

ORDINARY MEETING

22 MAY 2024

**3**

## **REGIONAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT FUND (RADF) PROGRAM SUBMISSION TO ARTS QUEENSLAND**

79/6/8| #7378795

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Council:**

- 1. Approves entering into a four-year agreement with Arts Queensland committing a total of \$480,000 (ex GST) from the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) budget.**
- 2. Notes the program submission for the 2024-25 RADF program to Arts Queensland.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise all matters arising from the signing of this submission.**

### **INTERESTED PARTIES:**

Arts Queensland.

*Note: The identification of interested parties is provided on a best endeavours basis by Council Officers and may not be exhaustive.*

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) is a partnership between Council and Arts Queensland. Both parties contribute funds which are used to support and activate arts and culture initiatives across the region through community grant programs and Council-led initiatives that meet priorities outlined in local and state arts and culture plans.

The partnership has been active since 2014 and the most recent investment plan with Arts Queensland is listed below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Cairns Regional Council</b>	<b>Arts Queensland</b>
2023/24	\$100,000	\$105,000
2022/23	\$100,000	\$100,000
2021/22	\$115,000	\$100,000

Funding arrangements with Arts Queensland were executed on a September-to-September basis and secured through an annual application process. Arts Queensland recently modified the process to a four-year application round. Funding agreements will align with financial years, commencing 1 July 2024. This provides Council with flexibility to respond to differing priorities over the funding cycle and plan long-term. It also

demonstrates the State Government's commitment to investing in arts and culture programs across the regions which are vital to activating liveable environments that support quality life and foster vibrant, healthy, and creative communities.

Council submitted a grant application to Arts Queensland to a predetermined deadline (2 May 2024) for the financial years 2024/25 through to 2027/28. Council has requested the maximum funds available of \$480,000 for the four years.

The application submission included a high-level overview of the RADF program for the four years with a one-year detailed program for 2024/25. Council will be notified in June 2024 of the application outcome.

This report provides an overview of the 2024-25 RADF program submission, including:

- Proposed annual program and intended outcomes.
- Budget allocations to each of the proposed programs.
- Summary of in-kind contributions and remaining amounts from previous funding year.

If the application to Arts Queensland is successful annual payments of \$120,000 over the four-year period will be triggered through a submission of an annual report aligned with KPI's against set goals and a proposed program for the following year.

The investment plan of \$240,000 annually comprising the following contributions:

Year	Cairns Regional Council	Arts Queensland	Total
2024/25	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$240,000
2025/26	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$240,000
2026/27	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$240,000
2027/28	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$240,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$480,000</b>	<b>\$480,000</b>	<b>\$960,000</b>

Council's contribution to the 2024/2025 program is provided through Creative Life's operating budget and is broken down as follows:

- \$105,000 from general operating budget for 2024/2025 in-line with previous years.
- \$15,000 will be redirected from the Arts & Cultural In-Kind Assistance stream to support RADF projects held at Council venues. This approach reduces red tape as previously, if a grant applicants project was connected with a Council venue, they were expected to fill out a separate, in-kind application. The RADF grant has now been amended to include requests for in-kind assistance for Council venues.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Established in 1991, RADF promotes the role and value of arts, culture and heritage as key drivers of diverse and inclusive communities and strong regions.

The RADF program is a highly successful state and local government partnership that supports professional and emerging artists and arts practitioners living in regional Queensland. All activities funded under the program are required to demonstrate how RADF investment is meeting the State's Key Performance Outcomes relating to High

Quality, Strong Impact and Sustainable Value.

Demand for Arts Queensland funding is significant making RADF a highly competitive program for the 59 eligible Councils. Funding is guided by the population and co-investment tiers below:

RADF Tier	Population	% AQ	% Council	Arts Queensland maximum investment
1	0 to 5,000	90	10	\$25,000
2	5,001 to 25,000	70	30	\$30,000
3	25,001 to 50,000	60	40	\$40,000
4	50,001 to 200,000	50	50	\$50,000
5	200,001 +	40	60	\$100,000

Councils can apply for funding above their population tier's maximum investment amount or ratio (up to a maximum of \$120,000) where they can provide strong justification, including:

- Financial contribution is at a higher level than defined percentage ratios, or Council have secured partners who are investing in their local RADF program; and/or
- Council can demonstrate capacity for exceptional delivery of RADF objectives.

Proposals that request Arts Queensland funding above the relevant population tier will be assessed and moderated by a Fund Assessment Panel.

Council is seeking the maximum amount of funding \$120,00 per annum which equates to \$480,000 over the full four-year funding cycle. The request for an increase to the maximum amount is due to:

- Matching Council investment: aligned with Arts Queensland's funding criteria of providing a higher level of investment than defined percentage ratios.
- Growing Population: responding to Cairns region growth agenda by providing creative programs and activities for a broad audience. In doing so diversifying the cultural and community offer to meet a wide range of interests.
- Skill Retention: responding to feedback from the industry who are leaving the region to take opportunities elsewhere due to lack of opportunities in the region.
- Workforce Development: The decline in pathways for creative arts university education in the region is of great concern to stakeholders. The RADF program supports life-long learning through capacity building and creative development.
- Increased cost of materials: Arts Queensland funding is not CPI linked therefore, investment ratios remain static and as such is not responsive to the cost-of-living increases.

## Impact and Value

The World Economic Forum has declared creativity as the number one most important and the fastest growing in-demand skill. Citing that creativity enables adaptability, experimentation, and innovative thinking, as well as empathy and human connection in an increasingly automated and polarised world.

The forum also indicated that creative activities help students develop personal, social and cognitive skills that transfer to a wide range of academic and social situations and improve performance in personal and professional development.

The most recent Council economic report demonstrated that the arts and culture industry was estimated to have generated \$79M plus an additional \$46M in indirect impacts for a total contribution of \$126M in Value Added. The industry supported 1,092 jobs directly and an additional 365 in indirect employment. The largest sub-industry for direct employment was estimated to be Arts Education with 15.6% of the total sector's employment.

This is further endorsed through the SoArts Report 2021, a research partnership with JCU and CQU to assess impact of the arts and culture strategy. The intent of the research is to provide tangible evidence of the value of culture and the arts to the livability and economy of Cairns. The 2021 report indicated that over a third of visitors who responding to a visitor survey considered the availability of cultural opportunities an important fact in their selection of holiday destinations.

The RADF and Council-led initiatives facilitate and contribute to this broad ecology and encourages growth in creativity, supporting personal and social well-being, building human capital, and contributing to a dynamic economy.

Over the past two years, the Council's RADF program invested \$380,000 to support 91 projects across the diverse suite of RADF grant streams and Council initiatives: This resulted in:

- 160 artists/cultural workers employed.
- 41 people employed in wider industry positions.
- 19,360 people attended RADF-supported projects.
- 1,127 people participated in RADF-supported projects.
- 226 volunteers activated with an estimated economic worth of \$117,348.

Council continues to refine the grant application processes. Recent improvements include:

- The launch of SmartyGrants, that streamline the application process, which is a response to feedback from applicants.
- One-on-one RADF Roadshow sessions, information nights and cross-Council collaboration events programs.

RADF is highly regarded in the community of artists and cultural workers because it consistently supports artistic and cultural endeavours within the region.

### **COMMENT:**

#### **Proposed 2024-25 RADF Program**

The submission to Arts Queensland and proposed program delivery is designed to support and deliver Queensland Government commitments, as well as Council's corporate and cultural priorities.

The proposed submission contains two core program areas that will drive and deliver a diverse range of strategic, multifaceted and multi art form initiatives: community grants program and Council-led initiatives.

## **1. Community Grants Program**

The 2024 -25 Community Grants Program contains a wide range of grant categories to enable and support creative practice, collaboration and employment opportunities for pre-emerging, emerging, professional artists as well as organisations. All applications submitted to Council will need to meet the criteria of High Quality, Strong Impact and Sustainable Value, comply with RADF grant program guidelines and align with Council's priorities and objectives.

- **Major Grant Rounds:**

This program comprises two rounds per year and targets diverse art streams and disciplines. Guidelines for applicants encourage alignment with State Government priorities as well as Council's strategic priorities for culture and the arts. The major grant program aims to foster new works, professional development opportunities, skill-sharing, collaboration and employment.

Applications are capped at \$12,000 and are open to individuals, groups, artist-run-initiatives and organisations. The capped funding amount has increased by \$2,000 (previously \$10,000) for the first time since its inception in recognition of overall cost increases, cost of living rises and industry feedback. Applications are assessed by the RADF Committee who provide recommendations to Council for endorsement.

The following three funding streams are quick response grants and open all year round. Applications will be assessed by three internal Creative Life staff and approved by the Director of Lifestyle and Community:

- **Individual Professional Development Program:**

This program provides funds for artists and cultural workers to participate in conferences, mentorships, capacity building activities and master classes. Grants are capped at \$1,000 for travel within Queensland, and up to \$1,500 for interstate or overseas travel costs.

- **Small Arts Grant Program:**

This program offers grants up to \$500 for artists to access a wide range of resources to support their practice, including but not limited to: materials, catalogues, framing, printing and promotions.

- **Flame.Arts Access Leg Up:**

This program will offer small grants up to the value of \$1,000 for young people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and up to \$1,500 for artists with disability. This grant stream supports projects that will enhance and enable meaningful skills development, training, and mentorship opportunities across the three specified target areas of the program. Grants will be available to organisations and/or individuals.

A significant modification to the Community Grants Program is the redistribution of the City of Arts Hero Project grant stream. One large-scale, high-calibre project was the focus of this grant round, and applicants could apply for \$25,000. Council is redirecting the investment to the Major Grant Rounds which will result in a more equitable distribution of investments and recognises significant cost increases in materials and general cost of living expenses.

The anticipated outcomes of the Community Grants Program are as follows:

- Enable and support diverse professional development and employment opportunities.
- Provide a platform for cross-sector and cross art-form partnerships and collaborations.
- Produce high-quality arts and cultural product and/or initiatives.
- Reinforce Cairns Region as the Cultural Capital of Northern Australia.

## **2. Council-led initiatives**

The intent of Council-led initiatives is to deliver a unified program of mentorships, skills and career development across music, theatre, visual art, screen and design. Council is committed to pathway programs that activate engagement with the industry from an early age that contribute to the building blocks of professional practice and future proof the industry whilst supporting regional activation.

A co-designed set of programs will see the Council working with lived experienced artists and creators that will build on previous years Council-led initiatives with three main topics: *Creative Learning, Business of the Arts, Arts & Disability*.

### **Proposed Budget Allocations for the RADF Program**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Major Round 1 & 2 (capped at \$12,000 per project)	\$174,000
Individual Professional Development	\$10,000
Small Arts Grants	\$4,400
Flame.Arts Access Leg-Up Grants	\$15,000
RADF Committee Fees	\$5,600
Creative Learning	\$11,000
Business of the Arts	\$15,000
Arts and Disability	\$5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$240,000</b>

### **Other Council Contributions and In-kind**

In order to support the RADF program Council provides other internal and external support. Based on prior years, the anticipated cost of this expenditure is estimated below and is within existing budgets:

Activity	Cash Amount	In-kind Amount
Employee costs	\$93,230	
Media and Promotion	\$2,070	
Catering and consumables for Critical Thinkers Platform, Grant Writing Workshops and Committee Meetings	\$4,140	
In-Kind Venue Hire and Equipment Hire for Critical Thinkers Platforms, Grant Writing Workshops and Committee Meetings		\$12,840
Arts and Cultural In-kind Grants connected to RADF.		\$10,700
<b>Total Cash (other)</b>	<b>\$99,440</b>	
<b>Total In-Kind</b>		<b>\$23,540</b>
<b>Total Cash and In-Kind</b>		<b>\$122,980</b>

## **OPTIONS**

1. Approves entering into a four-year agreement with Arts Queensland committing a total of \$480,000 (ex GST) from the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) budget.
2. Notes the program submission for the 2024-25 RADF to Arts Queensland.
3. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the Local Government Act 2009 to finalise all matters arising from the signing of this submission.

### Option 2:

That Council requests more information.

## **CONSIDERATIONS:**

### Risk Management:

In the event that Arts Queensland does not match Council's contribution, the RADF Program will be reduced, impeding industry growth, and decreasing the chance to address issues facing the arts and culture sector.

Council will still deliver the community grants program and Council-led initiatives however services will be reduced to fulfil policy and strategy commitments.

### Council Finance and the Local Economy:

The four-year investment plan of \$240,000 annually comprising the following contributions:

Year	Cairns Regional Council	Arts Queensland	Total
2024/25	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$240,000
2025/26	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$240,000
2026/27	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$240,000
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<b>Total</b>	<b>\$480,000</b>	<b>\$480,000</b>	<b>\$960,000</b>

The 2024/25 proposed budget represents an increase in Council's and Arts Queensland's contribution compared to previous years.

\$120,000 Council contribution is broken down as follows:

- \$105,000 is allocated in Council's 2024/2025 budget.
- \$15,000 will be redirected from the Arts & Cultural In-Kind Assistance stream and used to support RADF projects held at Council venues.

Contribution	Amount (excl. GST)
<b>Arts Queensland</b>	120,000
<b>Cairns Regional Council</b>	120,000
<b>Total Budget 2024/25</b>	<b>\$ 240,000</b>

### Corporate and Operational Plans:

The submission strategically aligns with Council's adopted Corporate Plan and the *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022*, *Arts & Disability Strategy Plan* and the *Strategy for Young Creatives*. This is achieved as follows:

- **Robust Economy:** Supporting a diversified and resilient economy that backs business innovation, growth, and jobs. This is achieved through the RADF grant program and Council-led initiatives which are designed to encourage growth in the industries workforce and activate jobs. This increases the regions reputation as a tropical, cultural and creative hub that encourages innovation whilst contributing to a mixed economy.
- **Design for Liveability:** Creating a safe, sustainable, and connected place that supports quality of life. The RADF programs delivered to date target a variety of community groups, interests, and geographical locations that stimulate activation and engagement.



- Community and Culture: Fostering a vibrant and healthy community where everyone feels they belong. RADF programs create opportunities for communities to participate in constructive activities that drives social change and encourages community integration whilst increasing skills, building capacity and breaking down barriers to participation.



Stephen Foster  
Executive Manager Creative Life



Destry Puia  
Director Lifestyle and Community