

CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL STRATEGY FOR YOUNG CREATIVES



Immersed, Dream State Entertainment,
Cairns Festival 2019



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Strategy for Young Creatives was developed in partnership with Arts Queensland as part of Cairns Regional Council's 2018/2019 Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) program. In 2019, well respected industry leaders, Lenine Bourke and Lia Pa'apa'a were engaged by Council to facilitate strategic research and consultation to determine the trends, issues and expectations that underpin young people's participation in the arts and cultural development in Cairns.

The valuable body of work produced by these consultants is outlined in this document and has enabled Council to develop an implementation plan to guide future investment in programs, projects and resources over the next two years.

Council recognises and values the contribution of project consultants Lenine Bourke and Lia Pa'apa'a, along with our funding partners Arts Queensland and the many artists, young people, parents, educators and organisations that took part in the discussions towards this strategy. These conversations have shaped the fundamental priorities and thematic framework of the strategic plan.

Cairns Regional Council also acknowledges the custodians and first people of this country, and respects their ongoing relationship and responsibility to their land and sea.

*Diamonds Found in Dreams. Dreamstate Circus.
Cairns Children's Festival*



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Young and emerging creatives are an essential and dynamic part of the arts and cultural landscape of the Far North Queensland region. They are savvy, engaged, passionate, concerned with social justice and often focused on more than a single career.

The Strategy for Young Creatives supports a key priority for Cairns Regional Council's Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 which identifies the need to increase young people's participation, education and employment in the arts and cultural and creative industries.

This Strategy for Young Creatives aligns with Council's broader corporate goals for community and culture, and provides a springboard for resourcing an important, and often underrepresented sector of the local community. It lays a solid path for Council to expand the quality, reach, impact and viability of our cultural services by embedding a strategic and targeted focus to ensure tailored engagement by young people.

Underpinned by thorough investigative and consultative processes the strategy steps out the trends, challenges and opportunities that influence young people's engagement as audience members, participants and creative producers. A two-year Implementation Plan has been designed to improve and further develop programs and services that respond to identified needs across seven specific platforms: Resources; Partnership and Collaboration; Funding; Professional Development; Programming; Placemaking and Strategic Development.

The State of the Arts Research Project, developed in partnership with James Cook University and Central Queensland University will include quantitative and qualitative evaluation to ensure the outcomes of this strategy are achieved and tracked.

New ideas in establishing sustainable career pathways in the cultural industries are vital to inspire and enable more young and emerging creatives to return to, and remain in the region into the future. Cairns Regional Council is committed to developing our region's emerging creative professionals and will continue to work collaboratively across Council areas and the larger arts and cultural sector to enable greater accessibility of information, resources and assets to all young people.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 DEFINITIONS

In every policy or strategy, the ages of children and young people are different. For the purpose of this strategy, the term 'child' relates to those aged 0 to 11 years old, and 'young people' or 'youth' as being aged between 12 and 25.

The term 'young and emerging artist' defines a young person, in the first five years of their creative practice.

2.2 PROFILE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CAIRNS

The Cairns population is comprised of a diverse spread of cultures and backgrounds, which is in turn reflected in the demographic information for children and young people. The following details are drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 census data, a 2018 report by Cummings Economics, research conducted by Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and Cairns Regional Council community and sector consultation:

- Children aged 0-14 make up 19.8% of the Cairns population¹
- In comparison to the rest of the state, Cairns (Statistical Area 4) has a slightly higher population of children aged 5-9¹
- Young people 20-24 make up only 5.5% of the Cairns population, in comparison to the state and national percentage of 6.7%¹
- The median age for non-Indigenous people in Cairns was 39, while for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people it was 22¹
- Indigenous people make up 10% of the Cairns population more than three times the national population average¹
- Indigenous participation in cultural and creative businesses was low with only 14% of survey respondents recording indigenous employment and numbers employed 6% of total (p4)²
- Cairns' population is younger and more highly educated than the rest of regional Queensland (p.6)³ however, there is a lower uptake of tertiary education in Cairns when compared at broader state or national level (ABS)¹
- Cairns Regional Council sector engagement reveals local arts and cultural representatives' concern with the low numbers of young people staying to pursue life after school (pp.7, 11)⁴ and broader community concern regarding the alarming rate of unemployment for young people (p.10)⁵

¹ https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/306

² https://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/330315/LIVE-6046442-v1-Bill_Cummings_Cultural-and-CreativeBusinessesSurvey_pdf_final.pdf

³ <https://research.qut.edu.au/creativehotspots/wp-content/uploads/sites/258/2020/02/Creative-Hotspots-CAIRNS-report-FINAL-V1-20191220.pdf>

⁴ https://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/206259/CultureStrategy_CommEngagement.pdf

⁵ https://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/188126/Appendix-D_Final-Report-on-Community-and-Stakeholder-Forums.pdf

2.3 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN ARTS AND CULTURAL PRACTICE

Children and young people across Cairns engage in arts and cultural experiences every day. Each is unique in their engagement but this participation is vital to their sense of connection and development of creativity. The enablers of these cultural experiences include parents, friends, teachers and Council. As small babies and children, experiences often occur in libraries or at cultural events with their families. As they mature their interests and capacity to engage in the arts changes.

The role parents and carers play... parents, carers and relatives are essential in early arts and cultural engagement for children. Many young people consulted explained that seeing their family members perform was a major highlight for them. Families supporting children and young people to engage in the arts includes the logistics of managing travel, finances and other family members, and is also about knowing where and how to access information. In some situations, knowing about an activity is still not enough, having recommendations from trusted adults is also essential. Knowing that the program can accommodate different needs is also crucial for carers. Special attention should be given to communicating how children will be kept safe, engaged meaningfully and given incredible encounters. This boosts the experience for the whole family and more broadly promotes the value of the arts within the community.

The role teachers play... educators are pivotal to engaging children and young people in learning arts and cultural techniques and theory, and provide a broader global perspective on art making. Teachers can be school-based or childcare centre-based, university orientated or community-based teachers of many art forms. Similarly, many cultural leaders and Elders also play an educational role, guiding their young people through knowledge of traditional and contemporary art forms, in events and ceremonies.

The role their friends play... as young people grow up, having opportunities to participate in social and cultural events with their friends is an essential part of their development. This social engagement in the arts creates a fertile ground for experimentation and innovation of art forms, such as shaping online platforms or creating new fashion trends. Autonomous participation for young people during their teen and post school years is a major consideration for the development of this strategy.

The role artists and arts organisations play... without artists and arts organisations to support children, young people, their families and emerging artists in their career development only some young creatives would find their way into the arts sector. Creative practitioners who set up programs, make work, run organisations, secure funding and drive the industry to ensure equitable opportunities for children and young people are an essential part of the arts ecology.

The role Cairns Regional Council plays... Council developed the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 from which the Strategy for Young Creatives has emerged. Council's role is not only via the provision of funding, resources, support, adequate infrastructure, but also in taking a strategic lead across the region including galvanising the sector locally and brokering national and international opportunities.





Alissa Tyrrell, Tanks Arts Centre Curator's Award Winner 2019,
Year 13+ program
Tanks Arts Centre

2.4 INCLUSION

In Australia, there continues to be major discrepancies for children and young people in their access and ability to engage in education, employment and cultural rights, while also managing personal life circumstances like income generation, health, community connections and family. This is especially challenging for those young people from Indigenous and culturally diverse backgrounds, asylum seeker young people, young people with disability or mental health issues, young people living in low socio-economic families, young LGBTIQ people, young parents and carers and young people from rural and remote contexts. Often young people with additional life pressures do not have the same access to services or support structures. They also do not get to the milestones that their peers can meet at specific ages, like finishing school, or engaging in a community arts project.

3. CONSULTATION DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY FOR YOUNG CREATIVES

Consultation for The Strategy for Young Creatives was carried out from February–September 2019 and a wide range of individuals and organisations were engaged for discussion, feedback and ideas to inform the strategy’s development, these include:

- 15 organisations • 50 artists and arts sector individual members • 6 schools • 40 young and emerging artists
- 2 universities • 104 general public and families • 256 children and young people
- 1 festival, 4 performances, 4 film nights, 1 forum, teleconferences, face to face meetings and group workshops

3.1 WHAT THE SECTOR SAID

Challenges

- Lack of sector development, training and workshops engaging children and young people
- Not enough opportunities to attend national and international events in the children and youth arts sectors
- Limited number of artists bringing ideas to local presenters’ venues and festivals
- Not enough full time or part time positions in the local sector
- Market development to teenage audiences
- Constantly changing technology requires innovations in practice and business development
- Access to space
- Limited funding opportunities, with low level amounts or match funding requirements
- No organisational funding opportunities
- Lack of university training for young people and lack of TAFE arts programs with available courses constantly changing, or not being available
- Not enough film, media and screen-based practice
- Flexibility to accommodate changing requirements of children and young people as they mature
- Children and young people living in Cairns need deeper intercultural connections with Indigenous culture, both traditional and contemporary.

Opportunities

- More platforms for cross-sector collaboration, networking and programming
- Better use of resources, venues and talent
- Young curators and creative producers are hungry for support and training
- Expand programs such as The Flame.Arts Projects and Year13+ to ensure more access for post school creatives and other young people
- Expand ScreenPLAY and Understory programs to develop the capacity of young people to produce and present screen content
- More engagement with schools across the region
- More engagement with local young Indigenous leaders and artists
- Recognise that professional skills young people gain through creative projects are cross transferable
- Align STEM and creative industries to address the region’s significant deficit in digital creative skills.

3.2 WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAID

Challenges

- High cost of arts experiences
- Travel and transport issues
- Difficulty in obtaining licencing such as busking
- Perceived limited access to safe public spaces
- Not enough all ages events
- Lack of programming awareness and access to information
- Limited knowledge on how to access funding opportunities
- Lack of post school direction without an adult for guidance
- Perceived lack of arts career opportunity in Cairns
- Lack of engagement in public art and placemaking projects.

Opportunities

- Expand opportunities for young people in cultural dance expression
- Expand opportunities for young people to have meaningful audience experiences
- Increase programming of diverse multi art form experiences tailored for young people including circus, fashion, musicals, media and screen-based work
- Increase opportunities for young people to be employed in the arts
- Nurture more internships, and industry placements for secondary and tertiary students
- Having teachers to guide young people to opportunities outside of school
- Seeing family and people they know perform or present work
- Ensure programming includes opportunities for young people to celebrate their connection to place and cultural diversity through personal creative expression
- Nurture more internships, and industry placements for secondary and tertiary students to encourage meaningful career pathways in the arts.



3m Pride with Mau Power at Understory Film Festival



3.3 SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS IDENTIFIED IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The proportionately large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the Cairns region validates a special focus on increasing the visible participation of the children and young people of these communities within the arts and cultural landscape, an objective significantly echoed in the consultation process informing this strategy.

3.3.1 Raising the level of opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People:

- **Employment** - Identifying paid work opportunities for young Indigenous artists is fundamental. If the workforce does not grow, these young creatives will be required to leave the industry or move elsewhere.
- **Local Links** - Young Indigenous leaders are deeply engaged in practice, events or programs with local and nationally recognised companies. More opportunities need to be created.
- **Regional Links** - Many Indigenous young people have strong links across the region and into the Torres Strait Islands. This is a regional asset that could grow with professional development and travel bursaries, with young people collaborating across communities to make work and exchange practice. This can also strengthen the Regional Arts Service Network (RASN) across Far North Queensland.
- **International Links** - Young local Indigenous people have links internationally, attending symposia, conferences, events and showcases. This could be optimised with their skills showcased upon arrival home.

3.3.2 Growth:

Sustainable growth with investment in new initiatives is imperative, including:

- Dedicated audience development strategies especially for 8yrs+
- Participatory and professional development programs across all venues, facilities, programs and festivals
- Creating new work with and for young audiences led by local artists, with national and international collaborators

The funding pool is always stretched, but this Strategy encourages Council to leverage its funds with State and Federal government, as well as the philanthropy and business sector.

Sustaining Straws (detail) by Claire Shead, Energy Exhibition Cairns Festival 2019

The Strategy for Young Creatives aligns with Council's broader corporate objectives, and the three key priority areas of Council's Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022.

4.1 Cairns Regional Council Corporate Plan Objectives for Community and Culture

- Support a rich and diverse culture through accessible public facilities and community initiatives
- Be recognised as the Arts and Cultural Capital of Northern Australia
- Build vibrancy through community events and activities
- Support social and community groups
- Culture, heritage and place are valued, shared and celebrated

4.2 Cairns Regional Council Strategy for Culture and The Arts 2022

PRIORITY ONE

Infrastructure, resources and skills that support and stimulate the cultural and creative life of our community.

PRIORITY TWO

Culture, heritage and place are valued, shared, celebrated and promoted.

PRIORITY THREE

A robust cultural economy fuelled by an international reputation as a tropical, cultural and creative hub.

5. DELIVERING OUTCOMES BY 2022

The Strategy for Young Creatives will be undertaken through partnership and collaboration with State and Federal Governments, local industry, the education sector, community-based arts and cultural organisations, and creative individuals.

PRIORITY ONE

Infrastructure, resources and skills that support and stimulate the cultural and creative life of our community.

Outcomes we want to see by 2022

Increased collaboration, networking, resource-sharing, cross promotion and information flow.

Increased professional development opportunities for young people including internships, mentorship, traineeships and pathways to further education and employment.

Increased engagement with young creatives and cross sector collaborations to optimise the facilities, funding and networks that enable and support creative enterprise.

Further development of evidence-based research to support and guide future decision making and investment in programs for young creatives.

PRIORITY TWO

Culture, heritage and place are valued, shared, celebrated and promoted.

Outcomes we want to see by 2022

Greater programming and activities that engage and inspire young people's interest in the region's unique cultural heritage and participation in Museum and Gallery practice.

Meaningful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, their families and communities to ensure accessible and inclusive cultural services.

Greater participation of young creatives in placemaking and public art initiatives, including temporary and ephemeral projects.

More platforms for young people of all ethnicities and abilities to explore and celebrate intergenerational, intercultural stories and creative expression.

PRIORITY THREE

A robust cultural economy fuelled by an international reputation as a tropical, cultural and creative hub.

Outcomes we want to see by 2022

Enhanced local, national and international reputation of Cairns as a leader in the innovative engagement of children and young people in the arts and cultural sector.

Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and creative practitioners sharing their stories and producing their own creative works.

Expanded leadership opportunities in festivals, venues and organisations through mentoring and training young practitioners into significant roles.

Continued investment in high quality, national standard programming to cultivate the next generation of creative professionals.

Evaluation - Measures for success:

INTRINSIC MEASURE

Exposure to new knowledge, skills and experiences.

INSTRUMENTAL MEASURE


Accessible and affordable facilities and expanded annual program of inclusive activities.

INSTITUTIONAL MEASURE

Effective frontline services that focus on engagement and communication with young people.

6. ACTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

Actions for implementing the Strategy for Young Creatives are designed to improve and further develop programs and services that respond to identified needs across five specific focus areas, comprising: Partnerships and Collaboration; Professional Development; Programming; Funding; and Strategic Development.

MOTIVATION	#	ACTION	STRATEGY FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS 2022
1. Partnerships and Collaboration	1.1	Build on initial consultation and further develop targeted collaboration with young people, their families, carers, education and youth service providers to guide and deliver programs and services for young people.	  
	1.2	Strengthen and consolidate existing peak body partnerships with national, state and local performing and visual arts organisations to benchmark processes and collaborate on the implementation of this two-year strategic plan.	 
	1.3	Embed meaningful engagement with Traditional Owners and elders on projects concerning cultural knowledge and creative expression of young First Nations people to ensure appropriate protocols and procedures.	
	1.4	Collaborate with Gallery and Museum sector to deliver targeted activities that cultivate interest in, and connection to, the region's unique collections, history, cultural heritage and gallery and museum practice.	  
	1.5	Initiate round-table discussion with youth arts companies and young people as part of the current cultural facilities audit to identify spaces for young creatives to produce work and generate creative enterprise.	 
	1.6	Initiate cross-Council collaboration and partnerships with Libraries, Community Development, Leisure Services and Planning departments to explore opportunities for employment, traineeships and internships for young people.	 
2. Professional Development	2.1	Develop mentoring & traineeship opportunities and pathways to further education and employment opportunities for young people in Council's cultural facilities including:	  
	2.1.1	Cairns Performing Arts Centre (CPAC) - Initiate training opportunities in aspects of staging, sound, lighting and other production components.	
	2.1.2	Cairns Courthouse - Engage children, young people and their families in gallery program incorporating exhibitions, activities, and digital technology.	
	2.1.3	Tanks Arts Centre – Develop leadership-focused opportunities for young creatives in exhibition and curatorial programming.	

Key:  Priority 1  Priority 2  Priority 3



Suburban Satellites, *The Voice of the River*
Cairns Festival 2019

MOTIVATION	#	ACTION	STRATEGY FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS 2022
2. Professional Development	2.2	Ensure relevant and meaningful mentoring, internships, industry placements and professional development opportunities in Cultural Services' creative and cultural programming, including:	● ●
	2.2.1	Tanks Year 13+ Program designed to expand the capacity of young creatives after high school, through the iconic Tanks Arts Centres' Visual Art program.	
	2.2.2	Flame.Arts in partnership with Arts Qld, Regional Arts Services Network (RASN), and neighbouring regional Councils to facilitate skills and career development across diverse creative disciplines and industries.	
	2.2.3	Flame.Arts Access in partnership with Arts Qld RADF program to expand the quality, reach, impact, and viability of the broader Flame.Arts program to ensure engagement by underrepresented groups.	
	2.2.4	ScreenPLAY and Understory Film Festival to expand opportunities for young creatives to use interactive technologies to make screen content.	
	2.3	Build the capacity of young people to engage in volunteering opportunities with the Cultural Services Volunteer Program.	●
3. Programming	3.1	Support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to create intergenerational creative work that strengthens understanding and appreciation of traditional cultural heritage and contemporary creative expression.	● ●
	3.2	Deliver a CPAC and Tanks Arts Centre program, targeting companies and artists who work with children and young people, and provide the opportunity for young creatives to collaborate.	● ●
	3.3	Expand collaborative partnerships with neighbouring Councils and encourage young people's participation in projects that interpret and promote regional identity and sense-of-place.	● ●
	3.4	Raise awareness of all Council cultural facilities and programs through information sessions and online promotion targeting young creatives, and expand uptake through incentives for local schools and youth groups.	●

Key: ● Priority 1 ● Priority 2 ● Priority 3



Energy Exhibition Opening,
Cairns Festival 2019

MOTIVATION	#	ACTION	STRATEGY FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS 2022
4. Funding	4.1	Collaborate with other Council departments to encourage Community Grant streams to include KPI's that target access for, and engagement with, young people.	●
	4.2	Build a case for external investment in the implementation of this two-year strategy, including State and Federal government agencies.	●
	4.3	Broadcast and promote Council grant opportunities for young creatives, along with the outcomes and achievements of successful projects initiated by young creatives, through targeted marketing and advocacy campaigns.	● ●
	4.4	Continue to deliver the RADF Flame.Arts Access Leg Up, Individual Professional Development and Small Arts Grant programs targeting professional development, travel opportunities, and/or project development for young creatives.	● ●
5. Strategic Development	5.1	Embed best-practice, evidence-based evaluative strategies to monitor the value of Council's grants program relating to audience development, participation and employment opportunities for young people.	● ●
	5.2	Identify common ground between young creatives and arts and disability strategies to develop shared goals and aspirations towards careers in the creative and cultural industries.	● ●
	5.3	Ensure Council's policy and strategic plan for public art includes mentoring and skills development platforms for young creatives to work on real-life projects, including new works and temporary and event-specific programs.	● ● ●
	5.4	Ensure forward planning for all Cultural Services' creative programming integrates targeted and strategic access considerations for young people including: content, pricing, venue, publicity and information flow.	● ● ●
	5.5	Advocate a people-centred and place-based approach to future planning, design and management of public spaces, encouraging young people to participate in the research and design phase of new capital development projects.	● ● ●

Key: ● Priority 1 ● Priority 2 ● Priority 3