020

It's common for a few things to shift and change from the time you begin drafting a Strategy like this, to the moment you launch it into the world.

Some people might move on to new roles. Events may change dates. New players could emerge. Small, manageable things that require a little tweak here and there to the final document.

But it's hard to describe any of the changes we've witness unfold since we began this process in mid-2019 as 'common'.

A draft of this Strategy was prepared for release in March 2020, immediately before the full impacts of COVID-19 became evident. These impacts have been particularly acute for the arts and creative industries. In response, we reviewed the proposal to ensure we could adequately reflect the changed starting point we find ourselves in – even if we feel the end goals remain the same.

We present this Final Strategy now acknowledging that much of the focus in each Objective must be viewed through a lens of community, cultural and economic recovery in the immediate term.

This may mean that some Activities can be delivered before current movement restrictions can be lifted, whilst others can't.

The order, focus and timeline for the Objectives will not be even, but their importance over the four-year life of the Strategy remains unchanged. Where relevant, we've made these notes against each Objective.

The creative industries can play a central role in our wider community rebuilding. We look forward to using this Strategy as one tool towards this aim.

ACCESSIBILITY

To access the Strategy in other formats or request a copy, please head to strategy.rav.net.au/south-coast, email enquiry@rav.net.au, or phone (03) 9644 1800.

2020-24

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WHAT IT MEANS: A CREATIVE INDUSTRIES STRATEGY FOR SOUTH WEST VICTORIA

2020-24

INTRODUCTION

Regional Arts Victoria presents *What it Means: A Creative Industries Strategy for South West Victoria*.

From the moment this project was formed through the Victorian Government's Regional Assemblies program, one question has followed us around: *what will this mean for me?*

We grappled with this question throughout the entire process. What *does* creativity mean for, and to, South West Victoria?

This Strategy is our response.

The arts and creative industries impact us all, collectively and individually, in myriad ways. *What it Means* is a four-year plan to support the creative industries that support us. It has been developed, and will be delivered, in partnership with local community, government, and the creative sector.

The Strategy invests in the conditions needed for creative endeavours to thrive in South West Victoria, so that the multiple benefits of a healthy sector can be realised. It is a stage; a canvas; a page; an invitation to you to share with us: *What it Means*.

1. WHAT WE DID



72

individual or group
consultations



139

1 open survey
completed by
139 people



14

industry-expert led
community events
attended by 178
people



124

existing policy or
strategy documents
reviewed

4 month open online consultation period through
strategy.rav.net.au/south-coast

2. WHAT WE HEARD



CURRENT STRENGTHS

- First Peoples culture and sites
- Visual arts well established
- Strong music community
- Some strong festivals
- Strong community arts hubs
- Key flagship institutions
- Active community of artists
- Interested and open local audiences
- Councils open to strengthening the sector
- Makers and small business owners



CURRENT CHALLENGES

- Limited data available on creative industries
- Lack of suitable spaces to develop work
- Limited venues to perform and present
- Limited opportunities for mid-career artists
- Technical expertise limited
- Few advanced education offerings
- Much activity relies on individual energy
- Lack of coordination across region
- Limited options for young people to participate and develop career pathways



FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

- Spotlight First Nations creative work, culture and community
- Utilise abundant available spaces
- Leverage music community
- Grow regional touring circuits
- Connect sector to council and state government strategies
- Create dedicated funding programs
- Build technical workforce
- Encourage experimentation
- Support for Events and/or Event Development
- Better supported flagship institutions
- Better links with tourism



FUTURE IMPACTS

- Energies of sector not harnessed
- Support structures not put in place
- Declining membership of community organisations
- Individuals lose motivation
- Lack of effective promotional platforms
- Council strategies remain disconnected
- Reduced funding
- Multiple impacts of COVID-19

3. WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT

HOW TO READ THIS SECTION: OUR APPROACH

To help understand how we've got to this point, a brief summary of our approach and findings may be useful.

- It is clear from the consultation findings that there **exists a strong belief and confidence** in the existing creative institutions and people in the region;
- **What is missing** is the support for these existing people and organisations to meet current needs (let alone deliver to additional demand);
- Therefore, this Strategy focuses on investing in this **'behind the scenes'** support.

At a broad level, what we are seeking to do is make more support available to **anyone**, so that the Strategy has the best chance of benefiting **everyone**.

This document is presented as a **partnership** between government, the sector, and the community. All should be considered equally active and invested participants, rather than serving, or being serviced by, the Strategy.

WHAT COULD BE: **AMBITIONS** FOR SOUTH WEST VICTORIA

How do we want the creative industries in the South West to look by 2040? And what do we do next to get there?

This region already has great strengths: a First Peoples storytelling culture and tradition dating back thousands of years, accessible through a number of culturally significant sites; the natural environment; successful local institutions and festivals; government and philanthropic investment; and individual leaders in the sector, to list just a few. The distance of the region from a major capital city is a strength, though it also presents some challenges. There is no shortage of local energy and creativity amongst residents, but the behind-the-scenes hard and soft infrastructure support needed for a thriving creative sector is lacking.

By 2040, the South West region will have the local support and skills available to drive the creative industries. We must focus on this now, so that by 2040 the sector will be connected within and beyond the South West, with opportunities and resources that support current residents and attract new ones. In turn, experimentation will be encouraged, audiences treated to a diversity of offerings, and the creative industries celebrated across the region for the benefits they bring.

GOAL: BENEFICIAL AND SUSTAINABLE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN SOUTH WEST VICTORIA

(this is what we want):

OUTCOMES

(because creative industries can lead to):

Cultural: participants benefit from new knowledge, ideas and insights; appreciate a diversity of cultural expression; and stimulate their creativity.

Social: participants benefit from improved physical and/or mental wellbeing; increased sense of safety and security; enhanced social connectedness; and feeling valued.

Economic: participants' professional and/or practice capability increases; employment-enhancing skill development can be supported; individual economic wellbeing is increased; and local economy is supported.

ACTIVITIES

(so we will do the following things):

OBJECTIVES

(to get there, we need):

1. **First Nations:** increased recognition of First Nations culture and heritage in the region
2. **The South West Story:** greater understanding of South West creative industries
3. **Data Collection:** valuable regional cultural and economic data is collected and used
4. **Testing Ground:** greater recognition of South West Victoria as an innovative creative industry region

CONFIRMED

(what we can do right now):

- 1.1 Match existing regional priorities of First Nations groups to the resources needed to deliver them
- 2.1 Pilot a storyteller-in-residence program to creatively profile the region through existing platforms
- 2.2 Support local government areas in the region to develop and review local-level strategies and plans
- 3.1 Pilot data collection for impact with selected institutions across region
- 4.1 Seek resources for a regional-level program that allows for two-entry points:
 - 'Test It': support for new initiatives or projects
 - 'Follow-Up': to extend opportunities for existing projects and initiatives

ACTIVITIES

(so we will do the following things):

UNCONFIRMED

(what we would like to do):

- 1.2 Support local emerging practitioners with mentoring from Elders and/or other First Nations artform leaders
- 1.3 Showcase projects featuring established and emerging artists
- 2.3 Review outcomes of pilot project
- 2.4 Launch local government strategies
- 2.5 Support local governments to incorporate creative industry goals into Council Plans
- 3.2 Establish sample baseline data for South West Victoria
- 3.3 Review sample data and data points
- 3.4 Create an 'open access' portal for local organisations to access measurement tools
- 3.5 Publish aggregate data for region
- 3.6 Review and revise data portal as required
- 4.2 Deliver the regional-level program
- 4.3 Showcase projects progressed through 'Follow-up' stage

ABOUT THE UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

(what we need first before we do these activities):

The Activities that are not confirmed for this Objective require Activity 1.1 to be completed first, and may require additional resources to be delivered.

The Activity that is not confirmed requires Activity 2.1 to be completed first.

The Activities that are not confirmed require Activity 2.2 to be completed first.

The Activities that are not confirmed for this Objective require Activity 3.1 to be completed first. Data collection activities may be delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions.

The Activities that are not confirmed require Activity 4.1 to be completed first, and will require additional resources to be delivered.

GOAL: BENEFICIAL AND SUSTAINABLE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN SOUTH WEST VICTORIA

(this is what we want):

OUTCOMES

(because creative industries can lead to):

Cultural: participants benefit from new knowledge, ideas and insights; appreciate a diversity of cultural expression; and stimulate their creativity.

Social: participants benefit from improved physical and/or mental wellbeing; increased sense of safety and security; enhanced social connectedness; and feeling valued.

Economic: participants' professional and/or practice capability increases; employment-enhancing skill development can be supported; individual economic wellbeing is increased; and local economy is supported.

ACTIVITIES

(so we will do the following things):

ACTIVITIES

(so we will do the following things):

OBJECTIVES

(to get there, we need):

5. Creative Hubs: centres connected with infrastructure, industry and each other

6. Professional and Enterprise Development: increased capacity to grow the creative industries

7. Youth Programs: greater mentoring, education, career pathways opportunities

CONFIRMED

(what we can do right now):

5.1 Design a regional hub program to:

- Build capacity for existing spaces and facilitators
- Identify opportunities for other suitable spaces
- Examine the potential for 'pop-up' networking opportunities

5.2 Consolidate creative infrastructure requirements at a regional level

6.1 Launch annual professional development program for residencies and information sharing from within and outside the region

6.2 Develop an enterprise support program for advancing business skills and marketing opportunities for creative professionals

7.1 Build connections between major institutions and young people in the region

7.2 Pilot a 'creative leaders' program to mentor young people to devise and deliver creative programs

UNCONFIRMED

(what we would like to do):

5.3 Match hubs with relevant state or national industry bodies

5.4 Develop MOUs with hub spaces formalising community access protocols

5.5 Create 'Hub Exchange' residency program across hubs to support short-term intensives between regions

5.6 Review hub program and membership and revise program accordingly

5.7 Review financing models and pipeline for infrastructure upgrades

5.8 Implement recommendations from review of infrastructure financing models and needs

6.3 Review, revise and deliver professional development program

6.4 Review and revise program for enterprise support

7.3 Create skills-based placements across region

7.4 Support delivery of projects or initiatives identified by creative leaders

ABOUT THE UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

(what we need first before we do these activities):

The Activities that are not confirmed require Activity 5.1 to be completed first, and will require additional resources to be delivered. Hub activities may be delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions.

The Activities that are not confirmed require Activity 5.2 to be completed first, and may require additional resources to be delivered.

The Activity that is not confirmed requires Activity 6.1 to be completed first.

The Activity that is not confirmed requires Activity 6.2 to be completed first. Activity 6.2 may also require additional resources as the program develops.

The Activity that is not confirmed requires Activity 7.1 to be completed first, and will require additional resources to be delivered.

The Activity that is not confirmed requires Activity 7.2 to be completed first.

4. BACKGROUND

WHAT ARE THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES?

As part of the development of 'Creative State', Victoria's first Creative Industries strategy, Creative Victoria noted:

Creative industries are an evolving mix of sectors spanning arts, culture, screen, design, publishing and advertising. They cover disciplines as diverse as game development and graphic design, fashion and filmmaking, performing arts and publishing, architecture and advertising, media and music, comedy and craft. They include activities that are commercially-driven and community based, experimental and export-intense.¹

The South West Strategy development takes a similarly broad approach in considering the diverse fields that contribute to cultural, economic and social life in the south west of the state.

¹ creative.vic.gov.au/creative-state/introduction/victorias-creative-industries

WHERE IS SOUTH WEST VICTORIA?

South West Victoria, as it relates to this Strategy, refers to the region identified as the Great South Coast Regional Partnership by the Victorian Government, reaching from the Shipwreck Coast to the South Australian border.



The five municipalities that comprise the Partnership are the Corangamite Shire; Glenelg Shire; Moyne Shire; Southern Grampians Shire; and the City of Warrnambool.

You can read more about the region, and the Partnership, at the Regional Development Victoria website: rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-partnerships/great-south-coast.

WHY DO WE NEED A REGIONAL STRATEGY?

A regional-level strategy allows us to work together on common challenges and opportunities, rather than approach them in isolation.

Traditional Owners, artists, federal government, state government, local government, tourism groups, not-for-profits, peak bodies, and businesses are just a few of the many and varied groups working in the creative industries across the region.

Building on what is already being achieved, as well as strengthening some of the long-term partnerships already in place, is a way to build a roadmap for supporting practitioners, organisations and supporters in the South West of Victoria.

It also presents an opportunity for people living and working in the area to take a leading role in shaping outcomes for the creative industries that impact locally. A strategic approach like this allows us to determine how we can join forces to turn ideas into action.

WILL THIS REPLACE OTHER GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES?

No. The South West Strategy has been designed to complement, rather than replace, existing work in the creative industries. A key policy document interacting with this one is the State Government's Creative Industries Strategy. At the time of writing, this document is under review with a launch planned in 2021 after being reviewed for COVID-19 impacts.

This Strategy will also be used to assist each of the five local government areas in the Partnership to develop and/or update their own local level policies. The commitment to do so is outlined in more detail under Objective 2.

Local organisations, including libraries, galleries and performing arts centres, may also have existing policies or plans that can be supported by this document.

As part of the research for this project, Future Tense also undertook a Strategy and Policy Scan to inform the Creative Ecology Report provided at Appendix 2. 124 documents were reviewed in order to identify which opportunities and gaps a regional plan such as this might address.

HOW WAS THIS STRATEGY DEVELOPED?

The need for a Strategy in the region was identified at a Great South Coast Regional Assembly session in 2016. Once this brief was refined, a Project Control Group advised Regional Arts Victoria on the development of the Strategy, with representatives from:

- Aboriginal Victoria;
- City of Warrnambool;
- Corangamite Shire;
- Creative Victoria;
- Glenelg Shire;
- Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Board;
- Moyne Shire;
- Regional Development Victoria;
- Southern Grampians Shire; and
- The Great South Coast Regional Partnership.

Expert policy development advice was provided by the Cultural Development Network, and Future Tense led a creative ecology mapping exercise to add significant analytic support to researching the Strategy.

Regional Arts Victoria also co-delivered a series of community consultation sessions with industry leaders through 2019, the summary of which can be found at strategy.rav.net.au/south-coast.

WHAT DOES 'CREATIVE ECOLOGY' MEAN?

Mapping a Creative Ecology is a process of looking at the artists and organisations that make up the creative sector, the relationships they have with the wider community, and the different types of impact they have on the region as a whole. This process was led by Future Tense.

Established and emerging artists, purely creative practitioners and creative professionals, formal institutions and informal sub-cultures, mainstream and underground activities – and the audiences they serve – were all surveyed as part of the investigation. The information was used to assess the development of South West Victoria's creative ecology in terms of:

- The level of connection and engagement amongst the participants;
- Whether there are opportunities for growth;
- How important local audiences are;
- The extent to which experimentation is encouraged and supported;
- The availability of resources;
- Whether the contribution of the arts is recognised by the wider community; and
- The depth of creative diversity.

5. WHAT WE HAVE

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE SOUTH WEST

Stretching from the Shipwreck Coast to the South Australian border, the South West region of Victoria includes:

- 5 councils that contribute to arts and culture;
- 33 public, commercial or artist-run galleries;
- 43 arts organisations;
- 17 festivals;
- 4 start-up support hubs;
- 83 potential spaces for creative activities, including 3 performing arts centres;
- 47 creative industries businesses².

There are 23,092 residents involved in creative activities, including performing, singing, playing a musical instrument, dancing, writing, visual arts or crafts. Attendance is consistent with state-wide figures, with:

- 13% of people attending classical music concerts or operas (compared to 22% in Victoria);
- 33% attending popular music concerts (33% Victoria);
- 35% visiting art galleries (29% Victoria); and,
- 31% attending performing arts events (33% Victoria).³

² See Appendix 2.

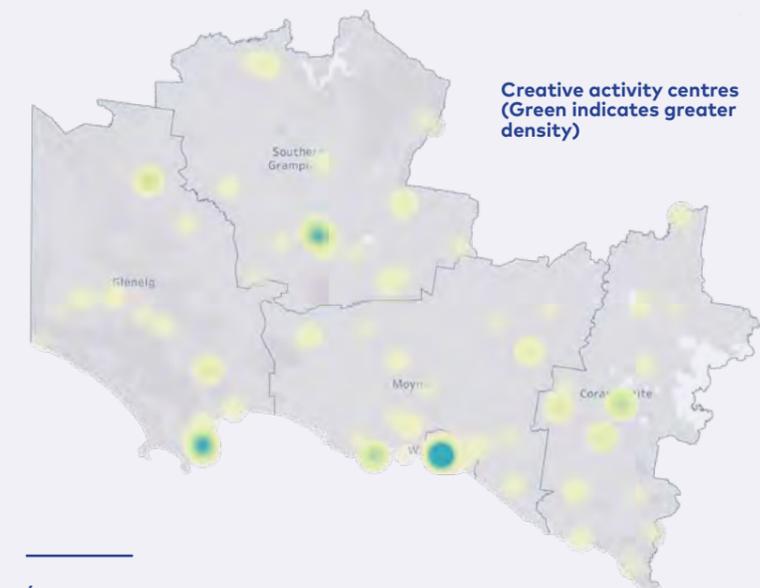
³ <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/arts-and-cultural-attendance-and-participation-local-region-rates/>.

387 places, spaces, institutions, resources or collectives generate or participate in creative activities in the region.

1,340 people were employed in the creative industries in South West Victoria in 2016, representing 2.68% of the workforce. They collected total wages of \$58,916,268 across the region. Employment in arts & recreation services and information media & communications in the region was projected to grow by a further 374 people from 2016-2031.⁴

At June 2018 there were 418 businesses within the cultural and creative industries in the Wannon Federal electorate, which matches closely to the South West region. People in the region who purchased tickets for arts events spent an average of \$557.50 on them per annum.⁵

The map below shows creative activity centres, with green indicating greater density.



⁴ See Appendix 2.

⁵ <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/arts-and-cultural-attendance-and-participation-local-region-rates/>.

6. STRATEGY DETAIL

WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

The simple goal guiding the Strategy is to build **beneficial and sustainable creative industries in South West Victoria.**

There are two key parts to it:

1. **beneficial** creative industries, emphasising the economic, social and cultural benefits the sector can have on the region; and,
2. **sustainable** creative industries, focusing on supporting the needs of creative industries themselves.

The creative industries can deeply impact the fortunes of regional communities when a healthy local creative ecology exists.⁶

Many of the ingredients needed to develop a thriving creative ecology in South West Victoria currently exist. Given the distance of the region from a metropolitan centre, the work of sustaining industry will depend on harnessing the skills of locals.

This means that the creative industries in the South West will be of most **benefit** if they are **sustainable** for local people delivering them.

⁶ See Appendix 2.

WHAT WILL THE **OUTCOMES** BE?

With our goal as a guide, we need to explain what the **benefits**, or **Outcomes**, will be.

Drawing on support from the Cultural Development Network⁷ to identify what measurable Outcomes might be, as well as consultation and research for the Strategy, the beneficial Outcomes we will measure are **cultural, social and economic**, with 12 Outcomes identified for measurement (see opposite). Additionally, a number of **governance** outcomes will be monitored for some of the Objectives (See Objectives 2 and 3 for more detail).

Activity 3.1 in the Strategy, 'Pilot data collection for impact with selected institutions across region', will allow us to set some baseline data for each of these measures that we can track over time to indicate our progress.

⁷ See <https://culturaldevelopment.net.au/measurable-outcomes/about-measurable-outcomes/>

CULTURAL

1. Creativity is stimulated
2. Aesthetic enrichment is experienced
3. Knowledge, ideas and insight are gained
4. Diversity of cultural expression is appreciated

SOCIAL

5. Wellbeing (physical and/or mental) is improved
6. Sense of safety and security is increased
7. Social connectedness is enhanced
8. Feeling valued is experienced

ECONOMIC

9. Professional and/or practice capability is increased
10. Employment-enhancing skill development is facilitated
11. Individual economic wellbeing is increased
12. Local economy is supported

WHAT ARE OUR OBJECTIVES?

Knowing our broad Goal, and Outcomes we wish to see, we can then work on specific Objectives for South West Victoria, and create Activities to deliver them.

The seven Objectives are:

1. **First Nations:** increased recognition of First Nations culture and heritage in the region;
2. **The South West Story:** greater understanding of South West creative industries;
3. **Data Collection:** valuable regional cultural and economic data is collected and used;
4. **Testing Ground:** greater recognition of South West Victoria as an innovative creative industry region;
5. **Creative Hubs:** centres connected with infrastructure, industry and each other;
6. **Professional and Enterprise Development:** increased capacity to grow the creative industries; and,
7. **Youth Programs:** greater mentoring, education, career pathways opportunities.

Over the following pages, each of these Objectives is explained in more detail, as well as Activities listed to demonstrate how they will work:

1. **About this Objective** explains the Objective in more detail;
2. **Evidence supporting the Objective** summarises the work done to decide on why this Objective was included;
3. **Confirmed Activities** describes what must happen first to advance the Objectives;
4. **Unconfirmed Activities** describe Activities to follow the Confirmed Activities;
5. **Why this Activity?** explains how this activity will help deliver on the Objective;
6. **Intended Outcomes** shows what the benefits of the objective will be and links these to the Outcomes sought;
7. **And another thing...** includes pilot projects, resourcing plans, limitations, exclusions or other information relevant to the Objective.

Each Objective also includes a case study demonstrating how local organisations or individuals currently support the work.

FIRST NATIONS: INCREASED RECOGNITION OF FIRST NATIONS CULTURE AND HERITAGE IN THE REGION

About this Objective

This Strategy will impact upon lands and waters over which a number of First Nations' Traditional Owner and language groups hold custodianship. Registered Aboriginal Parties and Native Title Holders in the region include the Barengi Gadjin; Eastern Maar; Gunditj Mirring; and Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation.

Traditional Owners and language groups in the South West include people who identify as Bunganditj, Djabwurung, Djargurdwurung, Gunditjmarra, Jardwadjali, Kirrae Whurrung,

Kuurn Kopan Noot Maar, Peek Whurrong, Tjap Wurrung, Yarro waetch (Tooram Tribe), Wadawurrung, and Wotjobaluk.

The cultural, social and economic impact First Nations creative practitioners might bring to the region requires investment in supporting this community leadership, rather than the imposition of further 'outside' objectives through this Strategy. This Objective seeks to support this existing work.

Evidence supporting the Objective

A number of existing documents have been published clearly outlining the ambitions for local First Nations groups to grow the number and capacity of indigenous-led enterprises. These include:

- Gunditj Mirring Annual Report 2017-18;
- Winda-Mara Strategic Plan 2019-22;
- Gunditjmarra Land Justice Story;
- Budj Bim Cultural Landscape Strategic Management Framework; and.
- Meerreengeeye Ngakeepoorryeeyt: Eastern Maar Country Plan.

Through the consultation phase of this Strategy, Regional Arts Victoria met the Warrnambool Art Gallery Maar Nation Steering Committee; the Glenelg Shire Mara Quorin Aboriginal Advisory Committee; local practitioners; Aboriginal Victoria; other organisations who have completed or have undertaken consultations in the area (including the Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Board) and industry experts. Advice received from all was consistent, and has informed the approach presented.

CONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Confirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
1.1 Match existing regional priorities of First Nations groups to the resources needed to deliver them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant cultural plans and cultural priorities already exist requiring resources to progress

UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Unconfirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
1.2 Support local emerging practitioners with mentoring from Elders and/or other First Nations artform leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations-led approach to professional development and mentoring will be pivotal to success in the region • Support community-identified priorities for skills development to showcase stories
1.3 Showcase projects featuring established and emerging artists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create jobs and build skills in community to host events as well as performing in them

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Cultural	Social	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulate creativity • Gain knowledge, ideas and insight • Appreciate diversity of cultural expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the experience of feeling valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local economy • Increase professional and practice capability • Enhance employment skills • Increase individual economic well-being

And another thing...

- A pilot project to enact Activity 1.1 is underway in partnership with the Warrnambool Art Gallery and Maar Nation Steering Committee
- Note that cultural safety protocols must be developed alongside this activity to ensure stories remain with local First Nations groups
- The Activities that are not confirmed for this Objective require Activity 1.1 to be completed first, and may require additional resources to be delivered

MAAR NATION INITIATIVE

Excerpt from the Maar Nation Impact Study

When Warrnambool Art Gallery opened the Maar Nation Gallery and Aboriginal-led legacy initiative in 2018, the First Nations people of South West Victoria for the first time had a central place for the interpretation of history and culture through exhibition.

It also created a meeting place, for education, passing on knowledge, sharing stories and showing contemporary culture to many young people and the greater community.

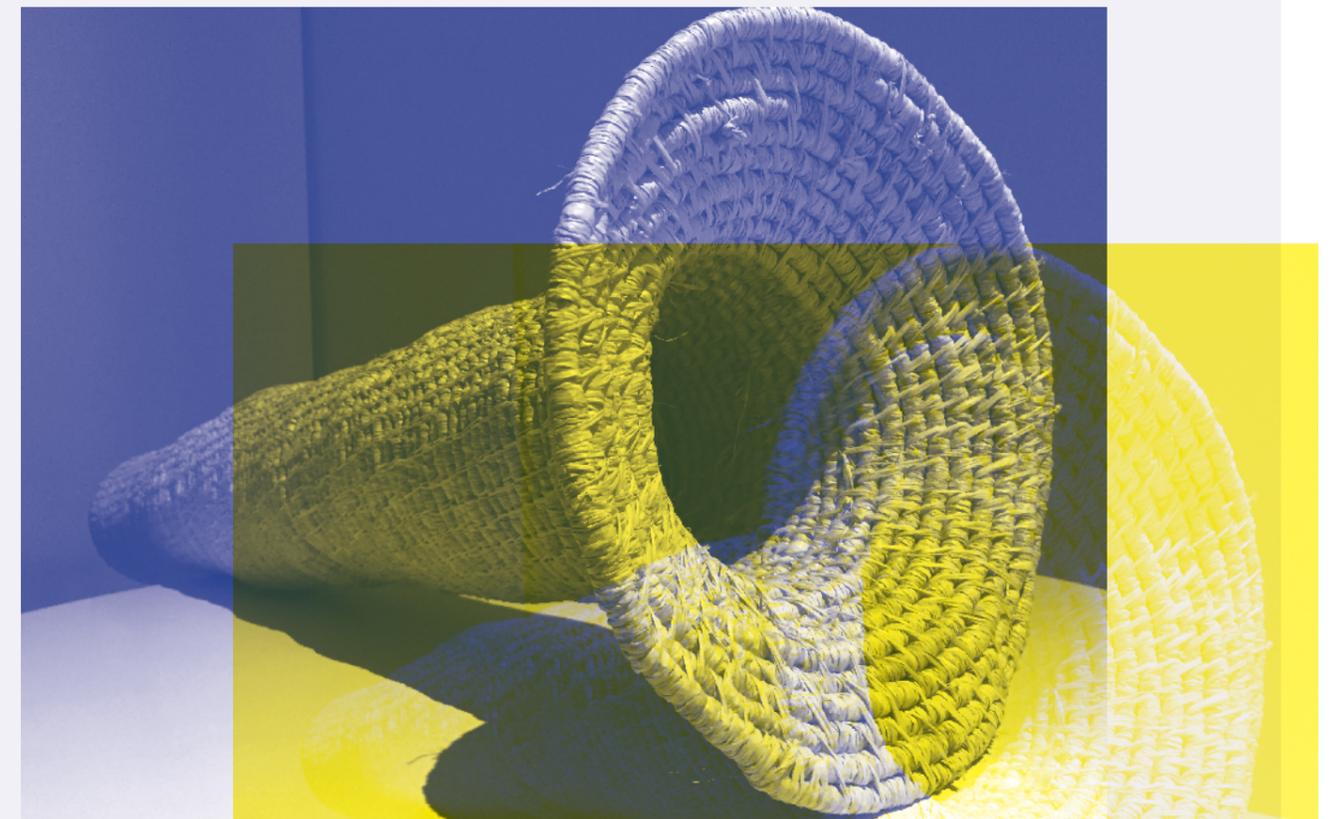
The initiative has led to the Maar Nation Steering Committee of Elders and Cultural Leaders which has guided the development of the space.

Maar Nation Gallery has already held four exhibitions, fostered new employment in the arts for a Curator and Curatorial Assistant Trainee, education for local people and commercial benefits for south west artists.

Chair of the Steering Committee, Dr Vicki Couzens said "the Maar Nation Gallery and Legacy Initiative is about the past and also the future. Having a dedicated space to celebrate, share and express, creates a connection for everyone and gives our artists and young people a link to identity and to opportunities.

"Having this connection gives us recognition and our own platform to celebrate our place and the significance of our culture" she said.

Image: Eel Trap by Bronwyn Razem, part of the Warrnambool Art Gallery Collection



Local Keerray Woorroong early-years educator and artist Sherry Johnstone has been employed as Curator of Cultural Engagement for the space over the next two years. Johnstone said it is important for her as a cultural curator to show people the history and contemporary ingenuity of South West people. "Our culture is bold and has sophisticated techniques, storylines and graphics that are unique to this area. Ancient traditions are also reflected in modern culture and there is a vast array of contemporary art, from painting to multimedia."

THE SOUTH WEST STORY: GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF SOUTH WEST CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

About this Objective

Stories within the South West region are plentiful. These stories are incubated through a range of support structures, including local government, festivals, galleries, museums, performing arts centres, halls, and individual movers and shakers. This Objective seeks to

put in place additional support to better share these stories. It also seeks to provide further assistance for the people, organisations and infrastructure that work behind the scenes to help the region's narrative be told.

Evidence supporting the Objective

Through the community consultation, participants suggested opportunities for promoting and sharing local stories were limited. The Galleries; Museums; Fashion; and Music sessions discussed the need for better storytelling, which requires

marketing and promotional support. Additionally, the Creative Ecology report notes locals tend to connect more strongly to the story of their local area or township, rather than the South West region, and 'a lack of promotion' as a current challenge.

Multiple consultations also referenced the importance of

local government leadership through the creation and publication of local creative industries or arts and culture strategies. An opportunity to renew existing strategies, or create new ones, that align with this regional-level approach will allow each local government area to formalise its creative industry ambitions with their communities.

CONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Confirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
2.1 Pilot a storyteller-in-residence program to creatively profile the region through existing platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative storytellers in the South West can contribute to a regional narrative if supported Piloting this initiative will seek to match storytellers with existing platforms across the region and allow for it to be profiled
2.2 Support local government areas in the region to develop and review local-level strategies and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each local government area manages or supports specific assets, events and ambitions This Strategy will support all five local councils in the partnership to create local plans of their own that deliver to these needs

UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Unconfirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
2.3 Review outcomes of pilot project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews and refines the work of 2.1
2.4 Launch local government strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continues the work of 2.2
2.5 Support local governments to incorporate creative industry goals into Council Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to developing creative industry and arts strategies, supporting local government to incorporate creative goals into their high-level Council plans is an important piece of work

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Cultural	Economic	Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulate creativity Gain knowledge, ideas and insights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local economy Increase professional and practice capability Enhance employment skills Increase individual economic well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase access to beneficial networks and other resources Enable agency and voice for the creative industries sector

And another thing...

- Larger government-owned institutions in the region, including the Warrnambool Art Gallery, Lighthouse Theatre, Hamilton Performing Arts Centre, Hamilton Gallery and Portland Arts Centre have additional, specific marketing and communications needs not included in this regional plan; it is recommended that local council strategies address the need for specialist marketing and communications roles in these facilities
- Activity 2.3 requires Activity 2.1 to be completed first
- Activities 2.4 and 2.5 requires Activity 2.2 to be completed first

FIND YOUR VOICE CHOIR

Find Your Voice all abilities choir is based in Warrnambool with members from across the South West region eager to turn up and share what they love with audiences.

In a short period of two years the choir has moved quickly to success, with the pinnacle to date being selected to perform on TV's Australia's Got Talent, endorsing their vision that engaging in the arts creates equitable expression and opportunity.

The choir welcomes members of all abilities, ages, genders, ethnicities, sexual preferences and backgrounds and is growing in membership and audiences.

Overwhelming positive changes have been noted in participants with Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy and complex Autism but it is perhaps the shared experience that is most unique and important.

One of the key motivations of the choir is to provide the opportunity for members to develop their skills as singers and artists in their own right. The choir is a mentoring hotbed for anyone standing forward with a goal to be a singer, musician or choir leader.

Image: Rodney Harris Photography



Choir Coordinator Kylie Thulborn adds, "There's a natural symbiotic mentoring that happens when you're in a bigger group and you're standing there and singing together; an organic sharing of a generous, giving energy. The experience allows them to give and to receive."

She goes on to say, "It's not a perfect science. It's messy, it's beautiful, it's emotional and complex. A lot of it we can't define, but bringing people together in a melting pot and using their voices creates magic."

Follow Find Your Voice on Facebook:
facebook.com/findyourvoicechoir

DATA COLLECTION: VALUABLE REGIONAL CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DATA IS COLLECTED AND USED

About this Objective

Good decision-making relies on good data. It is difficult to build strong policies and programs to support the creative industries without similarly strong data to back them up. Investing in both the collection and sharing of useful data for the creative industries not only

helps policy-makers, it can assist individuals and organisations to assess their impact against benchmarks in the region and beyond.

Evidence supporting the Objective

Through the consultation process, many advocates for the creative industries lamented their inability to access timely, relevant data to support their work or direct investment. The Performing Arts Centre session, for instance, discussed the lack of coordination and time-consuming nature of data collection, as well as reservations about the value of the information collected. The Creative Ecology report highlighted difficulties in sourcing consistent

information about arts and culture, with current strategies often siloed without clear guiding policy.

Even in the development of this Strategy, it was frequently challenging to find an agreed-upon baseline for data, or navigate published information from government sources that was often prepared with other uses in mind. If the impact of the Strategy is to be measured, this shortcoming needs to be addressed.

CONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Confirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
3.1 Pilot data collection for impact with selected institutions across region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Outcomes measures included throughout this Strategy are taken from a tested model developed by the Cultural Development Network Selecting a number of these to trial within the region will allow for a baseline set of sample data to be established

UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Unconfirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
3.2 Establish sample baseline data for South West Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 3.1; following on from establishing the data points, a sample will be gathered from stakeholders and audiences within the region to create a starting comparison point for future years
3.3 Review sample data and data points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the trial period, a review to test the usefulness of the data collected, as well as the ease of interpretation, will allow for the approach to be refined
3.4 Create an 'open access' portal for local organisations to access measurement tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So that organisations and individuals across the region are able to input data and measure their own impact, an open portal will be created This will provide a simple template for measurement of projects and events that will be collated and help inform policy
3.5 Publish aggregate data for region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once a full 12 months of the portal data collection approach has been completed, a report presenting aggregated data for the region will be published This will allow for comparisons within the region and celebrate the impact of the work in South West Victoria
3.6 Review and revise data portal as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 3.3

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Cultural	Economic	Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain knowledge, ideas and insight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspire a positive future

And another thing...

- Data collection activities may be delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions
- As this Strategy has been developed using the Cultural Development Network framework, it is recommended the same outcomes tool is used for broader data collection
- This approach can be complementary to existing data reporting or collection methods
- Collecting data will require privacy policies are created that support the intended use of the information

THE GLENELG SHIRE CULTURAL COLLECTION

This collection holds a special significance for the south west region. With over 10,000 objects valued at around \$6 million, the collection holds a unique potential for story telling of its place.

The collection has also been identified in a 2019 study as being on the threshold of national significance.

Managed by the Cultural Collections Officer, a position unique in regional Victorian councils, the collection's main purpose is to manage, preserve and display objects and historical records of the past and contemporary times.

Aspects of this vast collection are displayed at History House and the Maritime Discovery Centre in Portland, with periodical exhibitions of certain objects and photographs presented around the shire annually.

Included in the collection are artworks, maritime, social and civic objects and monuments and public art.

The collection has evolved and grown over time with generous donations from passionate locals, and is supported by an equally passionate group of local volunteer historians who open the doors daily to History House from where they also provide a genealogical service.

In order to foster cultural understanding through dual storytelling, Glenelg Shire is partnering with local indigenous people to address the colonial impact on first peoples represented in the collection and other symbols.

Image: Provided by Glenelg Shire



TESTING GROUND: GREATER RECOGNITION OF SOUTH WEST VICTORIA AS AN INNOVATIVE CREATIVE INDUSTRY

About this Objective

A region that is renowned for supporting creative innovation can attract visitors and new residents – including artists. Building recognition for the innovators in South West Victoria requires a focus on building the right conditions so that innovation in the creative

industries is encouraged, and when strong ideas emerge, there are options in supporting them through the life-cycle of emergent to embedded.

Evidence supporting the Objective

A key finding of the Creative Ecology report is that thriving creative communities have resourcing that supports new ideas to be developed. Whilst the South West has no shortage of talent and ideas, the Creative Ecology report observes that only 30% of arts organisations and business felt they could access the resources they need.

Through the community consultation process, dozens of viable small projects were raised.

Though it is beyond the scope of a regional-level strategy to support any one of these directly, it was clear that there are currently a very limited, and very competitive, number of places for them to find support elsewhere.

Additionally, the issue of volunteer burnout and/or over-reliance on a small number of individuals was frequently raised as a challenge. This is often due to inability to find support after the establishment phase of a project, in the form of advice, resources or audiences.

CONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Confirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
4.1 Seek resources for a regional-level program that allows for two-entry points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Test It': support for new initiatives or projects • 'Follow-Up': to extend opportunities for existing projects and initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though a number of programs or funds exist within the region, there are none that explicitly prioritise experimentation in the creative industries • By creating a targeted program, the Strategy will create the scope for new entrants to emerge in the area and allow a safe space for new ideas to succeed or fail • The second stage of project development is often the most difficult, as the initial excitement and support of a new idea dissipates • A 'Follow-Up' entry point allows for strong concepts to receive an additional boost that could focus on business development; marketing and communications; succession planning or similar areas of sustainability

UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Unconfirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
4.2 Deliver the regional-level program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See 4.1. Resources must be secured before this Activity progresses. These resources will be sought through a consolidated pitch to a relevant program from the local partners working on this Strategy
4.3 Showcase projects progressed through 'Follow-up' stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of projects will be showcased to demonstrate the impact in the region of the approach

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Cultural	Social	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulate creativity • Experience aesthetic enrichment • Appreciate diversity of cultural expression • Gain knowledge, ideas and insight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance social connectedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the local economy • Increase professional and practice capability • Enhance employment skills • Increase individual economic well-being

And another thing...

- A number of small 'ideas' funds currently exist in the region, including 'Beers & Ideas' and the Fletcher Jones Foundation, though they are not spread across the region nor creative-industry specific
- These Activities don't replace the need for existing initiatives, and the Follow-Up fund may be structured to support second-stage concepts coming from each
- Additional resourcing is required to deliver on these Activities; some existing programs, however, may be used to pilot the approach

PORT FAIRY WINTER WEEKENDS

A festival that celebrates community stories, knowledge and inspiration responding to the natural elements. Pivotal to their success is a passionate commitment to using their town and region as a unique backdrop for the festival.



Image: Supplied by Port Fairy Winter Weekends

Committee member Loren Tuck explains, "Our festival tells a story of its place. We want people to see this place and to know the people and how special it is. We want to champion our locals because their stories and abilities are really worth sharing. And they are unique stories that don't exist anywhere else. We want to highlight our strengths *through* our differences as a town and region."

Winter Weekends is also a learning space and testing ground for the arts. The size of the town makes it easy to navigate, it has a lot of interesting spaces to test new ideas, there is an abundance of passionate volunteers and an audience for what the festival provides.

Loren again, "All of these ingredients provide a foundation for exciting new projects for our local and visitor audiences. We find there's a real appetite for unique experiences." Winter Weekends is a direct response to its own story, a true place-making experience.

"This might be romantic but Port Fairy is a frontier; it's wild and there's lots of space and beautiful settings. This provides a sense of freedom that pushes us to try new things that highlight the value of our place so that we fight harder to protect it."



CREATIVE HUBS: CENTRES CONNECTED WITH INFRASTRUCTURE, INDUSTRY AND EACH OTHER

About this Objective

There are a number of existing hotspots of creative energy across the South West, as well as some with potential to become so. Supporting hubs within the region to be connected to advice, as well as each other, will enable each hub in turn to provide similar backing for their creative communities.

Evidence supporting the Objective

The Creative Ecology report identified a number of existing hubs in the region. There are, however, gaps in this map, not just in terms of geographical distance but community access and connection to expertise, which leads to a struggle to build or maintain creative communities and subcultures. Access to space was a frequently recurring theme through the community consultations,

as was the difficulties in finding connection to peers and industry bodies (most of whom are based outside the area). Noting the Regional Partnership focus on modernising and expanding our arts and cultural facilities, there is some work to do in meeting the demands for practitioners to find a place over which they feel ownership.

As part of building the networks of practitioners within the region, the value of informal connection was also highlighted. For many, whilst the advance of remote communication and education can be useful for developing

specific skills, these tools do not yet replicate the peer-to-peer learning that is vital for many of the creative industries active in the region. There are a range of existing and emerging infrastructure challenges for institutions such as galleries and performing arts centres, as well as local festivals and events. Each highlighted challenges in managing and maintaining infrastructure. The Great South Coast Regional Partnership Outcomes Roadmap also seeks to support projects that strengthen and modernise arts infrastructure and facilities, as well as cultural industries.

CONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Confirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
5.1 Design a regional hub program to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build capacity for existing spaces and facilitators Identify opportunities for other suitable spaces Examine the potential for 'pop-up' networking opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Creative Ecology report identifies some hotspots which would be ideal trial locations for the speciality hubs Following up with each individually and co-designing a response is required as a first step to building the hub program

UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Unconfirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
5.3 Match hubs with relevant state or national industry bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With locales selected, a process of connecting hubs to industry bodies will formalise their professional support For some hubs, this connection will already exist, whilst for others a more active brokering will be required so that they can be equipped to connected to other industry leaders, and provide similar connection to their community
5.4 Develop MOUs with hub spaces formalising community access protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalising community access to hubs is required to meet the potential of this objective Addressing the need for matching local practitioners to spaces will be aided with clarity around joint expectations
5.5 Create 'Hub Exchange' residency program across hubs to support short-term intensives between regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having created local hubs, the program can expand to facilitate networking and connection Expanding to the wider region through an exchange and residency program will allow for skill sharing and local networks to be strengthened
5.6 Review hub program and membership and revise program accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the program to inform actions post 2024

CREATIVE HUBS: CENTRES CONNECTED WITH INFRASTRUCTURE, INDUSTRY AND EACH OTHER cont.

CONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Confirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
5.2 Consolidate creative infrastructure requirements at a regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regional-level infrastructure schedule will strengthen the understanding of what exists, and what currently doesn't, in the region This audit can include small festivals, halls and similar events as well as the local-government owned institutions

UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Unconfirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
5.7 Review financing models and pipeline for infrastructure upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following on from 5.2, exploring a sustainable model for maintaining and upgrading infrastructure across the region will assist in delivering on needs over the long-term. Similar approaches are used in other program areas currently, including tourism, which can be drawn on as examples.
5.8 Implement recommendations from review of infrastructure financing models and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows on from 5.2 and 5.7

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Cultural	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulate creativity Gain knowledge, ideas and insights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local economy Increase professional and practice capability Enhance employment skills Increase individual economic well-being

And another thing...

- Hub activities may be delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions
- Some hubs of activity are better equipped than others to resource their community; the MOU development process will require an assessment of this capacity and may necessitate further support
- In particular, the need for facilitators within communities to activate and/or manage spaces will be an important part of the negotiated process
- Examples of hub focus points might be artform based, such as visual arts, music or theatre; they may also be organised around another focus point, such as young people or artists living with a disability, or more simply be connected at a geographic/town level
- The hubs themselves have the potential to be developed as tourism drawcards if they host exhibitions, workshops, studios or events
- Small festivals, events and organisations across the region expressed interest in sharing infrastructure and services, including marketing, legal and small equipment; this option should be included in discussion for Activity 5.2 but may need to be addressed separately

OFF THE RAILS

A unique arts space housed in the old railway building in Dunkeld. Initiated in 2007 by artist Trevor Flinn as a place to practice ideas and exhibit local art, the project was such a success that the community eventually applied, and were successful, to the *Community Use of Vacant Rail Buildings Program* through VicTrack.

What exists now is an intimate space that welcomes various groups, activities and arts development as well as providing an important alternative for children with a vocation for the arts.

Having a physical space to meet and develop programs and activate the arts has provided the community with important connections, inspiration and learning. The committee has generated friendships and fostered relationships across the region, growing their network of supporters and adding to the unique visitor interest of the town.

Users have stated a feeling of special connectivity to the space that once served as a working railway station.

"The train line is special for Dunkeld because it reflects the movement of people within the town: the established families, tree changers, new young families and tourists," the committee reflected.

"Having OTR connects us to our history. Dunkeld doesn't have many old buildings left so when we gather we are aware that our own presence meets with the echoes of our town's history. It's a special space for creative dreaming."



Image: Annette Huf

PROFESSIONAL AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT: INCREASED CAPACITY TO GROW THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

About this Objective

Increasing the capacity to grow the creative industries in the South West has two related but distinct components: professional development and enterprise development. Professional development focuses on the practice of artists building their own creative

skills. Enterprise development, on the other hand, is about supporting the business needs of artists so that they are able to capitalise on the quality of their creative endeavours.

Evidence supporting the Objective

Within the Creative Ecology report are several references to lack of professional development support, as well as a lack of formal training opportunities. Greater council support was a strong desire, alongside an observation of inadequate online self-representation. Through the community consultations, connection to industry expertise inside and outside the region, coupled with challenges progressing from hobby to professional artist, was a recurring

gap. Participants welcomed co-hosted sessions in their community with industry leaders, whilst simultaneously lamenting the infrequency of these visits.

Committing to an annual program of both professional and enterprise development will address these shortcomings.

CONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Confirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
6.1 Launch annual professional development program for residencies and information sharing from within and outside the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback on the value of industry sessions through the consultation period was exceptionally positive These sessions can be adapted with ease and low cost for ongoing delivery so that residents in South West Victoria can regularly access professional development support
6.2 Develop an enterprise support program for advancing business skills and marketing opportunities for creative professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some enterprise support programs already exist within the region, however they are currently not well known in the creative industries or don't adequately meet these needs Developing a specific program helps identify the gaps this program can address, or may also find new approaches to increase take-up of existing programs in the region

UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Unconfirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
6.3 Review, revise and deliver professional development program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 6.1; will evolve with the feedback from the program as it is delivered
6.4 Review and revise program for enterprise support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 6.2; a formal review of the program to inform future activities

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Cultural	Social	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulate creativity Gain knowledge, ideas and insights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve wellbeing Enhance social connectedness Experience feeling valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the local economy Increase professional and practice capability Increase individual economic well-being Enhance employment skills

And another thing...

- The professional development program may also tap into a number of existing resources, such as the Quick Response Grants program through the Regional Arts Fund; this will assist more artists to travel outside the region when needed to gain support, complementing the approach in this Strategy which is focused on bringing professionals to the region to build capacity
- Local government partners in the South West may support community members and organisations in their region to access existing expertise or programs delivered by Council; this would be a welcome outcome of developing the program
- Regional Arts Victoria continues to play a role in advising and guiding community members on how to access focussed support on a case-by-case basis, and both of these programs may assist in advancing this aim
- Young artists, artists living with disability and community members from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are amongst groups within the region who can be targeted with specialist programs for support through their respective arts and non-arts peak bodies – and may also offer training themselves to the wider community on cultural literacy

GREAT OCEAN ROAD WOOLLEN MILL

A small enterprise based in the south west at the forefront of yarn manufacturing.

Owned and run by Isabel and Nick Renters from a small farm near Timboon, the business provides high quality alpaca yarn and other yarn products to national and international buyers.

At the heart of the GORWM vision is a passion for Australian-made, sustainable and ethical fashion. From the raw product to the end result, everything is sourced locally, ensuring a low carbon footprint and acknowledging the vast amount of product and skills that can be sourced from across the south west.

"There is a growing appetite in the region to expose and acknowledge the artisans that exist here making high quality products," observe Nick and Isabel.

They strongly advocate for slow fashion and keeping trades in the region.

"Trades are being lost and we're interested in keeping those skills alive in our region. Many people at different stages are involved in the process of making our product. Slow fashion creates a community and there is a resurgence in people wanting to understand where their fibre comes from."

"When you come to our farm you can make that connection."



Image: Jo O'Keefe
Image supplied by Great Ocean Road Woollen Mill

YOUTH PROGRAMS: GREATER MENTORING, EDUCATION, CAREER PATHWAY OPPORTUNITIES

About this Objective

Programs which target young people in South West Victoria inside and outside of formal education institutions allow for a greater range of career pathways to be explored – including within the region. More opportunities for hands-on learning through projects, mentoring, and formal

education will also make space for youth-led initiatives to develop, so that young people in the region can access programs designed and delivered by their peers.

Evidence supporting the Objective

Challenges with attracting and retaining young people both within the region and in arts organisations were frequently raised throughout the consultations. Many participants noted the need for targeted programs, whilst simultaneously lamenting their lack or demise. Resources for existing programs, such as Freeza, in the region, are stretched. Access to music and arts education within schools across the South West is highly variable, and the

distances required to travel for some students significantly curtails their participation in programs outside of school.

Like most places in regional or rural Victoria, the South West also has skills shortages in a number of roles that support creative industries, including sound and lighting design. Also like other regions, many young people leave home to study in a major city on graduating high school, owing to limited formal continuing education or employment options locally.

CONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Confirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
7.1 Build connections between major institutions and young people in region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matching skills shortages in the local institutions or community facilities with formal training programs for local young people addresses two challenges noted through the consultation Many large State institutions, such as Arts Centre Melbourne, run relevant programs that might be accessed to support formal training opportunities This may also encourage more young people to stay locally if work is available
7.2 Pilot a 'creative leaders' program to mentor young people to devise and deliver creative programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some schools in the region currently appoint 'arts captains' to their student leadership cohort Building on this notion, a creative leaders initiative could see this rolled out across the region It would be supported by formal mentors from the creative sector and may support the delivery of a student-led project in the community Leaders would also be brought together at least annually to meet with each other and discuss ideas

UNCONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

Unconfirmed Activity	Why this Activity?
7.3 Create skills-based placements across region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pending completion of 7.1
7.4 Support delivery of projects or initiatives identified by creative leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pending completion of 7.2

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Cultural	Social	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulate creativity Experience aesthetic enrichment Gain knowledge, ideas and insight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve wellbeing Enhance social connectedness Experience feeling valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance employment skills Increase professional and practice capability Increase individual economic well-being

And another thing...

- It is beyond the scope of this Strategy to address the decline in formal education delivery for music and arts programs. However, Regional Arts Victoria will convene local arts education stakeholders to inform Objective 7 implementation and discuss with this group potential local actions for improving education offerings.
- This decline should be noted, however, as the increased demand it puts on teachers to work outside of school hours on 'passion projects' is a significant threat to the health of the creative ecology in the region
- The creative leaders initiative will be supported by VicHealth
- Training opportunities may necessitate travel outside of the region; the program could also coincide with other initiatives or goals, and may target early-school leavers
- Existing links to other programs, such as Beyond the Bell, should also be strengthened to support this Objective

CORANGAMITE SHIRE'S **YOUNG PEOPLE**

In 2018 young people of Corangamite Shire region took part in a project to research and film stories of their community. Young people were trained in story-telling and travelled the region collecting stories and getting to know their locals.

At the heart of this multi-partnered project was the vision to create a connected community across geography and generations. The project had the aim of counteracting the disconnection felt by some of their region's young people and to provide something to allow them to feel relevant and valued. For the young people in this process, it was about freedom to express themselves with curiosity and through their own perspective.

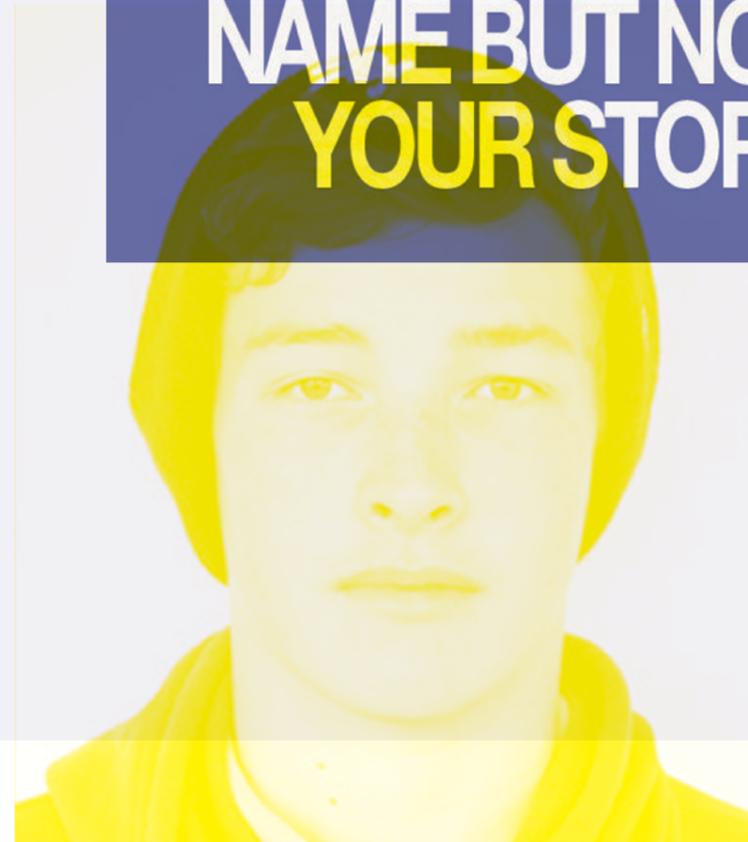
Past project coordinator, Chelsea Hatherall said, "For rural areas a sense of connection to community is integral to mental health and art is a wonderful tool to strengthen social ties and build empathy."

An important and lasting outcome has been the skills learnt for those involved, providing training for their careers after school. Skills in film making, content creation, listening and interviewing were some of the learnings passed on.

"This provided an increase in confidence and a sense of contribution to their community," said Chelsea.

The project bridged a gap for the young people in their communities and created lasting stories of their towns they can be proud of.

WE KNOW YOUR
NAME BUT NOT
YOUR STORY



7. EVALUATION

Over the life of the Strategy, the planning and evaluation of activities will provide important information and reflection of what is achieved, backed up by data. Aggregating and analysing evaluations across all Activities of the Strategy will provide a line of sight into the progress of the Strategy towards its Goal and where there are issues requiring new approaches.

The Strategy includes agreed Outcome measures that sit within the economic, social and cultural domains of public policy. These measurable outcomes have been developed by the Cultural Development Network in partnership with the Australian local government cultural sector plus a selection of producers and presenters, to enable the analysis of consistent and comparable evaluation data.

We will draw on these measures to provide an evidenced-based narrative on the contribution an activity makes to the economic and cultural aspects of the creative industries in the South West.

Using the Cultural Development Network question generator (whitebox.org.au/generate-question), Regional Arts Victoria will have options to select the right questions for each outcome, depending on particular circumstances. This will assist managers of the different activities to select the best question for the method and the Outcome to be measured.

Support and instructions for running evaluation will be included in the roll-out of the Strategy.

8. MAKING IT HAPPEN

NOW WHAT?

The Strategy delivery work begins in late 2020. We will start with Activities that are confirmed immediately, whilst others (where noted) require additional investigation or resourcing before we commence, or may require flexibility to adapt to COVID-19 restrictions.

As this is a regional-level Strategy, working across a large area and all artforms, it may be difficult to find something specific for you and your passion here. To help break this down, Regional Arts Victoria will release a series of *What it Means* Summary Sheets that help demonstrate the broad impact of this work. You can find these at strategy.rav.net.au/south-coast.

We hope you find something to support your work here. What all of this means, to Regional Arts Victoria, is finding more and better ways to support artists, audiences and participants in the South West to make and experience work that is relevant to you.

WHO WILL DO THIS WORK?

Regional Arts Victoria will coordinate the delivery of the Strategy, with the direct support of two newly formed advocacy and advice groups:

- A Governance group, consisting of representatives from State and Local government invested in the Strategy; and,
- An Advisory group, consisting of representatives from a range of sectors (including creative sectors) based in South West Victoria.

Both groups will meet twice-yearly to review and revise milestones and initiatives as they progress against an implementation plan and timeline. Updates and reports on the Strategy will be released to the public following these meetings. The Advisory Group will also assist in advocating for the delivery of the Strategy in the region.

From time-to-time, additional organisations or individuals may also work with Regional Arts Victoria on particular projects or activities in the Strategy. Regional Arts Victoria will continue the placement of a Partnership Manager on the ground in South West Victoria.

To follow updates, opportunities, progress reports, or to get involved, head to strategy.rav.net.au/south-coast or www.facebook.com/RAVgreatsouthcoast.

9. APPENDIX LIST

Three pieces of background research were critical to the development of the Strategy. These were:

1. **A Community Consultation series;**
2. **A Creative Ecology Report; and,**
3. **An Evidence Summary.**

A brief summary of each of these documents is provided here to demonstrate where they fit into the Strategy. Each can be read in full at strategy.rav.net.au/south-coast.

SUMMARY RESPONSE: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?

This document summarises each of the community consultations undertaken by Regional Arts Victoria in partnership with experts from the creative industries sector.

It also provides a 'Summary of the Summaries' to condense down the session-by-session recommendations into a smaller number of overall observations.

RATIONALE: WHY WAS THIS WORK COMPLETED?

Community consultation is a vital part of any Strategy development process. Regional Arts Victoria was keen to lead this process in a way that also allowed for local creative industry professionals to meet their sector leaders.

As well as being useful for informing the Strategy, this networking meant that a number of new connections were made before the Strategy document itself was even complete. It is not possible for any

one organisation, such as Regional Arts Victoria, to support every outcome all the time. By creating these connections, there are more opportunities for more people to work together – a great outcome in and of itself.

SUMMARY: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

These issues were generally consistent across the community consultations:

- There is strong belief in local stories, skills and potential in the region;
- The role of facilitators and hubs: they are vital resources, but people or organisations are often stretched as a result of working in a predominantly voluntary capacity;
- There are challenges in connecting to industry expertise based in and outside the region;
- There are challenges in connecting within local networks and community groups, both formally and informally;
- There is a strong interest in co-investment or shared resourcing across groups;
- The pathway from hobby to professional artist is not well lit, with a number of artists and organisations

unsure how to take 'the next step'; and,

- Access to opportunities and support for young people is critical, but currently limited.

THE STRATEGY: HOW DOES THIS WORK INFORM THE STRATEGY?

All of the summary findings are incorporated in some way through the Strategy. These are easily observable in the Objectives and Activities sections around Professional and Enterprise Development; Creative Hubs; Youth Programs; and the South West Story.

RESPONSE: HOW DO THESE FINDINGS COMPARE WITH OTHER WORK DONE?

Each of the other consultation and research pieces undertaken drew heavily on these consultation summaries, so it is no surprise that they are generally consistent.

Regional Arts Victoria thanks each of the industry bodies who supported us to undertake this work.

SUMMARY RESPONSE: GREAT SOUTH COAST CREATIVE ECOLOGY REPORT

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?

A creative ecology is the combination of the people, places and organisations that exist and operate throughout a region and the creative activities they produce, present and support.

This report analyses how the creative ecology in the Great South Coast region is currently working, making a number of observations on how healthy it currently is, and why. It draws on economic data, publicly available strategies and policies, and a survey of participants in the region to inform conclusions. Findings from the community consultations undertaken by Regional Arts Victoria were also used in the report.

The Creative Ecology Report was completed by Future Tense, a creative sector consultancy offering research, strategy and advocacy services. The methodology used draws upon extensive previous research led by Future Tense on what makes a creative ecology thrive, and how to measure this.

RATIONALE: WHY WAS THIS WORK COMPLETED?

It was critical for Regional Arts Victoria to draw on an independent, detailed analysis of what was happening across the region. The rigorous, data-driven academic approach used by Future Tense complements the work undertaken on-the-ground through the community consultations by Regional Arts Victoria.

The final report provides a strong foundation to build a Strategy from.

SUMMARY: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

The Creative Ecology report makes a number of key findings about the creative ecology:

- People have a strong connection to their local area or township, rather than to the wider Great South Coast;
- Arts and culture are currently siloed from other facets of civic life and without guiding policy;
- Creative activity is mostly in arts or community festivals;
- Most local activity focuses on the visual arts;

- The region's major cultural institutions provide the backbone of the creative ecology
- There is limited evidence of creative subcultures;
- A handful of network hubs are generating the bulk of the region's activity;
- There are few professional development or support opportunities, meaning creatives have to leave the region to gain access to them;
- The region struggles to build communities, especially across generational divides, leading to continuity challenges for community organisations;
- Existing platforms and opportunities primarily cater to over 50s; and,
- There is a growing community of creative professionals (~30-40 year olds) who are currently overlooked.

It then suggests a pathway to addressing some of these gaps:

- Explicitly acknowledge the creative industries in the future council strategies and budgets;
- Establish dedicated grants at the council level that encourage experimentation;
- Develop strategies for providing professional development for mid-

career and established practitioners;

- Develop initiatives to target overlooked sections of the community;
- Set measurable performance metrics for activities;
- Develop mechanisms to assist local creatives access state, federal and non-council funding and development support, such as increasing submissions to the State and Federal Governments around arts, culture and creative industries;
- Push for peak body strategies and programs that specifically target the Great South Coast;
- Establish creative sector promotional training for artists and creative professionals;
- Establish centralised documentation and advertising of available creative spaces (such as creativespaces.net.au);
- Establish broad tri-annual collection of creative industry data such as creative practitioner numbers, business numbers, creative industry income, GVA, audience numbers;
- Track the economic benefits of the Creative Industries in council strategies, reports and budgets; and,
- Measure the income from creative and cultural assets in council budgets.

THE STRATEGY: HOW DOES THIS WORK INFORM THE STRATEGY?

Findings from the Creative Ecology report can be found throughout the final Strategy document. Examples include:

- the summary of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is adapted for the 'What we Found' section in the Strategy;
- in the 'Why this Activity?' section for each Objective, the Creative Ecology report is often referenced as evidence of why we are doing what we are doing; and,
- the section 'What we Have – Creative Industries in The Great South Coast Region' is drawn from an analysis of the same in the Creative Ecology Report.

In general, the data in the Creative Ecology report has been used as background information to help us make good decisions about what to include and do in the Strategy.

RESPONSE: HOW DO THESE FINDINGS COMPARE WITH OTHER WORK DONE?

It is important to understand that this report is only one of the documents being used to support the Strategy. Just because the ecology report makes a recommendation or finding, that does not mean it will be adapted word-for-word. This is because there may be other ways to achieve a similar goal; it contradicts another finding from other consultations; or the gap needs to be address through some other piece of work (for example, the State Government or another industry).

However, the majority of the findings of the Creative Ecology report are consistent with those through the community consultations and other research. As a result, almost all of the 'Steps to get There' in Section 6.2 of the report are incorporated into the Strategy Activities in some form, though some have been modified to allow for flexibility in delivering the same outcome a different way (for example, recommendations on Council reports and budgets are covered by working with Councils to create strategies). Regional Arts Victoria commends Future Tense on this final report.

SUMMARY RESPONSE: CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK EVIDENCE REPORT

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?

As we moved closer to deciding on final Objectives, the Cultural Development Network undertook some additional desktop research to determine if existing literature, case studies or data reinforced or contradicted our own conclusions.

This Evidence Report is the summary of this work.

RATIONALE: WHY WAS THIS WORK COMPLETED?

Whilst the Community Consultations and Creative Ecology report provided strong overall background for progressing the Strategy, Regional Arts Victoria also had to distil these findings down to some summary Objectives and Activities.

Once we had agreed upon the seven Objectives, the Cultural Development Network met with Regional Arts Victoria to determine if we had sufficient evidence to back them up. In most cases, there was a

strong case to recommend an Objective, pending some further research.

Having undertaken the necessary additional research, the Cultural Development Network provided this Evidence Report as summary.

SUMMARY: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

There is ample evidence to support the conclusions reached in the final Strategy.

As well as the work undertaken directly by Regional Arts Victoria and Future Tense, there are a number of other case studies and reports from around the country that provide us with the confidence to proceed. This can be read in summary through the Evidence report, which also provides links to the full documents where relevant.

THE STRATEGY: HOW DOES THIS WORK INFORM THE STRATEGY?

Findings from the Evidence Report are linked to the 'Why this Activity?' section for each Objective in the Strategy.

As for the other Appendix documents, the Evidence report forms critical background information to help us make good decisions about what to include and do in the Strategy.

RESPONSE: HOW DO THESE FINDINGS COMPARE WITH OTHER WORK DONE?

The findings from the Evidence Report correlate strongly to the previous work done for the Strategy, as the report itself drew on this previous work as a source.

The Cultural Development Network were vital in this process, and provided an expert outside eye. This Evidence Report is a small section of the extensive support they provided, and we extend our gratitude to them for it.

The logo for Regional Arts Victoria is positioned in the lower-left corner of a large yellow rectangular area. It consists of the words 'REGIONAL', 'ARTS', and 'VICTORIA' stacked vertically. The letters are in a blue, serif font. The 'A' in 'ARTS' and the 'V' in 'VICTORIA' are stylized, with the 'V' having a unique shape that incorporates a diagonal line. The background of the entire page is white, with a large yellow rectangle on the right side. On the left side of the yellow rectangle, there are four thick, yellow, rounded rectangular bars extending from the left edge towards the right. In the top-right and bottom-right corners of the yellow rectangle, there are small blue triangles pointing inwards.