

**STRATEGY FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS 2022 REPORT CARD AND STATE OF THE ARTS IN CAIRNS REPORT 2023**

79/5/10-01 | #7392947

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council:

1. **Receives and notes the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 Report Card; and**
2. **Receives and notes the State of the Arts in Cairns Report 2023; and**
3. **Endorses the reports for promotion and public distribution.**

**INTERESTED PARTIES:**

Nil

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

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Cairns Regional Council's five-year strategy for Culture and the Arts (the Strategy) was adopted in 2018 following extensive consultation between late 2016 and 2017. During this time Council spoke with over 280 people across 84 organisations and groups to gain a better understanding of the challenges, opportunities and expectations that impact on the arts and cultural sector of the Cairns region.

Each year the Strategy has been assessed through an intense evaluation process in partnership with Associate Professor Lisa Law James Cook University (JCU) and Dr. Russell Milledge, along with research collaborator Professor Bruce Prideaux Central Queensland University (CQU).

This final assessment combines the feedback from each year's State of the Arts in Cairns Report (SoArts Report) and shows that over 90% of the Strategy goals were achieved despite two of the five years being impacted by COVID-19 and delays in reporting and assessments occurring due to key staff changes within Strategy partner organisations and the sector.

In the five-year period of the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022:

- Over two million people attended performances and 38,000 actively participated in creative engagement activations across the region.
- Over 6,000 short term job opportunities and 29 long-term job activations in the creative sector were created.

- Over 1,500 people volunteering their time with an economic worth of over one million dollars.
- Opening of two major venues: Cairns Performing Arts Centre (2018) and Court House Gallery (2021). Leading to the development of a vision to transform three existing heritage listed buildings within Cairns City Centre to create a dynamic world class gallery precinct.
- Launched the arts and culture map (2018) as a central information point for arts and culture activities across the region.
- In partnership with Arts Queensland continued to activate the Regional Arts Development Grant Fund, supporting 340 projects with over two million dollars investment.
- Increased focus on young people and programs that deliver pathways for further education and employment opportunities.
- The recruitment of an Indigenous Project Officer in 2019 and First Nations Curator in 2023 strengthening relationships with First Nations communities and activated creative programs across all art forms.
- Re-imagining historical buildings and connecting creative spaces by harnessing the natural environment through placemaking initiatives expressed in the Strategy for Public Art and Placemaking adopted by Council in 2020.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Strategy was endorsed by Council 21 February 2018 and followed three priority areas:

- Priority 1: Infrastructure, resources and skills that support and stimulate the cultural and creative life of our community. This priority focuses on the hard and soft infrastructure, resources and opportunities that will ultimately build and sustain the capacity and capability of the sector.
- Priority 2: Culture, heritage and place are valued, shared, celebrated and promoted. This priority recognises Council's corporate goal and focuses on measures for protecting, interpreting, connecting and promoting our shared cultural heritage assets.
- Priority 3: A robust cultural economy that is fuelled by our international reputation as a tropical, cultural and creative hub. This priority focuses on maximising the development opportunities that are coming our way over the next five-years and establishing our reputation as a creative city.

An implementation plan combined 26 strategies and 99 actions. This report presents the outcome of the achievements.

### **Measures for Success:**

The Strategy was monitored and evaluated over the five-year period through an annual SoArts evaluation report. A research partnership was established with JCU and CQU with the intent to provide tangible evidence of the value of culture and the arts to the livability and economy of Cairns.

The research focused on:

- Measuring the extent and change in the arts and creative industries over time (using census data, and Council/stakeholder data).
- Identifying opportunities for growth in the creative sector (using the Arts and Culture Map, and interviews with arts/culture industries).
- To produce a State of the Arts in Cairns Report summarising the data and analysis to inform appropriate, place-based development of creative industry policies.

The Strategy has resulted in the industry being supported through various creative pathway programs, facilitated through a diverse grant program which has supported the soft industry infrastructure to thrive. Whilst the achievements are many there are areas that still require attention including:

- The lack of smaller arts venues for creative production, presentation, and operations.
- The need for adequate storage to preserve and protect significant collections.
- Progressing engagement with First Nations culture.
- The importance of establishing sustainable career pathways in the cultural industries for young and emerging creatives.
- Improving connectivity between the city's historic architecture, art and cultural precincts and recreational hubs; and
- Enhancing brand identity and participation in the tourism market.

The next *Creative Life Strategy* (under development) will look to address these as well as any new emerging issues informed by Federal, State and local long term strategic planning frameworks.

### **COMMENT:**

Council's provision of direct services and industry support has led to a maturing of the sector. This has attracted strong cultural leaders to the region and has also increased ambition, capabilities and expectations. Facilitating the growth of the cultural and creative industry and supporting the sector to achieve its maximum potential is crucial. By embracing innovation and leveraging its cultural assets, and facilitating an environment for collaboration and entrepreneurship, Cairns can continue to thrive as a vibrant and sustainable economic hub for the creative sector.

The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 places a strong emphasis on celebrating and acknowledging First Nations creative expression and cultural heritage. Implementing strategies to establish ethical and co-operative processes, while also leveraging the region's national and international status as a thriving hub for Indigenous art, is leading to positive change. The emerging gallery precinct and development of a cultural centre can only be achieved within a robust and consistent strategic environment that involves promoting cultural protocols, self-determination and working within a co-design framework to effective positive outcomes.

### **OPTIONS:**

#### Option 1: (Recommended)

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 Report Card; and
2. Receives and notes the State of the Arts in Cairns Report 2023; and
3. Endorses the reports for promotion and public distribution.

#### Option 2:

That Council defers adoption of the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 Report Card and State of the Arts in Cairns Report 2023 pending further information being provided.

#### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

##### Risk Management:

The Strategy has been consistently monitored and evaluated and will continue to inform decision making until a new strategy is adopted in 2025.

##### Financial:

Council's financial investment of more than \$68m in capital and operational expenses leveraged over \$26m in grant funding from the State and Federal governments during the five year period. This combined financial input has played a vital role in propelling the development of prominent infrastructure, and enabled Council to undertake large-scale projects that would otherwise have been financially unachievable. It has also spearheaded, enabled and supported innovative programs and events that have enriched the cultural and social fabric community.

The assessment of \$1.2 million in economic worth of volunteers is modest and predicted to be higher. This is because the data captured does not include the volunteer activations across the industry, outside of Council supported programs, events and venues.

Costs related to the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 review and research study were identified within existing approved operational budgets.

##### Corporate and Operational Plans:

The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 is aligned with and informs:

- Corporate Plan 2021-2026: meeting three of the five focus areas of Robust Economy, Design for Liveability and Community & Culture.
- Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026: Arts and Culture identified as one of four pillars to support economic growth.

The Strategy is informed by and reflects three strategies that focus on Arts and Disability, Young Creatives, and Public Art and Creative Placemaking.

##### Policy:

Arts and Culture General Policy  
Public Art and Creative Placemaking General Policy  
Strategy for Young Creatives  
An Arts and Disability Strategy  
Strategy for Public Art and Creative Placemaking

## **CONSULTATION:**

The Strategy was developed via a place-based and participatory approach to cultural planning. Community engagement was undertaken between June 2016 and July 2017 where Council officers consulted with approximately 240 representatives of the Cairns arts and cultural sector across 84 organisations.

The draft Strategy was workshopped with the Executive Team as well as a Council workshop in mid-December 2017.

Throughout the implementation of the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 regular engagement, consultation and collaboration utilised the following range of research methodologies:

- Qualitative: interviews, surveys, focus groups, content analysis, case studies, narrative inquiry.
- Quantitative: audience data, ABS statistics, visitation figures, surveys.
- Mixed methods: GIS mapping, explanatory and exploratory research techniques.
- Research and development through an annual SoArts report in partnership with JCU and CQU to provide tangible evidence of the value of culture and the arts to the livability and economy of Cairns.

The Five-Year Report Card expresses and details the outcomes of the consistent consultation, engagement and activation of the Strategy.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 Report Card #7454475

Addendum 1 – Delivering Outcomes #7452622

Addendum 2 – Key Performance Indicators #7452625

Addendum 3 – Internal and External Factors and Trends #7452626

State of the Arts in Cairns Report 2023 #7452696



Stephen Foster  
Executive Manager Creative Life



Destry Puia  
Director Lifestyle and Community

STRATEGY FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS 2022

# Report Card

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# Acknowledgement of Country

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Cairns Regional Council acknowledges the First Peoples within our region who are the Traditional Custodians of this country. Traditional Custodians within the Cairns region include the Djabugay; Yirriganydji; Bulawai, Gimuy Walubara Yidinji; Mandingalbay Yidinji; Gunggandji; Dulabed and Malanbara Yidinji; Wanyurr Majay; Mamu and NgadjonJii peoples.

We pay respect to their elders past, present and future and extend that respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians within our region.



## Message from the Mayor

Cr Amy Eden  
Mayor, Cairns Regional Council

I am delighted to share the outcomes of the Strategy for Arts and Culture 2022.

This report demonstrates that there has been new investment in cultural infrastructure, an increase in public and creative participation and that we have managed to maintain a diverse program through two, very challenging COVID-19 years.

Even with these challenges we were able to meet over 90% of the goals identified in the plan.

This is a testament to Cairns region's community; we came together to ensure we stayed connected and supported each other.

Arts and culture were vital platforms for engagement during these challenging years.

Council worked with James Cook University and CQUniversity to measure impact and value of this strategy over the five-year period.

With over two million people engaged in creative activity and a further 1,586 volunteering their time demonstrates the value our community places in arts and culture.

Activating the economy through creative activities, infrastructure development and supporting skills development contributed to a very dynamic workforce, with over 6,000 short-term and 29 long-term employment opportunities.

I see this as a significant and important part of supporting a mixed economic, social and environmental ecology.

Of course, there are many challenges ahead and these are clearly identified at the end of this report.

First Nation stories and heritage is a significant part of what makes Cairns the vibrant city it is today.

We need to continue to find ways to engage and include First Nation peoples in the development of our city's rich cultural tapestry.

This report card outlines the great inroads we have made in creating accessible and welcoming places for people, culture and our stories to thrive.

However, there is more to be done to ensure the dynamic and diverse communities of Cairns are reflected in all that we do.

This will include working with our important partners and stakeholders in order to ensure the viability of arts and culture as we further our ambitions of being an international cultural destination.

The outcomes expressed in this document demonstrated that Cairns is a vibrant city with a high level of creative excellence, active engagement, and strong participations.

I want to thank all the staff, volunteers, partners, stakeholders, community members and participants, creatives, artists and so many more, for all you have done to bring this strategy to life.

Being on the ground and part of the community is very important to me because local government is about place shaping and making.

The outcomes of this strategy demonstrate the value and importance of culture in creating a sense of place, identity and citizenship.

Cairns continues to be seen as a destination of choice to live, visit, study and do business, and I look forward to leading the next iteration of this strategy and strengthening our position as a destination for culture where transformational experience is part of our everyday lives.



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# Executive Summary

*The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022* Report Card marks the completion of the strategy's five-year cycle and is the final chapter in the annual outcome reports published by Council.

This process has yielded remarkable results and accomplishments that deserve to be highlighted and celebrated. Ambitious goals have been realised through the collective efforts and dedication of the Creative Life team, project partners, stakeholders and volunteers, resulting in a significant positive influence on the Cairns community.

The report shows more than 2 million people attending events and performances, approximately 38,000 individuals actively participating in projects and programs, and over 1,500 volunteers dedicating their skills and time. This level of engagement demonstrates a strong sense of community spirit and a shared commitment to achieving the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The establishment of over 6,000 short-term and 29 long-term job opportunities is also a significant achievement, as it not only provides individuals with employment but also contributes to the region's overall economic development. Projects designed to increase attendance and participation were found to have the most significant impact on engagement. Notable contributors were the Cairns Performing Arts Centre, Munro Martin Parklands, the Tanks Art Centre, the Court House Gallery, the Cairns Festival and Council's grants program, which all played a crucial role in activating participation and attracting audiences.

Council's substantial financial investment of more than \$68m in capital and operational expenses has been bolstered by the injection of approximately \$26m in grant

funding from the State and Federal governments over the past five years. This combined financial input has played a vital role in propelling the development of prominent infrastructure, and enabled Council to undertake large-scale projects that would otherwise have been financially unachievable. It has also spearheaded, enabled and supported innovative programs and events that have enriched the cultural and social fabric of the community.

The implementation of the strategy has incorporated independent and high-level research to examine the cultural and creative influences that contribute to the city's unique creative ecosystem. Various reports such as *SoARTS* by James Cook University and Central Queensland University, *Cultural and Creative Activity in the Cairns Region* by Cummings Economics, *A Population and Hotspot Analysis* by QUT, and a *Priority Industry Profile* independent economic analysis, have all offered valuable insights into Cairns' arts and cultural sector, economy and future potential. Surveys conducted across fourteen diverse activities over the last five years have also provided insight into the strategy's impact, quality and effectiveness.

Delivering the impressive 5-year action plan was impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. In particular, years two and three were significantly affected by lock downs and social distancing, and many planned events were cancelled or postponed. However, despite these challenges, proactive measures were taken to adapt to the circumstances with online platforms to host virtual exhibitions and performances, the production of digital content, and the provision of financial support to artists and cultural organisations impaired by the pandemic.

2018 Commonwealth Games Festival



Overall, the report's findings highlight Council's commendable performance in executing the strategy. The high completion rate of specified actions and the successful attainment of set targets demonstrate Council's effectiveness in translating strategic objectives into concrete actions and results. Positive trends in the growth of hard and soft infrastructure, collaborative partnerships, audience and employment numbers, as well as high levels of appreciation, enrichment, and satisfaction experienced by audience members or project participants, are evident. In assessing the internal and institutional aspects of the strategy, it is clear that Council has achieved a greater level of dedication and commitment towards prioritising, revitalising, and sustaining the cultural life in Cairns.

Sector observations included in this report echo these achievements, but also highlight areas that still require attention: the lack of smaller arts venues for creative production, presentation, and operations; the need for adequate storage to preserve and protect significant collections; the importance of establishing sustainable career pathways in the cultural industries for young and emerging creatives; improving connectivity between the city's historic architecture, art and cultural precincts and

recreational hubs; and enhancing brand identity and participation in the tourism market.

Council's forward-thinking approach towards the arts and cultural development has played a pivotal role in transforming Cairns into a lively and dynamic hub for culture and creativity. The construction of state-of-the-arts facilities, innovative programming and the advancement of the arts and creative industry have created a vibrant and thriving cultural landscape that has elevated Cairns to a leading cultural destination in the region. Through continued investment, imaginative planning and ongoing collaboration, Council is poised to further strengthen Cairns' cultural identity and reputation on a national and international scale.

# 1. Introduction and Background

## 1.1 About the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022

The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 has guided the delivery of Cairns Regional Council's arts and cultural services over a 5-year planning cycle across the financial years 2018/19 - 2022/23.

In 2017, Council undertook an in-depth process of consultation to gain a better understanding of the arts and cultural environment in Cairns. Eighty-four organisations and groups, comprising more than 280 people across ten distinct sectors took part. The outcome shaped the content of the strategy.

Adopted in 2018, the strategic plan was launched in conjunction with large-scale projects already in the pipeline. These included significant and timely opportunities such as the Commonwealth Games 2018 - Cairns Festival Event City, the completion and opening of the new Cairns Performing Arts Centre (CPAC), and the commencement of restoration and revitalisation of the Cairns Court House linked to the overarching vision for Cairns Gallery Precinct.

These momentous opportunities were imbedded into the strategy as accelerators towards achieving its goals. The principles and core objectives of the strategy were aligned with Council's Corporate Plan 2017-2022. The strategy was underpinned by three core priorities and a suite of outcomes to be achieved by 2022, driven by an ambitious five-year plan of targeted actions and timelines.

**CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL  
STRATEGY FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS 2022  
AT A GLANCE**

**OUR VISION** In a region that is celebrated for its unique environment and diverse peoples, Cairns is a vibrant city with a high level of creative excellence, where culture and the arts are reflected in our everyday lives.

**OUR AIM** Council is well positioned to begin a brand new cultural planning cycle. Our business is to efficiently enhance, promote and develop our cultural programs and facilities, and join with our partners and the community in leveraging our collective cultural assets to build a vibrant and sustainable region.

**CORPORATE OBJECTIVES** The five-year Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 has been developed in parallel with Cairns Regional Council's Corporate Plan 2017-2022, which identifies broad strategic objectives for community and cultural development as follows:

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.
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**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**

World-class cultural facilities, including a master-planned arts precinct in the CBD.

Adequate space for cultural and creative sector operations, production and storage.

Platforms for collaboration, networking, resource-sharing, cross-promotion, knowledge-sharing and professional development.

Annual grant programs that enable and support creative practice, and seed funding for testing ideas and new collaborations.

Opportunities for cross-cultural, cross-art form, intercultural and intergenerational creative expression for people of all ages, ethnicities and abilities.

Increased focus on young people and programs that deliver pathways for further education and employment in the arts.

Evidence-based research to support and guide future decision making and investment in hard and soft cultural infrastructure and resources.

**PRIORITY TWO**

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

**Outcomes we want to see by 2022**

Preservation initiatives that protect and value the region's built and natural cultural heritage, as well as historic and contemporary collections.

Effective and collaborative procedures for programs concerning cultural knowledge and artistic expression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Diverse place-making, public art and cultural tourism programs that add value to the city's growing portfolio.

Advocacy and promotion of local heritage assets and the diverse multicultural character of our community as a source of identity and belonging.

Network of regional organisations to drive cross-promotion, project development, shared resources and professional development.

Evidence-based research to support and guide future decision-making and investment in the preservation and promotion of our shared cultural heritage and regional identity.

**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**

National and International reputation as a vibrant hub for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and creative expression.

Quality programs, events and activities that encourage visitation, maximise visitor experience and bring people to our region specifically for culture and the arts.

Strategic framework and audience development strategies to drive market exposure and income generation.

Creative and cultural industries network to drive coordinated and strategic industry development.

Focused investment in connecting and promoting our collective points of distinction and valuable cultural and creative offerings.

Evidence-based research to build a case for investment and maximise our global market opportunities.

**MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

<p><b>INTRINSIC MEASURES THAT EVALUATE:</b> New knowledge and experience gained, community satisfaction, enrichment and connectivity.</p>	<p><b>INSTRUMENTAL MEASURES THAT EVALUATE:</b> Social outcomes, participation, audience growth, income generation and economic returns.</p>	<p><b>INSTITUTIONAL MEASURES THAT EVALUATE:</b> Effective community engagement and customer service, adequate resourcing, cross-departmental and cross-government collaboration.</p>
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*Contemporary Indigenous Textiles from Australia's Tropic Zone.  
A Cairns Art Gallery Exhibition during Cairns Festival.*

## 1.2 About the Report Card

The Report Card marks a significant milestone in the planning process, signifying the completion of the strategy's 5-year cycle. It builds upon the suite of outcome reports published by Council over the past five years, as well as valuable insights generated in the State of the Arts in Cairns (*SoARTS*) research study undertaken by James Cook University and Central Queensland University.

This comprehensive report card provides an overview of the strategy's overall value and achievements, highlighting its successes, challenges and legacies, as well as the lessons learned along the way.

The report card includes a statistical analysis of the level of engagement in the strategy's diverse range of multi-disciplinary projects, programs, and infrastructure development. It also outlines the desired outcomes for 2022 and the extent to which they were achieved. Additionally, it identifies trends and recommendations for the future.

Lastly, it expresses gratitude and acknowledgement to all those who contributed to the implementation of the strategic plan, recognising their valuable participation.

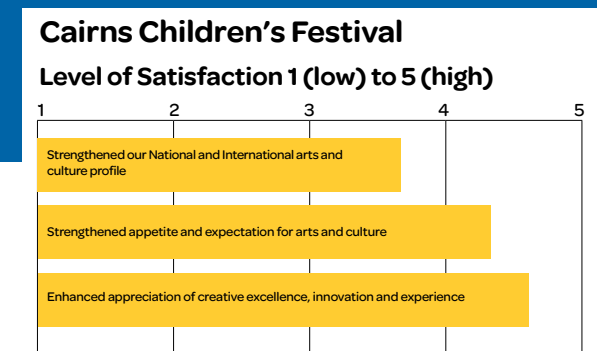
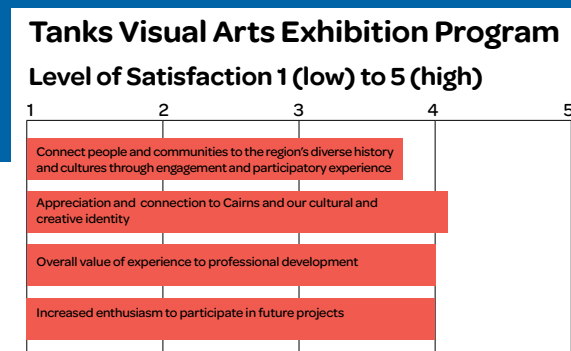
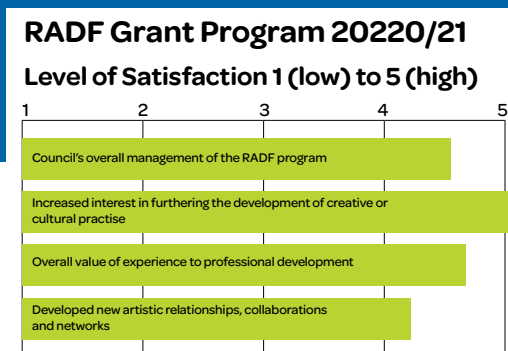
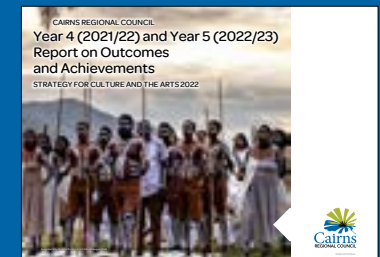
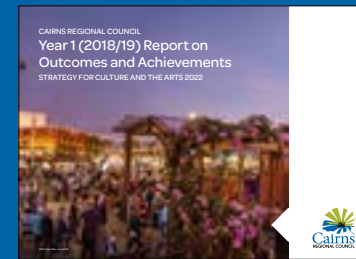
# 1.3 Monitoring, Evaluation and Sector Insights

Determining the strategy's impact, quality and effectiveness has been a crucial element in the five-year planning process. Methods of evaluation included two levels of investigation.

## 1.3.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Measures

First, internal assessment regularly collected and analysed data matched to the strategies and actions in the annual implementation plan. A series of outcome reports were published in years one, two, and three, along with a combined report for years four and five. The reports provided a quantitative snapshot of the active participation, audience numbers, volunteer efforts, short and longer-term employment opportunities created, as well as partnerships forged.

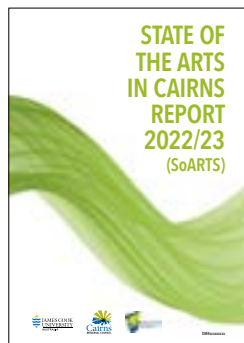
Additionally, to gain a richer understanding of community perspectives, surveys were conducted across 14 diverse projects and programs. This provided a deeper and more qualitative level of insight into community satisfaction, appreciation and engagement. The analysis and interpretation of the survey results was outsourced to a research consultant, and formed the basis of a suite of case studies included in the outcome reports.



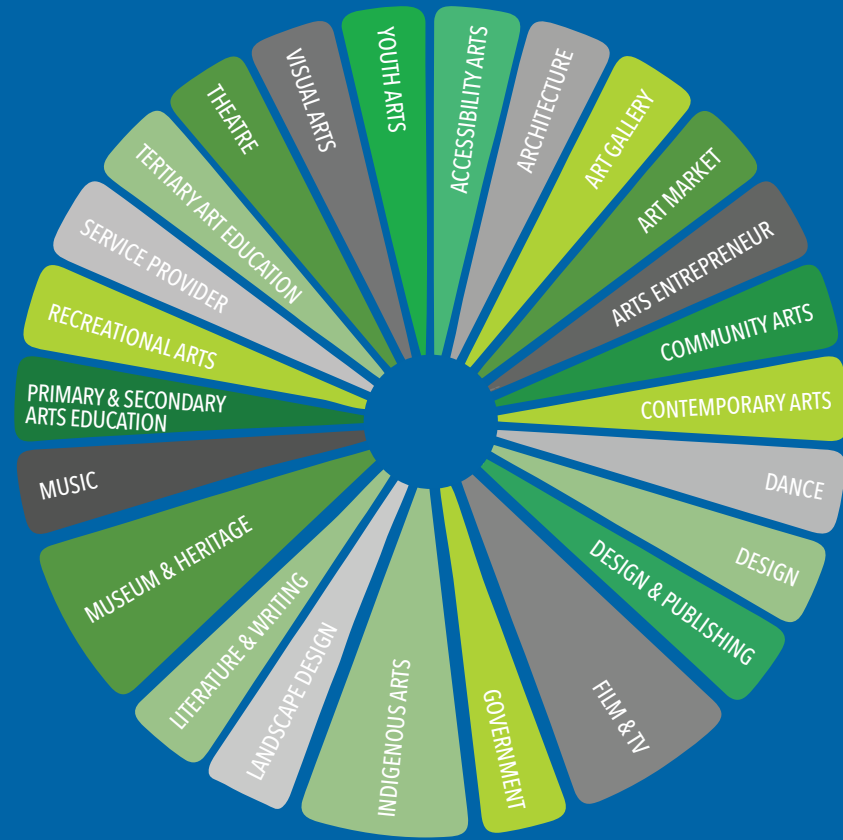
### 1.3.2 Sector Insights – State of the Arts in Cairns (SoARTS)

The second, and external level of investigation, was undertaken by James Cook University (JCU) and Central Queensland University (CQU), who were engaged to work in conjunction with the five-year strategy to provide an independent and objective study of the sector's vitality, wellbeing, resilience, and economic impact. Reports produced in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2023 represent a sequential collation and analysis of research-informed insights and recommendations relating to the three priority areas of the strategic plan.


SoARTS was driven by Chief Investigators Lisa Law and Russell Milledge from James Cook University as well as CQU Researchers Bruce Prideaux, Michelle Thompson and Leonie Cassidy. The research project was supported and guided by an Advisory Panel that included First Nations representatives and local MPs, as well as tourism, economic, education, regional development and state government agencies.



## STAKEHOLDERS



Insights and recommendations were derived from a Stakeholder Group comprising about 26 representatives of visual arts, dance, arts services, writing, recreational arts, contemporary arts, galleries, museums, art fairs, music, inclusive arts, arts education, Indigenous design, landscape design, architecture, publishing, theatre and education. \*(1)

A woman with curly hair, wearing a black sleeveless top and blue jeans, is looking up and to the right in an art gallery. The background shows various artworks on the wall, including a large abstract painting with blue and white tones and a smaller one with orange and green. There are also some circular objects hanging from the ceiling.

*Curate Create Exhibition 2022, a Flame.Arts project.*

## 2. Stats and Facts

The following section of the report provides a statistical snapshot of the strategy's engagement levels over the past five years, and is compiled from the annual outcome reports mentioned in 1.3.1.

While we have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the collected figures, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations and anomalies:

- The statistics presented in our annual outcome reports do not include data from high-value and high-output partnerships such as the Council-subsidised Cairns Art Gallery, Cairns Museum, and Cairns Indigenous Art Fair.
- Where possible, this report incorporates statistics derived from Council's grant programs for arts and cultural activities. However, it is important to note that there is a gap in the data due to the timing of grant recipient acquittals. The COVID-19 pandemic and the necessity to prioritise and reshape programming may have also led to some irregularities in data collection.
- It is important to note that the year-on-year breakdown of data in the strategy's three Priority Areas (P13) may not always reflect the actual level of involvement in each area. There are some irregularities in the tabulation of data, where information for a particular project may have been recorded under a different Priority, based on its location or if its final result was included in a main or lead project.

As mentioned above, variances and anomalies have been identified in the data collection process and it is believed these irregularities have, to a degree, underestimated the findings. Additional clarification and information can be found in Section 2.4.



The figures illustrate the extensive engagement in the wide-ranging projects, programs, and infrastructure development undertaken throughout the five-year strategic planning period. These initiatives embraced multidisciplinary methods to tackle different facets of the strategy, and a holistic and cohesive approach towards attaining its objectives.



**38,372**  
PEOPLE ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED



**1,586**  
PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED THEIR SKILLS AND TIME



**2,147,932**  
PEOPLE WERE AUDIENCE MEMBERS

**2,194,090**  
TOTAL ENGAGEMENT ACROSS THE FIVE-YEAR PLANNING CYCLE



## 2.1 Overall Engagement



**6,171**  
SHORT-TERM EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WERE CREATED



**29**  
LONGER-TERM EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITES WERE CREATED

## 2.2 Year-on-Year Statistics

The below figures illustrate the year-on-year contrasts in engagement within projects, programs and infrastructure development carried out over the five years. Variations can largely be explained by the impact of COVID-19, as events, venues and organisations were affected by lockdowns and border closures in 2020 and 2021, and to a lesser extent in 2022. Note also that the 2018/19 (Year 1) reporting year included 3 months of data from the previous financial year and the large-scale Commonwealth Games 2018 Festival. For further clarification, please refer to section 2.4 (Notes to Year-on-Year Statistics).

	YEAR 1 (2018/2019)	YEAR 2 (2019/2020)	YEAR 3 (2020/2021)	YEAR 4 (2021/2022)	YEAR 5 (2022/2023)	TOTAL
<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	9,240	7,949	4,689	7,755	8,739	38,372
<b>AUDIENCE</b>	723,789	244,891	177,177	442,510	559,565	2,147,932
<b>VOLUNTEERS</b>		406	332	351	497	1,586
<b>EMPLOYMENT SHORT TERM</b>	2,322	977	644	1,104	1,124	6,171
<b>EMPLOYMENT LONG TERM</b>	14	7	5	1	2	29

## 2.3 Year-on-Year Statistics across the Three Priority Areas

The information below shows the levels of engagement observed each year in the strategy's three priority areas. As expected, there is a high level of engagement in Priority Areas 1 and 3, which focus on both hard and soft infrastructure, as well as programs, events, and activities designed to encourage visitation and participation. It's important to mention that there are some irregularities in the data, such as projects and programs in Priority 2 that have created opportunities for audience members, participants, volunteers, or employment in a 'lead' project. An example is the production and staging of *Beginnings* as part of the Commonwealth Games 2018 Festival, where participant and employment data has been included in the figures for the Commonwealth Games Festival in Priority 1, while audience figures have been collected for Munro Martin Parklands statistics in Priority 3.

	PRIORITY 1: Infrastructure, Resources & Skills					PRIORITY 2: Culture, Heritage & Place					PRIORITY 3: A Robust Cultural Economy				
	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
ACTIVE PARTICIPATION	4,841	2,311	2,043	2,681	3,331	318	664	1,197	527	658	4,081	4,974	1,449	4,547	4,750
AUDIENCE	543,900	140,616	47,184	81,114	110,677	429	1,322	1,899	2,502	5,224	179,460	102,953	128,094	358,894	443,664
VOLUNTEERS		262	270	232	289		30	31	22	33		114	31	97	175
SHORT-TERM EMPLOYMENT	1,769	160	156	359	315	79	13	29	20	33	474	804	459	725	776
LONG-TERM EMPLOYMENT	14	6	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	3	0	1
TOTALS YEARLY FIGURES	550,524	143,355	49,653	84,387	114,612	826	2,029	3,158	3,071	5,949	184,015	108,846	130,036	364,263	449,366
PRIORITY TOTALS	942,531					15,033					1,236,526				
TOTAL ENGAGEMENT 2018/2022 - 2,194,090															

## 2.4 Notes to Year-on-Year Statistics

The following section of the report provides details on the variations observed during the implementation of the strategic plan.

### PARTICIPATION AND AUDIENCE

- Year 1 (2018/19)** generated the highest levels of active participation and audience attendance over the five-year planning cycle. It should be noted that the Year 1 reporting year included 3 months of data from the previous financial year, the opening of the new Cairns Performing Arts Centre, as well as the large-scale Commonwealth Games 2018 Festival. The top five contributors to engagement were: Cairns Festival; participants and audiences associated with Council's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; TANKS exhibition and public programs; Commonwealth Games Festival 2018; CPAC and Munro Martin Parklands (MMP) program.
- Year 2 (2019/20)** experienced a decline in participation and audience numbers due to the emergence of COVID-19 and the suspension of many planned activities. There was a decrease of approximately 13.9% in participation rates and a massive 66% decrease in audience numbers compared to the previous year. The top five contributors to engagement were: Cairns Festival; CPAC and MMP programs; TANKS exhibition and public programs; participants and audiences associated with Council's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; and Vibrance Magazine.
- Year 3 (2020/21)** international and national border closures, venue restrictions and event cancellations resulted in a further 41% decrease in participation rates and a 2765% decrease in audience numbers compared to the previous year. Recovery strategies began to re-engage local audiences with all local programming and live streaming. The top five contributors to engagement were: CPAC and MMP programming and recovery concert series; TANKS exhibition and public programs; participants and audiences associated with Council's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; Court House Gallery program; and Vibrance Magazine.
- Year 4 (2021/22)** witnessed a 65% increase in participation rates and a massive 149.75% increase in audience numbers compared to the previous year, as lockdowns eased, some national borders re-opened and audience confidence returned. The top five contributors to engagement were: participants and audiences associated with Council's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; the continuation of MMP and CPAC recovery concert series; Cairns Festival; Court House Gallery program; and TANKS exhibition and public programs.
- Year 5 (2022/23)** saw a further 12.68% increase in participation rates and 26.45% increase in audience numbers from the previous year with the full easing of lockdowns, the opening up of national and international borders, and audience confidence at its highest level since the pandemic began. The top five contributors to engagement were: TANKS exhibition and public programs; participants and audiences associated with Council's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; Cairns Festival; CPAC and MMP programs; and Vibrance Magazine.

#### PARTICIPATION



#### AUDIENCE



● YEAR 1
 ● YEAR 2
 ● YEAR 3
 ● YEAR 4
 ● YEAR 5

# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Year 1 (2018/19)** generated the highest levels of employment opportunities, noting that the Year 1 reporting year included 3 months of data from the previous financial year and the large-scale Commonwealth Games 2018 Festival. The top five contributors to short and long-term employment were: CPAC and the Court House Gallery capital works which account for over 1,600 short-term jobs and 14 longer-term opportunities; employment generated from Council's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; Commonwealth Games Festival 2018; TANKS exhibition and public programs; and Cairns Festival.
- Year 2 (2019/20)** With the emergence of COVID-19, a decline of approximately 57.9% short-term and 50% longer-term employment numbers were seen compared to the previous year. The top five contributors to short and long-term employment were: capital works projects including the Court House Gallery refurbishment and Stage 2 of MMP upgrade; CPAC operations (1 full-time and 5 casual positions); Cairns Festival; CPAC and MMP programs; and TANKS exhibition and public programs.
- Year 3 (2020/21)** With the continuation of snap lock-downs, travel and venue restrictions affecting the delivery of live performances and large-scale events, there was a further decline of 34.08% in short-term employment and 28.57% in longer-term employment from the previous year. Recovery strategies began to re-engage local audiences with all local programming and live streaming. The top five contributors to short and longer-term employment were: MMP and CPAC programming and recovery concert series; employment generated from Council's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; TANKS exhibition and public programs; the official opening of the Court House Gallery; and Public Art.
- Year 4 (2021/22)** witnessed a massive 71.42% increase in short-term employment compared to the previous year as some national borders reopened and audience confidence returned. While only 1 long-term position was created, the top five contributors to short-term employment were: the continuation of MMP and CPAC recovery concert series; employment generated from Council's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; TANKS exhibition and public programs; Cairns Festival; and Cairns Children's Festival.
- Year 5 (2022/23)** The full easing of lockdowns and the opening up of national and international borders saw a small 1.8% increase in short-term employment and 2 long-term employment opportunities created. The top five contributors to short and longer-term employment were: employment generated from Council's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; TANKS exhibition and public programs; MMP & CPAC programs; Cairns Children's Festival; and Cairns Festival.

## SHORT TERM EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES GENERATED



## LONG TERM EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES GENERATED

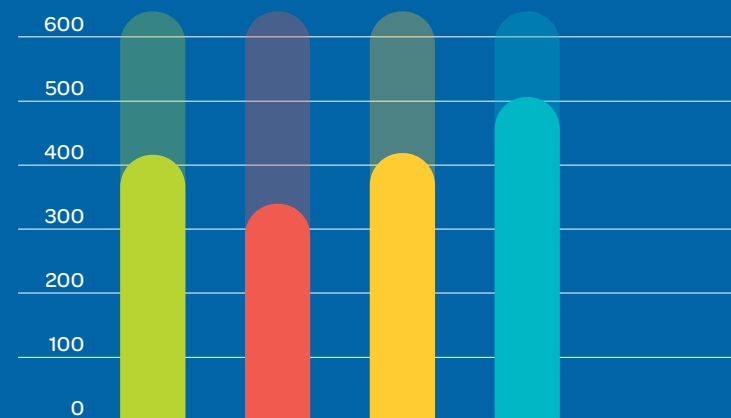


● YEAR 1
 ● YEAR 2
 ● YEAR 3
 ● YEAR 4
 ● YEAR 5

# VOLUNTEERS

- **Year 1 (2018/19)** No volunteer data was recorded in Year 1. This shortcoming in the reporting system was rectified in the following years of the strategic planning cycle.
- **Year 2 (2019/20)** An estimated 406 people volunteered their skills and time. The top five projects and programs supported by volunteers were: volunteers associated with CRC's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; Arts and Cultural In-kind Assistance Program; Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Grant; Creative Life Arts and Events Volunteer Program; Shadows of the Past Theatrical Tour of McLeod Street Pioneer Cemetery.
- **Year 3 (2020/21)** An estimated 332 people volunteered their skills and time (a decrease of 18.23% from the previous year). The top five projects and programs supported by volunteers were: volunteers associated with CRC's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; Creative Life Arts and Events Volunteer Program; Cairns Children's Festival; Shadows of the Past Theatrical Tour of McLeod Street Pioneer Cemetery; and Understory Film Festival.
- **Year 4 (2021/22)** An estimated 351 people volunteered their skills and time (an increase of 5.7%). The top five projects and programs supported by volunteers were: volunteers associated with CRC's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; Creative Life Arts and Events Volunteer Program; Cairns Festival; Cairns Children's Festival; and MMP concert series.
- **Year 5 (2022/23)** An estimated 497 people volunteered their skills and time (an increase of 41%). The top five projects and programs supported by volunteers were: volunteers associated with CRC's grants program supporting community-driven arts and cultural activities; Creative Life Arts and Events Volunteer Program; Court House Gallery program; Cairns Festival; and Cairns Children's Festival.
- It is important to note that the estimated economic benefit of volunteer services to Council's programming and service delivery over the past five years is approximately \$1.2m, calculated by assuming that each year the abovementioned volunteers worked one hour per month and based on the national minimum wage per hour income.

## VOLUNTEERS



● YEAR 2 ● YEAR 3 ● YEAR 4 ● YEAR 5

## 2.5 Comparisons between Cultural Planning Cycles

Comparison across the two 5-year planning cycles shows a marked increase in the level of engagement in terms of active participation, audience and attendances, as well as short and long-term employment opportunities. Volunteer numbers were not captured in the evaluation of the 2009/14 years.

The construction and programming of significant infrastructure projects like the Cairns Performing Arts Centre (CPAC), Munro Martin Parklands, and the Court House Gallery have been catalysts for achieving these results. These projects have successfully transformed into lively and dynamic destinations. In addition to this, the 2018 Commonwealth Games 12-day art and cultural program in Cairns, and the continuous growth of the City's arts and cultural festivals and events has attracted visitors, generated employment, and encouraged greater participation.

2009/2014

PARTICIPANTS

19,728

AUDIENCE

1,670,179

SHORT TERM  
EMPLOYMENT

1,151

LONG TERM  
EMPLOYMENT

10

2018/2022

PARTICIPANTS

38,442

AUDIENCE

2,147,932

SHORT TERM  
EMPLOYMENT

6,171

LONG TERM  
EMPLOYMENT

29

VOLUNTEERS

1,586

## 2.6 Council’s Investment in the Arts and Culture 2019-2023

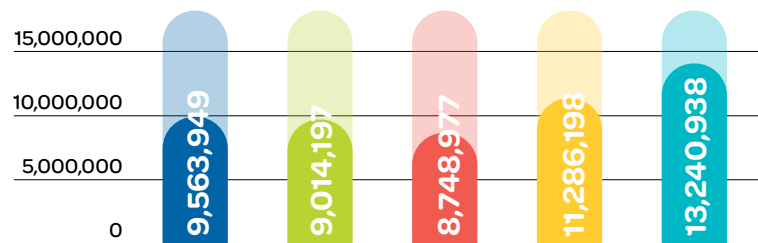
The below investment is testament to Council’s commitment to growing the City’s presence as a hub for artistic and cultural expression. Operational and capital expenditure over the past five years equates to more than \$68m. Over the course of the five-year planning cycle, Council has secured about \$26m in grant funding. This injection has played a crucial role in driving the development of prominent infrastructure and valuable assets, along with new events and the specialist staff to effectively support and facilitate Council’s vision.

Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022

# Vision

“In a region that is celebrated for its unique environment and diverse peoples, Cairns is a vibrant city with a high level of creative excellence, where culture and the arts are reflected in our everyday lives”

### OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE



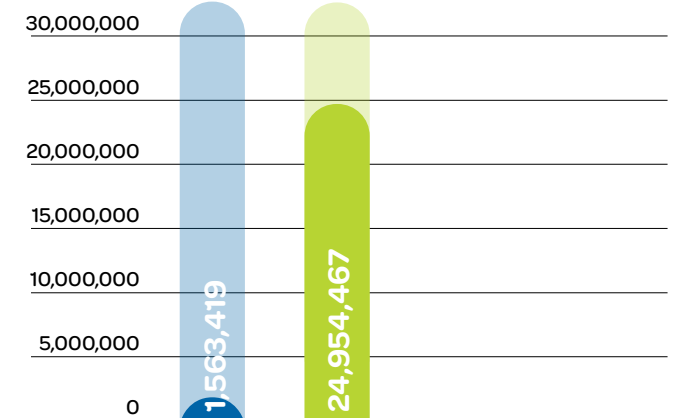
### CAPITAL EXPENDITURE



**TOTAL EXPENDITURE \$68,129,162**



### STATE & FEDERAL GRANT INCOME 2018/2023



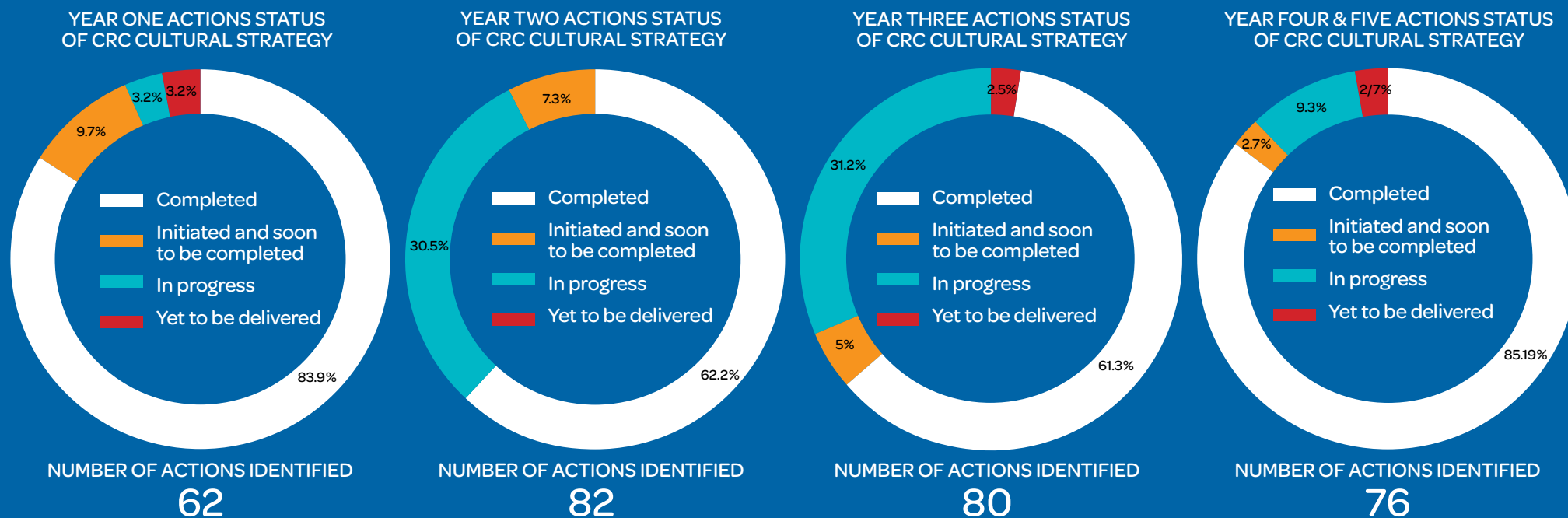
**TOTAL GRANT INCOME \$26,517,886,87**





## 2.7 Implementing Strategic Actions

The Strategy's Action Plan guided the implementation of key annual objectives. The below chart provides an overview of the targets that were accomplished over the five-year cycle.



Years two and three were significantly affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many planned events, exhibitions, and performances were cancelled or postponed, resulting in a decline in actions that were 'completed to a tangible outcome' and a rise in projects that were 'in progress'.

Despite these challenges, efforts were made to adapt to the conditions. This included the development of online platforms for virtual exhibitions and performances, the creation of digital

content, and the provision of financial assistance to affected artists and cultural organisations.

Overall, with only a minimal percentage (3%) of actions left incomplete, the set targets have virtually been successfully reached.

Incomplete or yet to be delivered items are further discussed in Section 6 (Insights, Observations and Recommendations).

# 3. Delivering Outcomes

The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 established three key priorities.

Focusing effort on soft and hard infrastructure, celebrating and communicating Cairns' shared identity, and supporting economic sustainability enabled meaningful progress towards the desired goals.

The following section offers a glimpse into the notable achievements. While not comprehensive, it provides a condensed view of some of the most meaningful results that exemplify the strategy's impact.

**Refer to Addendum 1** for a comprehensive overview of the outcomes achieved, and how they align with the strategy's intended goals and measures for success.

## KEY PRIORITIES

### PRIORITY 1

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

### PRIORITY 2

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

### PRIORITY 3

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

### OUTCOMES WE WANT TO SEE BY 2022

World-class cultural facilities, including a master-planned arts precinct in the CBD.

Adequate space for cultural and creative sector operations, production and storage.

Platforms for collaboration, networking, resource-sharing, cross-promotion, knowledge-sharing and professional development.

Annual grant programs that enable and support creative practice, and seed funding for testing ideas and new collaborations.

Opportunities for cross-cultural, cross-art form, intercultural and intergenerational creative expression for people of all ages, ethnicities and abilities.

Increased focus on young people and programs that deliver pathways for further education and employment in the arts.

### OUTCOMES WE WANT TO SEE BY 2022

Preservation initiatives that protect and value the region's built and natural cultural heritage, as well as historic and contemporary collections.

Effective and collaborative procedures for programs concerning cultural knowledge and artistic expression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Diverse place-making, public art and cultural tourism programs that add value to the city's growing portfolio.

Advocacy and promotion of local heritage assets and the diverse multicultural character of our community as a source of identity and belonging.

Network of regional organisations to drive cross-promotion, project development, shared resources and professional development.

Evidence-based research to support and guide future decision-making and investment in the preservation and promotion of our shared cultural heritage and regional identity.

### OUTCOMES WE WANT TO SEE BY 2022

National and International reputation as a vibrant hub for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and creative expression.

Quality programs, events and activities that encourage visitation, maximise visitor experience and bring people to our region specifically for culture and the arts.

Strategic framework and audience development strategies to drive market exposure and income generation.

Creative and cultural industries network to drive coordinated and strategic industry development.

Focused investment in connecting and promoting our collective points of distinction and valuable cultural and creative offerings.

Evidence-based research to build a case for investment and maximise our global market opportunities.

# KEY OUTCOMES PRIORITY ONE

## What we wanted to see by 2022:

World-class cultural facilities, including a master-planned arts precinct in the CBD.

**Cairns Performing Arts Centre:** The \$71 million CPAC co-funded by the Federal Government's National Stronger Regions Fund and Queensland Government's Arts Qld, opened in December 2018. The venue offers a 941-seat main auditorium and 400-seat studio theatre equipped with high-quality technical equipment and support.



**Court House Gallery:** The \$8.28m refurbishment and adaptive re-use of the former Cairns Court House began in 2019 in step with the building's significant heritage values along with broader CBD precinct development plans. Officially opened in February 2021, the Court House Gallery serves as a gathering place and a high-level art and cultural presentation space.



**Munro Martin Parklands:** Since its redevelopment in 2016, Munro Martin Parklands has become the most popular outdoor venue in Cairns. The green proscenium stage, the largest in Australia has hosted world-class performances such as Queensland Opera's Barber of Seville, Circa's new circus, Grammy Award-winning Soweto Gospel Choir, and the contemporary music of Passenger and the Waifs.



**Cairns Gallery Precinct:** Supported by a \$10m Federal Government grant, Council's vision to transform three existing heritage-listed buildings within the Cairns city centre to create a dynamic and world class gallery precinct, is underway. In July 2022, expressions of interest were advertised in the search for innovative designs to master-plan a unique cultural destination.



# KEY OUTCOMES PRIORITY ONE

## What we wanted to see by 2022:

Platforms for collaboration, networking, resource-sharing, cross-promotion, knowledge-sharing and professional development.

### Tanks Art Centre Multi-Artform

#### Residency Program

caters to a range of arts practitioners including visual arts, music, writing, performance, multi-media and community cultural development.



### Court House Gallery Curators

#### Symposium and a Taste of Culture

Series offered workshops and opportunities for the arts community to come together, share ideas and discuss future projects.



### The Understory

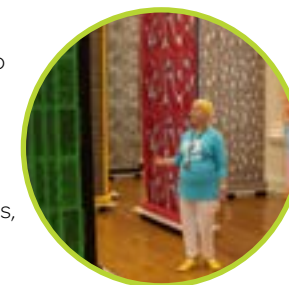
#### Symposium

is a vital component of the Understory Film Festival designed to stimulate discussion, knowledge-sharing and cross-artform and cross-sector collaboration.



### The Creative Life Volunteer Program

is a valuable and growing network of people in the community who contribute to the success of Council's galleries, festivals, and events.



## What we wanted to see by 2022

The arts and cultural grant program supported a multi-dimensional range of initiatives, with the full suite of grants circulating around \$2.8m in funding across 340 projects. The grants were designed to build and sustain the viability and productivity of community-based organisations, and enhance the capacity and capability of local artists, as well as cultural and creative practitioners.

IN-KIND  
\$219,687

ARTS & CULTURAL  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
\$344,067

COMMUNITY  
PARTNERSHIPS  
EVENTS  
(Producing Cultural &  
Creative Content)  
\$1,252,188

RADF  
\$1,063,479

# KEY OUTCOMES PRIORITY TWO

## What we wanted to see by 2022:

Diverse place-making, public art and cultural tourism programs that add value to the city's growing portfolio.

### Cairns City Centre Master Plan

adopted by Council in 2019 to guide the ongoing evolution of public spaces within the Cairns City Centre through five key public space project opportunities.



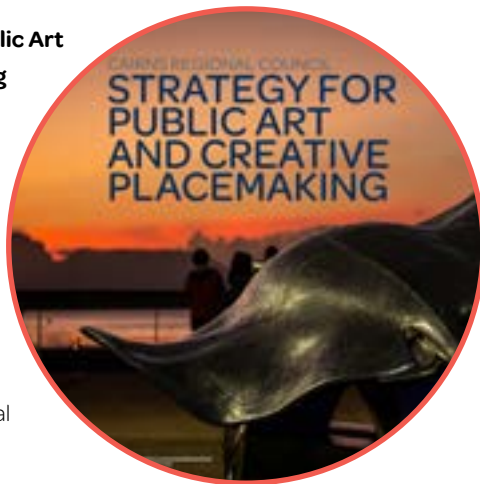
### Streetscape Master Plan for Palm Cove

endorsed by Council in 2022 to guide renewal and development of the foreshore, including opportunities for creative placemaking and public art.



### Strategy for Public Art and Placemaking

adopted by Council in 2020 to promote the integration of public art and creative processes into Council's urban design and renewal projects.



### Cairns & Great Barrier Reef Event Strategy 2025

updated and endorsed by Council in 2022 to deliver strong collaboration between Council, Tourism Tropical North Queensland and Tourism and Events Queensland.

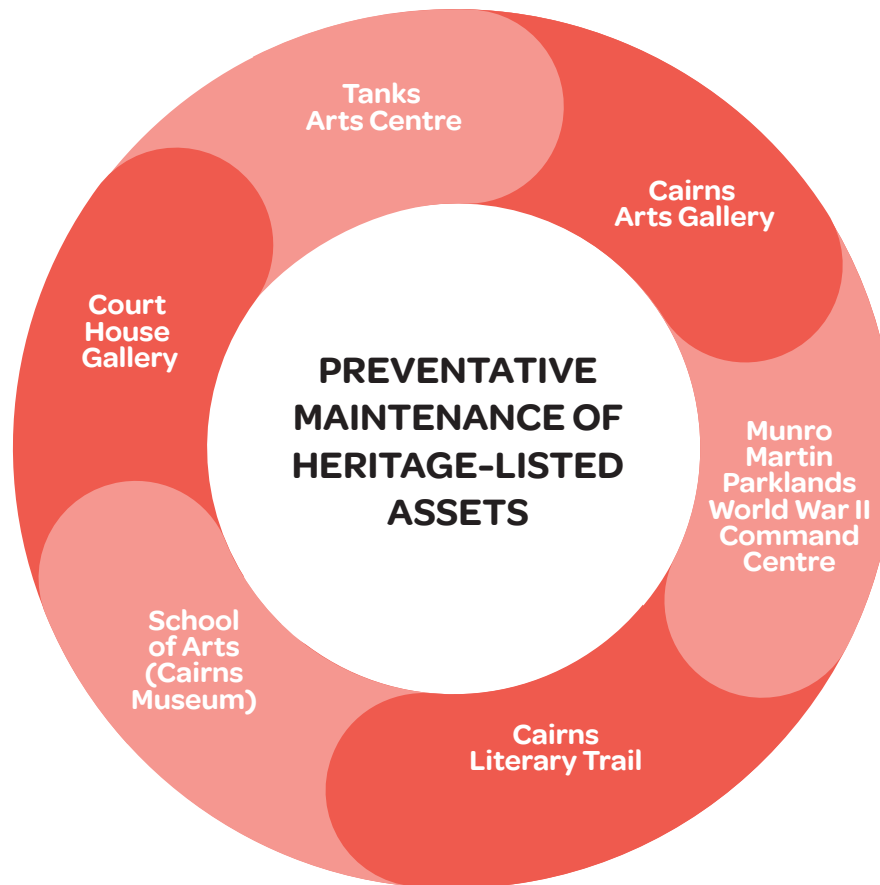


# KEY OUTCOMES **PRIORITY TWO**

## What we wanted to see by 2022

Preservation initiatives that protect and value the region's built and natural heritage, as well as historic and contemporary collections.

**Effective Preventative Maintenance:** Ongoing preventative maintenance across the region's shared and significant cultural heritage and historical assets has been undertaken in accordance with conservation management plans.



# KEY OUTCOMES **PRIORITY TWO**

## **What we wanted to see by 2022**

Effective collaborative procedures for programs concerning cultural knowledge and artistic expression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**Collaboration and Partnerships:** High-level partnerships, collaboration, resource-sharing and co-production have seeded the development of an impressive range of projects. Examples include, but are by no means limited to the following:

**ANNUAL CIAF PROGRAM** Tanks Arts Centre & Court House Gallery

**A TASTE OF CULTURE WORKSHOP SERIES** Umi Arts & Court House

**MASTER PLANNING** Cairns Gallery Precinct & Court House Gallery

**PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE EXHIBITION** Court House Gallery

**JINA'S JOURNEY** Miriki Performing Arts & CPAC

**PUBLIC ART INSTALLATIONS** Shields Street Heart

**PASSING THE TORCH** Giringun Aboriginal Art Centre

**BILLUM STORIES EXHIBITION** Court House Gallery

**WOVEN** Sounds of AustraNesia & CPAC

**HOT BROWN HONEY** Creative Development & CPAC

**COLOURFUL COUNTRY** Pompokuraaw Art and Culture Centre

**MIXED BLOOD EXHIBITION** Tanks arts Centre

# KEY OUTCOMES PRIORITY THREE

## What we wanted to see by 2022:

A national and international reputation as a vibrant hub for Indigenous culture and creative expression.

### **Purpose-built Gallery:**

Stages 4 and 5 of the Cairns Gallery Precinct include development of the master plan to connect Cairns Art Gallery, the Court House Gallery, and the Mulgrave Gallery. Central to the design is the additional inclusion of a purpose-built gallery that will act as a destination point for First Peoples artists and Arts Centres throughout the Cape, and expose authentic Indigenous art to national and international audiences.

### **Outcome-focused Partnerships:**

Supporting First Nations creative industries has been realised across Council's flagship venues. The Court House Gallery, CPAC, MMP and the Tanks Arts Centre have each seeded the development, presentation and promotion of a diverse range of exhibitions, public art, theatre, fashion, festivals, artist talks and workshops.

### **Supporting Signature Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Festivals and Celebrations:**

The on-going provision of grants and resources has supported a vibrant calendar of First Nations festivals and celebrations that have added value to the city's Indigenous arts and cultural experiences

### **Advocacy and Collaboration:**

Council has played a solid support and advocacy role in the development of the State Government's Bulmba-ja Arts Centre, and Creative Life has continued to support and collaborate with its resident companies.



# KEY OUTCOMES PRIORITY THREE

## What we wanted to see by 2022:

Quality programs, events and activities that encourage visitation, maximise visitor experience and bring people to our region specifically for culture and the arts.

**Commonwealth Games Festival 2018:** The State granted Council \$1,400,000 (excl GST) to design, manage, secure, market and deliver the Event City Festival in Cairns in accordance with a range of creative principles. The 12-day Arts and Cultural Festival was designed to create a positive, long-lasting legacy and build the region's reputation as a hot spot for the arts.



**Cairns Festival:** Continued investment in Cairns Festival via innovative and contemporary programming as well as development of partnerships that attract new work, provided opportunities for creative exchange and fusion of local, national and international influences.



**Understory Film Festival:** The annual film event for North Queensland filmmakers has grown from strength to strength and will celebrate 10 years in 2023. Understory receives films created by emerging and established filmmakers of all ages, coming from as far south as Townsville and reaching north to the Torres Strait.



**Cairns Summer Sounds:** Council's partnership with Tourism Events Queensland and Tropical Tourism North Queensland was initiated in 2020 to stimulate visitation. The 2020 and 2023 series brought some of the biggest names of the Australian music scene to Cairns and promoted the city nationally and internationally as a destination for the arts and entertainment.



# KEY OUTCOMES PRIORITY THREE

## What we wanted to see by 2022:

Focused investment in connecting and promoting our collective points of distinction and valuable cultural and creative offerings

### **The Cairns Arts and Culture Map:**

Launched in 2018, the Cairns Arts and Culture Map is a one-stop-shop for information on the city's arts and cultural offerings. Council-owned and privately-owned art and cultural facilities are listed, including venues for hire, historic sites, information about festivals and cultural organisations. Creative businesses and individual artists create their own entry and can use the site to promote their practice and find like-minded people to network and collaborate with.



**Vibrance magazine:** Launched in 2021, the publication is a comprehensive resource that showcases the arts and cultural programs produced by Cairns Regional Council. Since its launch, this bi-monthly magazine has established itself as a go-to guide for all the exciting happenings at CPAC, Munro Martin Parklands, the Court House, and Tanks Arts Centre. Moreover, it provides valuable insights into grants, spaces for hire, creative developments, festivals, outcomes of artists-in-residence programs, and the latest public art installations.



# 4. Measuring Our Success

## PRIORITY 1 Measures Met

### Intrinsic

- Community satisfaction
- Exposure to knowledge, skills & experience
- Sector confidence, resource sharing, networking & connectivity.

### Instrumental

- Accessible & affordable facilities commensurate with needs and expected growth of the Cairns community
- Increased collaborations, partnerships & networking across the sector.
- Increased sector sustainability, capacity & capability.

### Institutional

- Increased investment in step with infrastructure needs & aspirations of the community
- Improved capacity, usage & promotion of cultural facilities
- Effective frontline services that focus on community engagement & communication.

## PRIORITY 2 Measures Met

### Intrinsic

- Appreciation of the region's Indigenous & multicultural history
- Connection to place & strong cultural identity
- Visible, engaging, accessible & vibrant spaces & places.

### Instrumental

- Increased protection, conservation & promotion of the region's heritage assets & contemporary collections
- Reinvigorated culture-led revitalisation of urban spaces & places
- Increased cross-cultural and cross-artform exchange.

### Institutional

- Effective & best practice preventative maintenance of significant heritage assets
- Improved collaboration and partnerships in place-making, urban planning, public art and interpretive projects
- Improved participatory processes for promotion & interpretation.

## PRIORITY 3 Measures Met

### Intrinsic

- Creative excellence, innovation & enrichment
- Growing appetite & expectation for quality contemporary works, programs & products
- Ability to project our arts and cultural brand nationally & internationally.

### Instrumental

- Increased cultural and creative export flowing from the region
- Increased profile as a city of the arts, growth in audience numbers & employment opportunities
- Increased demand for creative product unique to Cairns.

### Institutional

- Strategies & resources in place to guide economic development
- Programming that attracts new audiences
- Increased cross-departmental and cross-government, corporate and business sector partnerships & collaboration.

Determining the strategy's impact and effectiveness has been an important element in the planning process.

Evaluation metrics were established for each of the priority areas of the strategic plan, based on three fundamental values: *Intrinsic values*, evaluating the strategy's impact on delivering meaningful, innovative, and enriching experiences; *Instrumental values*, assessing the strategy's effectiveness in enhancing or increasing outcomes like collaborations, partnerships, audience numbers, and employment opportunities; and *Institutional values*, reviewing Council's performance in terms of the processes, methods, and approaches used to create value for the community.

**Addendum (2)** contains a full *Key Performance Indicators Report* prepared by external consultant, Dr Julie Carmody.

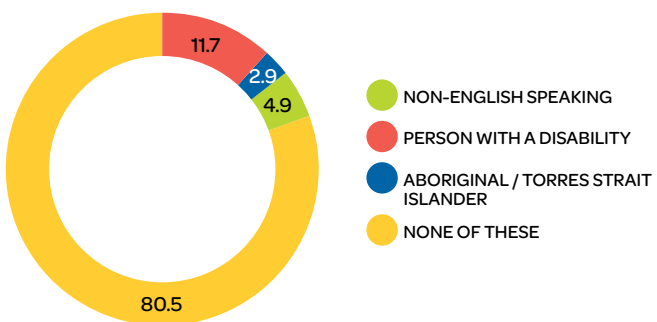
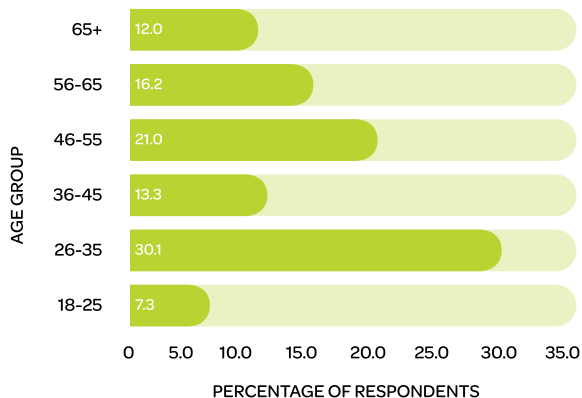
Carmody's findings, coupled with the outcomes identified in this report, reveal successful achievement of the following:

- **Intrinsic Measures** - a positive trend and pleasing level of enrichment, appreciation, new knowledge and satisfaction
- **Instrumental Measures** - an increase in hard and soft infrastructure, collaborative partnerships, culture-led revitalisation, audience and employment numbers
- **Institutional Measures** - a heightened dedication and commitment to prioritising, revitalising and sustaining the cultural life in Cairns.

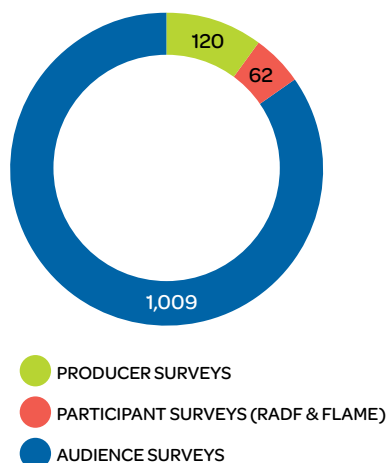
# 4.1 Snapshot of Survey Results

The following section of the report provides a summary of the results obtained from 14 surveys involving audiences, producers, and participants engaged in various projects, programs and activities implemented by the strategy. Surveys were conducted across a range of festivals, events, performances and grant activities over the course of the five years, with a total of 1,191 responses received.

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



## RESPONSES RECEIVED



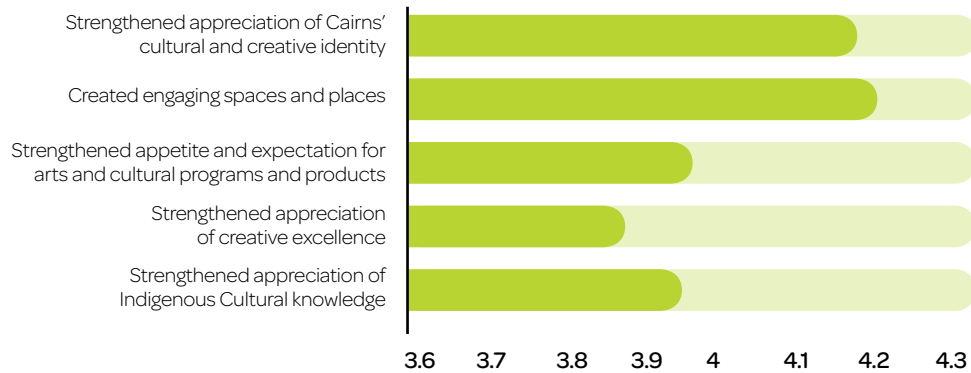
AUDIENCE SURVEY
Beginnings - A Musical Story of Cairns (2018)
Cairns Festival (2018)
Wicked (2019)
Covid Live Recovery (2020)
Understory Film Festival (2020)
Cairns Children's Festival (2021)
PRODUCER SURVEY
Beginnings - A Musical Story of Cairns (2018)
Cairns Festival (2018)
Beyond the Waves (2020)
Cairns Children's Festival (2021)
Tank 4 Exhibition (2021)
Court House Gallery (2023)
PARTICIPANT SURVEY
RADF Program (2021)
Grant Recipient Flame Arts (2023)

# SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

## Experience, Enrichment and Appreciation

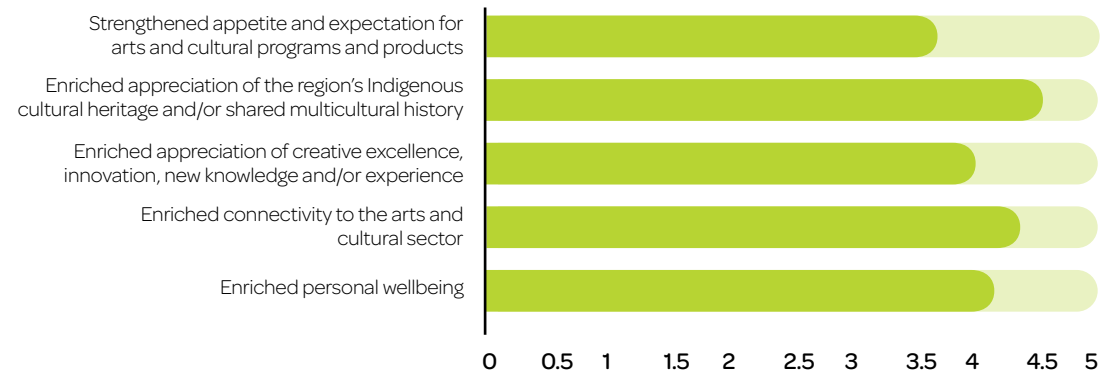
### AUDIENCE

#### Attending an event enriched personal experience



### PRODUCERS AND PARTICIPANTS

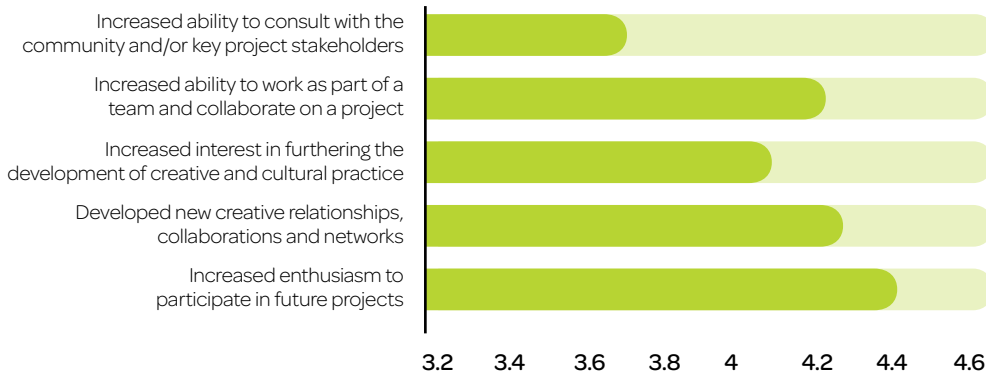
#### Involvement in event enriched personal experience



## Exposure to New Knowledge, Skills and Experiences

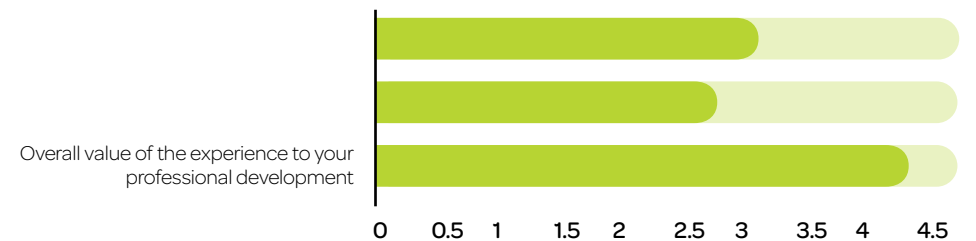
### PRODUCERS AND PARTICIPANTS

#### Involvement in activity enhanced professional development



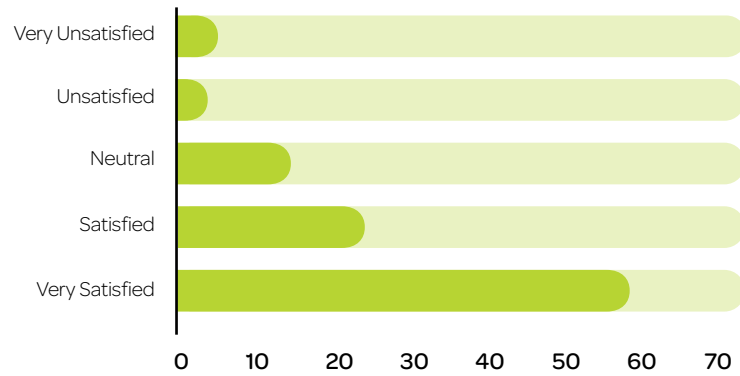
### PRODUCERS AND PARTICIPANTS

#### Value of professional development experience

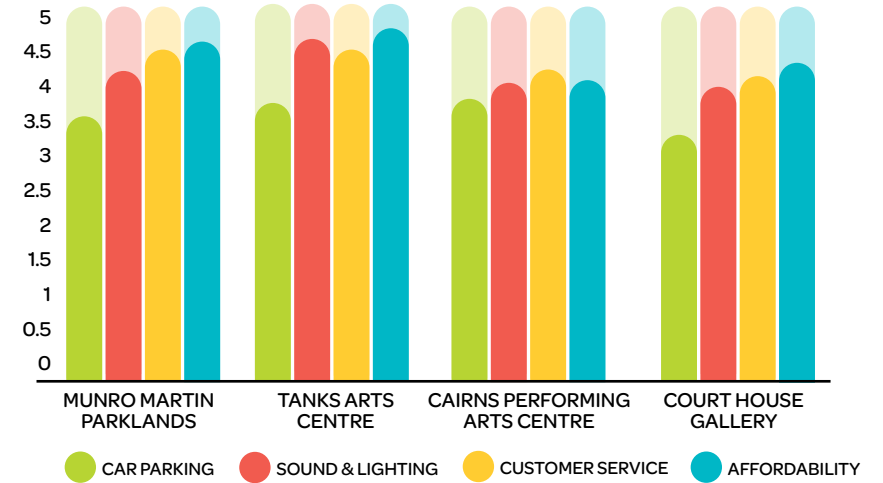


## Satisfaction

**PRODUCERS AND PARTICIPANTS**  
Satisfaction with the management of the project or activity  
(customer service, professionalism of staff, communication, promotion etc)

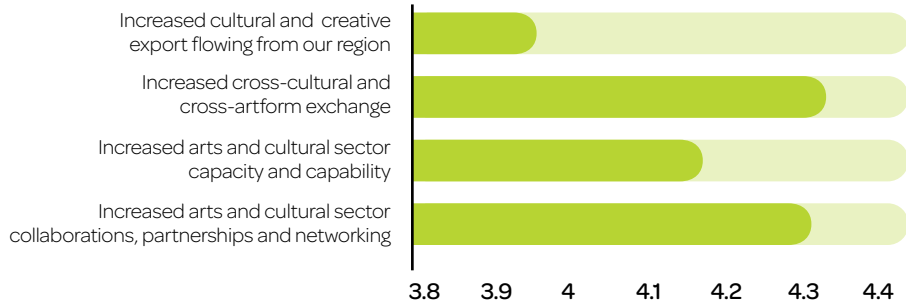


**AUDIENCE**  
Satisfaction with the venue



## Benefits

**PRODUCERS AND PARTICIPANTS**  
Benefits to local arts, culture and creative industry



**AUDIENCE, PRODUCERS AND PARTICIPANTS**  
Value of activity or intervention



# 5. Internal and External Factors and Trends

This section summarises some of the dynamics influencing the implementation and delivery of the strategy, and playing a pivotal role in shaping its outcomes and determining its success.

Without a doubt, the COVID-19 Pandemic was one of the primary challenges. The global arts and recreation services sector faced unprecedented obstacles between 2019 and 2021.

Across Australia and here in Cairns, the cancellation of festivals, cultural events, live performances and creative projects had a devastating effect on the sector. This highlights the importance of imbedding economic and sustainability factors in future planning priorities.

This major disruption to 'business as usual' has triggered a tangible shift in all sectors of the arts and cultural field over the past few years. The unified voice of the cultural and creative sector, together with Parliamentary Enquiries, has played a crucial role in implementing new public policies and a better understanding of the value of arts and culture. \*(2)

**Refer to Addendum 3 for further information.**

## EXTERNAL FACTORS

### COVID-19 Pandemic

"The COVID-19 Pandemic has disproportionately impacted industries that are predicated on the free movement and gathering of people, including cultural and creative industries. This has prompted both significant disruption and necessitated the beginning of significant reform" \*(3)

### Government Policy and Funding Priorities

"Australia's Federal, State and Territory and local governments all invest in arts and culture to provide opportunities for people to access, experience and keep creating Australia's heritage and culture" \*(8)

### FNQ Priorities

"The regional vision for Far North Queensland is for a stronger, more liveable and sustainable community" \*(12)

### Sector Capacity & Engagement

"Engagement with stakeholders suggested that the breadth and significance of arts, cultural & creative activity is in a sustained period of growth" \*(17)

## INTERNAL FACTORS

### Leadership

"There is a palpable sense that Cairns really believes in the value of aspiring to be the arts and cultural capital of Northern Australia and probably already is, given the extraordinary levels of investment that underpin this branding" \*(21)

### Strategic Direction

"We need to look to the future and plan for the next phase of growth. Good design and planning will help us protect and embrace many of the things that make Cairns special: our unique environment, economic, social and cultural values" \*(23)

### Capacity and Capability

"Stakeholders in the field recognise the Cairns Regional Council as a critical enabler and partner in delivering cultural and artistic expression to its constituents" \*(27)

# 6. Insights Observations and Recommendations

The following section explores key findings and recommendations derived from the input of the arts and cultural sector as well as Council's Creative Life Team.

The comments have been categorised into four distinct themes. The purpose of these insights and observations is to provide direction and influence for future strategic planning initiatives.





# Insights and Recommendations: Cultural Leadership

## 6.1.1 Impact and Value

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote the results and accomplishments of the five-year plan to recognise the progress that has been achieved and acknowledge the efforts of those involved in achieving these outcomes
- Continue to invest in strategic evaluation platforms and imbed a consistent and value-based metric framework into future plans.
- Gain a comprehensive understanding of audience segments and their aspirations, identify any areas of improvement, and create a program that effectively engages existing audiences while also finding ways to cultivate new ones.
- Utilise an industry-recognised, well-respected and well-tested model such as Culture Counts, to streamline, modernise and professionalise the current evaluative system.

SECTOR INSIGHTS	OBSERVATIONS
<p>Awareness of the Cairns Regional Council's contribution to capital infrastructure is high amongst the stakeholder group. (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>Council in-kind support to facilities and soft infrastructure is critical in allowing some viability for arts and culture activities. (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>The establishment of the Court House Gallery, by the Council, has engendered an increased infrastructure for curatorial practice that has included projects with Cairns Art Gallery, UMI Arts and others. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>The Council's Flame.Arts program engages a network that has included NorthSite Contemporary Arts and Regional Excellence in Arts and Culture Hubs (REACH) with a focus on emerging professional practice and pathways for entry into the sector. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council has allocated significant resources, both in terms of budget and human capital, to gather baseline data, conduct surveys, perform economic analysis, and partner an independent study on the state of the arts in Cairns. These efforts have been achieved in parallel with the entire five-year cycle of the strategy. By involving external experts, Council has ensured that research and analysis are unbiased and reliable, and that the goals and objectives outlined in the five-year strategy are informed by a deep understanding of the local arts sector and its potential for growth and development.</li> <li>• The place-based and participatory approach to planning has generated in-depth consultative engagement with the sector, shaped the strategic objectives of the five-year plan and enabled a road map for decision-making and investment in the arts and culture. This inclusive approach has not only ensured that the plan reflected the needs and aspirations of the local arts and cultural community but has also fostered a sense of ownership and buy-in from stakeholders.</li> <li>• Engagement and involvement in Creative Life's programs and services has significantly increased in terms of participation, audience numbers, and employment opportunities when comparing the planning cycles of 2009/14 and 2018/23. This expansion, along with feedback from surveys conducted with audience members, producers, and participants, indicate a strengthening of their appreciation and connection to Cairns and its cultural identity.</li> <li>• Survey results also reveal that the local arts and culture industry has experienced significant advantages through cross-cultural and cross-artform exchange, as well as collaborations and networking opportunities. These have played a crucial role in strengthening the sector's capacity and capability.</li> <li>• For audiences and the wider community, survey results show valuable outcomes such as enhanced community wellbeing, a deeper appreciation of the region's Indigenous and shared multicultural history and a greater admiration for creativity and innovation. This all indicates an engaged community that has a keen interest in, and appetite for the arts and cultural experiences.</li> <li>• The strategy's impact and effectiveness has led to an increased level of commitment from Council in prioritising, revitalising, and sustaining the cultural life in Cairns. These outcomes have been greatly influenced by the involvement of partners, sponsors, contributors, volunteers, and stakeholders. Their support and collaboration have been essential in shaping and achieving goals.</li> </ul>

# Insights and Recommendations: Cultural Leadership

## 6.1.2 Alignment with Corporate Objectives

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Imbed creative-led recovery objectives into Council’s Disaster Management response.
- Ensure future strategies for the arts and cultural development are in harmony with the objectives and priorities of Towards 2050, and in step with the community’s long-term aspirations.
- Ensure future strategies for the arts and cultural development are aligned with Federal, State and FNQ regional priorities.

### SECTOR INSIGHTS

The Council’s five-year Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 is one of the most detailed and ambitious plans in a regional centre, with consultation and development occurring in tandem with its Corporate Plan 2017-2022. (QUT Digital Research Centre Australian Cultural and Creativity: A Population and Hot Spot Analysis, Cairns Report 2019)

The Cairns Regional Council’s Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 (CRC 2018) is a strategic vision that supports and stimulates the creative vitality of the Cairns region, as well as promoting and perpetuating the broad artistic and cultural heritage of the people of Cairns. (SoARTS Report 2020)

Insights into the long-term viability of the Culture, Arts and Creative Industries in the Cairns region is a vital mechanism from which Cairns Regional Council intends to shape its cultural and economic policy direction. (SoARTS Report 2019)

### OBSERVATIONS

- The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 was formulated to align with Council’s 2017-2022 Corporate Plan which sought to create a vibrant, inclusive and healthy community with access to services and facilities that reflect the unique character and needs of the community. The synchronisation of planning cycles provided a valuable opportunity to incorporate the region’s cultural and artistic priorities into Council’s core business.
- There is no doubt that the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 has successfully supported and enriched the 2017-2022 Corporate Plan’s strategic goals for community and cultural development by:
  - Supporting a rich and diverse culture through the provision of accessible public facilities and community initiatives
  - Promoting Cairns as the leading hub for arts and culture in Northern Australia
  - Enhancing vibrancy within the community through a range of engaging events and activities
  - Providing support to various social and community groups
  - Recognising, sharing and celebrating the significance of culture, heritage and place.
- Arts and culture in Cairns are now also being actively promoted and supported in other corporate goals, including Council’s Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026, the Towards 2050 growth strategy, and the Cairns COVID-19 Local Recovery Plan. These initiatives highlight the recognition of the arts and cultural sector as a valuable asset for Cairns. By promoting and investing in this sector, Council aims to enhance the profile and economic viability of the region as well as creating a vibrant and thriving community for both locals and visitors to enjoy.
- The outstanding progress accomplished in the past five years establishes a solid groundwork and a lasting testament to Council’s present ambitions for a sustainable, globally connected city, propelled by innovation and adaptability, and celebrated for the desirable lifestyle cherished by the community. \*(28)

# Insights and Recommendations: Cultural Leadership

## 6.1.3 Institutional Capacity

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Leverage the innovative solutions developed during the pandemic to support the growth of artists, cultural institutions, and the broader cultural community.
- Enhance collaboration and engagement across sectors to leverage growing sector unity and interaction.
- Initiate pause and reflect processes and mechanisms to interrogate the models of delivery to ensure fitness for purpose during a growth period.
- Integrate succession planning into future planning processes to ensure continuity and preparedness for the future.
- Target the commercial aspect of the industry to drive innovation and create tailored programs for the creative sector.

### SECTOR INSIGHTS

More than 10 years of cultural policy focusing on local 'ownership' has led to belief in the 'arts and cultural capital of North Australia' culminating in the opening of Cairns Performing Arts Centre in December 2018. (QUT Cultural and Creativity: A Population and Hot Spot Analysis, Cairns Report 2019)

Cairns Regional Council Cultural Services branch implemented an inclusive and detailed consultation process during 2017-18 to inform their current Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022. (SoARTS Report 2019)

Cairns' strong grassroots culture has been nurtured by the cultural strategy development processes of the Cultural Services branch of Cairns Regional Council, drawing strength from the participatory culture in the wider region. (QUT Cultural and Creativity: A Population and Hot Spot Analysis, Cairns Report 2019)

### OBSERVATIONS

- Council implemented a rapid and proactive response to the COVID-19 pandemic through collaboration with health authorities, government agencies, businesses and social services to develop strategies and tailored support programs. By investing in the arts and events sector, Council not only contributed to the cultural vibrancy of the community but also provided economic support to artists and event organizers who were significantly impacted by the pandemic.
- Council has demonstrated strong leadership in overseeing the growth, organisation, and administration of cultural assets and services through robust and well-defined strategic and operational frameworks. This is evident from its growing financial commitment to new capital projects which have revitalised cultural life in Cairns. These capital projects not only provide a physical space for creative and cultural activities but also contribute to the economic growth of the region by attracting visitation, as well as generating revenue and opportunities for employment.
- Increased interdivisional and across-government, corporate and business sector partnerships and collaboration have supported Council's ability to deliver high-end gain and sustainable outcomes.
- The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 has been shaped and influenced by the dedication and adaptability of the Creative Life team. Their skills and expertise have played a pivotal role in driving the strategy over the past five years.
- Team members have reflected on the importance of expanding staffing resources to effectively keep pace with the evolving needs of the community and maintain a leading position in the industry.
- Succession planning and preparing for the next generation and new wave of artists, audiences and participants is also a primary consideration.
- Directing attention towards the commercial dimension of the industry has also been identified as a means to stimulate innovation and foster the development of new programs and services that cater to the unique needs of the creative sector.
- Underpinning these considerations, the team recognises the value of taking time to pause and reflect on past achievements and challenges, allowing for new perspectives and a renewed outlook for the next cultural planning phase.

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority One - Infrastructure, Resources & Skills

### 6.2.1 Grants and Funding – RADF, Community Partnerships Events, Arts and Cultural Infrastructure and In-Kind Assistance

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt a comprehensive approach that gives equal importance to the immediate needs of artists and organisations, as well as laying the foundation for long-term growth and development.
- Continue to recognise the diverse voices, perspectives and experiences within the community to cultivate an inclusive cultural environment.
- Align objectives of Council’s annual arts and cultural grants program with both priority needs and the core objectives of Council’s new strategic plan for the arts and cultural development.
- Assign a portion of Council’s annual arts and cultural grants to support disaster recovery programs.
- Create more emphasis on collaborative initiatives, joint projects and initiatives that nurture partnerships and leverage additional investment opportunities.

#### SECTOR INSIGHTS

A successive reduction in operational and project funding levels provided by State and Federal governments has negatively impacted the range of services available to the sector. The local council takes up gaps in advocacy and facilitation of services. (SoARTS Report 2019)

The RADF program is acknowledged by stakeholders as a consistent enabler of activity across the disciplines of the sector, and Council programs that provide in-kind access to facilities and soft infrastructure are critical to some. (SoARTS Report 2020)

Stakeholders lamented limited philanthropic support for arts and culture activities, however there is a sentiment that Council actively supports business and project development opportunity through its funding programs. (SoARTS Report 2020)

#### OBSERVATIONS

- Council’s Annual Grants Program has resulted in the highest levels of engagement across the three priority areas of the strategy. The grants program has invested around \$2.8m in funding to support 340 multi-dimensional initiatives over the course of the 5-year strategic planning cycle. This suite of grants has played a pivotal role in fostering the growth and sustainability of community-based organisations, local artists and creative practitioners.
- The successful alignment of grant objectives with the fundamental principles and goals of the five-year strategic plan stands as a concrete and noteworthy accomplishment. This is especially apparent in the revamped and tailored annual RADF grant program, which now caters to, and focuses on the unique priorities of frequently underrepresented sectors within the community.
- Another notable addition to the Queensland Government-funded RADF program has been the establishment of a major grant category, the City of the Arts Hero Project. This has supported the advancement of larger-scale projects and products that generate exceptional and prominent work, leaving a lasting impact on those involved.
- According to SoARTS reports, Council is widely seen as accessible to the sector and committed to promoting business and project growth through its funding initiatives. The Council’s programs, which provide access to facilities and support for soft infrastructure, are crucial for specific stakeholders. The subsidised access offered by Council can greatly improve the viability of cultural activities and art projects.
- Survey results show that grant recipients placed high value on their ability to develop new artistic relationships, collaborations and networks and develop new audiences for the city’s cultural venues. \*(29)
- The artists, creative professionals and cultural institutions in the region are playing a crucial role in establishing Cairns as the leading arts and cultural hub in northern Australia. Their efforts not only contribute to economic growth but also have a profound social impact on our community.
- Grants are becoming an increasingly important aspect in the sustainability of artists and organisations alike. As the region’s sector continues to expand and transform, sustainability should remain at the forefront of Council’s grants program.

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority One - Infrastructure, Resources & Skills

### 6.2.2 Grants and Funding - Resource and Performance Agreements

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Sustain investment in major partnerships and encourage organisations who benefit from large-scale Resource and Performance Agreements to invest in strategic research and data collection that measures the economic, demographic, social, and cultural impact of their initiatives.
- Work with partners towards a common vision and optimise mutual advantages and shared benefits by transitioning from a patronage model to a strategic partnership approach.
- Align the key objectives, priorities, intended outcomes, and reporting KPIs of the Resource and Performance Agreements with the future strategic goals for the arts and cultural development.

#### SECTOR INSIGHTS

The Council's support for CIAF with its program of visual art, music, dance and other performing arts, extends the experience of Indigenous art and culture as a unified expression. (SoARTS Report 2021)

Landmark infrastructure such as Cairns Art Gallery are vital for the sector. (SoARTS Report 2019)

Stakeholders suggested that early work on the Tanks Arts Centre and the Cairns Art Gallery were important moments in forming foundations for arts and culture in Cairns today. (SoARTS Report 2021)

The museum is supported by Council and operated by an historical society that attracts the services of many volunteers, making it a remarkable and successful enterprise for telling the stories of the region's heritage and cultures. (SoARTS Report 2021)

#### OBSERVATIONS

- In addition to the Annual Grant Program, Council has successfully maintained major partnerships with the Cairns Art Gallery, Cairns Museum, and Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) through longer-term funding agreements.
- These collaborations serve the dual purpose of fulfilling Council's strategic goals and bolstering the operational and business capabilities of these organisations, who contribute to the overall cultural vibrancy and economic development of the Cairns community.
- The three to four-year partnership agreements have enabled longer-term certainty for these organisations and increased their ability to leverage other levels of support from the private and public sectors.

**Cairns Indigenous Art Fair** is Australia's premier Indigenous art fair, creating opportunities for cultural exchange and economic growth for Indigenous artists in Queensland. The CIAF 2022 Report reveals the Art Fair's impressive impact over the past decade. Nearly 300,000 attendees have experienced the festival's celebrations of Queensland's Indigenous arts and culture. \*(30)

**Cairns Art Gallery** is recognised as the premier public art museum in the region. Its primary objective is to acquire, oversee, safeguard, interpret, and exhibit artworks that have strong connections to the heritage and culture of Far North Queensland. It serves as a valuable educational and research resource, leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come. In 2021/22, the gallery welcomed 169,291 visitors and engaged over 4,000 individuals in community and education programs. \*(31)

**Cairns Historical Society/Cairns Museum** houses a significant collection of over 85,000 items. With a mission to showcase the history of Cairns and its transformation into a tropical city, the collection includes archival documents, books, newspapers, maps, journals, photographic images, and individual objects. Between 2019 and 2023 the museum has welcomed over 87,000 visitors. Council's \$8.69 million investment in refurbishing the historic School of Arts building in 2017 has enhanced the museum's facilities and preserved its historical significance for future generations to enjoy. \*(32)

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority One - Infrastructure, Resources & Skills

6.2.3 Civic Infrastructure	
RECOMMENDATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Claim the title of the <i>Arts and Cultural Capital of Northern Australia</i> and strategically link the city's wealth of world-class facilities, assets and creative identity with visitor economy and tourism objectives.</li> <li>Optimise and leverage the exceptional investment partnerships forged with the Federal and State governments.</li> <li>Continue to align the city's future cultural objectives with broader whole-of-government trends and opportunities.</li> <li>Investigate and develop best-practice storage solutions to protect and preserve Indigenous and non-Indigenous significant collections and artefacts.</li> <li>Research national and international Creative Space models, that support accessible and inclusive places to develop and present work for the small-to-medium, NFP, ARI and social enterprise sector.</li> <li>Incorporate creative spaces into urban renewal, regulatory frameworks, and land use planning mechanisms, and seek opportunities for adapting, repurposing, restoring and improving existing facilities.</li> </ul>	
SECTOR INSIGHTS	OBSERVATIONS
<p>Stakeholder perspectives on hard infrastructure indicate a continued acknowledgement of the level of investment by CRC in the development of arts venues in the CBD. (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>Stakeholders expressed that the provision of cultural infrastructure is creating landmarks and a cultural identity for Cairns, noting the massive transformation of Cairns over the past 10-15 years. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>There is a need for smaller arts spaces that allow different parts of the ecology to grow, including experimental, underground arts programming. The Council-initiated Renew Cairns program has contributed to the remedy of this issue. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>Indigenous keeping places are needed. They are a critical piece of infrastructure to maintain historical material culture. Currently, significant artefacts are scattered around the region and international collections seek to repatriate to appropriate facilities for conservation and protection. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council's investment in civic cultural infrastructure has been commendable, and serves as an outstanding example of State and Federal governments playing a significant partnership role.</li> <li>Community aspirations and high-end infrastructure needs have been met through a culture-led vision, resulting in the delivery of Munro Martin Parklands (\$11m), Cairns Performing Arts Centre (\$71m), the Court House Gallery (\$8.28m), and the master planning for a new Gallery Precinct (estimated \$39.8m). *(33)</li> <li>Additionally, iconic facilities like the Tanks Arts Centre and Munro Martin Parklands have undergone continuous upgrades and refurbishments. Both new and upgraded cultural facilities have attracted high levels of visitation and activation. Survey findings on these premier facilities have received high satisfaction rating for affordability, customer services, and sound and lighting.</li> <li>The Queensland Government has also demonstrated its dedication to transforming the cultural landscape of the region. The Bulmba-ja Arts Centre and the construction of a state-of-the-art screen production facility in Cairns are extraordinary additions to the city's infrastructure.</li> <li>On the flip side of these achievements, sector observations reveal an ongoing and crucial need for smaller arts spaces that support the development of different facets of the arts community, such as creative production, presentation, and operations. The need for storage facilities that adhere to current national conservation standards, for both Indigenous and non-indigenous significant collections and artefacts, is seen as a critical piece of infrastructure to preserve, protect and maintain historical material culture. *(34)</li> <li>Efforts to address these challenges have included the promotion of venues and facilities through the Cairns Arts and Culture Map and Vibrance magazine, the development of a Community Activity Spaces Strategy, and the Renew Cairns program. Despite these initiatives, there remains a pressing need for new approaches and innovative strategies.</li> <li>To create a more robust and sustainable environment for creative and cultural producers, it is crucial to explore various national and international models, and to integrate the significance of creative spaces into urban renewal, regulatory frameworks, and land use planning mechanisms.</li> </ul>

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority One - Infrastructure, Resources & Skills

### 6.2.4 Access & Inclusion - Young Creatives

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review Flame.Arts program to ensure the pathway programs are fit for purpose, aligned with arts and culture priorities, connected to industry needs and adaptive to future changes and trends.
- Continue to invest in the next generation of artists, creators, and cultural leaders to ensure that the cultural and creative industries continue to grow and evolve.
- Initiate new approaches to utilising innovative technologies to involve the younger generation.
- Ensure relevant and meaningful mentoring, internships, industry placements and professional development opportunities in Creative Life programming.
- Continue to work collaboratively across Council areas and the larger arts and cultural sector to enable greater accessibility of information, resources and assets to young people.

#### SECTOR INSIGHTS

Across the sector, there remains a sense of losing a young generation, with limited youth-oriented organisations, few young people on boards or committees and diminishing pathways at tertiary education institutions. (SoARTS Report 2021)

The scenario in Cairns was contrasted with the Sunshine and Gold Coasts where flourishing young artists can fill spaces like Home of the Arts. (SoARTS Report 2021)

The young generation needs to be engaged sector-wide through new models and methods that include innovative technologies. (SoARTS Report 2021)

With the loss of many other youth-oriented programs in the sector, internships and mentorships are key to young people's knowledge and skill sets so they reach their full potential. (SoARTS Report 2021)

The Council's Strategy for Young Creatives provides exemplar youth-oriented programs that redress some of the decline in youth arts of previous decades. (SoARTS Report 2021)

#### OBSERVATIONS

- Significant milestones have been reached over the course of the planning cycle, in particular the development and adoption of a Strategy for Young Creatives in partnership with Arts Queensland in 2020. The Strategy steps out the trends, challenges and opportunities that influence young people's engagement in the arts, and is guided by a relatively short, two-year planning cycle that has established a solid groundwork for future planning.
- Investing strategically in projects like the RADF-supported Flame.Arts, along with its tailored career development and access programs, has created a vibrant platform for emerging artists to engage with experts from various artistic fields. This has provided valuable practical experience, tailored career development and exposure to fellow artists, industry professionals, and potential collaborators.
- Results from a 2023 survey among Flame.Arts workshop participants, facilitators, volunteers, and crew members showed high praise for the valuable knowledge gained, personal growth, and increased connection to the arts and culture scene in Cairns. These findings confirm that by providing access to Council venues and facilities, building relationships, and improving skills, a more dynamic and enduring creative community in Cairns can be achieved. \*(35)
- Beyond these results, the demographic profiles of audiences surveyed at Council's premier venues and various festivals reveal a notably low proportion of young individuals (7.3%) within the 18-25 age bracket. \*(36)
- The importance of arts education from primary school to the tertiary level was emphasised by stakeholders in the SoARTS 2021 Report. Concerns were raised about the lack of strong arts certificates or programs at TAFE and JCU, while CQU had a limited number of locally enrolled students, with the majority studying online from other parts of Australia. As a result, young creatives in Cairns have fewer opportunities for idea generation and collaboration within their peer groups. \*(37)
- 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. Council's recruitment of an Arts and Culture Education Officer in early 2023 now provides a targeted educational focus across Creative Life programming and resource development, embedding a strategic and targeted focus to ensure tailored engagement by young people.

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority One - Infrastructure, Resources & Skills

### 6.2.5 Access & Inclusion - Arts & Disability

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review the Arts and Disability Strategy to ensure it is fit for purpose, connected to the needs and expectations of the disability sector, and adaptive to future changes and trends.
- Leverage and support Council's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and imbed inclusion as a core value in the delivery of future strategic planning, programming and services for the arts and cultural development.
- Continue to invest in industry training to deliver best-practice, accessible and inclusive programming across all facets of Creative Life services, activities and venues. Encourage and invite broad sector involvement in training opportunities.
- Re-assess grant programs to prioritise access and inclusion as key objectives, and encourage applicants to include 'accessibility costs' in their budget proposals.
- Strengthen alliances, broaden collaborative scope, and foster the growth of audiences for disability arts organisations and individual artists.

#### SECTOR INSIGHTS

Inclusivity is a dominant theme that exists within the NFP arts and cultural sector/cities as highly desirable and beneficial to growth. (SoARTS Report 2019)

Sector-wide accessibility associated with infrastructure should be balanced with an increased level of engagement involving inclusive programming. (SoARTS Report 2021)

The Council has demonstrated leadership with the release of an Arts and Disability Strategy highlighting aims for inclusive participation throughout its programs. (SoARTS Report 2021)

Representatives from disability arts suggest the idea of a locally hosted disability arts festival has some merit, and that disability inclusion complement the other sector-wide festivals in the region. (SoARTS Report 2021)

Across the entire cultural and arts sector, inclusion should be a central strength of programs rather than a segregation or add-on. (SoARTS Report 2021)

#### OBSERVATIONS

- The development and adoption of an Arts and Disability Strategy in partnership with Arts Queensland throughout 2019 and 2020 has established a strong foundation for encouraging and supporting inclusive arts.
- The Strategy acknowledges the obstacles that hinder the full participation of individuals with disability, and addresses issues such as physical barriers, limited funding opportunities, and attitudinal barriers that perpetuate stereotypes and stigmas.
- Creative Life has made significant investments in various capacity-building programs aimed at enhancing accessibility and meeting the diverse needs of individuals. These programs included training on Accessibility and Inclusion, Tactile Tours, Neurodiversity Awareness, and Deaf Awareness.
- Creative Life also targeted audience development and programming to engage people with disabilities through exhibitions, performances, forums and advocacy platforms, as well as specific funding opportunities integrated into the annual RADF program to ensure customised engagement with and for people with disability.
- Co-production and partnership between Council, ARC Disability Services Inc and the Dead Puppet Society on the creation of the highly acclaimed Beyond the Waves theatre production has stimulated beneficial and outcome-focused skills development for people with disability. This new work is set to tour regional FNQ, providing an original and engaging experience for regional audiences.
- SoARTS 2021 noted that many smaller businesses and organisations in the arts sector express concerns about lacking the resources and capacity to create programs that truly embody inclusivity, and the need for support to develop strategies and programs that focus on promoting arts inclusion activities effectively. \*(38)
- The demographic profiles of audiences surveyed at Council's premier venues and various festivals reveal a notably low proportion of people with disability (11.7%). \*(39) In contrast, Council's 2024-2026 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP), states that Cairns is home to about 28,000 residents with disabilities and nearly 4,000 NDIS registered individuals. Additionally, with Cairns' reputation as a top accessible tourism destination, the DAIP aims to leverage the \$3.2 billion industry nationally and uphold Council's dedication to disability inclusion. \*(40)
- Given these significant factors, it is crucial to continue to prioritise strategic planning and investment in accessible and inclusive arts and cultural infrastructure and services.



## Insights and Recommendations: Priority Two - Culture, Heritage and Place

### 6.3.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture and Creative Expression

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Fortify and strengthen the effective teamwork, communication, and alliances established over the last five years with the First Nations creative sector to accomplish shared goals and aspirations.
- Leverage Arts Queensland's commitment to elevate First Nations arts industry through continued partnership and collaboration with the State Government.
- Provide platforms for cultural expression, preservation, and reconciliation that promote an understanding and appreciation of the region's Indigenous cultures.
- Increase visibility and awareness of Indigenous sites and their stories to promote cultural understanding and appreciation.

#### SECTOR INSIGHTS

Indigenous arts and cultural organisations within the stakeholder group recognize a positive relationship with Council that is genuine and generally described as non-tokenistic. However, there is a need for more Indigenous people with decision-making clout in positions of responsibility to effect capacity building and engagement within the sector. (SoARTS Report 2021)

There is a role for the sector to enable capacity building, mentoring and support for Indigenous arts enterprise. Indigenous culture in the region is unique due to the prevalence and proximity of traditional communities in Cape York and the Torres Strait. (SoARTS Report 2021)

Despite there being no significant cultural and arts education pathways for Indigenous practitioners, there are exceptions - Indigenous production in the form of fashion, film making, music and visual arts is associated with some of the success stories from the region. (SoARTS Report 2020)

#### OBSERVATIONS

- The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 placed a strong emphasis on celebrating and acknowledging First Nations creative expression and cultural heritage. It implemented strategies to establish ethical and co-operative processes, while also leveraging the region's national and international status as a thriving hub for Indigenous art.
- Co-production and outcome-focused partnerships supporting First Nations creative producers have been realised across Council's flagship venues. The Court House Gallery, CPAC, MMP and the Tanks Art Centre have each seeded the development, presentation and promotion of a diverse range of exhibitions, public art, theatre, fashion, festivals, artist talks and workshops.
- Supporting signature Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander festivals and celebrations through the provision of grants and resources has generated a vibrant annual calendar that adds value to the city's arts and cultural experiences.
- Alliances with the State Government's Regional Arts Network (RASN), Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF), NorthSite Contemporary Arts, and the Queensland Music Trails program have supported a diversity of Council-driven First Nations projects.
- The Creative Life team has made significant progress in supporting and promoting Indigenous programming with the addition of two key roles. The Indigenous Project Officer and the First Nations Curator positions have played a vital role in expanding networks and attracting new audiences.
- Although opportunities to test and strengthen procedures and protocols relating to sharing of cultural knowledge have been successfully achieved through a range of interpretive, public art and placemaking projects, there remains a need for increased visibility and awareness of Indigenous sites and their stories to enhance cultural understanding and appreciation. \*(41)
- The opening of the Court House Gallery in 2021 has spearheaded the growth and sustainability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creative industries. The planned Cairns Gallery Precinct's inclusion of a purpose-built gallery/destination point for First Nations artists and artworks is seen as a major contribution to the region's future development.
- SoARTS 2021 noted a clear argument for arts and cultural development, resources and infrastructure representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to be centred in Cairns, and that growing Indigenous leadership in the arts is crucial for achieving equity in the sector. \*(42)

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority Two - Culture, Heritage and Place

### 6.3.2 Placemaking and Urban Revitalisation

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to imbed public art and creative processes into Council's urban design, development and renewal projects.
- Review and revise the current Strategy for Placemaking and Public Art by incorporating specific sites, locations, and routes for potential creative placemaking initiatives.
- Explore and initiate outreach, advocacy and marketing methods that will foster sector-wide and community support.
- Encourage and support community-led and local placemaking, through projects, programs, activations and use of local places.
- Build and sustain the capacity of the region's art and historical museums, historical societies and genealogy groups.

#### SECTOR INSIGHTS

Shields Street is mentioned as a precinct where the integration of public art and public amenity has created a destination attracting people-oriented activity, including two university campuses. (SoARTS Report 2019)

The idea of character precincts is important in terms of retaining a collection of vernacular architecture that represents different timeframes in the region's history. Council's purchase and restoration of the Court House is an exemplar project applauded by stakeholders. (SoARTS Report 2021)

The sector identifies the opportunity to strategically underpin the Gallery Precinct in terms of initiating creative development programs that elevate the aptitude of local artists to undertake work of outstanding quality. (SoARTS Report 2021)

Although Council has adopted state of the art procedures for consultation on public art, there remains a perception/sentiment that its processes could be enhanced. (SoARTS Report 2022)

#### OBSERVATIONS

- The Cairns City Master Plan has played a crucial role in the successful implementation of cultural and creative-led revitalisation projects. As a design and planning framework, the Master Plan places emphasis upon the creation of dynamic public spaces through the integration of art, storytelling, and place-making. The SoARTS 2021 research report highlights the favourable feedback received regarding the overall development of the city centre, particularly the Esplanade and new Dining Precinct, the revitalisation of the wharf area and Shields Street. \*(43)
- Council's vision and master planning towards the transformation of three existing heritage-listed buildings within the Cairns city centre to create a dynamic and world class Gallery Precinct, is a testament to the city's commitment to the arts and its ongoing evolution as a cultural destination.
- Council has implemented a forward-thinking approach to conserving and protecting the city's cultural heritage. The revitalisation and repurposing of important historical sites like the Cairns Court House have been guided by well-prepared Conservation and Interpretive Management Plans, resulting in high-quality conservation results. Council's ongoing investment in the region's heritage infrastructure plays an important role in preserving and telling the story of Cairns' past, present and future.
- Despite its inclusion in the five-year strategy, the piloting of a heritage advocacy program to support the conservation and promotion of collections, heritage buildings, and/or places, has not yet begun. By providing additional incentives and support, this program could eventually play an active role in safeguarding heritage assets for future generations.
- Successful revitalisation projects in urban, suburban, and foreshore streetscaping have been achieved through effective collaboration between Council departments. This collaboration has enabled the integration of cultural programming, public art installations, and community engagement initiatives. City and suburban streetscapes, cycle ways, parks and gardens have been transformed by blending historical and contemporary elements.
- Council's ongoing partnership with Queensland Museum, Cairns Art Gallery, Cairns Museum and CIAF, has been instrumental in ensuring that the historical collections of Cairns are preserved for future generations while fostering a greater appreciation for the unique history and identity of the region.
- In 2020, a fresh approach to Public Art and Creative Placemaking was introduced, outlining steps for commissioning, managing, maintaining, de-accessioning, and executing public art projects. This strategy has effectively incorporated public art into various urban design initiatives, resulting in ten significant artworks and more than 65 murals, digital & ephemeral Artworks in the CBD and suburban areas. Through placemaking events like Cairns Festival's City Lights and Suburban Satellites, the region has embraced digital and contemporary platforms, attracting new audiences creating a supportive space for contemporary public art. Despite significant progress in developing strategies and formalising protocols for public art, sector sentiments highlight the need for improved communication and advocacy.

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority Two - Culture, Heritage and Place

### 6.3.3 Connection, Presentation and Promotion

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen linkages and connections to the city's historic architecture, art and cultural precincts, and to recreational hubs, to improve walkability, wayfinding and functionality of public space.
- Prioritise enhancement and connectivity initiatives on the area around the Tanks Arts Centre, Botanical Gardens and Greenslopes Street to stimulate identity and commercial synergy.
- Work with First Nations representatives to enhance visibility and dissemination of information on Indigenous sites and the Aboriginal history of places.
- Develop curated self-guided walking tours connecting arts and cultural precincts, showcasing the city's investment in, and celebration of, public art.
- Strengthen internal resourcing of the Arts and Culture Map by including new marketing collateral and the introduction of new features to showcase and promote listings, projects and heritage assets.

#### SECTOR INSIGHTS

Any new post-COVID-19 renewal of the Cairns City Masterplan must address the issue of connecting the Cairns Museum, the Gallery Precinct, Bulmba-ja, Munro Martin Parklands and the Cairns Performing Arts Centre through wayfinding and legibility. Easy connection between these sites is essential for tourists and residents. (SoARTS Report 2020)

Stakeholders suggested that placemaking is really about the capacity to tell stories about the place/region to ourselves and to our visitors. While public art in the city is important, more strategically planned integration of arts and arts experiences is needed. (SoARTS Report 2020)

Stakeholders across the arts, culture and creative industries suggest the Cairns Arts and Culture Map is an underutilised resource and it is therefore important to refresh the map to attract more interest and to bring users back more regularly. (SoARTS Report 2020)

#### OBSERVATIONS

- Substantial progress has been made in developing interpretive media to educate audiences about the significance of Cairns' shared identity and cultural heritage. Notable projects such as the Embracing Our Stories - Cairns Indigenous Interpretive Signage Trail, the Tanks History Panels and the Court House Gallery Interpretive Signage Project have effectively enhanced the cultural heritage landscape in urban and suburban settings.
- Strengthening linkages to the city's historic architecture, art and cultural precincts and recreational hubs has been a central consideration of this priority area. Although a diverse range of interpretive media and signage projects has been implemented, stakeholders suggest that more can be done to promote Cairns' tropical location and its arts, culture and heritage. The importance of walkability and wayfinding between arts infrastructure is paramount, with many stakeholders suggesting improved signage would greatly enhance urban vitality. \*(44) Despite the presence of significant synergies in cultural assets, stakeholders suggest there is a lack of connectivity and that further work is needed to link these assets.
- Stakeholders also wish to see a more explicit focus and connectivity on the area around the Tanks Arts Centre, Botanical Gardens and Greenslopes Street. Stakeholders also note that the Greenslopes Street Cultural Precinct is an important cultural zone that could be greatly enhanced by initiatives such as public art installations, historical markers and events that celebrate the street's heritage and arts and cultural contributions. \*(45)
- The introduction of the Cairns Arts and Culture Map in 2018 has been a significant step towards promoting the cultural identity of Cairns. Presentation and promotion specific to heritage places and public art includes self-guided mural trails such as Sea Walls public art, and Pumped water and waste trail, along with seven heritage and interpretive trails. By highlighting these diverse cultural offerings, this interactive map helps to foster a sense of connection to the city's artistic and historical roots.
- Although the Arts and Culture Map is predominately regarded by stakeholders as a highly valuable networking and visibility tool, many stakeholders across the arts, culture and creative industries suggest the map, while functioning as a valuable listing of participants in the sector, could be enhanced to meet the expectations of stakeholders by including more dynamic content. \*(46)

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority Three - A Robust Cultural Economy

6.4.1 Partnerships and Collaborations	
RECOMMENDATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen linkages and connections to the city's historic architecture, art and cultural precincts, and to recreational hubs, to improve walkability, wayfinding and functionality of public space.</li> <li>Prioritise enhancement and connectivity initiatives on the area around the Tanks Arts Centre, Botanical Gardens and Greenslopes Street to stimulate identity and commercial synergy.</li> <li>Work with First Nations representatives to enhance visibility and dissemination of information on Indigenous sites and the Aboriginal history of places.</li> <li>Develop curated self-guided walking tours connecting arts and cultural precincts, showcasing the city's investment in, and celebration of, public art.</li> <li>Strengthen internal resourcing of the Arts and Culture Map by including new marketing collateral and the introduction of new features to showcase and promote listings, projects and heritage assets.</li> </ul>	
SECTOR INSIGHTS	OBSERVATIONS
<p>Partnerships and collaborations build capacity and allow programs and projects to flourish at a scale that could not be achieved by individual entities. (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>The stakeholders in general feel isolated from national industry networks but form local partnerships, groups and consortiums. These groups share current developments and cost-share opportunities that might allow more viability. (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>Stakeholder activity suggests that strong and effective developmental support networks operate within sub-segments. However, peak strategic representation engaged in focused advocacy for the arts, cultural and creative industries as an aggregated sector is limited. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>The co-location of regional services in Cairns suggests that the council might consider further significant partnerships and joint ventures with other local government areas, state and national entities. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 7 of this report demonstrates Council's commitment to establishing connections and nurturing relationships within the sector through an extensive list of acknowledgements. The strategy's accomplishments are attributed to the valuable contributions of over 200 organisations and individuals, as well as the dedication of 1,586 volunteers who generously shared their time, skills, and commitment over the past five years. This serves as a testament to the sector's strong capacity and willingness to collaborate and engage.</li> <li>Council's ongoing affiliation with Arts Queensland and Federal and State government agencies has enabled impactful and meaningful outcomes for the region. Throughout this planning cycle, Council has secured over \$26m in funding for the construction of substantial infrastructure and operational support to enhance Creative Life's diverse and growing program.</li> <li>Collaborative and co-production opportunities with local, state, national, and international organisations, service providers and specialists in the visual arts, performing arts and education sectors have greatly enhanced Creative Life's programming offerings. These partnerships have resulted in the development of innovative and captivating programs that have appealed to a broader audience, and have solidified Cairns' position as a vibrant hub for creativity.</li> <li>The strategic plan's effectiveness has also relied on internal and across-Council collaborations between various business areas, such as libraries, community development, communication and marketing and recreational and planning departments. By working together, departments have been able to create synergies, tap into diverse perspectives, pool their expertise, and co-ordinate their efforts towards achieving common goals.</li> <li>Survey results show that the local arts and culture industry has experienced significant advantages through cross-cultural and cross-artform exchange, as well as via collaborations and networking opportunities. *(47)</li> <li>SoARTS 2021 Report highlights the concentration of regional services in Cairns, suggesting an opportunity for Council to consider forming new alliances and collaborations with neighbouring local governments, state agencies, and national organizations. The report emphasizes the importance of implementing comprehensive regional projects that utilise council's knowledge, resources, and abilities across a broader geographical area that extends beyond local boundaries. *(48)</li> </ul>

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority Three - A Robust Cultural Economy

6.4.2 Festivals and Events	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to invest in strategic research and data collection that measures the economic, demographic, social, and cultural impact of Council-produced and Council-sponsored festivals and events.</li> <li>Include research that enables a deeper understanding of audiences and their perspectives, as well as gaps and opportunities that will enhance future programming.</li> <li>Sustain investment in, and build new audiences for Council's premier arts and cultural festivals.</li> <li>Maximise and leverage the collective appeal and significance of Cairns' rich and diverse community-driven festivals and link more closely with visitor economy and tourism objectives.</li> <li>Work with industry partners, Queensland Government, Tourism Events Queensland and Tropical Tourism North Queensland to develop a solid brand identity that raises the City's national and global profile as a festival destination.</li> <li>Maximise the opportunities and potential that comes with the Brisbane 2032 Olympics.</li> </ul>	
SECTOR INSIGHTS	OBSERVATIONS
<p>Council's 'Cairns Summer Sounds' program leveraged partnerships with tourism authorities and state government to entice audiences back to entertainment and arts venues in Cairns after the relaxing of some COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>The Cairns Indigenous Arts Fair stands out as an event that has the support of tourism organisations, such as Events Queensland and Tourism Tropical North Queensland. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>Participation in the tourism market is out of range for many small organisations. The cost of participation and meeting minimum expectations of the tourism industry is beyond the means of many in the sector. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>The arts sector is largely disengaged from tourism activity, preferring to cater at a level for immediate local audiences or traditional arts touring markets. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Festivals and large-scale events produced by both Council and the community have resulted in high levels of engagement. The exceptional levels of audience, participation, volunteering, and employment serve as strong evidence for the effectiveness of initiatives specifically designed to attract visitors and motivate active participation.</li> <li>The Cairns Commonwealth Games Event City Arts Programs in 2018, in partnership with the Queensland Government, and the Cairns Summer series collaboration with TEQ and TTNQ in 2020 and 2023, along with Council's support of the annual CIAF event, have been instrumental in establishing Cairns as a prominent hub for arts and culture, both domestically and globally. The up-coming Brisbane 2032 Olympics presents an opportunity to build on these high-profile events and elevate their outcomes to new heights.</li> <li>The impact of festivals and events on sociocultural growth cannot be underestimated. Surveys conducted on three of Council's premier annual festivals, Cairns Festival, Understory Film Festival, and Cairns Children's Festival, have revealed a high degree of personal enrichment and increased community wellbeing. These events have not only inspired the community but also fostered a greater sense of appreciation for creative excellence, as well as new audiences for the city's cultural venues. *(48)</li> <li>Festivals and events also play a significant role in driving economic growth and regional development. The 2023 Cairns Festival, for instance, generated a substantial economic impact, with visitors spending a total of \$1,991,848 in Cairns. The majority of this spending came from interstate visitors, contributing over \$970,000 directly and through incremental expenditure. *(49)</li> <li>Similarly, the 2022 Cairns Indigenous Arts Fair Report highlights CIAF's significant economic influence. The total in-scope expenditure generated is responsible for creating a value-added economic contribution of \$6.2m for Cairns. *(50)</li> <li>SoARTS 2021 Report also highlights the financial challenges faced by small organizations in participating in the tourism market. The arts sector often prioritises local audiences or traditional markets over tourism activities. Having arts company boards, directors and managers integrate tourism outcomes as strategic indicators has the potential to focus sector efforts on combining with the tourism economic cluster. *(51)</li> </ul>

## Insights and Recommendations: Priority Three - A Robust Cultural Economy

6.4.3 Industry Development	
RECOMMENDATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate a whole-of-Council approach to advocate for, and enable and invest in the arts, culture and creative industries.</li> <li>Develop a creative learning framework that provides more opportunities for creative co-working, internships, mentorships, industry placements, networking and professional development.</li> <li>Expand opportunities for creative practitioners to access underutilised real estate to enhance development of their creative practice.</li> <li>Provide grant streams and pathways to support and sustain the region's creative industry professionals.</li> <li>Review models of service delivery and realign priorities with the emerging needs of the cultural and creative sector.</li> <li>Broker partnerships and collaborations with tourism industry, creatives and commerce leaders to drive creative industry opportunities.</li> </ul>	
SECTOR INSIGHTS	OBSERVATIONS
<p>There is a sense that Cairns is an important hub for Northern Queensland and should aim to be part of a strong network across northern Australia with links to the Pacific and South East Asia. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>There is potential to strategically enhance the capacity of the sector leading into the rollout of the Gallery Precinct and towards cultural events associated with the Brisbane 2032 Olympics. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>Strong links outside the Cairns local government area indicate that the sector thinks globally and acts locally in what can be considered a hub and spoke network model or ecology. (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>The sector critically needs to find traction with other industries, especially tourism. (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>An 'arts leaders' group would strengthen the cohesiveness and confidence of the sector in terms of cross-sector and cross-industry outcomes. (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council has partnered in an outstanding range of research projects over the past five years, establishing a solid foundation to elevate the city's reputation as a hub for culture, creativity and the arts. Reports like SoARTS produced by JCU and CQU (2019, 2020, 2021 &amp; 2023); Cultural and Creative Activity in the Cairns Region (2019) produced by Cummings Economics *(52); A Population and Hotspot Analysis (2019) produced by QUT *(53); and a Priority Industry Profile (2021/22) independent economic analysis, have each provided crucial insights into Cairns' arts and cultural sector, economic output and future potential. *(54)</li> <li>This collective body of research emphasises Cairns as a prominent economic centre for the cultural and creative industry, with a distinct cultural identity and character that is greatly influenced by the local Indigenous culture and the region's tropical nature and exoticism. Recognising this vital link between culture and nature is crucial to formulating strategies for the future. The studies also recognise that Cairns is in a favourable position to capitalize on economic opportunities, as recent data reveals that the Arts and Culture sector in Cairns had a substantial economic impact in the 2021/22 period, contributing an estimated \$126m in direct and indirect impacts, creating over 1,400 jobs. *(55)</li> <li>Despite the evident strengths of the creative sector, there is a need for increased efforts to raise awareness about its strategic significance. Additionally, there is a disconnect between the creative sector and the tourism industry, which could both benefit greatly from collaboration. Stakeholders emphasise the need for strategic planning that combines cultural tourism with economic objectives to fully leverage the opportunities that tourism presents for the creative sector. *(56)</li> <li>The realisation of Cairns as a cultural and creative hub heavily relies on collaboration among industry stakeholders. Through collective efforts, stakeholders can devise effective strategies and initiatives to foster creative industry growth and ensure its long-term viability. This may involve the further development of cultural precincts and creative clusters, as well as investment in premier events and festivals that showcase the region's cultural and creative excellence.</li> <li>Council's provision of direct services and industry support has led to a maturing of the sector. This has attracted strong cultural leaders to the region and has also increased ambition, capabilities and expectations. Facilitating the growth of the cultural and creative industry and supporting the sector to achieve its maximum potential is crucial. By embracing innovation and leveraging its cultural assets, and making an environment for collaboration and entrepreneurship, Cairns can continue to thrive as a vibrant and sustainable economic hub for the creative sector.</li> </ul>



# 7. Acknowledgements

Cairns Regional Council extends its sincere gratitude to all partners, sponsors, contributors, volunteers and stakeholders who have played a crucial role in the creation and development of this five-year strategic plan. Your support and collaboration have been instrumental in shaping and delivering the desired goals and objectives.

The following pages of this report outline a compilation of 221 organisations and individuals who have made significant contributions. This extensive list is complemented by the 1,586 individuals who have generously volunteered their skills, time, and dedication. Through collaboration and working together, a strong foundation has been laid to forge the future of the Cairns Region.

# Partners, Sponsors and Collaborators

2 Spirits  
Access Arts  
ACT Government  
AGB Events  
Air Niugini (Project Sponsor)  
Akay Koo Oila Women's Art Centre  
Alcaston Gallery  
ANZ Bank Cairns  
ARC Disability Services  
ARC Circus and Co  
Arts Queensland  
Atherton Performing Arts  
Atherton State High School  
Australian Ballet  
Australian Government (Building Better Regions Funds)  
Australian Performing Rights Association  
Australian Government – Australian Council for the Arts  
Babinda District Community Association  
Bamanga Bub Ngadimunku Aboriginal Corporation (BBN)  
Bell Shakespeare  
Black Honey Company  
Bonemap  
Box Jelly Theatre Co  
Brisbane Museum  
Bulmba-ja  
Cairns and District Chinese Association Inc (CADCAI)  
Cairns Art Gallery  
Cairns Art Society  
Cairns Children Museum  
Cairns Choral Society  
Cairns Create It  
Cairns District Family History Society

Cairns Historical Society  
Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF)  
Cairns Indigenous Youth Employment Program  
Cairns Museum  
Cairns Photographic Society Inc  
Cairns Private Hospital  
Cairns School of Distance Education  
Cairns Sister City, Riga in Latvia  
Cairns State High School  
Cairns State Special School  
Cairns Tropical Writers Festival  
Cassowary Coast Regional Council  
Central Queensland University (CQU)  
Circa  
Circue Mother Africa  
City of Freemantle Library  
City of Sydney  
Club Ocellaris Report (Project Sponsor)  
CoCA  
Code Green  
Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art (CAIA)  
CRC Community Development  
CRC Economic Development  
CRC Libraries  
Creative Partnerships Australia  
Creative Victoria  
Critical Stages Touring  
Cycas Circus  
Dead Puppet Society  
Defence Shed  
Department of Defence

**Open Session Agenda – Ordinary Meeting – 10 July 2024 – #7458941**

Dept Ed (ICECC) Indigenous Community Engagement Cultural Capacity  
Dept Ed (SDSS) Specialist Disability Support Services  
Dept of Youth Justice  
DFAT  
Douglas Shire Council  
Dr Paul Matthews  
Dr Raya Mayo  
Dulux  
Edge Hill/Whitfield Progress Hall Association  
End Credits Film Club  
Ergon Energy  
Erub Island Arts Centre  
Essential Screen Skills  
Etheridge Shire Council  
Expressions Dance Company  
Federal Government - Regional Jobs and Investment Packages Grant,  
First Peoples Advisory Committee (FPAC)  
Flying Arts Alliance  
FNQ Dance Academy  
Friends of the Botanic Gardens  
Get Skilled Access  
Gimuy Walubara Yidinji community,  
Girringun Aboriginal Arts Centre  
Gondwana Choirs  
Good Counsel College (Innisfail)  
Grand Kyiv Ballet of Ukraine  
Green Space, Our Place – Volunteer Program  
Griffith University  
Grin and Tonic Theatre and the Simoni  
Gympie Art Gallery



Hayley Gillespie  
Holding Redlynch (Sponsor)  
House of Gemini  
Indigenous Art Centre Alliance  
Indigenous Elders  
Inkmasters Cairns  
Innisfail East State School  
Innisfail State College  
Innisfail State School  
James Cook University (JCU)  
Junior Eisteddfod  
JUTE Theatre Company  
KickArts  
Lae City Authority  
Land Council PBC's (Aboriginal Corporations)  
Lissening Island Resort (Project Sponsor)  
Little March Productions  
Making Whoopie  
Malanda Theatre Company  
Mamu Health Service – Cassowary Coast  
Melbourne Museum  
Mike Ball Dive Expeditions (Project Sponsor)  
Milne Bay MV Chertan (Project Sponsor)  
Minjil Indigenous Cultural Group  
Miriki Performing Arts  
Mitomel Printmaking  
Morganics  
Mornington Island Art Centre  
Mossman Gorge Training Centre  
Mossman Health Service – Apunipima  
Mossman Indigenous Elders  
Mossman State High School

Mossman Youth Outreach  
Mount St Bernard College (Herberton)  
Naresuan University  
National Joblink  
National Museum  
Nautilus Scuba Club Cairns (Exhibitor)  
Ngamumu – For Mothers  
Nintiringanyi Cultural Training Centre  
North Queensland Amateur Gem Cutters & Jewellers  
Northsite Contemporary Arts  
NQ Chamber Orchestra  
Office of the Commonwealth Games  
OMNI Builders  
Onespace Gallery  
Opera Queensland  
Opera Australia  
PangeaSeed Foundation  
Patch Theatre Company  
Peace Lutheran College  
Pegasus Studios  
Peninsula Art Educators Association (PAEA)  
Polygot  
Polytoxic  
Pompuraaw Aboriginal Art Centre  
Qld Aboriginal Islander Health Council (QAIHC) and Member Services  
Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art  
Qld Symphony Orchestra  
Qld Theatre  
QMusic  
Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC)  
Queensland Aids Council  
Queensland Art Gallery|Gallery of Modern Art

Queensland Ballet  
Queensland College of Art (QCA)  
Queensland Council for LGBTI Health  
Queensland Government – Building Our Regions Program  
Queensland Government – Youth Justice  
Queensland Museum  
Queensland Music Festival Queensland Poetry Festival  
Queensland RHD Register and Control Program (RHD)  
Queensland Symphony Orchestra  
Queensland University of Technology  
REACH Arts FNQ  
Redfern Community Centre  
Redlynch State College  
Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF)  
Regional Arts Orgs – Theatre, Music, Performing, Visual Art Networks  
Regional Arts Services Network (RASN)  
Regional Youth Networks and working groups  
Renew Australia  
RHD Australia  
Rondo Theatre  
Russell Mills Foundation  
Saltwater Creek Basketry Group  
Scouting Association of Australia – Queensland Branch  
Screen Qld  
Screenworks  
Shake and Stir Theatre Company  
Skytrans  
Solomon Islands Dive Expeditions (Project Sponsor)  
Sorami Ochi and Hayley Gillespie  
Sounds of AustraNesia  
Spirit of Freedom (Project Sponsor)

St Andrews Catholic College  
St Augustine's College  
St Mary's Catholic College  
St Monica's College  
State Library of Queensland  
Tableland Music Lovers  
Tablelands Regional Council  
TAFE Qld  
Tapa Arts from Oro Province  
Tawali Resort (Project Sponsor)  
The Italian Social Dance Academy,  
The National Art Gallery of Australia  
The Pryce Centre for Culture and Arts  
The Royal Czech Ballet  
The Young Company  
TLNA Smithfield State High School  
Torres Strait Island Regional Council  
Tourism Events Queensland (TEQ)  
Tourism Tropical North Qld (TTNQ)  
TPG Architects  
Trinity Anglican School  
Trinity Bay State High School  
Tropical Art Theatre Group  
Tropical Arts  
UMI Arts  
Vitae Veritas  
Wallindi Plantation Resort (Project Sponsor)  
Wespac Bank  
Woree State School  
Yak Yak Yak  
Yalanji Arts  
Yarrabah Art Centre

# 8. Glossary of Terms

TERM	DEFINITION	TERM	DEFINITION
ARI	Artist Run Initiative		
CBD	Central Business District		
CIAF	Cairns Indigenous Art Fair		
Circa	Circa Contemporary Circus		
CPAC	Cairns Performing Arts Centre		
CQU	Central Queensland University		
CRC	Cairns Regional Council		
DAIP	Disability Access Plan		
FNQ	Far North Queensland		
JCU	James Cook University		
MMP	Munro Martin Parklands		
National Conservation Standards	National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries supporting key areas of activity common to organisations that care for collections and provide collection-based services to the community.		
NFP	Not for Profit		
QPAC	Queensland Performing Arts Centre		
QUT	Queensland University of Technology		
QUAGOMA	Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art		
RADF	Regional Arts Development Fund		
		Sector	Australia: Advertising; Architecture; Broadcasting, electronic or digital media and film; Design; Environmental heritage; Fashion; Libraries and archives; Literature and print media; Museums; Music composition and publishing; Other culture goods manufacturing and sales; Performing arts; Supporting activities; Arts education; Visual arts and crafts
		SoARTS	State of the Arts in Cairns - Research Project produced by JCU and CQU
		SoARTS Sector/ Stakeholder Group	Representatives of visual arts, dance, arts services, writing, recreational arts, contemporary arts, galleries, museums, art fairs, music, inclusive arts, arts education, Indigenous design, landscape design, architecture, publishing, theatre and education
		Stakeholder	Individual, group or organisation that have interest in the strategy and impacted by the outcome
		TAFE	Technical and Further Education
		TEQ	Tourism Events Queensland
		TTNQ	Tourism Tropical North Qld

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# Addendum 1 - Delivering Outcomes

STRATEGY FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS 2022 REPORT CARD

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# Strategy for Culture and the Arts - Delivering Outcomes

## What we wanted to see by 2022, and what was achieved

### Preface

The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 established three key priorities.

Focusing effort on soft and hard infrastructure, celebrating and communicating Cairns' shared identity, and supporting economic sustainability enabled meaningful progress towards the desired goals.

This appendix to the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 Report Card provides a comprehensive overview of the outcomes achieved, and how they align with the strategy's intended goals and measures for success.

## KEY PRIORITIES

### PRIORITY 1

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

### OUTCOMES WE WANT TO SEE BY 2022

World-class cultural facilities, including a master-planned arts precinct in the CBD.

Adequate space for cultural and creative sector operations, production and storage.

Platforms for collaboration, networking, resource-sharing, cross-promotion, knowledge-sharing and professional development.

Annual grant programs that enable and support creative practice, and seed funding for testing ideas and new collaborations.

Opportunities for cross-cultural, cross-art form, intercultural and intergenerational creative expression for people of all ages, ethnicities and abilities.

Increased focus on young people and programs that deliver pathways for further education and employment in the arts.

### PRIORITY 2

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

### OUTCOMES WE WANT TO SEE BY 2022

Preservation initiatives that protect and value the region's built and natural cultural heritage, as well as historic and contemporary collections.

Effective and collaborative procedures for programs concerning cultural knowledge and artistic expression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Diverse place-making, public art and cultural tourism programs that add value to the city's growing portfolio.

Advocacy and promotion of local heritage assets and the diverse multicultural character of our community as a source of identity and belonging.

Network of regional organisations to drive cross-promotion, project development, shared resources and professional development.

Evidence-based research to support and guide future decision-making and investment in the preservation and promotion of our shared cultural heritage and regional identity.

### PRIORITY 3

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

### OUTCOMES WE WANT TO SEE BY 2022

National and International reputation as a vibrant hub for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and creative expression.

Quality programs, events and activities that encourage visitation, maximise visitor experience and bring people to our region specifically for culture and the arts.

Strategic framework and audience development strategies to drive market exposure and income generation.

Creative and cultural industries network to drive coordinated and strategic industry development.

Focused investment in connecting and promoting our collective points of distinction and valuable cultural and creative offerings.

Evidence-based research to build a case for investment and maximise our global market opportunities.

## PRIORITY 1 Infrastructure, Resources and Skills

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> World-class cultural facilities, including a master-planned arts precinct in the CBD</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b></p> <p><b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Community satisfaction and appreciation</p> <p><b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Accessible and affordable facilities commensurate with the needs and expected growth of the Cairns community</p> <p><b>Institutional Measures:</b> Increased investment and culture-driven vision in step with the infrastructure needs and aspirations of the Cairns</p>	<b>Key Achievements</b>				
	<p><b>Cairns Performing Arts Centre:</b> The \$71 million CPAC co-funded by the Federal Government’s National Stronger Regions Fund and Queensland Government’s Arts Qld, opened in December 2018. The venue offers a 941-seat main auditorium and 400-seat studio theatre equipped with high-quality technical equipment and support.</p>	<b>AUDIENCE NUMBERS</b> (Dec 2018 - Jun 2023)	<b>PARTICIPANTS</b> (Dec 2018 - Jun 2023)	<b>EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES</b> (Dec 2018 - Jun 2023)	
		316,290	2,099	1,680 short term 19 longer term	
	<p><b>Court House Gallery:</b> The \$8.28m refurbishment and adaptive re-use of the former Cairns Court House began in 2019 in step with the building’s significant heritage values along with broader CBD precinct development plans. Officially opened in February 2021, the Court House Gallery serves as a gathering place and a high-level art and cultural presentation space.</p>	<b>AUDIENCE NUMBERS</b> (Feb 2021 - Jun 2023)	<b>PARTICIPANTS</b> (Feb 2021 - Jun 2023)	<b>EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES</b> (Feb 2021 - Jun 2023)	
		91,105	2,715	148 short term 3 longer term	
	<p><b>Munro Martin Parklands:</b> Munro Martin Parklands has rapidly gained popularity among locals since its redevelopment and re-opening in 2016. The parkland’s green proscenium stage, the largest in Australia, has hosted various performances such as Queensland Opera’s Barber of Seville, Circa’s new circus, Grammy Award-winning Soweto Gospel Choir, and the contemporary music of Passenger and the Waifs.</p>	<b>AUDIENCE NUMBERS</b> (Dec 2017 - Jun 2023)	<b>PARTICIPANTS</b> (Feb 2021 - Jun 2023)	<b>EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES</b> (Feb 2021 - Jun 2023)	
		66,708	1,244	674	
<p><b>Cairns Gallery Precinct:</b> Supported by a \$10m Federal Government grant, Council’s vision to transform three existing heritage-listed buildings within the Cairns city centre to create a dynamic and world class gallery precinct, is underway. In July 2022, expressions of interest were advertised in the search for innovative designs to master-plan a unique cultural destination.</p>					
<b>Sector Insights</b>					
<p>Stakeholder perspectives on hard infrastructure indicate a continued acknowledgement of the level of investment by CRC in the development of arts venues in the CBD (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>The opening of the Court House Gallery in Abbott Street has been applauded by the sector and adds to the growth of infrastructure development that has transformed the city of Cairns into a hub of arts and creativity (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>SoARTS stakeholders expressed that the provision of cultural infrastructure is creating landmarks and a cultural identity for Cairns, noting the massive transformation of Cairns over the past 10-15 years (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>					



## PRIORITY 1 Infrastructure, Resources and Skills

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Adequate space for cultural and creative sector operations, production, and Storage</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b></p> <p><b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Community satisfaction and appreciation</p> <p><b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased sector sustainability, capacity and capability</p> <p><b>Institutional Measures:</b> Improved capacity, usage, and promotion of Council-owned and community-run cultural facilities, venues and spaces</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p>		
	<p><b>Enhanced Public Awareness:</b> Two new promotional campaigns showcasing the diversity of facilities and spaces on offer were developed to boost visibility and drive greater utilisation of the city's public and privately owned amenities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Cairns Arts and Culture Map: Launched in 2018, the Arts and Culture Map is a one-stop shop for information on the city's arts and cultural offerings. The map's Facilities and Spaces page continues to be the third most popular and viewed category.</li> <li>Vibrance magazine: Launched in 2021, the magazine has combined the full range of Creative Life programs and resources in one single publication. Vibrance targets the promotion of Council-owned facilities for hire, ranging from galleries and halls to meeting rooms, stages and arts centres.</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>Community Activity Spaces Strategy:</b> Endorsed by Council in 2022, the strategy provides a roadmap for decision making around the provision, design, and management of indoor community spaces. This forward-thinking strategy aims to encourage active and engaged communities across the Cairns region and meet the needs of community by ensuring equitable provision and effective utilisation of community spaces.</p>		
<p><b>Renew Cairns:</b> This milestone partnership between CRC, Renew Australia and local landlords was forged in 2021. Designed to activate and energise underutilised areas of the city, creative start-ups and projects can now access vacant CBD spaces to test and grow their business or idea in a commercial setting.</p>	<p><b>RENEW CAIRNS SHOP VISITS (2022-2023)</b></p> <p>4,200</p>	<p><b>RENEW CAIRNS TENANTS (2022-2023)</b></p> <p>(13 tenants + 42 other makers) 54</p>	<p><b>RENEW CAIRNS TENANTS (2022-2023)</b></p> <p>Workshop Participants 249</p>
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p>			
<p>Awareness of the Cairns Regional Council's contribution to capital infrastructure is high amongst the stakeholder group (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>Engagement with stakeholders suggested that the breadth and significance of arts, cultural and creative activity is in a sustained period of growth. Demand for development, production and presentation facilities remained high (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>There is a need for smaller arts spaces that allow different parts of the ecology to grow, including experimental, underground arts programming. The Council-initiated Renew Cairns program has contributed to the remedy of this issue (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>			

## PRIORITY 1 Infrastructure, Resources and Skills

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Platforms for collaboration, networking, resource-sharing, cross-promotion, knowledge-sharing and professional development</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Exposure to new knowledge, skills and experiences <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased collaborations, partnerships and networking across the arts and cultural sector <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Effective frontline services that focus on community engagement and communication with the cultural sector</p>	<b>Key Achievements</b>	
	<p><b>Collaboration, Networking and Professional Development:</b> Initiatives designed to inspire professional development, collaboration and new networks have included an exceptional range of artist in residencies, mentorships, internship projects and forums. Examples include, but are by no means limited to:</p>	
	<p><b>Tanks Art Centre Multi-Artform Residency Program</b> caters to a range of arts practitioners including visual arts, music, writing, performance, multi-media and community cultural development.</p>	<p><b>TANKS ARTS CENTRE</b></p> <p>RESIDENCY PROGRAM (Jul 2018 - Jun 2023) 31 Residencies</p>
	<p><b>Court House Gallery Curators Symposium and a Taste of Culture Series</b> offered workshops and opportunities for the arts community to come together, share ideas and discuss future projects.</p>	<p><b>COURT HOUSE GALLERY</b></p> <p>CURATORS SYMPOSIUM (Mar 2023) 27 people International / National / local A TASTE OF CULTURE (Mar - Jun 2022) 145 people</p>
	<p><b>The Understory Symposium</b> is a vital component of the Understory Film Festival designed to stimulate discussion, knowledge-sharing and cross-artform and cross-sector collaboration.</p>	<p><b>UNDERSTORY SYMPOSIUMS &amp; FORUMS</b></p> <p>(Jul 2019 - Jun 2023) 350 people</p>
<p><b>The Creative Life Volunteer Program</b> is a valuable and growing network of people in the community who contribute to the success of Council's galleries, festivals, and events.</p>	<p><b>CREATIVE LIFE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM</b></p> <p>(2019 - 2022) 1,586 people</p>	
<b>Sector Insights</b>		
<p>There is evidence of low-level informal networks structured around specific disciplines and communities of practice. It is also evident, however, that high-level advocacy is critically needed to promote growth across the sector (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>Partnerships and collaborations build capacity and allow programs and projects to flourish at a scale that could not be achieved by individual entities (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>Stakeholder activity suggests strong and effective developmental support networks operate within sub-segments. However, peak strategic representation engaged in focused advocacy for the arts, cultural and creative industries as an aggregated sector is limited (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>		

## PRIORITY 1 Infrastructure, Resources and Skills

What we wanted to see by 2022	Key Achievements			
Annual grant programs that enable and support creative practice, and seed funding for testing ideas and new collaborations	<b>Provision of Annual Grants:</b> The arts and cultural grants program has supported a multi-dimensional range of initiatives. Designed to build and sustain the viability and productivity of community-based organisations, and enhance the capacity and capability of local artists, cultural and creative practitioners, the full suite of grants have circulated around \$2.8m in funding across 340 projects			
<b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Community satisfaction and appreciation <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased sector sustainability, capacity and capability <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Effective frontline services that focus on community engagement and communication with the cultural sector	RADF July 2018 - June 2023 <b>\$1,063,479</b>	<b>Audience</b> (July 2018 - June 2023)	<b>Participation</b> (July 2018 - June 2023)	<b>Short Term Employment</b> (July 2018 - June 2023)
	ARTS & CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE July 2018 - June 2023 <b>\$344,067</b>	<b>663,294</b>	<b>10,650</b>	<b>915</b>
	COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS EVENTS (Producing Cultural & Creative Content) July 2018 - June 2023 <b>\$1,252,188</b>			
	IN-KIND July 2018 - June 2023 <b>\$219,687</b>			
Sector Insights	<p>Stakeholder sentiment that the tacit and intangible benefits associated with culture and the arts are at risk of becoming undermined by explicitly economic imperatives, and that this may further inhibit a holistic value of the industry (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>The RADF program is acknowledged by stakeholders as a consistent enabler of activity across the disciplines of the sector and Council programs that provide in-kind access to facilities and soft infrastructure are critical to some (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>Stakeholders lamented limited philanthropic support for arts and culture activities however there is a sentiment that Council actively supports business and project development opportunity through its funding programs (SoARTS Report 2020)</p>			

## PRIORITY 1 Infrastructure, Resources and Skills

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Opportunities for cross-cultural, cross-artform, intercultural and intergenerational creative expression for people of all ages, ethnicities and abilities</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b></p> <p><b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Exposure to new knowledge, skills and experiences</p> <p><b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased collaborations, partnerships and networking across the arts and cultural sector</p> <p><b>Institutional Measures:</b> Effective frontline services that focus on community engagement and communication with the cultural sector</p>	<b>Key Achievements</b>			
	<p><b>Cross-cultural and cross-artform expression:</b> A fusion of positive, cross-cultural, cross-artform collaborations and a wide assortment of opportunities have encouraged community engagement, participation and creative expression. Examples include, but</p>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Short Term Employment</b>
	<p><b>Beginnings – A Musical Story of Cairns, Commonwealth Games Festival 2018:</b> A large-scale locally devised and produced musical theatre piece. Telling the unique Indigenous and multicultural history of cairns, the program engaged over 300 performers from diverse cultures and with mixed abilities.</p>	(2018) 3,500	(2018) 343	
	<p><b>Cairns Children’s Festival:</b> An annual celebration for children aged 12 years and under, showcasing a diverse, innovative and multi-arts program across two days and various arts precincts.</p>	(2021, 2022, 2023) 22,603	(2021, 2022, 2023) 284	(2021, 2022, 2023) 215
<p><b>Arts and Disability Strategy:</b> Consultation and collaboration with the disability sector to guide implementation of programs, projects and resources was facilitated by Queensland’s peak arts and disability advocate Access Arts.</p>		(Feb 2019 - Jul 2023) 200	(Feb 2019 - Jul 2023) 5	
<b>Sector Insights</b>				
<p>Inclusivity is a dominant theme that exists within the NFP arts and cultural sector/cities as highly desirable and beneficial to growth (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>The build-up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games in Queensland provides an opportunity for more cross- sector activity and partnerships (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>Beginnings: A Musical Story of Cairns at the 2018 Cairns Festival was held up as an example of multicultural visions done well (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>				

## PRIORITY 1 Infrastructure, Resources and Skills

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Increased focus on young people and programs that deliver pathways for further education and employment in the arts</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Community satisfaction and appreciation <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased sector sustainability, capacity and capability <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Effective frontline services that focus on community engagement and communication with the cultural sector</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p>	
	<p><b>Strategy for Young Creatives:</b> Developed in partnership with Arts Queensland in 2018/19 and adopted by Council in 2020, the Strategy for Young Creatives steps out the trends, challenges and opportunities that influence young people’s engagement in the arts here in Cairns, and guides five specific focus areas: Partnership and Collaboration; Funding; Professional Development; Programming; and Strategic Development.</p>	<p>February - September 2019 Participants <b>450</b> Short Term Employment <b>2</b></p>
<p><b>Flame.Arts:</b> Targeted investment in RADF-funded Flame.Arts and its specific career development and access programs has delivered significant professional development and strategic development outcomes. The recruitment of an Indigenous Project Officer in 2019 continues to support and guide the delivery of the program.</p>	<p>2021 - 2022 Participants <b>669</b> Exhibition Attendance <b>3,700</b></p>	
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p>		
<p>The Council’s Strategy for Young Creatives provides exemplar youth-oriented programs that redress some of the decline in youth arts of previous decades (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>Across the sector, there remains a sense of losing a young generation, with limited youth-oriented organisations, few young people on boards or committees and diminishing pathways at tertiary education institutions (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>Stakeholders uniformly argued the need for good arts education from primary school to the tertiary level, otherwise it is difficult to get young people to continue with serious careers and for Cairns to have a young talent pool feeding its arts and culture scene (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>		

## PRIORITY 1 Infrastructure, Resources and Skills

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Evidence-based research to support and guide future decision making and investment in hard and soft cultural infrastructure and resources</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b>  <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Sector confidence, resource-sharing, networking and connectivity  <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased collaborations, partnerships and networking across the arts and cultural sector  <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Increased investment and culture-driven vision in step with the infrastructure needs and aspirations of the Cairns community</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p>	
	<p><b>Research and Evaluation:</b> Council has partnered in an outstanding range of research and evaluative projects that have provided crucial insights into Cairns' arts and cultural sector, economic output and future potential. This research includes:</p>	
	<p>SoARTS produced by JCU and CQU in 2019, 2020, 2021 &amp; 2023</p>	<p>2019 - 2023 Advisory Panel 20 Sector Participants 27</p>
	<p>Cultural and Creative Activity in the Cairns Region (2019) and Cultural and Creative Business Survey (2019) produced by Cummings Economics</p>	<p>2019 Business Participants 112</p>
	<p>A Population Hotspot Analysis (2019) produced by QUT</p>	<p>2019 Sector Participants 33</p>
<p>A series of 14 Key Performance Indicators surveys (2018 – 2022) designed to gauge audience and participant levels of satisfaction and enrichment.</p>	<p>2018 - 2022 Survey Participants 1,191</p>	
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p> <p>Council in-kind support to facilities and soft infrastructure is critical in allowing some viability for arts and culture activities. (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>A successive reduction in operational and project funding levels provided by State and Federal governments has negatively impacted the range of services available to the sector. The local council takes up gaps in advocacy and facilitation of services. (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>Stakeholder perspectives on hard infrastructure indicate a continued acknowledgement of the level of investment by CRC in the development of arts venues in the CBD. (SoARTS Report 2020)</p>		

## PRIORITY 2 Culture, Heritage and Place

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Preservation initiatives that protect and value the region's built and natural cultural heritage, as well as historic and contemporary collections</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Visible, engaging, accessible and vibrant spaces and places <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased protection, conservation and promotion of the region's significant heritage assets and historical and contemporary collections <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Effective and best-practice preventative maintenance across Council's significant heritage assets</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p> <p><b>Court House and Mulgrave Shire Council Chambers Adaptive Re-use:</b> The conceptual redevelopment and repurpose of these significant buildings has been underpinned by the preparation of Conservation and Interpretive Management Plans commissioned in 2018. Collaboration with National Arts Leaders representatives from Melbourne Museum, QUAGOMA, and QPAC; as well as local representation from First Nations stakeholders, arts and cultural organisations, designers and architects have guided the project.</p> <p><b>Effective Preventative Maintenance:</b> Ongoing preventative maintenance across the region's shared and significant cultural heritage and historical assets has been undertaken in accordance with conservation management plans. This includes the following heritage-listed assets:</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;">COURT HOUSE GALLERY</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;">CAIRNS ART GALLERY</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;">TANKS ARTS CENTRE</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;">TOBRUK POOL ANZAC CENTENARY SCUPTURE &amp; INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;">SCHOOL OF ARTS (CAIRNS MUSEUM)</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;">CAIRNS LIBRARY TRAIL</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;">MCLEOD STREET PIONEER CEMETERY</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;">MUNRO MARTIN PARKLANDS WORLD WAR II COMMAND CENTRE</div> </div>
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p> <p>The idea of character precincts is important in terms of retaining a collection of vernacular architecture that represents different timeframes in the region's history. Council's purchase and restoration of the Court House is an exemplar project applauded by stakeholders (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>Stakeholders recognize that the region's collections are important for telling stories through curatorial practice and other creative production methods (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>The role of Cairns as a regional creative hub suggests that significant AAA grade storage facilities for both Indigenous and non-indigenous collections is an ongoing concern for the sector (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	

## PRIORITY 2 Culture, Heritage and Place

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Effective and collaborative procedures for programs concerning cultural knowledge and artistic expression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Appreciation of the region's Indigenous cultural heritage and shared multicultural history <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increase cross-cultural and cross-artform exchange <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Improved collaboration and culture-led partnerships in place-making, urban planning, revitalisation, public art and interpretive projects</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p> <p><b>Specific and purpose-built roles within the Creative Life Team:</b> The recruitment of an Indigenous Project Officer in 2019 continues to support and guide the delivery of the Flame.Arts program. The recent recruitment of a First Nations Curator in February 2023 now provides overall supervision, co-ordination and management of the Creative Life First Nations Visual Arts Program.</p> <p><b>Collaboration and Partnerships:</b> High-level partnerships, collaboration, resource sharing and co-production have seeded the development of an impressive range of projects. Examples include, but are by no means limited to the following:</p> <div style="display: grid; grid-template-columns: repeat(4, 1fr); gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">CIAF FASHION STORY EXHIBITION COURT HOUSE GALLERY</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">A TASTE OF CULTURE WORKSHOP SERIES UMI ARTS COURT HOUSE GALLERY</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">MASTER PLANNING CAIRNS GALLERY PRECINCT &amp; COURT HOUSE GALLERY</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">MIXED BLOOD EXHIBITION TANKS ARTS CENTRE</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">JINA'S JOURNEY MIRIKI PERFORMING ARTS CPAC</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">PUBLIC ART INSTALLATIONS SHIELDS STREET HEART</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">WOVEN SOUNDS OF AUSTRANESIA CPAC</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">PASSING THE TORCH GIRRINGUN ABORIGINAL ART CENTRE</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE EXHIBITION COURT HOUSE GALLERY</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">HOT BROWN HONEY CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT CPAC</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">BILLUM STORIES EXHIBITION COURT HOUSE GALLERY</div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">COLOURFUL COUNTRY PORMPURA AW ART AND CULTURE CENTRE</div> </div>
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p> <p>Diversity is a highly valued aspect of the sector, with wide representation across age, gender, ethnic and cultural diversity as well as socio-economic status (with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders arts practice as an important leitmotif) (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>Indigenous arts and cultural organisations within the stakeholder group recognize a positive relationship with Council that is genuine and generally described as non-tokenistic. However, there is a need for more Indigenous people with decision-making clout and in positions of responsibility to effect capacity building and engagement within the sector (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	



## PRIORITY 2 Culture, Heritage and Place

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Diverse place-making, public art and cultural tourism programs that add value to the city's growing portfolio</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Visible, engaging, accessible and vibrant spaces and places <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Re-invigorated culture-led revitalisation of urban spaces and places <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Improved collaboration and culture-led partnerships in place-making, urban planning, revitalisation, public art and interpretive projects</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p>			
	<p><b>Revitalisation, Urban Vitality and Public Art:</b> Cultural and creative-led revitalisation, cultural tourism and public art projects have been brought to life by strategic planning frameworks that aspire to drive visitation and create a vibrant, connected and liveable city:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cairns City Centre Master Plan</b> adopted by Council in 2019 as a design and planning framework to guide the evolution of this important public space.</li> <li>• <b>Streetscape Master Plan for Palm Cove</b> endorsed by Council in 2022 to guide renewal and development of the foreshore, including opportunities for creative placemaking and public art.</li> <li>• <b>Cairns &amp; Great Barrier Reef Event Strategy 2025</b> updated and endorsed by Council in 2022 to deliver strong collaboration between Council, Tourism Tropical North Queensland and Tourism and Events Queensland.</li> <li>• <b>Strategy for Public Art and Placemaking</b> adopted by Council in 2020 to promote the integration of public art and creative processes into Council's urban design and renewal projects</li> </ul>		<p><b>Public Art and Creative Placemaking Strategy</b></p>	
	<p><b>New Works</b> (2018 - 2023)</p> <p><b>10</b> New Works Created</p> <p><b>39</b> Employment Opportunities</p>	<p><b>Public Programs</b> (2018 - 2023)</p> <p><b>66</b> Murals, Digital &amp; Ephemeral Artworks Created</p> <p><b>72</b> Employment Opportunities</p> <p><b>43,104</b> Audience</p> <p><b>386</b> Participants</p>	<p><b>Collection Management</b> (2018 - 2023)</p> <p><b>9</b> Restoration &amp; Repairs</p> <p><b>16</b> Employment Opportunities</p>	
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p> <p>Shields Street is mentioned as a precinct where the integration of public art and public amenity has created a destination attracting people-oriented activity, including two university campuses (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>The development of the Cairns Esplanade, with Robinson's iconic Woven Fish, is also highlighted because of the proliferation of public art. Public Art is an under-appreciated art form that enhances a connection between the local community and visitors (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>A public art walking trail could be combined with a masterclass developed in collaboration with James Cook University and key stakeholders as part of the process of progressing and promoting a trail (SoARTS Report 2020)</p>				

## PRIORITY 2 Culture, Heritage and Place

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Advocacy and promotion of local heritage assets and the diverse multicultural character of our community as a source of identity and belonging</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b></p> <p><b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Connection to place and strong cultural identity</p> <p><b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Re-invigorated culture-led revitalisation of urban spaces and places</p> <p><b>Institutional Measures:</b> Improved participatory process and decision-making for promotion and interpretation</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p> <p><b>Presentation and Promotion:</b> Creative projects designed to promote and communicate the value of the city's rich heritage, character and diversity have included, but are by no means limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flame.Design:</b> Designed to engage young people from across the region to identify iconic historical buildings in their towns and replicate them on a digital platform.</li> <li>• <b>Cairns Arts and Culture Map:</b> Presenting the collective appeal of the region's valuable assets via self-guided heritage walks and historic interpretive trails.</li> <li>• <b>Shadows of the Past:</b> Cairns District Family History Society's annual theatrical tours of the McLeod Street Pioneer Cemetery.</li> </ul> <p><b>Interpretive Media:</b> The development of interpretive media has been imbedded into a range of cultural infrastructure development and urban revitalisation projects. Examples include, but are by no means limited to the following:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>EMBRACING OUR STORIES CAIRNS INDIGENOUS INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE TRAIL</b></p> <p>Exploring the themes of traditional culture and extending a message of welcome to visitors.</p> </div> <div style="background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>TANKS ARTS CENTRE TANKS HISTORY PANELS</b></p> <p>Telling the story of Tanks Arts Centre and the significance of the concrete fuel tanks to naval operations in the Pacific during World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.</p> </div> <div style="background-color: #e85c3d; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>COURT HOUSE GALLERY INTERPRETIVE MEDIA</b></p> <p>Providing the historical background of the building and the assortment of archaeological finds on display, along with First Peoples interaction with the building during its time as a Court House from 1920.</p> </div> </div>
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p> <p>The council-supported promenade theatre production Shadows from the Past, presented in local cemeteries, is an innovative approach to historical storytelling. It provides a production model with high potential for popularity, outreach and engagement (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>Through its collections, the Cairns Museum is a key repository, resource for research and dissemination point for contemporary and historical storytelling related to the social life of Cairns and the region. There are significant opportunities for the digitisation and deployment of the Cairns Museum's holdings (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	

## PRIORITY 2 Culture, Heritage and Place

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Network of regional organisations to drive cross-promotion, project development, shared resources and professional development</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Sector confidence, resource-sharing, networking and connectivity <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increase cross-cultural, and cross art form exchange <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Improved participatory process and decision-making for promotion and interpretation</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p> <p><b>Building Capacity:</b> Sustained, outcome-focused and highly-beneficial partnerships have been forged to promote and celebrate shared identity and cultural heritage. Alliances include, but are by no means limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cairns Art Gallery, Cairns Museum and Cairns Indigenous Art Fair</b> have supported a shared vision for the preservation and presentation of the region's cultural heritage and valuable historical and contemporary collections.</li> <li>• <b>Queensland Museum Regional Museum Development Program</b> has enabled and supported a strong and collaborative network across the region's museum and collecting groups. A key focus of the program has been best-practice collections management as well as building the capacity and capability of the sector.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Queensland Museum Regional Museum Development Program (2018 -2023)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Audience <b>176</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Engagement &amp; Participation <b>2,367</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Site Visits Undertaken <b>154</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Talks &amp; Training Sessions provided <b>33</b></p>
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p>		
<p>There is evidence of low-level informal networks structured around specific disciplines and communities of practice. It is also evident, however, that high-level advocacy is critically needed to promote growth across the sector (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>The stakeholders in general feel isolated from national industry networks but form local partnerships, groups and consortiums. These groups share current developments and cost share opportunities that might allow more viability (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>Stakeholder activity suggests strong and effective developmental support networks operate within sub-segments. However, peak strategic representation engaged in focused advocacy for the arts, cultural and creative industries as an aggregated sector is limited (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>		

## PRIORITY 2 Culture, Heritage and Place

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Evidence-based research to support and guide future decision-making and investment in the preservation and promotion of our shared cultural heritage and regional identity</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b></p> <p><b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Appreciation of the region's Indigenous cultural heritage and shared multicultural history</p> <p><b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increase cross-cultural and cross-artform exchange</p> <p><b>Institutional Measures:</b> Improved collaboration and culture-led partnerships in place-making, urban planning, revitalisation, public art and interpretive projects</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p> <p><b>Research and Evaluation:</b> Council has partnered in an outstanding range of research and evaluative projects that have provided crucial insights into Cairns' arts and cultural sector, economic output and future potential. This research includes:</p>	
	<p>SoARTS produced by JCU and CQU in 2019, 2020, 2021 &amp; 2023</p>	<p>SoARTS (2019-2023) <b>Advisory Panel 20</b> <b>Sector Participants 27</b></p>
	<p>Cultural and Creative Activity in the Cairns Region (2019) and Cultural and Creative Business Survey (2019) produced by Cummings Economics</p>	<p>Cultural and Creative Business Survey (2019) <b>Business Participants 112</b></p>
	<p>A Population and Hotspot Analysis (2019) produced by QUT</p>	<p>A Population and Hotspot Analysis (2019) <b>Sector Participants 33</b></p>
	<p>A series of 14 Key Performance Indicators surveys (2018-2022) designed to gauge audience and participant levels of satisfaction and enrichment.</p>	<p>Key Performance Indicators Survey (2018-2022) <b>Survey Participants 1,191</b></p>
	<p>Studies emphasise the distinct cultural identity of Cairns, shaped by the local Indigenous culture and the tropical environment. Studies also recognise the vital importance of the region's historical and contemporary collections in communicating stories through curatorial methods and diverse creative techniques.</p>	
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p> <p>Cairns lies at the heart of an active, creative region. It is a critical business and operational hub servicing the rich and diverse expressions of a uniquely tropical Australian culture with intrinsic regional cultural, artistic and creative values (SoARTS Report 2023)</p> <p>As a city with a strong tropical identity, there is potential to specialise in the cultural influences and practices that abound in the region. This includes Indigenous, Melanesian, Pacifica, migrant and settler heritages. Focusing on these unique values will attract national and international attention, augmenting the reef and rainforest spectacle for which the region is currently promoted through tourism channels (SoARTS Report 2023)</p>		

## PRIORITY 3 A Robust Cultural Economy

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> National and international reputation as a vibrant hub for Indigenous culture and creative expression</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Creative excellence, innovation and enrichment <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased demand for creative product unique to Cairns <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Increased cross-departmental and cross-government, corporate and business sector partnerships and collaboration</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p> <p><b>Nurturing the Profile and Reputation of Indigenous Creativity and Cultural Engagement:</b> Efforts to support and promote Cairns as a leading centre for Indigenous culture and creative expression on both the national and international stage has included the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose-built Gallery:</b> Stage 4 and 5 of the Cairns Gallery Precinct includes development of the master plan to connect Cairns Art Gallery, the Court House Gallery and the Mulgrave Gallery. Central to the design is the additional inclusion of a purpose-built gallery that will act as a destination point for First Peoples artists and Arts Centres throughout the Cape and to expose authentic Indigenous art to a national and international audience.</li> <li>• <b>Advocacy and Collaboration:</b> Council has played a solid support and advocacy role in the development of the State Government’s Bulmba-ja Arts Centre, and Creative Life has continued to support and collaborate with its resident companies.</li> <li>• <b>Outcome-focused Partnerships:</b> Supporting First Nations creative industries has been realised across Council’s flagship venues. The Court House Gallery, CPAC, MMP and the Tanks Art Centre have each seeded the development, presentation and promotion of a diverse range of exhibitions, public art, theatre, fashion, festivals, artist talks and workshops.</li> <li>• <b>Supporting Signature Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Festivals and Celebrations:</b> The ongoing provision of grants and resources has supported a vibrant calendar of First Nations festivals and celebrations that have added value to the city’s Indigenous arts and cultural experiences. These include but are by no means limited to:</li> </ul> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> <div>NAIDOC WEEK</div> <div>CAIRNS INDIGENOUS ART FAIR</div> <div>BIG TALK ONE FIRE UMI ARTS</div> <div>MABO DAY CELEBRATIONS</div> <div>SHINE ON GIMUY SHINE ON PRODUCTIONS</div> </div>
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p> <p>Despite there being no significant cultural and arts education pathways for Indigenous practitioners, there are exceptions - Indigenous production in the form of fashion, filmmaking, music and visual arts is associated with some of the success stories from the region (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>Overall, the results indicate that Indigenous arts/cultural activities were more popular than other arts/cultural events. This may reflect the commercial nature of the Indigenous arts/cultural activities (SoARTS Report 2021)</p> <p>Prioritising certificates of authenticity and Indigenous-led suppliers is going to strengthen the local industry and provide a more conducive and satisfying experience for the tourism market (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	

## PRIORITY 3 A Robust Cultural Economy

What we wanted to see by 2022	Key Achievements			
<p>Quality programs, events and activities that encourage visitation, maximise visitor experience and bring people to our region specifically for culture and the arts</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b></p> <p><b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Growing appetite and expectation for quality contemporary works, programs and products</p> <p><b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased profile as a city of the arts, growth in audience numbers, and employment opportunities for local artists and cultural industry sector</p> <p><b>Institutional Measures:</b> Programming that attracts new audiences and brings people to our region specifically for the arts and culture</p>	<p><b>Enhanced Visitor Experience:</b> A rich variety of high-quality programs, events, and activities have been developed to increase engagement, participation and visitor experience. Examples include:</p>			
		<b>Participants</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Employment</b>
	<p><b>Commonwealth Games Festival 2018:</b> The State Government granted Council \$1,400,000 to design, manage, secure, market and deliver the Event City Festival in Cairns in accordance with a range of creative principles. The 12-day Arts and Cultural Festival was designed to create a positive, long-lasting legacy and build the region’s reputation as a hot spot for the arts.</p>	600	74,700	100
	<p><b>Cairns Festival:</b> Continued investment in Cairns Festival via innovative and contemporary programming, and development of partnerships that attract new work provided opportunities for creative exchange and fusion of local, national and international influences.</p>	2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 7,423	2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 337,050	2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 842
	<p><b>Understory Film Festival:</b> The annual film event for North Queensland filmmakers has grown from strength to strength and celebrated 10 years in 2023. Understory receives films created by emerging and established filmmakers of all ages, coming from as far south as Townsville and reaching north to the Torres Strait.</p>	2020, 2022, 2023 671	2020, 2022, 2023 3,331	2020, 2022, 2023 46
<p><b>Cairns Summer Sounds:</b> Council’s partnership with Tourism Events Queensland and Tropical Tourism North Queensland was initiated in 2020 to stimulate visitation. The 2020 and 2023 series brought some of the biggest names of the Australian music scene to Cairns and promoted the city nationally and internationally as a destination for the arts and entertainment. Around 25 percent of ticket holders were visitors from outside the region.</p>		2020 & 2023 9,600		
Sector Insights				
<p>International tourists visit Cairns for its natural attractions but their relatively short visits limit opportunities for engagement in cultural experiences. Domestic tourists are often repeat tourists and while they too visit the reef and rainforest, their length of stay provides more opportunities for cultural experiences (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>Claiming the title of the arts and culture capital of Northern Australia is the Cairns Regional Council’s call to action and signals the importance of the sector to establishing a unique regional identity (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>The Cairns Indigenous Arts Fair stands out as an event that has the support of tourism organisations such as Events Queensland and Tourism Tropical North Queensland (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>				

## PRIORITY 3 A Robust Cultural Economy

What we wanted to see by 2022	Key Achievements
<p><b>Strategic framework and audience development strategies to drive market exposure and income generation</b></p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b></p> <p><b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Growing appetite and expectation for quality contemporary works, programs and products</p> <p><b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased demand for creative product unique to Cairns</p> <p><b>Institutional Measures:</b> Strategies and resources in place to guide economic development and diversification opportunities</p>	<p><b>Strategic Frameworks in Place:</b> Championing and prioritising the growth of the region’s diverse arts, cultural and events sector is now central to Council’s broad corporate objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>COVID-19 Cairns Local Recovery Plan 2020 V2:</b> The Cairns Local Recovery Plan was designed to meet short-medium term needs – both acute and developmental – while informing longer-term recovery and resilience. Actions to re-open facilities, restart events, and foster the development of new cultural product and infrastructure were central to the broader recovery objectives.</li> <li>• <b>Cairns Regional Council Corporate Plan 2021-2026:</b> Endorsed in July 2021 to guide Council’s decision-making, the five strategic goals of the Plan emphasise the region’s economic resilience and liveability. Optimising visitation and tourism opportunities and promoting Cairns as the arts and culture capital of Northern Australia is targeted as a key strategy to drive and nurture community wellbeing.</li> <li>• <b>Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026:</b> Endorsed in November 2021, key focus areas of the strategy include opportunities in Indigenous arts and culture, as well as in film and the performing arts. Major and economic events are also a key focus of the strategy, where Council aims to work with key stakeholders towards a diverse portfolio of events that will elevate the profile and economic sustainability of the Cairns and Great Barrier Reef region.</li> </ul>
Sector Insights	
<p>Much optimism is evident within the Cairns cultural, arts and creative Industries. This confidence is evidenced by a heightened awareness of the sector’s economic impact and indications of the sector’s growth (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>Strong links outside the Cairns local government area indicate that the sector thinks globally and acts locally in what can be considered a hub and spoke network model or ecology (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>Cairns is well placed to consider the economic impact of the culture, arts and creative industries and to promote the sector as an essential contributor to the region’s economic outputs (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>The key to leveraging tourism support for the arts and cultural sector is suggested to be an investment in strategic planning that incorporates cultural tourism goals and indicators (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>	

## PRIORITY 3 A Robust Cultural Economy

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Creative and cultural industries network to drive co-ordinated and strategic industry development</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Ability to project our arts and cultural brand nationally and internationally</p> <p><b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased profile as a city of the arts, growth in audience numbers, and employment opportunities for local artists and cultural industry sector</p> <p><b>Institutional Measures:</b> Increased cross-departmental and cross-government, corporate and business sector partnerships and collaboration</p>	<b>Key Achievements</b>	
	<b>Creative Networks:</b> Council's targeted investment and involvement in networks that facilitate and promote the sustainable growth of regional arts has included:	
	<p><b>Regional Arts Network (RASN)</b> is a region-led network initiated by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland in 2018. Cairns is part of Regional Arts Network Tropical North consortium of local authorities, which prioritises employment pathways that build the capacity and capabilities of creative practitioners in the region.</p>	<p><b>Network Representation</b> <b>20</b> Regions/LGA's</p>
	<p><b>SoARTS</b> is guided by an Advisory Group and a representative Stakeholder Group comprising around 26 representatives of Indigenous visual arts, dance, arts services, writing, recreational arts, contemporary arts, galleries, museums, art fairs, music, inclusive arts, arts education, Indigenous design, landscape design, architecture, publishing, theatre and education.</p>	<p><b>Advisory Group and Industry Stakeholders</b> <b>45</b></p>
	<p><b>Screen Queensland, Screenworks and local screen industry</b> have supported the development of a film-making hub in our region to grow our local industry and attract the attention of national and international industry professionals.</p>	<p><b>Network Representation</b> <b>110</b> <b>Advisory Panel and Industry Stakeholders</b></p>
<b>Sector Insights</b>		
<p>A survey of cultural, arts and creative industry business in 2019 suggests they anticipate an average growth of 7% over the next five years (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>A final geography of culture and the arts in Cairns is provided through our SoARTS interviews. The baseline data collected reveals that 25 of the 26 stakeholders divided their customers/clients between local, national and international markets (SoARTS Report 2019)</p> <p>Both Sector and Commercial Stakeholders suggested a co-ordinated approach to the 'image of Cairns' by sector leaders could elevate culture and the arts 'place' in the region (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>An arts leaders group would strengthen the cohesiveness and confidence of the sector in terms of cross-sector and cross-industry outcomes (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>		



## PRIORITY 3 A Robust Cultural Economy

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Focused investment in connecting and promoting our collective points of distinction and valuable cultural and creative offerings.</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Ability to project our arts and cultural brand nationally and internationally</p> <p><b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased profile as a city of the arts, growth in audience numbers, and employment opportunities for local artists and cultural industry sector</p> <p><b>Institutional Measures:</b> Strategies and resources in place to guide economic development and diversification opportunities</p>	<p><b>Key Achievements</b></p>		
	<p><b>Solid and Strategic Promotion:</b> To strengthen awareness of the region’s broad and diverse cultural and creative assets, two new promotional platforms have been initiated.</p>		
	<p><b>The Cairns Arts and Culture Map:</b> Launched in 2018, the Arts and Culture Map is a one-stop shop for information on the city’s arts and cultural offerings. Launched in 2018, the Cairns Arts and Culture Map is as a one-stop-shop for information on the city’s arts and cultural offerings. Council-owned and privately-owned art and cultural facilities are listed, including venues for hire, historic sites, information about festivals and cultural organisations. Creative businesses and individual artists create their own entry and can use the site to promote their practice and find like-minded people to network and collaborate with.</p>	<p><b>Listings</b> (March 2018 - June 2023)</p>	<p><b>Page Views</b> (March 2018 - June 2023)</p>
	<p><b>Vibrance magazine:</b> Launched in 2021, the publication is a comprehensive resource that showcases the arts and cultural programs produced by Cairns Regional Council. Since its launch, this bi-monthly magazine has established itself as a go-to guide for all the exciting happenings at CPAC, Munro Martin Parklands, the Court House, and Tanks Arts Centre. Moreover, it provides valuable insights into grants, spaces for hire, creative developments, festivals, outcomes of artists-in-residence programs, and the latest public art installations.</p>	<p><b>Distribution</b> (February 2021 - June 2023)</p>	<p><b>Copies</b> (February 2021 - June 2023)</p>
<p><b>Sector Insights</b></p> <p>The unique cultural makeup of the region is considered to positively shape innovation. Some suggest the potential for innovation is more evident in cultural and the arts services than creative practice and presentation (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>Commercial stakeholders have identified the potential of a ‘brand Cairns’ project. Reflecting the image of Cairns could be a motivating idea that interests stakeholders within the sector (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>The stakeholders believe that culture and the arts can be engaged to build those experiences which will enhance the liveability of the city and region (SoARTS Report 2020)</p> <p>There is potential to strategically enhance the capacity of the sector leading into the rollout of the Gallery Precinct and towards cultural events associated with the Brisbane 2032 Olympics (SoARTS Report 2021)</p>			

## PRIORITY 3 A Robust Cultural Economy

<p><b>What we wanted to see by 2022</b> Evidence-based research to build a case for investment and maximise our global market opportunities</p> <p><b>Measures for Success</b> <b>Intrinsic Measures:</b> Creative excellence, innovation and enrichment <b>Instrumental Measures:</b> Increased profile as a city of the arts, growth in audience numbers and employment opportunities <b>Institutional Measures:</b> Strategies and resources in place to guide economic development</p>	<b>Key Achievements</b>	
	<b>Research and Evaluation:</b> Council has partnered in an outstanding range of research and evaluative projects that have provided crucial insights into Cairns' arts and cultural sector, economic output and future potential. This research includes:	
	SoARTS produced by JCU and CQU in 2019, 2020, 2021 & 2023	SoARTS (2019-2023) Advisory Panel <b>20</b> Sector Participants <b>27</b>
	Cultural and Creative Activity in the Cairns Region (2019) and Cultural and Creative Business Survey (2019) produced by Cummings Economics	Cultural and Creative Business Survey (2019) Business Participants <b>112</b>
	A Population and Hotspot Analysis (2019) produced by QUT	A Population and Hotspot Analysis (2019) Sector Participants <b>33</b>
	A series of 14 Key Performance Indicators surveys (2018-2022) designed to gauge audience and participant levels of satisfaction and enrichment.	Key Performance Indicators Survey (2018-2022) Survey Participants <b>1,191</b>
Research emphasises Cairns as a prominent economic centre for the cultural and creative industry and is in a favourable position to capitalise on future economic opportunities.		
<b>Sector Insights</b>		
There is a sense that Cairns is an important hub for Northern Queensland and should aim to be part of a strong network across northern Australia with links to the Pacific and South East Asia (SoARTS Report 2021)		
Stakeholders engaged in the film industry suggest that there will be a significant impact on filmmakers, and the benefits will extend to many areas of the sector, particularly the acting and visual arts disciplines (SoARTS Report 2023)		
The interview responses show that the culture and arts activity field is diverse and thriving, with clear subsectors operating in determined priority and protocol settings (SoARTS Report 2023)		
The non-profit small to medium arts organisations have grown to new levels of success and exposure with renewed public investment (SoARTS Report 2023)		

# Addendum 2 - Key Performance Indicators

STRATEGY FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
2022 REPORT CARD

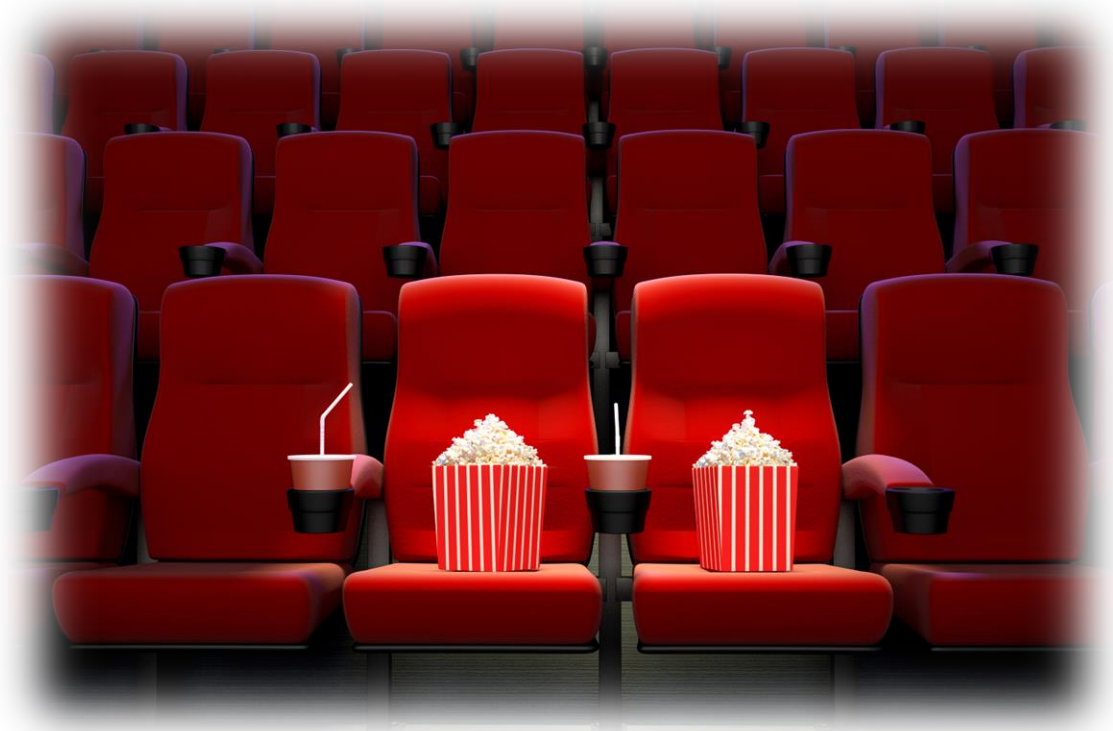
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# **Key Performance Indicators for Cairns *State of the Arts 2022* Report**

**Audience, Producers and Grant Recipients Online Survey Results**

Report to Cairns Regional Council

Dr Julie Carmody



**Disclaimer**

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Cairns Regional Council.

While reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this publication are factually correct, the author does not accept responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the contents, and shall not be liable for any loss or damage that may be occasioned directly or indirectly through the use of, or reliance on, the contents of this publication.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has focused on the intrinsic and instrumental measures, of the Cairns Regional Council's five-year *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022*. Surveys were completed by producers, audience members and grant recipients of selected art and culture events and exhibitions from 2018 to 2023. Overall, the intrinsic and instrumental measures of the three key priorities have been met.

The **three key priorities** for the five-year *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022* were:

Priority 1: Infrastructure, resources and skills that support and stimulate the cultural and creative life of our community.

Intrinsically, audience members and the wider community indicated very high levels of community satisfaction and appreciation. In terms of professional and practical skills, producers and artists in the arts and culture events and exhibitions strongly agreed that their involvement increased their interest in furthering the development of creative and cultural practice, developed a personal connectivity to the arts and cultural sector and have a desire to participate in future projects.

Instrumentally, the Council venues were considered accessible and affordable with the sound, lighting and customer service all rating highly. For the local arts and culture sector, it was highly agreed that new artistic relationships, collaborations and partnerships had been developed and these networks have contributed to an increase in the arts and culture sector capacity and capability.

Priority 2: Culture, heritage and place are valued, shared, celebrated and promoted.

The various Cairns Regional Council art and culture events strengthened an appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity for both producers and audience members. Similarly, a connection to the region's Indigenous cultural heritage and shared multicultural history was strong on a personal level for the audience.

For the local arts and culture sector, the events and exhibitions increased cross-cultural and cross artform exchanges and for the local community, there was culture-led revitalisation of urban spaces and places. There were higher levels of agreement that the arts and culture events increased the protection of the region's significant heritage assets and historical and contemporary collections, less so for the promotion of these assets.

Priority 3: A robust cultural economy fuelled by an international reputation as a tropical, cultural and creative hub.

The Council's *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022* strongly supported creative excellence, innovation and provided enrichment on a personal level and benefitted the arts and culture sector. The arts and culture sector agreed the strategy has increased cultural and creative export from the region. Overall, the strategy has strengthened community expectations for the arts, cultural programs and products across the region.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Cairns Regional Council (CRC) aims to support and stimulate the creative vitality of the region and promote and perpetuate the broad artistic and cultural heritage of the people (Cairns Regional Council, 2018).

The Cairns Regional Council (CRC) endorsed the new *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022* in March 2018. The *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022* aims to “efficiently enhance, promote and develop our cultural programs and facilities, and join with our partners and the community in leveraging our collective cultural assets to build a vibrant and sustainable region” (p. 10).

The **objectives** of the *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022* for community and cultural development are:

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

The **three key priorities** for the five-year *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022* are:

- Priority 1: Infrastructure, resources and skills that support and stimulate the cultural and creative life of our community.
- Priority 2: Culture, heritage and place are valued, shared, celebrated and promoted.
- Priority 3: A robust cultural economy fuelled by an international reputation as a tropical, cultural and creative hub.

Before finalising *The Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022*, the CRC through a consultative process found that the following factors are important to the performing arts sector:

- ✓ Building and sustaining the capacity and capability of the sector;
- ✓ Collaboration, co-operation and alliance – building better partnerships with state and federal bodies;
- ✓ Youth community engagement – innovative and creative educational pathways and developing the next generation of theatre audiences;
- ✓ Professional development and capacity building; and
- ✓ Diversification from reef and rainforest – celebrating our uniqueness

This report contributes to the overall assessment of the three key priorities, specifically intrinsic and instrumental measures, of the five-year *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022*.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The following survey datasets were used to report on the key performance indicators for the *Strategy for Culture and the Arts*.

Qualitative data collected via 14 of the 16 surveys administered by the Cairns Regional Council to selected events, art and culture exhibitions from 2018 to 2023 have been analysed overall for the intrinsic and instrumental measure of the three priorities of 1) Infrastructure, resources and skills; 2) Culture, heritage and place; and 3) A robust cultural economy. A summary of the survey statements used and the surveys these were included in, is provided at Appendix A.

The two surveys not included in the analysis were:

1. Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) survey – had only three respondents.
2. Vibrance Magazine 2023 (Audience) survey – statements were not provided as scale questions and therefore not compatible with all other datasets.

All surveys requested agreement with a question asking consent which provided access to the survey. All responses remained anonymous.

<b>Audience survey</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
Beginnings – A musical story of Cairns (2018)	281
Cairns Festival (2018)	43
Wicked (2019)	543
Covid Live Recovery (2020)	43
Understory Film Festival (2020)	40
Cairns Children’s Festival (2021)	59
	<b>1009</b>
<b>Producer survey</b>	
Beginnings – A musical story of Cairns (2018)	61
Cairns Festival (2018)	9
Beyond the Waves (2020)	6
Cairns Children’s Festival (2021)	4
Tank 4 Exhibition (2021)	9
Court House Gallery (2023)	31
	<b>120</b>
<b>Participant survey</b>	
RADF Program (2021)	17
	<b>17</b>
<b>Grant Recipient survey</b>	
Flame Arts (2023)	45
	<b>45</b>
<b>Total surveys collected</b>	<b>1191</b>

### 3. OVERALL RESULTS

#### Demographic Profile – Audience and Producers

The age of online survey respondents age groups is provided in Figure 1. Overall, producers (10.6%) involved in, and audience members (89.4%) who enjoyed attending arts and culture events, performances and exhibitions were mostly aged 26-35 years (30.1%) and 46-55 years (21.0%).

Two surveys are not included in the overall results for age group. The RADF Program 2021 (grant recipients) survey did not include age groups and different age groups were used for the Flame.Arts 2023 (participant) surveys.

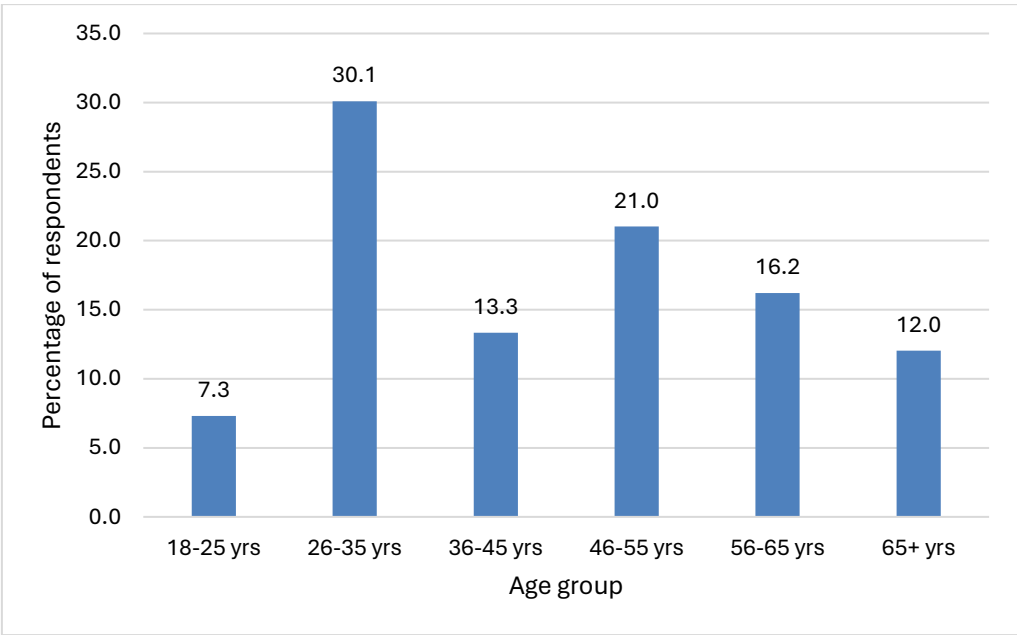
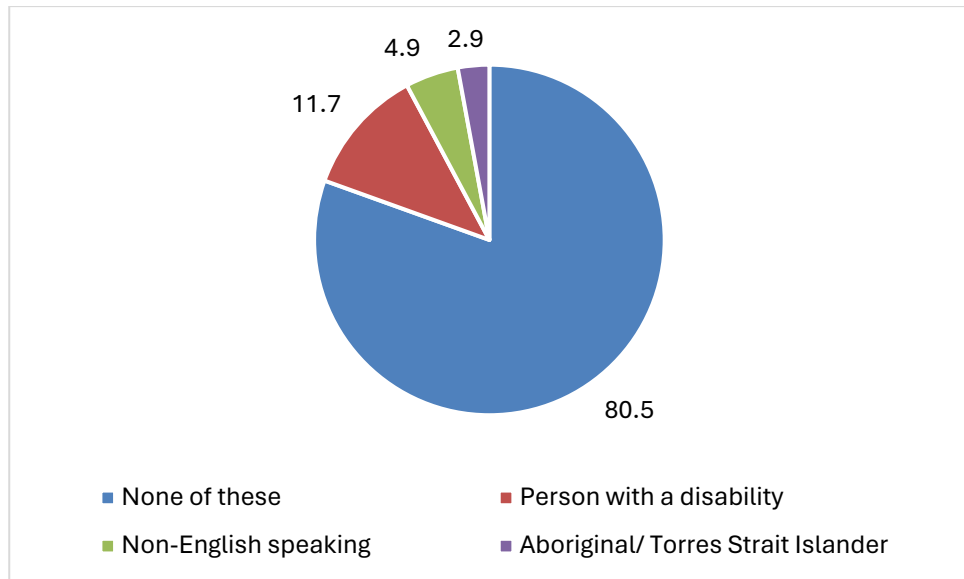


Figure 1: Percentage of respondents by age group overall

Respondents identified themselves as a person with a disability (11.7%), non-English speaking (4.9%) or Aboriginal/ Torres Strait Islander (2.9%). The majority did not identify as any of these (80.5%).

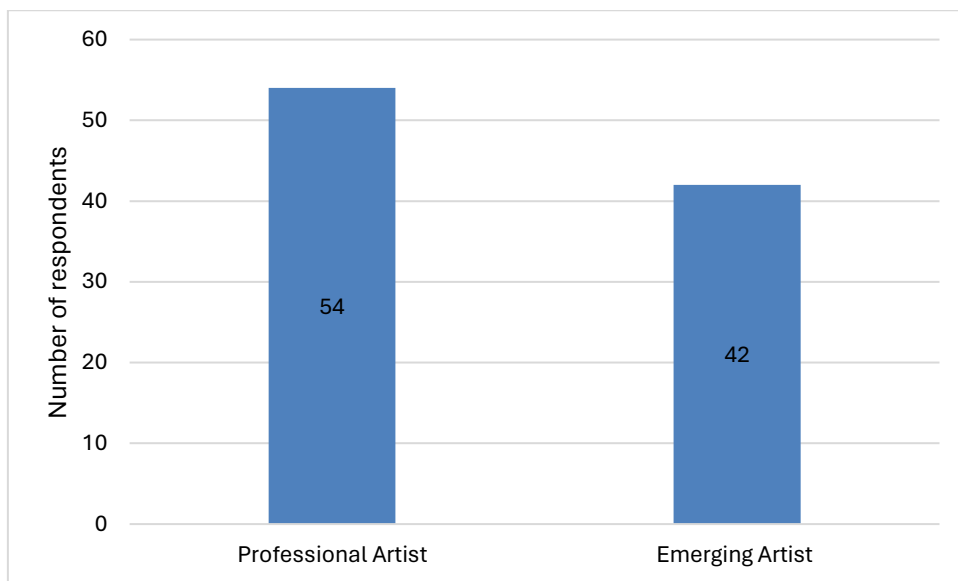
Table 1: Identity of respondents

Identify as	Frequency	Percent
None of these	720	80.5
Person with a disability	105	11.7
Non-English speaking	44	4.9
Aboriginal/ Torres Strait Islander	26	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



**Figure 2: Percentage of respondents by identity**

Figure 4 illustrates the producers' involvement in the art and culture industry. There were slightly more professional artists (54) than emerging artists (42) that completed a survey.



**Figure 3: Involvement in art and culture industry - Producers**

## Audience - Satisfaction with the Venue

The level of satisfaction with four aspects of the venue was measured on a scale of 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied. Overall, Munro Martin Parklands, had high satisfaction levels with affordability (4.64) and sound and lighting (4.29). Similarly, levels of satisfaction were highest with affordability (4.75) and sound and lighting (4.60) at the Tanks Art Centre. The Cairns Performing Arts Centre (CPAC) received the highest levels of satisfaction with customer service (4.16). The lowest levels of satisfaction were with the carparking at all four venues.

**Table 2: Audience Satisfaction with venue factors**

	Venue	Carparking	Sound & Lighting	Customer Service	Affordability
Beginnings – A Musical Story (2018)	Munro Martin Parklands	3.44	3.91	4.38	4.75
Cairns Festival (2018)		3.63	4.67	4.72	4.53
<b>Mean average</b>		<b>3.54</b>	<b>4.29</b>	<b>4.55</b>	<b>4.64</b>
Cairns Festival (2018)	Tanks Art Centre	3.00	4.50	4.50	4.75
Covid Live Recovery (2020)		4.50	4.92	4.46	4.92
Cairns Childrens Festival (2021)		3.68	4.39	4.44	4.59
<b>Mean average</b>		<b>3.73</b>	<b>4.60</b>	<b>4.47</b>	<b>4.75</b>
Wicked (2019)	Cairns Performing Arts Centre	3.56	4.23	4.54	4.11
Covid Live Recovery (2020)		3.90	4.12	4.19	4.15
Understory Film Festival (2020)		3.56	3.19	3.30	3.49
Cairns Childrens Festival (2021)		4.24	4.59	4.61	4.37
<b>Mean average</b>		<b>3.82</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>4.16</b>	<b>4.03</b>
Cairns Childrens Festival (2021)	Court House	<b>3.43</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>4.37</b>

All venue-specific open-ended responses provided by survey respondents are provided at:

- Attachment B: Munro Martin Parklands
- Attachment C: Tanks Art Centre
- Attachment D: Botanic Gardens Visitor Centre
- Attachment E: Cairns Performing Arts Centre
- Appendix F: Venue satisfaction



## Audience - Personal enrichment

Statements related to whether the event effected a person’s appreciation of Cairns art and culture were measured on a rating scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. These statements were only provided once in the audience survey for *Beginnings – A Musical Story (2018)*.

Respondents agreed that the event “created visible, engaging, accessible and vibrant spaces and places” (4.22) and it “strengthened their appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity” (4.18).

**Table 3: Attending an event enriched personal experience - Audience**

<b>Personal enrichment</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Appreciation of Indigenous cultural knowledge	3.96
Appreciation of creative excellence	3.86
Strengthened expectation of arts and culture	3.96
Created engaging spaces and places	4.22
Strengthened appreciation of Cairns cultural and creativity identity	4.18

# Cairns Regional Council Art and Culture Management Services

The Cairns Regional Council provides management services for art and culture projects in the region. These services include communication and promotion of the event, venue coordination and venue management.

The satisfaction with council’s overall management of the project (customer service, professionalism of staff, communication, promotion, acknowledgement of your skills and time, etc) was measured on a scale of 1=Very dissatisfied to 5=Very satisfied.

The importance of council’s management services to the overall outcomes of the project were measured on a scale of 1=Very unimportant to 5=Very important.

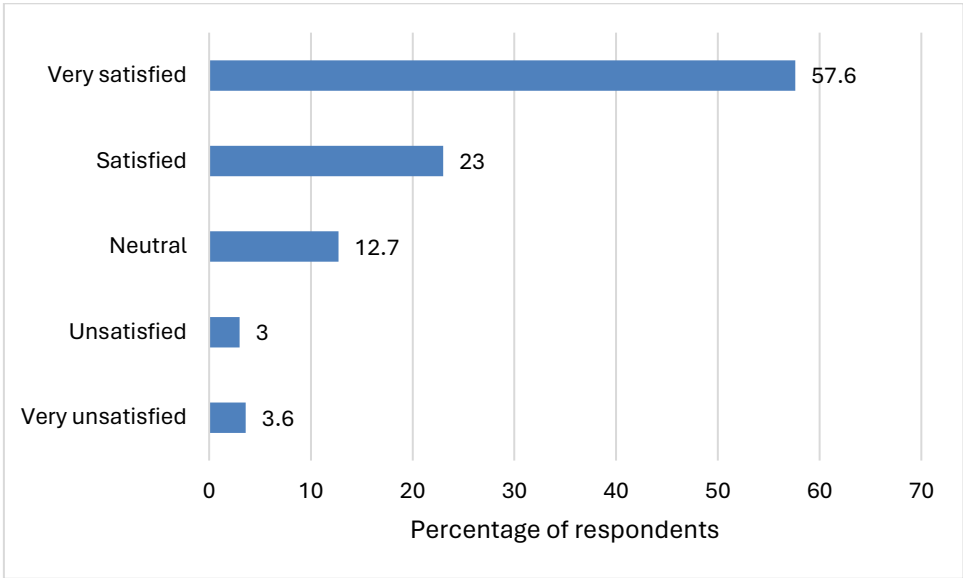
Across the producer’s surveys, the importance of councils management services rated very high with a mean of 4.48, although there were slightly lower levels of satisfaction with the Council’s overall management of the project (4.28).

All open-ended responses provided by survey respondents are provided at:

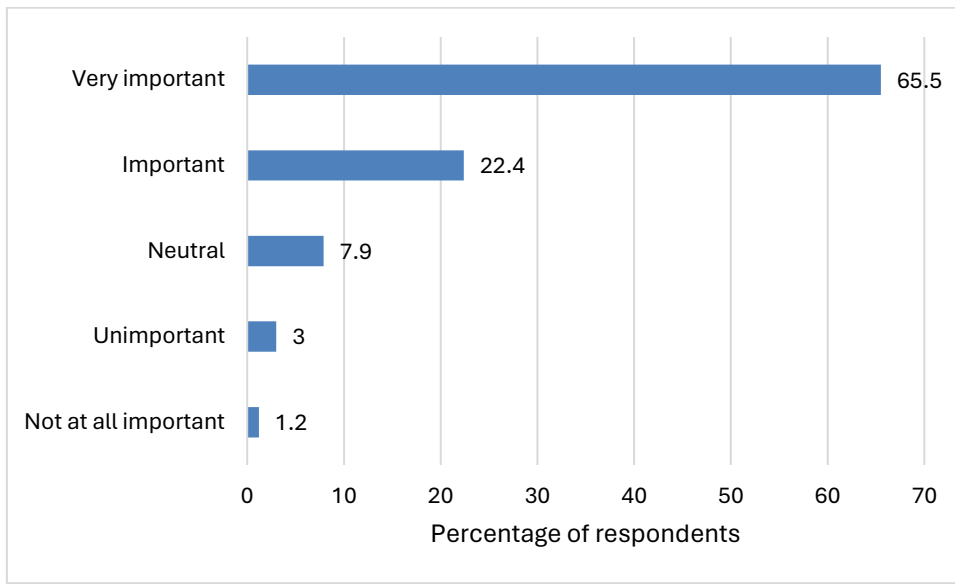
- Appendix G: About Council’s service delivery
- Appendix H: Suggested improvements to CRC management services

**Table 4: Council art and culture sector management**

Statement	Mean
Satisfaction with Council’s overall management of the project (customer service, professionalism of staff, communication, promotion, acknowledgement of your skills and time, etc).	4.28
Importance of Council’s management services to the overall outcome of the project	4.48



**Figure 4: Level of satisfaction with Council’s management of the project**



**Figure 5: Importance of council's service to the overall outcomes of the project**

# Personal experience

A series of statements were provided to understand the personal experience gained by being involved in a project. The statements were measured on a Likert scale of 1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree.

From a personal experience overall, there was strong agreement that being involved in the Cairns art and cultural sector provided “an appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity” (4.48), “emotional development, enrichment and connectivity to the arts and cultural sector” (4.34) and “personal wellbeing” (4.22).

From a producer’s perspective, being involved in an event provided an “appreciation of the region’s Indigenous cultural heritage and/or shared multicultural history” (4.37). Grant recipients strongly agreed their involvement personally provided an “appreciation of creative excellence, innovation, new knowledge and/or experience” (4.94).

**Table 5: Aspects of personal experience**

Personal enrichment	Overall Mean	Producers	Audience	Grant recipient	Participant
Your personal wellbeing	4.22	4.11	-	4.38	4.50
Your emotional development, enrichment and connectivity to the arts and cultural sector	4.34	4.15	-	4.70	4.71
Your appreciation of the region’s Indigenous cultural heritage and/or shared multicultural history	3.82	4.37	3.27	4.58	4.71
Your appreciation of creative excellence, innovation, new knowledge and/or experience	3.98	4.31	3.55	4.94	4.68
Your appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity	4.48	4.33	-	4.88	4.75
Strengthened your appetite and expectation for the arts and cultural program or products	3.65	-	3.65	-	-

All open-ended responses about positive and negative experiences by survey respondents are provided at:

- Appendix I: Positive and negative experiences
- Appendix J: Inspiration to attend again
- Appendix K: Unanticipated impacts
- Appendix L: Suggestions for information delivery and advertising

## Professional development

On a scale of 1=Very low to 5=Very high, ten statements were provided to measure whether involvement enhanced a survey participant’s professional and practical skills.

Overall, respondents agreed the opportunity “increased their enthusiasm to participate in future projects” (4.38), “developed new artistic relationships, collaborations and networks” (4.26) and “increased their ability to work as part of a team and collaborate on a project” (4.20). Grant recipients particularly “developed new artistic relationships, collaborations and networks” (4.71) and “increased their ability to consult with the community and/or key project stakeholders” (4.60).

For producers, there were low levels of agreement with “skills in promotion, marketing and/or publicity” and “skills in project management, planning and/or business planning” being enhanced. This may be reflective of the Council providing management services for art and culture projects.

**Table 6: Enhanced professional and practical skills**

	Overall Mean	Producer	Grant recipient
Increased my enthusiasm to participate in future projects.	4.38	4.31	4.38
Developed new artistic relationships, collaborations and networks	4.26	4.17	4.71
Increased my ability to work as part of a team and collaborate on a project.	4.20	4.12	4.56
Increased my interest in furthering the development of creative or cultural practice.	4.10	3.92	4.10
Increased my ability to consult with the community and/or key project stakeholders.	3.66	3.47	4.60
Developed my mentoring skills.	3.63	3.64	3.54
Developed my research skills.	3.56	3.49	3.92
Developed my presentation skills.	3.52	3.40	4.21
Developed my skills in project management, planning and/or business planning.	2.94	2.50	4.88
Developed my skills in promotion, marketing and/or publicity.	2.50	2.11	4.47

On a scale of 1=Not at all valuable to 5=Extremely valuable, being involved in an art or culture event or project was considered an extremely valuable experience (4.20).

**Table 7: Value of experience for professional development**

	Mean	Producer	Grant recipient
Overall value of this experience to your professional development	4.20	4.14	4.69

On a scale of 1=Very insignificantly to 5=Very significantly, the opportunities for future employment by being involved in a production was considered insignificant (2.63). However, there was slightly more recognition that being involved in a production increased the employment opportunities for other cultural or creative services and contractors (3.19).

**Table 8: Future employment opportunities**

<b>Employment opportunities</b>	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>Producer</b>	<b>Grant recipient</b>
Increased your opportunities for future employment	2.63	2.38	4.19
Increased the employment opportunities for other cultural or creative services and contractors	3.19	3.00	4.69

All open-ended responses about the value of the experience to a respondent’s professional development is provided at:

- Appendix M: Professional development

## Local arts and culture sector benefits

Statements asked respondents their level of agreement of the production or event having on the local art and culture industry of Cairns on a scale of 1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree.

The strongest benefit to the local art and culture industry was the “increased cross-cultural and cross-artform exchange” (4.31), “increased arts and cultural sector collaborations, partnerships and networking” (4.30) and an “increased arts and cultural sector capacity and capability” (4.18).

**Table 9: Benefits to local art and culture industry**

Local art and culture benefit	Overall Mean	Producer	Grant recipient	Participant
Increased arts and cultural sector collaborations, partnerships and networking	4.30	4.24	4.69	4.31
Increased arts and cultural sector capacity and capability	4.18	4.00	4.69	4.48
Increased cross-cultural, and cross-artform exchange	4.31	4.12	4.85	4.68
Increased cultural and creative export flowing from our region	3.97	3.92	4.36	4.00
Increased employment during or post COVID19 lockdown measures*	2.50	2.50	-	-

\* Only included in Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) and Covid Live recovery 2020 (Producers) surveys

## Audience or wider community benefits

Benefits to the audience or wider community were measured on a scale of 1-strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Overall, the highest levels of agreement were for “increased community well-being” (4.48), “increased protection of the regions significant heritage assets and/or historical and contemporary collections” (4.18), “developed new audiences for our cultural venues” (4.08) and “an appreciation of creative excellence, innovation, new knowledge and/or experience” (4.03).

**Table 10: Benefits to the audience or wider community**

<b>Audience or wider community benefit</b>	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>Producer</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Grant recipient</b>	<b>Participant</b>
Increased community well-being	4.48	4.69	-	4.58	4.31
An appreciation of the regions indigenous cultural heritage and/ or shared multicultural history	3.92	3.36	-	4.41	4.15
An appreciation of creative excellence, innovation, new knowledge and/ or experience	4.03	3.60	-	4.77	4.08
Strengthened community expectations for the arts and cultural programs and/ or products	3.88	3.68	-	4.69	3.64
Strengthened our national and or international identity as a city of the arts and culture	3.55	3.21	3.44	4.36	4.20
Created visible, engaging, accessible and vibrant spaces and places	3.81	3.42	3.67	4.75	4.56
Strengthened appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity	3.83	3.48	3.67	4.83	4.72
Increased protection of the region’s significant heritage assets and/ or historical and contemporary collections	4.18	3.39	-	4.58	4.69
Promoted the region’s significant heritage assets and/ or historical and contemporary collections	3.93	3.48	-	-	4.41
Developed new audiences for our cultural venues	4.08	3.72	-	4.78	-



## Project objectives

Specific project aims and objectives were measured on either a scale of 1=very low to 5=very high or 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

### ***Beginnings – A Musical Story (2018)***

For producers, the project objective of ‘showcasing our community’s performing and non-performing artists’ was considered very high and high by 88.4% of the respondents (4.55). Similarly, the objective of ‘leaving a lasting legacy through development of a local story’ was rated very high and high by 86.7% of the respondents (4.55).

**Table 11: Aims and objectives of Beginnings – A Musical Story (2018)**

<b>Project aims and objectives</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Left a lasting legacy through development of a local story	4.55
Showcased our community’s performing and non-performing artists	4.55
Fostered performing arts mentorships and collaborations	4.44

\* Statements were rated on a scale of 1=Very low to 5=Very high

### ***Cairns Festival (2018)***

For producers, the project objectives were highly met with the project was considered to ‘deliver a vibrant, progressive and collaborative community and arts festival’ (4.67) and ‘provide an annual forum that engages the community and explores our unique sense of place, diverse heritage, and distinct tropical lifestyle’ (4.67).

**Table 12: Aims and objectives of the Cairns Festival (2018)**

<b>Project aims and objectives</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Deliver a vibrant, progressive and collaborative community and arts festival	4.67
Provide an annual forum that engages the community and explores our unique sense of place, diverse heritage, and distinct tropical lifestyle.	4.67
Support artists and their creative process, grow venue audiences, and engage and entertain the people of the Cairns Region	Data not available

\* Statements were rated on a scale of 1=Very low to 5=Very high

### ***Beyond the Waves (2020)***

For producers, the objective to ‘provide an original arts and cultural experience for young persons living with a disability’ was well achieved (5.00), as was the objective to ‘develop new work that was engaging, appealing to children audiences and their families’ (mean=5.00). With the performance cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, the outcome for regional children and their families was least achieved.

**Table 13: Aims and objectives of Beyond the Waves (2020)**

<b>Project aims and objectives</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Provide an original arts and cultural experience for young persons with a disability residing in a regional area through the process of collaboration, skills development and networking opportunities garnered during this important process.	5.00
The development of a new work that is engaging, appealing to children’s audiences and their families, potentially tour-able, creating and enabling viable work and career pathways for regional young people with a disability.	5.00
Provide an original and exciting outcome for regional children and their families, establishing the next generation of performing arts audiences in regional locations.	4.89

\* Statements were rated on a scale of 1=Very low to 5=Very high

### ***Cairns Children’s Festival (2021)***

For producers, there was a very high level of agreement with all the aims and objectives being achieved.

**Table 14: Aims and objectives of the Cairns Children’s Festival (2021)**

<b>Project aims and objectives</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Deliver events and/or projects that connect cultural and creative diversity, and promote the region’s shared heritage, assets and collections to new audiences.	5.00
Develop a program that provides opportunities to local artists and performers to innovate, collaborate and deliver new ideas.	5.00
Deliver a festival of national reputation and establish a local development program that will create children’s content to be premiered at the festival and toured nationally.	4.50
Develop and deliver programming where children are in the spotlight, in charge of their creative journeys and where their ideas and views are celebrated.	4.00

\* Statements were rated on a scale of 1=Very low to 5=Very high

### **Tank 4 Exhibition (2021)**

For producers, the program “interpreted and amplified the significance of the Tanks and Botanic Gardens precinct” (4.11) and “encouraged broad participation and built new audiences for the arts” (4.00). There was least agreement with the project achieving “equitable, accessible and affordable infrastructure, resources and cultural experiences” (3.78).

**Table 15: Aims and objectives of the Tank 4 Exhibition (2021)**

<b>Project aims and objectives</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interpret and amplify the significance of the Tanks and Botanic Gardens precinct, the city of Cairns and the people who live here, our cultures, our environment, and our place in the region.	4.11
Partner and support community driven festivals and events that encourage broad participation and build new audiences for the arts.	4.00
Connect people and communities to the region’s diverse history and cultures through engagement and participatory experiences.	3.89
Provide equitable, accessible and affordable infrastructure, resources and cultural experiences.	3.78

\* Statements were rated on a scale of 1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree

### **Court House Gallery (2023)**

For producers, the program “celebrated our city’s unique environment and the art and culture created in Cairns” (4.33) and “connected people and communities to the region’s diverse history and cultures through engagement and participatory experiences” (4.31). There was less agreement with the outcome of “partnering and supporting community driven festivals and events that encourage broad participation and build new audiences for the arts” (3.75) being achieved.

**Table 16: Aims and objectives of the Court House Gallery Program (2023)**

<b>Project aims and objectives</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Celebrate our city’s unique environment and celebrates the art and culture created in Cairns.	4.33
Connect people and communities to the region’s diverse history and cultures through engagement and participatory experiences.	4.31
Focus specifically but not exclusively, on celebrating and supporting contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts.	4.21
Provide equitable, accessible and affordable infrastructure, resources and cultural experiences.	3.94
Partner and support community driven festivals and events that encourage broad participation and build new audiences for the arts.	3.75

\* Statements were rated on a scale of 1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree

## **Regional Arts Development Fund Program (RADF) (2021)**

The surveys targeted grant recipients. All project outcomes for the Major Grants for Public Projects and Activities were highly achieved. There was strong agreement that the program built “local cultural capacity, cultural innovation and community pride” (mean=4.77). There was slightly less agreement that the program outcomes delivered on Queensland Government objectives for the community (mean=4.62).

PCD Grant recipients thought the program most achieved on “delivering Queensland Government objectives for the community” (3.75). Providing public value for Queensland communities was the least achieved outcome (3.00).

**Table 17: Aims and objectives of the RADF Program outcomes - Major Grants for Public Projects and Activities**

	<b>Major Grants for Public Projects and Activities</b>	<b>Professional Career Development Grants</b>
<b>Project aims and objectives</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Build local cultural capacity, cultural innovation and community pride	4.77	3.50
Provide public value for Queensland communities	4.69	3.00
Deliver Queensland Government objectives for the community	4.62	3.75

\* Statements were rated on a scale of 1=Very low to 5=Very high

## **Flame.Arts (2023)**

Participants in Flame.Arts strongly agreed the program “grew their appetite to initiate creative projects” (4.68) and “increased their art/creative industry knowledge” (4.52). Least agreement was indicated in the program developing skills in “exhibition and curatorial programming” (3.94) and “skills in stage production – sound, lighting, staging (4.00).

**Table 18: Aims and objectives of the Flame.Arts Program (2023)**

<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Grown your appetite to initiate creative projects	4.68
Increased your art/creative industry knowledge	4.52
Increased your understanding of the resources available to support your creative endeavours (e.g. funding, venues, equipment, mentors and training)	4.48
Increased your knowledge of how to produce creative work and build a career in the arts	4.31
Develop your stagecraft and performance skills	4.30
Develop your skills in stage production – sound, lighting, staging	4.00
Develop your skills in exhibition and curatorial programming	3.94

\* Statements were rated on a scale of 1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree

## 4. SUMMARY - MEASURES FOR SUCCESS

### Priority 1 - Infrastructure, resources and skills.

#### Intrinsic measures

##### *Community satisfaction and appreciation*

Personal experience	Your personal wellbeing	4.22
Audience or wider community benefit	Increased community well-being	4.48

##### *Exposure to new knowledge, skills and experiences*

Professional and practical skills	Developed my mentoring skills.	3.63
Professional and practical skills	Developed my research skills.	3.56
Professional and practical skills	Developed my presentation skills.	3.52
Professional and practical skills	Developed my skills in project management, planning and/or business planning.	2.94
Professional and practical skills	Developed my skills in promotion, marketing and/or publicity.	2.50

##### *Sector confidence, resource-sharing, networking and connectivity*

Professional and practical skills	Increased my ability to consult with the community and/or key project stakeholders.	3.66
Professional and practical skills	Increased my interest in furthering the development of creative or cultural practice.	4.10
Professional and practical skills	Increased my enthusiasm to participate in future projects.	4.38
Personal experience	Your emotional development, enrichment and connectivity to the arts and cultural sector	4.34

## Instrumental measures

### ***Accessible and affordable facilities commensurate with the needs and expected growth of the Cairns community***

Carparking	MMP, Tanks, CPAC, Court House	3.63
Sound & lighting	MMP, Tanks, CPAC, Court House	4.24
Customer service	MMP, Tanks, CPAC, Court House	4.34
Affordability	MMP, Tanks, CPAC, Court House	4.45

### ***Increased collaborations, partnerships and networking across the arts and cultural sector***

Professional and practical skills	Developed new artistic relationships, collaborations and networks	4.26
Professional and practical skills	Increased my ability to work as part of a team and collaborate on a project.	4.20
Local arts and culture sector benefit	Increased arts and cultural sector collaborations, partnerships and networking	4.30

### ***Increased sector sustainability, capacity and capability.***

Local arts and culture sector benefit	Increased arts and cultural sector capacity and capability	4.18
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## Priority 2 - Culture, Heritage and Place

### Intrinsic measures:

#### ***Appreciation of the region's Indigenous cultural heritage and shared multicultural history***

Personal experience	Your appreciation of the region's Indigenous cultural heritage and/or shared multicultural history	3.82
Audience or wider community benefit	An appreciation of the region's indigenous cultural heritage and/or shared multicultural history	3.92

#### ***Connection to place and strong cultural identity***

Personal experience	Your appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity	4.48
Audience or wider community benefit	Strengthened appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity	3.83

#### ***Visible, engaging, accessible and vibrant spaces and places***

Audience or wider community benefit	Created visible engaging accessible and vibrant spaces and places	3.81
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### Instrumental measures:

#### ***Increased protection, conservation and promotion of the region's significant heritage assets and historical and contemporary collections***

Audience or wider community benefit	Increased protection of the region's significant heritage assets and/or historical and contemporary collections	4.18
Audience or wider community benefit	Promoted the region's significant heritage assets and/or historical and contemporary collections	3.93

#### ***Reinvigorated culture-led revitalisation of urban spaces and places***

Audience or wider community benefit	Developed new audiences for our cultural venues	4.08
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#### ***Increased cross-cultural and cross-art form exchange***

Local arts and culture sector benefit	Increased cross-cultural, and cross-artform exchange	4.31
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## Priority 3 - A robust cultural economy

### Intrinsic measures:

#### *Creative excellence, innovation and enrichment*

Personal experience	Your appreciation of creative excellence, innovation, new knowledge and/or experience	3.98
Audience or wider community benefit	An appreciation of creative excellence innovation, new knowledge and/or experience	4.03

#### *Growing appetite and expectation for quality contemporary works, programs and products*

Personal experience	Strengthened your appetite and expectation for the arts and cultural program or products	3.65
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#### *Ability to project our arts and cultural brand nationally and internationally*

Audience or wider community benefit	Strengthened our national and or international identity as a city of the arts and culture	3.55
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### Instrumental measures:

#### *Increased cultural and creative export flowing from the region*

Local arts and culture sector benefit	Increased cultural and creative export flowing from our region	3.97
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#### *Increased profile as a city of the arts, growth in audience numbers, and employment opportunities for local artists and cultural industry sector*

Local arts and culture sector benefit	Increased employment during or post COVID19 lockdown measures	2.50
Employment	Increased your opportunities for future employment	2.63
Employment	Increased the employment opportunities for other cultural or creative services and contractors	3.19

#### *Increased demand for creative product unique to Cairns*

Audience or wider community benefit	Strengthened community expectations for the arts and cultural programs and/or products	3.88
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# APPENDIX A: STATEMENTS AND SURVEYS

## Has the project enhanced your professional and practical skills

Statement	Survey
Developed new artistic relationships, collaborations and networks	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Developed my mentoring skills.	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Developed my research skills.	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Increased my ability to work as part of a team and collaborate on a project.	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)
Increased my ability to consult with the community and/or key project stakeholders.	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)

Developed my presentation skills.	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)
Developed my skills in project management, planning and/or business planning.	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)
Developed my skills in promotion, marketing and/or publicity.	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)
Increased my interest in furthering the development of creative or cultural practice.	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)
Increased my enthusiasm to participate in future projects.	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)

Develop new connections with other creatives and or created new artistic collaborations and networks	Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)
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### To what extent did the project

Statement	Survey
Increase your opportunities for future employment?	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)
Increase the employment opportunities for other cultural or creative services and contractors	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participant)

### Value of experience to professional development

Statement	Survey
Overall, how would you rate the value of this experience to your professional development?	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers)

## Personal experience

Statement	Survey
Your personal well-being	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participants)
Your emotional development, enrichment and connectivity to the arts and cultural sector	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participants)
Your appreciation of the regions Indigenous cultural heritage and/or shared multicultural history	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participants)
Your appreciation of creative excellence, innovation, new knowledge and/or experience	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients) Flame Arts 2023 (Participants)
Your appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Strengthened your appetite and expectation for the arts and cultural program and or products	Cairns Festival 2018 (Audience) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Audience)

	Understory Film Festival 2020 (Audience) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Audience)
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### Has local arts and culture sector benefitted

Statement	Survey
Increased arts and cultural sector collaborations, partnerships and networking	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Increased arts and cultural sector capacity and capability	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Increased cross-cultural, and cross-artform exchange	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Increased cultural and creative export flowing from our region	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Court House Gallery 2023 (Producers) Beginnings 2018 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Increased employment during or post COVID19 lockdown measures	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers)

## Has audience or wider community benefitted

Statement	Survey
Increased community well-being	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
An appreciation of the regions indigenous cultural heritage and or shared multicultural history	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
An appreciation of creative excellence innovation new knowledge and or experience	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Strengthened community expectations for the arts and cultural programs and or products	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Strengthened our national and or international identity as a city of the arts and culture	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Created visible engaging accessible and vibrant spaces and places	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Strengthened appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)

Increased protection of the regions significant heritage assets and or historical and contemporary collections	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)
Promoted the regions significant heritage assets and or historical and contemporary collections	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers)
Developed new audiences for our cultural venues	Beyond the Waves 2020 (Producers) Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Producers) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Producers) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Producers) Tank 4 Exhibition 2021 (Producers) Cairns Festival 2018 (Producers) RADF Program 2021 (Grant recipients)

### Has event enriched your personal experience

Statement	Survey
Enhanced your appreciation of the regions Indigenous cultural heritage and or shared multicultural history	Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Audience) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Audience) Cairns Festival 2018 (Audience) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Audience)
Enhanced your appreciation of creative excellence, innovation, new knowledge and or experience	Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Audience) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Audience) Cairns Festival 2018 (Audience) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Audience)
Strengthened your appetite and expectation for the arts and cultural programs and or products	Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Audience) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Audience) Cairns Festival 2018 (Audience) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Audience)
Created visible, engaging, accessible and vibrant spaces and places	Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Audience) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Audience) Cairns Festival 2018 (Audience) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Audience)
Strengthened your appreciation and connection to Cairns and our cultural and creative identity	Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Audience) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Audience) Cairns Festival 2018 (Audience) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Audience)
Strengthened Cairns national and or international profile as a city of the arts and culture	Covid Live Recovery 2020 (Audience) Understory Film Festival 2019 (Audience) Cairns Festival 2018 (Audience) Cairns Childrens Festival 2021 (Audience)

# APPENDIX B: MUNRO MARTIN PARKLANDS

## Beginnings (2018) - Audience

Positive Comments – Munro Martin Parklands
<i>Pleasantly surprised at how beautiful the venue it</i>
<i>The time it took to get through the gates was great with all of the bag searches going on I thought it would have taken longer.</i>
<i>Positive - filtered water, meals were available, well lit</i>
<i>Layout. Tree area for kids to run around. Food vans. Lighting - all great.</i>
<i>Fast entry process. Good use of 'over 18' wrist bands</i>
<i>We love the Munro Park venue - we think that the Council has done a great job in making arts and events accessible for everyone - the park stimulates socialising, it makes it easy for families to bring young children.</i>
<i>The bar staff were very efficient and quick to serve customers.</i>
<i>Gate staff were very friendly and helpful which makes a difference.</i>
<i>Beautiful Venue thankyou</i>
<i>The Venue is one of our most favourite in the world</i>
<i>Not too overcrowded and easy to find a spot to sit.</i>
<i>Very smooth, fast entry and bag check, even with lots of people</i>
<i>Positive - it is a nice new outdoor complex and easy to get to</i>
<i>Gardens are wonderful</i>
<i>The surroundings are just beautiful. I love the fact that everyone brought their own chairs</i>
<i>I appreciate the fact that no chairs were placed 'amongst' the 'picnic rugs' so the view for people was much better then previous experience.</i>
<i>Positive. I went on my own and the greeting I received at the entrance was excellent.</i>
<i>Laid back atmosphere.</i>
<i>What a beautiful venue! It's stunning.</i>
<i>I think you could see the performance from anywhere which is good</i>
<i>The groundskeeper deserves a medal for the grass</i>
<i>Central, clean,</i>
<i>The grass was very well maintained. The stage and the set-up seamless. Very well run. The guards were very friendly and supportive.</i>
<i>Beautiful natural environment. Love BYO chairs/food/drink. Love that children have a place to run around. Good toilet access too. Great visibility all areas. Fantastic venue.</i>
<i>Really enjoyed being outside, surprised by sound quality, a couple of times car noise from Sheridan St was intrusive</i>
<i>There was quite a bit of space and it had a beautiful feel to it.</i>
<i>Beautiful setting. Sound not great</i>
<i>All attending staff were exceptionally friendly and welcoming.</i>
<i>Good outdoor venue</i>
<i>Love sitting under the stars watching performances. Love the venue</i>
<i>Great view of stage from wide variety of places in the park. Good drainage after the rains - grass wasn't soggy. Good sound and special effects</i>
<i>Excellent viewing from any position. Great, central location, easy parking</i>
<i>Plenty of room and comfort in our position. We could see the whole show without interruption.</i>
<i>It is a great venue. Car parking is a problem</i>
<i>Love being under the big sky</i>
<i>Should've turned the lights out! And need more female toilets!</i>
<i>Venue beautiful, lighting was fantastic, great atmosphere.</i>



Beautiful gardens, grass is in perfect condition.

Suggest having a define area for chairs and one for picnic rugs. Could always use more female toilets.

Lighting and greenery

good sound and lighting

Beautiful space! Some issues with sound travelling to the back audience. May need speakers at the back

Visibility is possible from any area

staff at the gate were very pleasant and polite and gave good directions and information

Very clean facilities, lots of friendly staff, well organised

Good central open air location, family friendly, good lighting and acoustics

Lovely gardens, nice green grass to sit on

The venue is beautiful! The bins were well located and visible. No idea where the toilets are if there are any. No visible indication and no mention by any customer service. Food vans were horribly overpriced and the food was terrible (pizza raw on top and burnt on the bottom) and hardly any choice. Would be good to open it up to more variety and reasonable prices. The lighting was fantastic, but there was a problem with the sound....

Loved the open air atmosphere- just beautiful. The stage was very effectively used

LOVED the plant climbing wall and the way they utilised it as a movie screen! Brilliant!

Love the outdoor venue, feel safe inside

It's a beautiful venue and environment

Getting better as it grows

The gardens and the amphitheatre were amazing and so well groomed. I would love more music gigs there.

Amazing well-kept grass, friendly ushers. Wonderful. Love coming to MMP

Good venue

Great atmosphere, great venue. A few problems with sound at the start of the performance.

Love the outdoor vibe

Lighting

Such friendly folks!

Very good visibility of the stage, excellent acoustics. Good access to male toilets (but not so with women's - very long queues)

Just a beautiful venue, an asset to Cairns

Visually a lovely setting and very family friendly

Location

Very attractive venue. Well laid out. There were a few sound issues this time

Great for accommodating everyone and being able to see.

It was much appreciated that people with chairs had a definitive line, nothing worse than being on a picnic rug and someone puts a chair up in front of you. thank you

Beautiful venue for this performance, very fitting

Lots of space and very open

The venue is beautiful as a whole

I love the open theatre

Picnic lawn family atmosphere

Nice atmosphere - fairy lights in trees, good landscaping

Beautiful venue

It was clean, well organized and the security was excellent. A well behaved crowd of 3,000 made for an enjoyable evening.

The different spaces for seating enable good vision and sound everywhere

The grass was plush and cushy

Love the lights on the trees and watching the bats fly over at dusk

Venue is spectacular

Beautiful outdoor venue

<i>Well ordered and organised - in future where people are bringing their own chairs maybe some white lines could be considered to ensure access kept clear</i>
<i>The landscaping and setting of the park is amazing and provides a serene setting for live performances.</i>
<i>Stage was positioned great for all to see</i>
<i>Beautiful Venue, comfortable and gorgeous surrounds</i>
<i>Beautiful open parkland with great lighting and sound.</i>
<i>Queues to get in were quick.</i>
<i>Easy to get a good view</i>
<i>Venue was fine.</i>
<i>Very positive experience, great venue for this outdoor performance</i>
<i>The garden atmosphere, openness and beautiful evening.</i>
<i>Beautiful surroundings</i>
<i>Great venue</i>
<i>The gardens are gorgeous, and it is a nicely maintained space</i>
<i>Plenty of room</i>
<i>Gardens are magnificent but need attention.</i>
<i>Terrific venue - gorgeous setting :)</i>
<i>Appreciate being able to bring own food, makes it easier and more affordable with young children</i>
<i>The perfect spot for an event like this...</i>
<i>Venue is great.</i>
<i>Great venue</i>
<i>Safe place for the kids to run around and have fun without worrying about them, good security. Beautiful setting, clean, wonderful asset to the Cairns community.</i>
<i>The beauty of the venue and space</i>
<i>Sat alongside music and light tent. Great position</i>
<i>The venue is absolutely beautiful for these types of events in Cairns. It looks so pretty at night with all the trees lit up and the grounds are maintained perfectly. More ladies toilets are really needed for large events.</i>
<i>Great venue. So lovely to have a beautiful outdoor venue. There is always a nice feel in the atmosphere at any of the shows I have attended.</i>
<i>Clean, very well behaved crowd</i>
<i>The volunteers on the gate were polite efficient and informative with so many people attending the line was quick to get through. Inspection of bags was easy - you know the rules - no problem. One slight problem was the line to the ladies toilets - both blocks! The gardens looked amazing with the lights in the trees and it was nice to see children playing on the lawns</i>
<i>Beautiful surrounds trees and nature wonderful backdrop for stage</i>
<i>I love the lay out. It lends itself to being perfect for many types of performance.</i>
<i>The option to bring your own chairs, food and drink, picnic style is a definite positive. The gardens are beautiful, it creates a wonderful atmosphere.</i>
<i>Good view of stage for both adults and kids</i>
<i>Great venue</i>
<i>Well maintained</i>
<i>Beautiful venue, great layout</i>
<b>Positive comments – The performance</b>
<i>It was important to tell this story at Munro Martin park, with its significance to Indigenous culture, it felt like a healing process.</i>
<i>Story told without anger or blame. Learnt so much because of this.</i>
<i>Very entertaining and appreciated how many hours were put in by everybody concerned. A very professional show. Thankyou.</i>
<i>I thought that stage looked great with the vines to the side and the fake trees</i>
<i>The sound when people are speaking/singing on stage is often quite quiet in comparison to the music (we've noticed this at other performances too). But overall WOW! Beginnings was absolutely brilliant. I'd love to see</i>

<i>it's writers take the world by storm with an 5 version on all city stages. It was FANTASTIC. Wonderful to see such making talent from everyone involved:)</i>
<i>Spectacular presentation on a grand scale.</i>
<i>Brilliant show, just a bit long for the younger children</i>
<i>Getting the various community groups to come together and perform this locally produced outstanding piece of (reconciliation) work. My highest commendations go to the individuals who made this happen.</i>
<i>Loved the mix of all ages, young and old and the seemingly informal presentation. Such a lot of work went into it and the performers conveyed a feeling of joy. Music was superb.</i>
<i>I thought it was a fantastic show, lighting, special effects etc. were amazing. The highlight for me was the variety of sets, costumes and 1. The sound was at times a little patchy, it seemed like some performers didn't have microphones or that they weren't working properly. This didn't really affect my overall understanding/enjoyment of the performance but a lady who was hard of hearing sitting near to us had difficulty following some parts.</i>
<i>I found the show very well organised and the actors in the performance really professional. The performance was superb</i>
<i>Great performance!</i>
<i>The lighting was spot on!</i>
<i>Great show</i>
<i>The whole show was AMAZING</i>
<i>My heroes were the interpreters and their energy</i>
<i>Great open air event</i>
<i>Sound was great. The marquee for the choir and orchestra was appropriately placed.</i>
<i>Words from the stage often indistinguishable. Great sets and costumes. Wonderful dragon</i>
<i>Great! Should do more Cairns specific performances to educate the locals and tourists on our history</i>
<i>Artists</i>
<i>Very positive. Made the professional games opening ceremony look so amateurish. It was so enjoyable and the audience were enthralled. More more more. And the MM parklands are getting better as they grow. Well done. BRAVO Zulu</i>
<i>Was such a lovely evening and opportunity to connect as a community with a shared respect and understanding of our unique history.</i>
<i>The show was brilliant, perhaps a bit long</i>
<i>Fantastic event</i>
<i>Fantastic level of production values</i>
<i>The choir were amazing. The mics did drop out a lot</i>
<b>Positive comments - General</b>
<i>Just it was fresh</i>
<i>Overall everything excellent</i>
<i>All good</i>
<i>Positive</i>
<i>Cool clear evening and suitable refreshments available.</i>
<i>A really great night</i>
<i>Nice atmosphere, great weather</i>
<i>Love it</i>
<i>Nice</i>
<i>All round amazing!</i>
<i>Lovely atmosphere</i>
<i>Beautiful weather</i>
<i>Great</i>
<i>Overall fantastic</i>
<i>Perfect weather so great night</i>

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Ambience

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Good

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Very ambient, kids love it

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Fantastic atmosphere

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### **Negative Comments - Venue**

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Not enough toilets for women. Should be more than for men.

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Toilet queues for ladies during the interval were horrendously long. Some port-a-loos during free sold out events would make a big difference. Everything else was fantastic.

---

Negative - ladies toilets had a HUGE queue during the intermission

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The visibility of the stage from the front row was obstructed by the lighting equipment

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Female toilet queue was very, very long with no queue for the men's toilets. More female toilets are needed.

---

It was awesome for my first time however, I would have thought for the size of the venue-there would have been more toilets.

---

Only one toilet and difficult to wend thru the seated crowd.

---

Need more female toilets

---

The number of toilets for females was definitely not enough for 3,000 people.

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Toilet wait time. Not adequate amount for number of people

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Lack of female toilets. Lack of defined access routes through the crowds and a distinct lack of food options for such a large crowd.

---

Queue for toilets at interval was horrendous. Would have liked a couple more choices of food stalls. Parking was ok but is only on street so may be more problematic when the new theatre is open.

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Needs more toilets for the bigger shows

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More toilets please

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Sound was difficult to hear at times when some singers were performing. We found we couldn't always hear the words which then made us not quite gather all the information for the storyline. Overall, that was our only small matter arising, otherwise a great event!

---

Would have been good to mark out the walkways, designated sections for chairs/rugs /both would be nice. Great venue though and a huge improvement on what was there.

---

The sound was not good at all there were times when I could not hear the performers and others were so much louder than the others singing.

---

A big screen beside the stage would be good. Also, close the children's playground during performances - the noise was irritating and a distraction for the choir and stage members.

---

Car parking was the only issue, but other than that. The performances were okay, nothing that I was used to seeing in the Cairns festivals. Good vibes and friendly volunteers/staff who were welcoming from the beginning.

---

I think generally Munro Martin Parklands has a good feel as a venue. However, suggestions for improvements are:

---

- Consideration of a screen to the side of the stage to help people with impaired hearing to more fully enjoy a performance. At previous shows I have been able to better understand the songs/dialogue by seeing the face of the performer on a screen.

---

- For a full house at the parklands, I think the number of female toilets is inadequate, particularly when there are a lot of children in the audience.

---

We arrived close to 7 after having dinner in town beforehand so we were side on to the stage and our visibility wasn't the best. This was our fault and not the venues.

---

The sound on the show was terrible. The mics were not on when they should have been, the cast could obviously not hear the music properly.

---

Lighting was great. BUT sound was not. When sitting on the outer edges and at the back the sound is very low. (we moved to try to hear and see better). Maybe additional speakers needed at rear of seating area? The clarity of voices was very poor. I could not understand most of what was said, so unfortunately missed the story line.... When chatting to others they also had same concerns. One lady suggested could the parkland send audio via 1, like at the drive in!! This would be fantastic for those with hearing aids, those with some hearing loss like myself, and would not increase the sound level impact on surrounding properties and those seated in the front. The grounds are beautiful and something Cairns can be proud of. I think when the Civic Theatre is

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*finished it will be a fantastic entertainment area. Please ensure there is disabled parking/drive through drop off at the new theatre (not sure what have at the park now....). I have been to 3 shows at Munro Martin, first 2 it rained, the staff where great and supplying the rain ponchos greatly appreciated. The emails to remind what to take is also appreciated.*

---

*Sound was intermittently poor/good.*

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*It was difficult to hear the words clearly from up the back so although we knew the story we didn't know what the actors were saying. We could hear the Narrator clearly though.*

---

*Would have liked to see a screen on side of stage, just so audience can see clearly whats going on.*

---

*Needs large screens to show close ups*

---

*The stage felt very low so it was difficult to see the performers when they did floor work*

---

*I felt that having chairs interspersed with people sitting on the ground made it difficult for those on the ground to see the stage.*

---

*Expensive onsite catering, should consider more community based orgs to help them raise \$*

---

*At previous events security directed those with high chairs to sit further back but at Beginnings there were people seated with high chairs closer to the front leaving little space for those with beach chairs, cushions and blankets. It would be good if areas could be demarkated - no high chairs past this point, pillows and blankets only, and security enforce it. We left at half time as our view was blocked and we were too crowded.*

---

*Venue is excellent, but maybe mark out particular areas for chairs, as many vantage points were wasted eg terraces, because people had chairs right in front.*

---

*Potential of rain*

---

*Attendants were not very friendly. Audio was poor.*

---

*I think the sound and lighting tent can be moved back to the last tier. It blocks many patrons' views and is in the way. At the back of the venue allows more people to see the show.*

---

*Beautiful parklands. Thank you! Although the sound system is excellent in parts, there are some areas of the park where the audience misses out on quality. Any chance of more speakers for those on the sides and near the back of the park?*

---

*Ladies toilet had a looong line up, needs more facilities for ladies*

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*Ground not suitable for sitting. View blocked in many places. Plantings in the garden exotic, some are weeds!*

---

*Lack of toilet facilities - badly need more toilets as queues ridiculous for females. even portaloos in discrete location. Entrance area is a shambles - needs to be designated with roped oped lanes and maybe also very difficult getting out of seat and getting to toilets as no designated pathways in main seating/grass area so have to step over people chairs blankets and some people get angry at you*

---

*Fabulous performance! Venue needs more food & drink outlets? The red wine served at the bar for \$8 a glass is undrinkable.*

---

*Food is a bit expensive. Will try to take my own snacks in the future*

---

*Female bathroom queues were long. Visibility of performance was obscured on sides and due to positioning of camera/special effects people*

---

*We were sitting up the back row and had difficulty hearing the words in some the songs. I feel the sound could be improved. Everything else was fantastic.*

---

*Toilets long queue need more variety of food stalls*

---

*We were high up at the back and it was very hard to hear the words.*

---

*Too crowded*

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*More toilets very satisfied*

---

*With the new parking restrictions, getting there early (because parking will be scarce) meant you had a possibility of getting a fine. Also, meant you couldn't park and go to other events on the esplanade.*

---

*Lack of seating*

---

*Not enough female and disabled toilets*

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*There was a few very elderly people that I felt should have been able to avoid lining up for an extended time to enter the event. It would be good to prioritise entry for these people*

---

*More food stands and maybe better distribution of them*

---

*Sound was very bad and we couldn't see from the back so we left early*

---

*More toilets for females when large events are on. Experienced 3 large events at Munro Martin now and each time some of us have had to run into the men's toilets or use the disabled toilets*

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*Toilet queues were 1 mile long which means there are too few toilets in the venue. I didn't even bother to queue. Can't imagine how dirty it would be with so many people using it.*

---

*Other patrons were inconsiderate in terms of seating in front of us on the terraces*

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*Not enough toilets*

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## **Cairns Festival (2018) - Audience**

### **Positive Comments**

#### **Venue**

*It was a perfect venue for a symphony*

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*The park looked very pretty*

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*The park always looks magnificent*

---

*Beautiful setting - the park is a great venue.*

---

*Beautiful setting. Staff at gate were lovely.*

---

*Munro Martin stage and park is a beautiful venue, I would love to see more concerts etc there.*

---

#### **Family friendly**

*All ages could enjoy including small children. They could run and play or fall asleep on a rug. The orchestra's Superheroes was perfect for children's first experience of an orchestra.*

---

*Very family friendly and relaxed, perfect way to introduce children to classical music and concert going.*

---

*BYO food. Early start/finish. Price.*

---

#### **Overall**

*Good*

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*It was great*

---

*Yes it was very well presented and was a very professional performance enjoyed it very much :)*

---

*The venue was lovely, the performances fantastic, and was very pleased that there was student pricing available.*

---

#### **Negative Comments**

#### **Food and Drinks**

*Perhaps a few more eatery options. Cheaper prices for food and drink.*

---

*The venue prohibits patrons bringing their own alcohol, but then allows a 3rd party to supply alcohol at outrageously high prices. A bottle of white wine for \$40; probably only pay \$12 -15 at most in a bottle shop.*

---

#### **Parking**

*Car parking is not provided and with the new council policy of charging till 6pm DAILY including weekends it is a lottery whether you find free parking for such an event*

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#### **Entertainment**

*The sound in Munro Martin Parkland is always woeful.*

---

*The multiple acknowledgements of the Traditional Owners is ridiculous. It is a token, politically correct gesture that does not do the Aboriginal people any good. Let's give it a break - we are all Australians.*

---

*The local entertainment brought down the quality of the overall performance*

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# APPENDIX C: TANKS ARTS CENTRE

## Covid Live Recovery (2020) - Audience

<b>Customer Service</b>
<i>The Security guard that attended at the performance was very brutal...his tactics went overboard and he certainly wasn't practicing social distancing...as soon as someone stood up from their seat he was onto them...this was at the Reggae concert.</i>
<b>COVID related</b>
<i>Would be nice to have COVID-19 safe bubbles organised in circles to allow for dancing.</i>
<i>Please be at ease with events going forward. All staff were on edge which put the audience on edge. Cairns is 1,500kms away from someone with the flu.</i>
<b>Seating</b>
<i>Have a covered area for wet weather dining next to the food vendor.</i>
<i>I have a degenerative spinal issue and the chairs were EXTREMELY uncomfortable to sit on and caused me back pain. Also, we were rushed out after the show and couldn't stay for an extra half an hour to chat and have another drink.</i>
<b>Other</b>
<i>Wish people would not drop their bottle in bins during performances!</i>

## RADF Program (2021) – Grant recipients

<i>The Botanic Gardens Visitor Centre is a terrific venue</i>
<i>I can't think of anything really. There was a big issue with noise from gigs at adjacent buildings. But I would say if there are multiple musical gigs on at the Tanks, the programming should encourage audiences to experience them all by staggering the timing rather than putting them all on at the same time.</i>
<i>It all worked very well.</i>
<i>The acoustic properties of CPAC are not ideal for choirs, so the consideration of a sound shell to project sound into the auditorium would be welcome.</i>

## APPENDIX D: BOTANIC GARDENS VISITOR CENTRE

### Cairns Children's Festival (2021) – Producers

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*A little more training for the FOH staff in ensuring that they ask questions first and assume less when 'enforcing' the COVID safe plans upon an artist who was following them. We had one very sour experience here, which dampened an otherwise faultless experience.*

---

*Sometime things were a bit last minute. As we need to get approval and having to write a media release overnight can be a bit daunting.*

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---

*stop this happening? It was really bad. An easy solution would be any selected films with clipped audio could be RE-submitted, maybe there's someone that could help people out with this?*

---

*For young children up the front the volume was too loud. And when the winners of the different awards are coming up to the stage please play a clip of the film.*

---

*Second time I've been to this theatre and the sound was incorrect. Film festival was so loud it was distracting*

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#### **Venue Facilities**

---

*Lower the room temperature!!!*

---

*Clean the carpet.*

---

*Please use the Tanks again, better atmosphere, more personal for smaller audience!*

---

*Should have built the Cairns Entertainment Precinct instead, it would have been better located, better performance spaces and more future-proofed*

---

*Start on time*

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#### **Customer Service**

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*Provide more tills and staff serving at the bar*

---

*The line and length of wait to sort tickets (even when bought online) was too long, again. Suggest an extra person to help.*

---

*An extra person at the ticket office before the show.*

---

#### **Food and Beverage**

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*Allow the purchase of bottles of champagne and wine*

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*Better choice of white wines*

---

*More food options*

---

#### **Seating**

---

*Chairs in theatre are uncomfortable*

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#### **Parking and transport**

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*While I usually manage to arrive early and find a parking spot, some people have complained to me that they had trouble.*

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# APPENDIX F: VENUE SATISFACTION

## Cairns Festival (2018) – Producers

<i>To clarify the above, the sound was good, but lighting not so good. There was a big hum from generator.</i>
<i>The event was developed to respond to the site as a significant cultural and aesthetic location. Council representatives shared the same vision about how the site might be transformed as a festival venue.</i>
<b>Community Hall:</b>
<i>The venue was adequate. I think the technical arrangement could have been refined.</i>
<b>Council Recreational Reserve:</b>
<i>The site has a lot of cultural potential. It is one of the few places near the city that does not have disputed claims over Indigenous sovereignty, therefore cross-cultural expression can be celebrated.</i>
<b>Tanks Arts Centre:</b>
<i>Perhaps a large sight map with details of specific areas.</i>

## Cairns Children’s Festival (2021) – Audience

<b>Venue specific – The Court House</b>
<i>The redone Courthouse is a wonderful venue for arts activities</i>
<i>Court House is a cold and odd feeling venue. The exhibitions could be curated to fit the space better. The space is not being used to its full potential</i>
<b>Venue specific – Tanks Art Centre</b>
<i>Tanks is a great venue.</i>
<i>More events around the Tanks to spread the crowd out. The lines were long!</i>
<i>Big gaps between performance and due to COVID restrictions we were unable to attend and participate in events due to long waits.</i>
<b>Ticketing &amp; Seating</b>
<i>Having some pre-booked tickets for the free shows would cut down on some of the waiting times. Also more outside activities for the kids at Tanks as the line to get inside Tank 4 was quite long most of the day and my daughter lost patience. I know that covid-restrictions made things more complicated this year, hopefully next year will be easier!</i>
<i>Regarding the children’s festival, where you have seated events, even if the tickets are free, my recommendation would be to still use a booking system so that patrons are aware prior to the gig whether they will be able to attend. We drove from Malanda to attend the regurgitator event and missed out as the venue had reached capacity.</i>
<i>Allocated a larger venue for Regurgitator's Pogogo show</i>
<b>Activities</b>
<i>I would probably suggest not hold an event where there is only origami to do, we didn't realise, drove in from Edmonton and even my kids said is this it, this is boring, so we walked straight back out and left. Unfortunately, we wouldn't have gone had I realised there wasn't anything else there to do. Good on the organisers though.</i>
<b>Parking</b>
<i>Free parking and/or easily accessible parking</i>
<i>Great venues. Perhaps have someone monitoring the loading/taxi zone at the tanks. I deliberately chose to be dropped off and picked up, but people decided to park in this bay. Made it impossible to get picked up at the end. Had to walk a considerable distance with 2 young kids for a safe spot.</i>
<i>I hate the lack of parking at the Tanks so much. It puts me off going to any event here. It was a shame more people couldn't go to the shows this year. We missed out on both because they were only allowed limited people</i>
<i>More parking spaces. Free parking. 2-3hrs metered parking in CBD.</i>
<b>Positive comments without suggestions</b>
<i>All good</i>
<i>No</i>
<i>No! It was perfect!</i>
<i>No. Excellent.</i>

# APPENDIX G: ABOUT COUNCIL’S SERVICE DELIVERY

## Cairns Festival (2018) – Producers

Positive standout of service
<i>The Support was overwhelming</i>
<i>Good support &amp; communication leading up to event.</i>
<i>We felt supported at all times</i>
<i>It all ran smoothly. People were happy</i>
<i>Positive</i>
<i>The council technical services were responsive and efficient, however, the operational and artistic model that the festival was organised under was not clearly articulated.</i>

## Beyond the Waves (2020) – Producers

Positive standout of service
<i>Cairns regional council were so supportive through the entire development</i>
<i>I felt comfortable</i>
<i>I felt comfortable, friendly</i>
<i>I felt helpful and friendly</i>
<i>Incredible communication/professionalism, creative support from producer. Production team offered use of their venue for rehearsals so our artists with a disability could focus to meet our short project deadline, professionalism of project team, great promotion.</i>
<i>They were wonderful to work with. Everytime. Hayley did amazing expertise with her ideas/ The whole team was super helpful.</i>
<i>We always appreciate the support, collaboration and inclusion of our artists in projects with Cairns Regional Council</i>
Negative standout of service
<i>Coronavirus pandemic impact on delivery</i>

## Cairns Children’s Festival (2021) – Producers

Positive standout of service
<i>Excellent communications with the lead producer and artistic director of the festival. All communications with CPAC were clear, organized and effective.</i>
<i>The attention and positivity we received from the support crew Jas, Sam, Mick and Dave. Everyone did everything they could to support us.</i>
<i>There are no words to describe how amazing the cultural service team have been throughout the project! I have had a very positive experience and would love to work with them again in the near future.</i>
Negative standout of service
<i>Marketing was bombarded with green animal- took away from images.</i>

## RADF Program (2021) – Grant recipients

<i>Fleur McMenamin was an incredible help throughout the entire process of the project and beyond. Her approachable nature and knowledge is very appreciated.</i>
<i>Fleur was exceptional in providing information and specifics to enable the application process and set out Council's expectations.</i>
<i>Great service and assistance.</i>
<i>Kindness and clarity: the team at RADF has helped me understanding the process. It was my first time applying for a grant.</i>

---

*The council staff have been fantastic. Tanks staff and RADF staff.*

---

*The delivery provided to us: Bernie Singleton and Simone Arnol as the project artist, through Cairns Art Gallery as the auspice body was very supportive.*

---

*The service from the RADF officers is very good.*

---

*There was great flexibility during the challenges I experienced in bringing this project to fruition, with support and suggestions given along the way.*

---

*We were grateful for an extension granted to our outcome report due date as we have experienced some turn-over in development staff recently.*

---

## **Court House Gallery (2023)**

### **Positive**

---

*The staff at The Court House were exceptional in every way. And the venue wonderful.*

---

*Everything went as planned. I enjoyed the video of the show in Australia and the on-line meeting of the artists.*

---

*Positive*

---

*The staff were very nice/helpful*

---

*Very professional collaboration, giving us the chance to interact with the American artists was great. A beautiful building and professional assistance from the staff helped during the workshop's.*

---

*Personal support*

---

*Well organised good presentation at Court House*

---

*The room chosen was very suitable and every assistance was provided to ensure the exhibition was displayed authentically*

---

*The professionalism of the team - from installers to management and knowing that there was help available. Having cultural guidance was also important.*

---

*Everyone was very nice and lovely*

---

*Everything was positive, they were organised and kind and did an amazing job in display and handling artwork.*

---

*The placement of the sculptures was done well. The small podiums to put them on was effective so people could walk around them*

---

*Excellent organisation. Great opportunity for young budding artists in Cairns. Very encouraging.*

---

*Exhibition was free.*

---

*It was a great opportunity for the kids to see their artwork up in a gallery*

---

*Cairns Courthouse Gallery staff were friendly and helpful*

---

### **Negative**

---

*Corrupt funding reporting program where items constantly dropped out and had to be reworked.*

---

*I don't know where my unsold picture is now. Were the unsold pictures ever returned from Arizona?*

---

*The Zoom exchange workshop lecture did not happen due on internet inability to connect; was not able to communicate with Cairns participants*

---

*The fact that you had to drop it off during school hours was hard to work around.*

---

*Improve engagement with the space, be more welcoming, show appreciation for being a host, be warmer. Your contract was substandard, but the art house accommodation was just lovely, very good.*

---

*Lack of food at the opening*

---

*There was a finger food service and drink station last year but this year seems less service.*

---

*Children were only able to submit one art piece. No prizes, no people's choice*

---

*Promotional activities to increase sales and participation. Few knew of it and no TV or radio.*

---

## **Flame.Arts (2023) – Participants**

---

*AMAZING!*

---

*Beautiful venue. Inspiring people. Could have been an hour longer.*

---

*Breanna was great at keeping things running smoothly*

---

*Bringing together a wide range of locals and state reps to allow education of newbies.*

---

*Everything was at a high and professional standard. Some of the students said they could have done more performances on the day, at least another 1 or 2.*

---

---

*Extremely friendly*

---

*Great friendly hosts*

---

*Great initiatives to provide information, networking and performance opportunities for artists. Would have loved to get better pre-event communication in regards to timeslots. Sadly, the sound crew at Launchpad wasn't doing a top job to make young artists sound good. Having said all this, it's still a great project.*

---

*It was a very well organised production and enjoyable experience.*

---

*Overall it was both an informative and practical workshop. Thank you*

---

*Professional and informative. Friendly and thought provoking sessions. It is so important that services and grants are distributed to artists, to keep the very important Australian music industry alive.*

---

*Staff were very positive and interactive*

---

*The events were very well organised*

---

*The food was great. I love free food.*

---

*The presentations were very informative and the range of speakers was diverse and covered a lot of ground as far as the music industry landscape goes. Although I have been to one of these events a few years ago, I still wrote down some new information as well as got inspired by the passion and knowledge of the speakers of the panels.*

---

*The quality of the performance was professional.*

---

*The staff were amazing providing transparent communication and open to providing support throughout.*

---

*Very well managed, topics were relevant and activities interesting*

---

*Well done thank you all*

---

## APPENDIX H: SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS TO CRC MANAGEMENT SERVICES

### Cairns Festival (2018) – Producers

---

*Creative staging and lighting could have been improved.*

---

*Provide a strategic and artistic vision for the festival that empowers the implementation of events and projects that inspires the arts and cultural community to participate en masse and engage in a meaningful and mindful way with this place and its unique identity.*

---

*Perhaps a run down on a map of locations, e.g. pump house, red arrow, butterfly house etc. To help visitors find things.*

---

### Beyond the Waves (2020) - Producers

---

*Only to meet at beginning of project to better clarify roles of the creatives to ensure everyone is on the same page from the beginning*

---

*I was 100 percent pleased with everything offered.*

---

*I'm happy and excited*

---

### Cairns Children's Festival (2021) – Producers

---

*The team have done a splendid job, and I honestly cannot think of anything that requires improvement!*

---

*When working with people experiencing disability it would be useful to have a representative in the room whenever decision making is happening. We bring an understanding of how things will affect our people.*

---

### RADF Program (2021) – Grant recipients

---

*As the Cairns Art Gallery were the auspice body for the RADF grant, we were very grateful that this was allowed.*

---

*I think RADF team is solid and appreciate the arts grants are available in rounds to support local artists.*

---

*Coordinate with Tanks Arts Centre to showcase all projects to public after completion.*

---

*More consultation with grant applicants to discuss whether they have wisely covered their bases in terms of planning their project. Provide larger amounts.*

---

*My difficulty was in my confidence in the writing. English is my second language and writing is not one of my core skills. Grant writing sessions will be an opportunity I'd take in the future.*

---

*This type of survey doesn't work well for an organisation that has applied for funds to enable it to work with creatives. These questions are largely aimed at individual artists, rather than for the organisational, strategic and engagement outcomes that come from organisations, rather than individuals, collaborating with artist.*

---

### RADF Program (2021) – Grant recipients

---

*As an artist I would have appreciated more advice on this particular grant. In the meantime, I have noticed that the CRC is offering grant writing workshops, which I will attend.*

---

*For non-English speaking community groups and members, accessing and applying for CRC grants would be extremely challenging. Not all languages could be covered, but it would be appropriate to have the option of CRC grants information and application forms available in other languages.*

---

### Tank 4 Exhibition (2021) – Producers

---

*Allow artists to use the space with less of a loss.*

---

*Cut costs.*

---

---

*Provide more exhibition spaces - affordable - for visual artists in the region and give more support to NFP arts association who leases the premises from council.*

---

## **Court House Gallery (2023) - Producers**

### **Promotion and communication**

*Better communications*

*Greater support to community groups for the use of such places, thanks*

*Advertise more*

*Be more engaged with the curator organiser and with the space and exhibition*

*Further outreach to multicultural community exhibitions.*

*Awards.*

### **Additional events**

*More if you want to, can never get enough*

*Host more events to engage more young people.*

*Please fund the Cairns Children's Festival art exhibition so that it can continue well into the future*

### **Opening times**

*Have the courthouse gallery open on Sundays.*

*As we were part of CIAF - to be open on Sunday during the Art Fair. Many visitors were unaware we would be closed and missed the exhibition.*

### **Presentation**

*Maybe put the artist statements closer to the actual artworks. Some of the responding artworks did not have a statement next to it so it was hard to see which ones it was connected to.*

*I appreciate that my children's art is displayed on the wall in the art gallery. However, it would be even more special if you could call each child by their name in front of the audience and have a handshake. I understand that there are many people and time constraints, but parents would be happy to be there with their children for an additional moment.*

### **Logistics**

*Make the application for funding and reporting program less complex and be sure it works.*

*Work out technical problems with internet connections with Scottsdale, AZ Sister City*

*Have food at the children's exhibition opening*

## **Flame.Arts (2023) – Participants**

---

*6pm is roughly for most people dinner time*

*A collaboration speed date could be fun. In pairs, allow 2 mins to share your skills and goals with another creative, then switch pairs and repeat. Have sample questions on each table to help start the conversation.*

*As young artists I think we could've been given more stage practice time at the Tanks to improve performances and receive feedback from the industry professionals included.*

*Continue to the support the art sector and as we discussed in the workshops, put Cairns on the map as a music destination, not only rainforest and reef destination. Which means, supporting local artists expanding the industry through events like the one I went to. Continue the great work!*

*I felt everything was great*

*I'll let you know. I'm about to apply for a buskers licence.*

*Keep doing these days.*

*Maybe provided other opportunities for performance outside of the event day.*

*Not that comes to mind at the moment.*

*Offer noise cancelling headphones for small children and sensory sensitive people.*

*Turn the air conditioning down. It was too cold in the venue.*

---



# APPENDIX I: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

## Beginnings (2018) - Audience

Positive Experiences
<i>Positive - indigenous artist TSI dancers, female lead, narrator), negative = some of the solo singers were difficult to listen to as their singing needed work, however the chorus (side tent), were amazing. Great songs.</i>
<i>The musical brought the best out of our Cairns amateur artists. It was great to watch</i>
<i>I felt proud of Cairns and being part of the Cairns community</i>
<i>Some of the on-stage singing wasn't too impressive but the main singers were excellent.</i>
<i>Wonderful evening</i>
<i>A fantastic way to show us the history and learn more about the people that were here first, love the history and love to learn about the culture</i>
<i>No enjoyed the night greatly</i>
<i>Set, lighting (great). Show concept/story great idea, just wish had more info on it so could explain to the kids. Free access = accessible to all. Would have been fantastic with the HUGE amount of work for there to have been at least 2 performances. Would love to see it in the new Civic Theatre!! The final song would also make for a great 'theme' song for 1 commercials for Cairns &amp; TNQ??</i>
<i>Narrator was exceptional</i>
<i>The narrator was amazing. The trees lit up with the children playing underneath them was great to see</i>
<i>Harmonious mixture of audience members</i>
<i>all Positive</i>
<i>Merindi Schrieber and the Mirriki dancers were phenomenal</i>
<i>Totally positive!</i>
<i>Loved the Kuranda train!</i>
<i>Being involved as a performer has had a profound effect on my feeling of connection to others in Cairns community.</i>
<i>The friendliness of people around me.</i>
<i>Indigenous perspectives.</i>
<i>All brilliant</i>
<i>Yes, watching the enjoyment of the performers.</i>
<i>As I mentioned in a similar question, the standouts were the combination of the venue, the company and the quality of the performance. It was an enjoyable evening out. A highlight of the venue, other than its aesthetics (the lighting around the gardens is lovely!), is the fact that you can bring a picnic and enjoy an event like this in a more relaxed and social way.</i>
<i>This is a monumental piece of work and thanks so much.</i>
<i>The storyline was strong. Amazing! This should be shown around Australia</i>
<i>The emotional journey was awesome experience to be a part of.</i>
<i>the story content, dancing and singing</i>
<i>Toilet issue, but besides that it was a great performance. One performer (she was in the Indigenous group), sing a solo and then she died suddenly and the another girl with a solo describing the segregation (stolen generation). Very powerful.</i>
<i>Fantastic to see such a high quality performance with so many people involved.</i>
<i>As an Aboriginal/Italian woman, this show was so tactfully written and made for a beautifully emotional experience.</i>
<i>Very well portrayed Stage setting excellent. Costumes could have altered a little. A plarge video</i>
<i>Colourful vibrant performance. Minor negative would be a few of the lead vocalists (particularly male) were off key...not sure if it was a sound problem but they were very flat sounding.</i>
<i>Including ARC disability performers. Excellent to see them included!</i>
<i>The dragon was fab!</i>
<i>The writers of this production has moved towards taking steps for reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islanders and other 5s.</i>

*The narrator was very good and held the performance together. The performance left me with a warm, fuzzy feeling. I liked the way all the people came together at the end.*

*The whole event was a fantastic experience.*

*all positive*

*Music, costumes, story, set design*

*Quality of performance, singing, music, dance, storytelling, costumes and the smooth way it was all integrated together.*

*Terrific venue, atmosphere is great. Outdoor venue is a definite winner*

*The young Indigenous poet soliloquy and the Indigenous woman's reflection on the gold rush*

*This production was more engaging and delivered the message of unity more than the recent Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony - Well Done to all!*

*The enthusiasm of the cast*

*Loved it*

*Easy access and lots of security, which made the children safe and the adults could relax more.*

*The main narrator was incredible.*

*Impressed with local effort*

*Some good and not so good vocalists. The original music & lyrics were good. Overall it was entertaining & enjoyable.*

*Good balance of song and dance, and of humour and seriousness*

*All good*

*I liked the fact that it wasn't perfect in that the show used the talents of run-of-the-mill people - not just the obviously talented performers.*

*Nothing negative all positive*

*The venue*

*Positive*

*It is a stunning venue and I have enjoyed all other performances I have attended there. The queues, poor seating control, and lacklustre production quality of this performance left me less than inspired. I was disappointed to be honest.*

*The music*

*Amazing experience of outdoor theatre. An attention grabbing event*

*The happy volunteers especially the kids and the respect and consideration to the older of our cairns society*

*Impressed how many community groups had opportunity to participate. Very well written, organised, directed.*

*Both interpreter/ sign reader*

*Great atmosphere & variety of music & songs from different cultures*

*Narrator was excellent*

*All positive, as an audience you felt the performers passion for what they were doing and the message they were giving us. loved loved loved it*

*No amazing show all round*

*The singers that could sing were exceptional*

*Positive community spirit joining in the celebration of multicultural cairns.*

*The narrator was really good. Music and choir excellent*

*Parts of the show were great, choir and orchestra were great. Being a new work few little changes needed. Sound need to be better at points. Lovely mixture from ancient music and dance to the rap*

*Yes. Good performances from local identities.*

*The crowd were positive and the quality and originality of the show*

*People are generally very accommodating and helpful to each other*

*It was great*

*Several - the performance was exceptional*

*A great show and fantastic venue*

*Just the whole atmosphere created by the performers and the audience was a thrill to be part of.*

*Amazing venue*

The esplanade set up was amazing

Loved the atmosphere and the local talent

Narrator

The narrator

The blending of our cultural heritage and the natural amphitheatre of Martin Munro Park

The performance

The inclusion of others (less fortunate to ourselves) into the performance. was great to see.

The writer Kathryn Ash delivered an inspired story, which was complemented by the musical ability of Rubina Kimiia. The involvement of many Indigenous artists was wonderful.

I felt the band performed amazingly and did not receive any mention

Perfect venue - the night was perfect - not like the ballet!

The live music and the children singing was extraordinary. I feel there was too many songs, less would have had the same impact for the audience. I remember seeing the circus at the same venue a while back that had moving images on the screen behind the performers. That would have added something extra to the experience.

Yes, the way everyone came together to present and explore our history via performance

The quality of singing performances were high. I loved how you also included local choirs. There were a couple of singers who needed a bit more voice training, I struggled with that. But overall excellent.

Main Indigenous female vocalist was excellent

Some of the main singers at the start were a bit pitchy - but one stopped singing as he died in the performance and the other 2 were easy to deal with as the majority were very strong singers

The unity of performance was absolutely outstanding, each person on stage and behind seemed so well prepared and enthusiastic. So many people worked together. Yet it looked incredibly unified. Fantastic job from all involved. very touching that people from all abilities and cultures worked together, what a strong message!

It was an outstanding cultural show by locals for locals. It was way more than I was expecting. I loved how the show was narrated. It was a very professional event and I was amazed by the AUSLAN ladies singing for 2 hours non stop!

This event was fantastic. The only negative was that I did not understand the women wearing the black and white corsetry style costume. I discussed this with my fellow patrons. Some thought they were representing prostitutes of the time. I just thought it was a bit too 'arty' for this type of show.

Choir

I was impressed with the story line & talents of such a diverse range of performers

All participants in the show were fantastic.

Loved that it is a local production showcasing the talent of Cairns

A very professional show

Lovely venue

The inclusiveness of casting and the fact all the cast was local.

Excellent to see so many cultures represented on stage and in the audience. Quality of show is questionable. Food and beverage a little expensive/not realistic prices.

Fantastic experience and a great refresher on Cairns' history told in a different way

No all good

All good

All good.

All positive

### **Mixed Experiences**

The show was nice overall, but there were 2 singers who were really bad. The Italian and Chinese main performers. I don't understand that they got chosen for these roles. I am sure they tried their best, but it sounded horrible. We have much better singers in Cairns. I saw a lot of people leaving after the first 30 minutes or so. After that it fortunately got better. The cultural theme and all about unity in the show was very inspiring. Although it was at times a bit too long. Very disappointing that the choir and orchestra were hidden away AND did not even get a mention or to get on stage at the end to bow! Their performance was outstanding, in fact I think they were the best trained/skilled. Many people in the audience thought it was a background recording, because they could not see them and they were not mentioned! I think that is very sad, considering these guys worked their gut off. So next time, please honour all performers.

---

Some of the singers weren't really strong and some awkward gaps in performance. Some singers were fab though. Performance started too late for families with young kids. We had to go home early due to son getting too tired...

---

NEGATIVE - the pizza was simply appalling and left me feeling ill. For \$10 for a small 'cheese and garlic' pizza with sub-standard ingredients it was overpriced in the extreme. POSITIVE - The show itself was entertaining and spectacular. However, it is difficult to see the performance well when seated at the rear of the arena. Suggest people be encouraged to bring binoculars.

---

I really enjoyed the beginning but then find myself bored. Maybe some relation to the 5 story in general would have spiced it up a bite

---

Great set, lighting, Fantastic Music, on the minus: sound issues with feedback and actors not being heard, Some lead singers were off.

---

Positive: venue, community support, a worthwhile endeavour. Negative: not much the council can do about it, but other patrons being inconsiderate - talking throughout, and parents letting their children run around shouting and playing. It's not the place for that!

---

The quality of the performance and talent of some of the performers. The magic of so many groups coming together. The terrible food on offer and the shocking over pricing of said food.

---

It was a very conventional story line, but that's ok. Thought it might have included the many more cultural groups that have made Cairns home, some reference to saving environment

---

Yes, the door staff were very friendly and professional. I felt that it would have been more appropriate to offer Indigenous, English, Irish, Chinese and Italian food at this event to keep it themed.

---

Negative- sound issues, Positive- very personalised narration and music. The council should consider taking on several of the themes and songs at public events like our Festival Parade. Not many cities are fortunate to get their own theme song!

---

Pity the male Chinese actor couldn't sing in tune. However, he was a beaut actor. Overall, the music and singing was truly wonderful and indeed so inspirational. Congratulations to the composer and lyricists!

---

Hard to find a car park...liked the bag check

---

How positive and good the crowd was. Negatives was the small cup of wine for \$8

---

Choir was sometimes hard to understand due to speakers maybe? Also some singers could have used some more instruction. Hard to understand the Chinese actors with their accents sometimes and spoke quietly. Otherwise, really great!

---

Positives- the Aboriginal gentleman who was the storyteller was incredible. The choir was fantastic and the girl who was the love interest of the cane farmer 2nd act was very good both acting and vocally. Negative- only one or two principles could actually sing. The Chinese gentleman couldn't speak in tune, let alone sing in tune. Not their fault at all. They should never have been cast in the role. All this does is make them believe that they're so much better than they are, which is cruel in the long run. These are humans your dealing with, with feelings. Will you be offering counselling when they realise their performance wasn't as fantastic as you've been telling them?

---

### **Negative Experiences**

Only three of the lead singers could perform their role adequately.

---

Too much poor me the 1st half-2nd half great

---

I enjoyed the energy of all performers and also the appearance of the stage. However, I heard very little of what was said or sung and would have benefited from: (a) a screen to the side of the stage focussing on the featured actor/singer; (b) due to not hearing what was said I had to guess what was happening on stage and appreciated the few times a written sign appeared on stage to guide me as to what was happening. I cannot have been alone in missing much of the dialogue and would have greatly benefitted from some form of written sign to indicate what were each new group or activity.

---

Toilets difficult to access

---

Sound not great. Creatives (eg director) could've made some choices so not to embarrass people who were perhaps not singers...was awkward to watch some struggling up there doing solos etc. Not the casts fault...the creative team should've picked this up and made changes.

---

Sets great. Some cultures covered well. Amateurish. Seemed underprepared. Not enough "good" singers". Could not hear choir or orchestra.

---

I didn't like the show. Felt unwelcome by the indigenous people. And the use of white fellas that is disrespectful. If we can't use black fellas then they shouldn't use white fellas.

---

The sound was really low and when people were talking the music was too loud.

---

It was very culturally patronising to Chinese and anti- whitefella rather than celebrating shared culture.

---

The alcohol drink prices were outrageous

---

It was a bit hard to see, some big screens would be helpful. Some of the singers were pretty off key, but most of them were good. It was a great production overall. The mayor and another MP behind us kept chatting and laughing which wasn't appropriate.

---

Sound could have been better sometimes but understand hard for production of this size

---

---

*Some of the vocal parts were off key*

---

*More speakers. Too quiet*

---

*Microphones on leads didn't work properly*

---

*Two of the main singers (the bald Colonialist and the Chinaman) were very poor singers and out of sync with the choir and score and this detracted from an otherwise great show*

---

*Greater focus on Indigenous culture as seemed to be very Chinese orientated*

---

*Some of the performers were outstanding. I love the inclusiveness of the show. there were also some weaker leads that detracted from the show. I found the Chinese section very hard to understand and the singing poor*

---

*I understand it was a volunteer performance but some of singing was flat*

---

*Need better audio facilities*

---

*Rude audience members pushing in front and talking through performance*

---

*One disappointment I experienced was being told I could not use my camera to photograph, I read the conditions before going and it clearly stated no audio or video equipment which is understandable but no mention of cameras taking still images. I did explain this at the gate and a woman who I was only advised as the boss instructed I couldn't use my camera. I did as instructed and watched the show and hundreds of people filming with Ipads and phones without any issues. If I attend another similar production, I'll be making enquiries beforehand to have this clarified.*

---

*Very amateurish performance*

---

*I feel the musical did not show some of the positive steps being taken with the Aboriginal communities to help reconcile the differences.*

---

*Sound quality wasn't great. We were sitting to the left of the stage*

---

*The Chinese singers were painful to hear*

---

*Food and drink on one side of the venue only. Have more food and drink accessibility*

---

*Too much of the singing was poor and off key. Cairns amateur musicals are better for talent. But the choir was excellent.*

---

*Sound was a huge issue. Other than that, a fabulous evening!*

---

*Other patrons rather inconsiderate in sitting around in a way to obliterate our views and with talking through the performance.*

---

*Very hard to hear dialogue at the back and unable to hear song lyrics clearly, which took away much of the story*

---

*The singing was variable in quality*

---

*More options on food would be better with all the food vans we have that could of been better*

---

*Storyline needs improvement. Seemed choppy and unclear at times. Performers were not always well suited for their roles. Singing was sometimes off-key. Choir was sometimes inaudible and needed a microphone.*

---

## **Cairns Festival (2018) – Audience**

### **Grand Parade and Fireworks**

*Fireworks were great - first firework show since moving here from Sydney. Less 'gaps' in the parade, took too long especially with a toddler. Free parking for the parade was a great idea!*

---

*Fantastic parade so much effort by so many people it was awesome. The fireworks were superb, the atmosphere was fantastic*

---

*There was too much of a gap between the floats in the parade which affected the momentum and impacted enjoyability - we watched for 2 hrs with an hour of waiting beforehand so a total of 3 hrs and still didn't see the whole parade - because of the gaps it just went on for too long*

---

*Parade was very disappointing compared to previous years. Long gaps in between floats and not as many as previous years. Kids got bored of waiting in between floats making it drag on too long*

---

### **Queensland Symphony Orchestra**

*The Orchestra were amazing, and the conductor was wonderful!*

---

*Conductor was very entertaining. Added popular appeal to classical music by offering a popular theme. Great overall atmosphere. Loved the touch of having paid people in costume to welcome us.*

---

*The symphony was amazing. Such a great family event.*

---

*QSO and the fireworks were just AMAZING, the best we've seen in either Darwin or Cairns and the NT loves its fireworks*

---

*The Symphony Orchestra at Munro Martin Park*

---

*Just the concert. Would like to have seen the fireworks but was on the same night.*

---

**Light Show**

*Light show at the library. Qld orchestra. Fireworks were brilliant*

**Humans by Circa**

*Humans was a stand out. I also find events on the Esplanade to be fantastic as it truly engages the community*

**Carnival on Collins**

*Carnival on Collins really lacked compared to previous years. There was no good street performers like the stilt walkers etc. There wasn't as many stalls. It was all just junk food trucks etc.*

**Other events**

*Seagulls. They were so fun!*

*Lots of other things happening brass sweat and tears, the cemetery walk and the choral society*

**Negative Comments**

*Sometimes the local 'talent' is very local & not necessarily of a public event standard*

*The multiple acknowledgements of the Traditional Owners is ridiculous. It is a token, politically correct gesture that does not do the Aboriginal people any good. Let's give it a break - we are all Australians.*

*Negative was people not being moved on in the drop off/pick up zone out the front of the venue. Positive very well organised and run!*

## Wicked the Musical (2019) - Audience

**POSITIVE COMMENTS ON THE EXPERIENCE****Access**

*Ability to be picked up without getting wet*

*I really liked the drop off and pick up spot on the Sheridan Street side, and the ability to drive off easily into the traffic.*

*The pickup area during the rain was essential for my friend who is over 80. The toilets were excellent. The lift well situated.*

*In spite of the rain being able to be picked up and dropped off under cover. Visible security presence. Sign saying 'No alcohol beyond this point' very sensible.*

**Performance**

*The costuming and sets were more impressive than I had expected. Nothing negative.*

*Great cast. Lovely staff.*

*The performance was beautiful and the costumes chorus sets and band were stunning*

*The cast of the show. So talented.*

*Lead performers were very good*

*Good ensemble*

*Performances were excellent*

*The lead actresses were fantastic*

*The cast coming into the foyer after the show to mingle with the crowd was nice. An opportunity for photos and signings of programs with the cast would be lovely*

*Amazing costumes and stage design*

*The easy flow of the presentation in regard to changes of scenery, props, etc.*

*The performance and the Theatre were most enjoyable.*

*Performers and musicians were amazing, set fantastic*

*Yes. The tech, Quality of performance.*

*The night went well*

*Quality of actors*

*excellence of performance and excellent staging*

*Just a wonderful production for an amateur organisation*

*Choral Society productions are always great and of a high standard*

*Orchestra, sets, lighting, costumes, excellent*

*Excellence of local productions*

Great night out.

quality of the main performers

Cast was incredible

The whole cast and crew of Wicked

Unusual, unique

Outstanding flawless performance and production. Amazing local talent amazing

Overall a fantastic performance

Everyone that went thoroughly enjoyed the experience

The show itself

Vocal performances were outstanding

We really enjoyed the oerformance

We've got some great the Theatrical talent here in Cairns. Not only the cast, but, all that behind-the-scenes talent as well. The sets for Wicked were awesome!

Talent of performers was excellent

The cast

The vocals of all the characters

just an amazing show and very enjoyable evening

As always, the Choral Society did an outstanding job. The costumes and sets were amazing.

Wicked did not disappoint in anyway.

The performance

The performers, costumes and sets looked great

The performance was the best I have been to in Cairns

The talent of those on stage. The music. The stage sets and the special lighting effects. All so positive

Overall very pleasant evening and good value.

it was great overall

Great performance from the Coral society

Started pretty much on time. Would have enjoyed the curtain raised another one time for the audience to really appreciate and show support.

Wicked was a stand-out all round. Spectacular staging, lighting and costumes and an entertaining story. But I did feel sorry for the Wicked Witch.

The performance was great

Main actors, actresses were great. Lovely voices

For an armature production I believe the performers were just as good as the professional production of Wicked.

The quality and professionalism shown by the performers

The two female leads were great, particularly Glinda.

The two female leads were great, particularly Glinda.

Wicked cast were all amazing

Very positive experience, my wife and I thoroughly enjoyed the performance.

Overall was a great night.

Professionalism and enthusiasm of the cast

The quality of the performance was excellent

Overall very good- congratulations

Was very enjoyable

The experience was very positive

My granddaughter has now experienced a proper live theatre performance for the first time and was amazed by it. This sort of thing is what we need more of to inspire our next generation. They shouldn't have to travel to Brisbane to get this life experience. Just seeing her face and listening to her afterwards shows what bringing things like this here achieves.

Atmosphere was great

---

*I was so pleased that the performers of Wicked and the Cairns Choral Society now have an excellent performing space that suits their talents. (Instead of that other old clapped out barn)*

---

*Stunning costumes and performances of all artists*

---

*The Cairns Choral Society is excellent*

---

*Performance was of very high quality for a regional production.*

---

*seemed well polished*

---

*Incredible production. Sets, costumes, choreography, talent onstage. Vocally and orchestrally very strong*

---

*The show was a real success*

---

*Performance was terrific.*

---

*Except kids eating during performance, the rest was enjoyable*

---

*The performers, musicians and all behind the scenes teams did a fantastic job to produce a wonderful show*

---

*Very talented group of people*

---

*Overall great experience.*

---

*Exceptional night both show and centre*

---

*The show was magic, just loved every minute. Orchestra was wonderful, the conductor should have been given the chance to take a bow and the orchestra thanked specifically so we could applaud*

---

*The show was the standout. Well Done to all involved :)*

---

*Outstanding performance in a fabulous venue resulted in an excellent night out.*

---

*The high quality of the performance.*

---

*Great cast*

---

*The Wizard, Elphaba*

---

*Do you mean in relation to the actual production of Wicked or the CPAC experience? If Wicked, the costumes and orchestra were fabulous, the volume on the mikes on some of the leads went out a few times. All teething problems which no doubt will be ironed out during the season.*

---

*Appreciate the local talented artists and support people the costumes were outstanding*

---

*The second act once sound issues were resolved*

---

*Quality of staging, quality of acting and the amazing singing skills of local talent.*

---

*The talent was amazing. As already mentioned, there were times when the orchestra overpowered the singers and made it hard to hear what they were singing but I think that is a microphone issue. The voices overall could have been a bit louder.*

---

*It was a great night out*

---

*The quality of performers and assistants both on and off stage, and the quality of the musicians.*

---

*The entire cast was incredible!*

---

### **Seating**

*Comfort of the seats and view of the stage. My friend is small and I was worried about her seeing having never been in the CPAC. No worries now it is a great view*

---

*Great seats*

---

### **Sound**

*The sound was great and the sets and the manipulation of them were excellent.*

---

*Sound effects was very good, too.*

---

*Great sound and wonderful sets*

---

*Orchestra was heard sufficiently and acoustic good.*

---

*The orchestra sounded fantastic*

---

### **Staff**

*Great staff and state of the art venue just please stop people eating and drinking in the theatre itself it's very annoying*

---

*Positive-staff very friendly and helpful*

---

*Customer service, ease of finding way around theatre, great covered area around theatre especially in wet weather and ease of finding a close car park. Everything about our experience was awesome!!*

---

*Answered this question previously. Staff and surroundings*

---

*Ticketlink staff were most helpful with the booking process.*

---

*Everyone was helpful and friendly*

---



---

*Helpful staff.*

---

*The staff were great*

---

*Great service*

---

*Ushers very helpful*

---

*Helpful and enthusiastic staff.*

---

*Staff were helpful but inexperienced*

---

*I was very happy with everything, with my only suggestion being more bar staff be allocated for sold out shows*

---

**Stage**

---

*The stage sets were very impressive.*

---

*The staging and props, I was just totally amazed by how incredible they were, how made them, how they moved. Everything about them.*

---

*the onstage sets were fabulous*

---

*Wonderful sets & effects*

---

*Great stage backdrops and outstanding performances from all characters*

---

*Costumes and set design were outstanding*

---

*Costumes, sets.*

---

*Amazing set design*

---

*Thought the stage props were excellent*

---

*The costumes were fantastic - being a dressmaker I can appreciate how much work went into them*

---

*See previous responses. Costumes and sets were amazingly good. The cast performed admirably.*

---

*Staging and costumes*

---

*Very professional stage and props*

---

*Amazing set but sound quality disappointing*

---

*Sound, lighting, quality of costumes and stage props outstanding*

---

*The set was amazing*

---

*Stage effects were simply outstanding.*

---

*The costumes and props were excellent. The cast were all wonderful.*

---

*The set was completely amazing. I have never seen anything like that.*

---

*The sets and orchestra*

---

*The presentation of the stage, ie the big bat at the top was impressive.*

---

*Sets, Costumes and wonderful acting and singing*

---

*Costumes amazing*

---

**Toilets**

---

*Female toilets were numerous, so refreshing to not have to queue, well planned in design*

---

**Venue**

---

*Artwork recognising place of ATSI culture in Australia.*

---

*Venue is excellent. Customer service excellent.*

---

*Lovely venue but should be totally non-smoking area.*

---

*Exterior of venue is impressive*

---

*I love that it's all very open*

---

*No major delays at the toilets, bars and serveries.*

---

*Council did a good job*

---

*CPAC is of equivalent standard to capital city theatres*

---

*Wonderful to have a performing arts centre in Cairns!*

---

*The theatre is perfect for viewing the stage no matter what seats you have*

---

*Very classy venue*

---

*Positives beautiful venue, Choral Society!!*

---

*Just enjoyed seeing the new building. Cairns Choral Society were wonderful as usual.*

---

---

*Pos, beautiful theatre, great sound*

---

*The space comfort in the theatre foyer and stairs. Such an improvement on the old building.*

---

*The layout and feel is very in keeping with Cairns and its tropical climate and character*

---

*Loved that you could stand outside under cover, the bar was accessible both sides.*

---

*the quality finishing of the centre*

---

*Bar & snack area. Plenty of toilets.*

---

*Theatre layout and finishes.*

---

*Venue very easy to navigate*

---

*Positive Beautiful Theatre, Negative queues for refreshment stand/bar*

---

*Great theatre*

---

*Beautiful venue inside and outside*

---

*Loved the art inside and outside*

---

*The design and layout was good*

---

*Equal, if not better, to many venues I have attended. Wicked was 1st class.*

---

*Beautiful looking, great seats etc. bad sound and long bar wait times*

---

*Enjoyed the venue not the show*

---

*'Wow' factor on entering the theatre. Rainy night, so walk acrossuncovered and wet carpark was a dampener*

---

*The indoor/outdoor foyer*

---

### **Negative experiences**

*Only the lack of aircon, which made it a bit uncomfortable*

---

*The venue was quite hot*

---

*Air con and toilets where disappointing*

---

*The theatre was way too hot which is a shame as it is a standout venue*

---

*Extremely satisfied but would have preferred a Seniors discount ... hope this will apply to other shows!*

---

*Cheaper program of event.*

---

*Loved the theatre and performance. Confused as to the availability of parking on site. Needed to park a distance away on the street and negotiate flooded gutters.*

---

*Parking and processing needs improvement*

---

*Negative: parking; toilets; queues for refreshments.*

---

*Car parking at CPAC is an issue.*

---

*I frequent theatre regularly and I was disappointed with wicked*

---

*Only as stated above about not being g able to see the far right front of the stage*

---

*Unfortunate people in row behind, with young boys, spoke, and ate loudly from plastic packets, throughout performance. Also left dreadful mess. Your employees are angels*

---

*Rethink seating*

---

*Just the arm rests not being long enough.*

---

*Just the leg spacing of seats*

---

*The colour of the seats are awful in my opinion*

---

*Chair discomfort*

---

*Pity the sound levels of some performers was drowned out by orchestra. Need to get sound levels right, but it was opening night so maybe rectified in later performances.*

---

*The sound from the singer's mikes could have been improved slightly*

---

*Voices were very quiet and hard to hear a lot of the time and the overall sound was very quiet*

---

*The sound quality as mentioned above. needs attention or would not return*

---

*Just the sound level imbalance*

---

*There was a massive stand out in a negative way. The mic volume was way too low for the performers. I sat in row B and could barely hear them. Sometimes I could hear their actual voices on stage and not through the mics. There were some key vocal points in the show that were completely ruined by not being able to hear the performers*

---

---

*Seemed to be some sound issues at our performance*

---

*At times, the orchestra was too loud and masked the singing.*

---

*Volume of vocalists could have been louder!*

---

*Bar line up*

---

*The smoke effect used during the show was very choking and obstructed the view to the people in the front rows*

---

*Too much fog during performance caused breathing difficulties*

---

*Women and toilets (felt sorry for them), and the umbrellas.*

---

*Toilets not flushing*

---

*Negative. The ladies toilets.*

---

*I thought the new venue would have greater seat capacity than the old one in order to attract greater artists to perform in Cairns but I did not have the impression that it did.*

---

*More foyer space and more seating*

---

*There appeared to be more aboriginal culture displayed more than any other culture*

---

*Expected more Indigenous art works*

---

*Only as mentioned re people walking straight up the to bar area and then being served ahead of us patiently queuing and what felt like lack of air conditioning*

---

*I would add by way of comparisons, recently I had the benefit of seeing two operas at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. The Met is known for its fabulous productions. I do not think that Wicked is found wanting given our location and population. Of course, Wicked is a musical not sung in operatic style. But in the style that it is, the singing wasn't great and that is why I have come away feeling unexcited. They need to cast for better singing if possible and not for acting talent.*

---

## **Covid Live Recovery (2020) – Audience**

---

### **Tanks Art Centre - Positive**

---

*The Tanks Arts Centre is a stunning venue with staff to match. It's a reliably fabulous place to go.*

---

*How well everyone responded to the Covid-safe plan.*

---

*There was a sense of pride from both the artist and the Tanks staff that the community had come to this event.*

---

### **Tanks Art Centre - Negative**

---

*Just negative with the Security guard that was employed on the night...he was unduly aggressive...not to me...just saw how he went overboard and it was also very distracting*

---

*Security people were over the top*

---

*Unfortunately a group of ignorant and unappreciative women talked behind us all night when we were seated in the tanks in an acoustic setting. It was hard to remain in the beautiful acoustic moment of the artists with the non-stop chatter and laughing. We should have brought it to the attention of the staff as they had no idea it went on when we mentioned it at the end of the night. We will know for next time and it would no way deter us from going again.*

---

*I thought the headliner was underwhelming. I didn't enjoy his performance. Never the less, I will continue to attend performances at TANKS.*

---

### **Cairns Performing Arts Centre - Positive**

---

*Excellent all round*

---

*Being able to attend a live performance*

---

*Easy listening and inexpensive outing.*

---

*It was a good event. A bit odd to have so few people in the theatre especially for a comedy show. The event itself was fine, the comics are usual around town so we knew exactly what we were in for but really just wanted to support the endeavour and do something different.*

---

*It was lovely attending the venue and hearing a live performance with others even though we were physically distanced.*

---

*Love the new venue*

---

*The talent available in our local community.*

---

*Whole experience was magical*

---

### **Cairns Performing Arts Centre - Negative**

---

*As it was being broadcast live to other venues they had to use microphones for each instrument which did not provide the usual cohesive sound of a chamber quartet.*

---

---

*It wasn't what I was expecting, two very different shows put together.*

---

*This was more of a pub venue performance.*

---

*Thought some of the comedy presented was in bad taste and low brow for 2020 (misogynistic and abelist).*

---

## **Understory Film Festival (2020) – Audience**

---

### **Art and Culture Connection**

---

*The quality of the films.*

---

*Love that the young students of Cairns are so passionate about film making but was disappointed to see a lack of films from local adults. Potentially there weren't many submissions, hopefully that will change next year*

---

*I'd love to see more Symposium events. Potentially 3 days of workshops leading up to the festival? The advice given by this year's guest was incredible and to be amongst so many talented people was a pleasure. Getting a wide range of guests would be awesome, (I'd love to see Brenton Thwaites if that was ever possible ahah!). Only positive things to say about Understory and I look forward to next year!*

---

*Overall, it was a fun experience and it was great to network with so many fellow young and upcoming talents. I think the structure of the awards segment needs more work. Films were in different categories, yet they competed against each other. I think it should be divided along the lines of ages AND genres to level the playing field. And a guest panellist (and an established filmmaker) winning the top award seemed a bit out of place and strange. I don't want to think it was a result of bias or conflict of interest but eliminating this loophole could help with fairness and credibility. Apart from those issues it was all great, insightful and encouraging. Would recommend to any and all upcoming filmmakers in the region.*

---

*WE do have some great local talent.*

---

*Unity.*

---

*Diverse young local talent and professional presentation.*

---

*The amount of people that were there.*

---

### **About the Event**

---

*I simply enjoyed the buzz and enthusiasm of the event. The MC was hilarious and everyone was relaxed and happy to be there.*

---

*It was a really great buzzing culture at the event. That would be a highlight.*

---

*Kier Shorey was a great MC*

---

*Kier was an excellent host. The event felt very organic and represented Cairns beautifully.*

---

*Symposium.*

---

*Whiteboard may help*

---

*The customer service as a man in a wheelchair.*

---

### **About the Venue**

---

*I think the facility is a great asset to Cairns and strongly support the diversification of the arts in the area. The event itself was very successful and grows in strength to strength every year. Given the large numbers of entrants, more consideration needs to go into 'categories' and reducing the length for these films so that none are longer than 5 minutes!*

---

*Positives: Great atmosphere, Great staff! Great venue!*

---

### **Negative Comments**

---

*I preferred last year's venue at The Tanks for this type of event.*

---

*It lacked a lot of the atmosphere of holding the event at the Tanks, which feels a much more sympathetic space for the films in the event.*

---

*How can someone be on the panel and win an award? Should be one entry per person.*

---

*Each director should only be able to have one entry selected for viewing, if there were 70 submissions surely someone else deserves a chance to be seen*

---

*A lot of people were confused as to why voting tickets needed to have the number written on them if they were going into numbered bins. Voting could have been easier without the double handling.*

---

*Negatives: More food options...*

---

# Cairns Children’s Festival (2021) - Audience

<b>Positive</b>
<b>Productions</b>
<i>Chores at CPAC was outstanding!</i>
<i>Chores was excellent. Boats were fun</i>
<i>What a treat for the kiddies. The volume level of the music songs played at chores was too loud. Actors voices were spot on.</i>
<i>My children particularly loved the CHORES show....so much</i>
<i>Pogogo show was super fun. Would have preferred to purchase a ticket given its demand. Wish this show was also in a larger venue.</i>
<i>The dentist experience of the t-Rex inspired my daughter to research dinosaurs</i>
<i>Beyond the waves was fabulous.</i>
<i>The 5 Minutes of Fame and the build your own interactive opportunities</i>
<i>The Polygrot Boat experience and the Puppet show were our favourites. Loved the collaboration between ARC and the puppet company. What a great opportunity for the actors, and audience. Watching (and participating) in imaginative play outside of the courthouse was super fun. Would be great to see more activities like this!</i>
<i>The puppet show was great, and we all enjoyed</i>
<i>We loved the shows this year! We were unable to attend the Dinosaur show but would love to see more amazing events like that on in Cairns!</i>
<b>Staff and customer service</b>
<i>Diverse experiences, lovely staff everywhere, highly enjoyable</i>
<i>Friendliness of the volunteers.</i>
<i>The volunteers at the botanic gardens were fantastic.</i>
<i>Good turn out. Successful event at The Court House. Welcoming atmosphere. Great staff.</i>
<i>It was free! Thanks Cairns regional council</i>
<i>Proud to have a festival like this as part of our region.</i>
<b>Negative</b>
<i>Big lines</i>
<i>Just the parking problem and missing out on the shows as mentioned before</i>
<i>Not much shade in outdoor areas near food vans &amp; outside audience</i>

## APPENDIX J: INSPIRATION TO ATTEND AGAIN

### Beginnings (2018) - Audience

Performance related inspiration
<i>Our local talent is worthy of my time and money</i>
<i>It was a well produced and extremely well presented show.</i>
<i>It is nice to have a performance for locals.</i>
<i>The quality of music and the storytelling involved.</i>
<i>The high quality of the original works and the performances was inspiring</i>
<i>We loved the culture that was showcased through the show and that it was respectful of the history.</i>
<i>Variety, interesting to have an event tell a local story, original music.</i>
<i>Relaxed entertained and educated.</i>
<i>Great production from local artists.</i>
<i>Because it was so professional</i>
<i>Clearly a very high level of talent in Cairns.</i>
<i>As an Aboriginal woman I was so impressed that we had a show that was so inclusive and told from an Indigenous perspective</i>
<i>I love live performances especially when it showcases the talent here in Cairns &amp; the far North</i>
<i>I'm keen to learn more local stories.</i>
<i>It's great to have local artists on a big stage</i>
<i>The presentation was well choreographed, the background music and vocals superb. We loved the narrator and the whole story line and production were appreciated.</i>
<i>I enjoyed the historical and cultural information given via such an entertaining way</i>
<i>The performers need to know we appreciate their great effort. It is an enjoyable time with friends.</i>
<i>I thought the performance was excellent and would have showed visitors how Cairns progressed through the years</i>
<i>It was a great night out in a lovely venue, and while the performance was by no means perfect, it was enjoyable. What could have been a potentially difficult subject matter was handled sensitively and inclusively in my opinion. It was nice to see that Indigenous stories and perspectives were not just given their 'token' 5 minutes at the beginning of the piece and then promptly forgotten about. I thought it was well done.</i>
<i>I hail from Perth and they have a history of Musical theatre events all year round. This was on a par with their events. Well done.</i>
<i>Gave me an appreciation of another artform - theatrical musical... LOVE IT!</i>
<i>It was brilliant</i>
<i>It was a beautiful coming together of community, and a wonderful setting</i>
<i>Outstanding local talent in an outstanding venue.</i>
<i>Entertainment value</i>
<i>Excellent local talent</i>
<i>Great local talent. And beautiful venue</i>
<i>Apart from the awesome entertainment it was exciting to see the history of the beginnings of Cairns presented in such an enlightening way.</i>
<i>Good production, well presented and well managed. Also free event so that is also good.</i>
<i>It was entertaining, it was local, great atmosphere</i>
<i>Very enjoyable. Inspiring and makes me proud to be part of the Cairns community.</i>
<i>I guess I underestimated the quality of the performances we could create here in Cairns!</i>
<i>High quality culture learning</i>
<i>Surprised by performance quality.</i>
<i>This event seemed to be well-received by the majority. It kept children and adults enthralled with a upbeat story with subtle touches of comedy and beautiful narration. The local theme made it easy to relate to, and the message was clear. It was an honest reflection on our past, with a vision of hope for a better future, acknowledging the good and bad from the past.</i>

---

*Quality and community support*

---

*Everyone has a beginning and should be given an opportunity to improve their artistic growth. The joy and enthusiasm that the cast and production team displayed was fantastic.*

---

*It was absolutely fantastic, and it was free!*

---

*We have great talent in Cairns as well as including people with disabilities in the programs*

---

*Story, music and special effects were outstanding*

---

*It was interesting to learn cultural diversity.*

---

*I just loved the music/dancing and atmosphere. My kids enjoyed it too, it's a great way for us to all go out together as a family.*

---

*It was a wonderful musical - inspiring, amazing, life giving - fantastic!!*

---

*It was creative and included local artists*

---

*Great to see so many people involved and such a great mixture of people attending too*

---

*Opened my eyes to new things i.e. The theatre and musical side of it*

---

*The production exceeded my expectations. It was meaningful and moving and provided a unique insight into the history of Cairns from an indigenous perspective.*

---

*I was so impressed with the quality of the performance - totally entertaining and thought provoking*

---

*I realised how great our local talent is. The only thing stopping me is cost...*

---

*Incredible performance. Probably the best show we have ever seen. Seriously. Well done to all the performers.*

---

*I felt that this show encouraged harmony in our community and this is something that I feel needs more focus in Cairns. However, I feel that this show portrayed those of English and Irish descent in a disrespectful manner. Yes, please acknowledge the difficulties faced by our first 5s but those of us with English and Irish heritage have also experienced extreme hardship. Our history was not easy either and the use of terms like "white fella" also make me feel offended.*

---

*Love theatre*

---

*Great performance*

---

*"Beginnings" was a wonderful opportunity to really see that we're "all in this together". Cairns is a cultural melting pot and this performance allowed us all to contextualise this and to understand our personal agency in creating harmony. We could see this on stage and in the audience! Truly wonderful!*

---

*Great to have the opportunity to a diverse range of talent*

---

*Very good show*

---

*Truthfully some of the singers were pretty bad but overall it was entertaining, a great snapshot of our history in Cairns and ended on a really positive note.*

---

*Costumes and staging were excellent. However the content was not capturing enough and poor audio effected the experience negatively*

---

*So much effort had gone into this amazing production*

---

*Because it was brilliant, gave proud moments and gives us cheaper options to do things as a family*

---

*It was choreographed brilliantly bringing all the cultures together to tell the story*

---

*Because I was impressed with the standard of this musical presented by a cast of hundreds\*

---

*Performance was well done and highly enjoyable.*

---

*Great performance local history*

---

*Amazing performance and the storyline made people think*

---

**Personal value inspiration**

---

*Re-inspired me to make the effort to attend and support events*

---

*My son enjoyed it.*

---

*Because I believe it is important to support all the local events so we can continue to have more.*

---

*Local Indigenous perspective is very important to community. I love supporting the arts in Cairns... so many talented and passionate people.*

---

*I always attend them*

---

*I am already in favour of arts and cultural events but have to choose those I think I will be able to enjoy despite severe hearing impairment.*

---

*I attend shows as I want already*

---

*It was fun and great for the kids*

---

*It was free, easy to access, enjoyable and a real community project.*

---

*In a nutshell it was easy and convenient*

---

---

*Under the night sky, sitting with friends watching live performance I remember how much I love it. Beautiful Cairns*

---

*It was a beautiful night*

---

*I already attend as much as I can. I don't need inspiration to go!*

---

*I love the arts*

---

*As I have always supported the local shows I will continue to support all shows and yes attend more cultural events.*

---

*It was very inclusive. Message was universal and current.*

---

*It was free and educational*

---

*My partner is agoraphobic but stayed for entire performance, a rarity*

---

*Great night out*

---

*It was a beautiful family night*

---

*Enjoying*

---

*Family had fun, nice night out*

---

**Community well-being inspiration**

---

*To be part of community spirit*

---

*It's great to get community together*

---

*It brings community together.*

---

*Good for community*

---

*I love being at an event with the rest of the community*

---

*The nature of this event was community building and child friendly (even with an ADHD kid)*

---

*It reinforced to me the importance of culture for our community and how it is good to support cultural events. It also brings people together*

---

*Communal effort*

---

*Enhances sense of community*

---

*The vibe and community spirit was wonderful to be a part of.*

---

*It reminded me how great this community is*

---

*Creates such a wonderful spirit and sense of togetherness in and for the town.*

---

*Inspirational message. Fantastic community spirit at the event which made it an honour to be a part. Thank you!*

---

*Great community show. Represented varied aspects*

---

*Great sense of Community*

---

*It created an excellent sense of community and showcased the talent of local performers. Therefore when I see another show with the same performers I am likely to want to see them perform again knowing how excellent they are.*

---

*It's a fantastic way to engage in the local community and expand my knowledge of the area*

---

*A true community engagement event bringing our community together. This was evident last night*

---

*The community vibe and quality of performance*

---

*The community vibe and great feeling/experience of seeing friends we know on stage and sharing the experience with friends and our broader community members - was such a harmonious experience*

---

*It was a fantastic community event and I hope to see more of this from Cairns*

---

*The community spirit is strong at these events. Was good to see people celebrating The Arts.*

---

*I enjoyed the gathering of the community*

---

*It was a nice evening and it is good to celebrate living in such a diverse and unique community*

---

*We had a great time. Quality production. Affordable. Good to be part of the positive community feeling.*

---

**Venue related inspiration**

---

*Love the venue, we usually come with a group of friends and the park makes it easy to catch up before the start and in the break.*

---

*Love the venue and love to support most things that happen in our region*

---

*Just the atmosphere and it's something the whole family can enjoy,*

---

*Great venue, set, lights, performance very enjoyable.*

---

*Very interesting and enjoyable*

---



<i>Only if its not raining at MM Park - which it wasn't that night</i>
<i>The venue</i>
<i>Just a lovely venue and performance</i>
<i>Great venue</i>
<i>Great atmosphere, terrific venue</i>
<i>I enjoyed sitting outside under the stars watching a wonderful production</i>
<i>Great atmosphere</i>
<i>Great venue and great execution</i>
<i>Venue is family friendly</i>
<i>A wonderful community venue!</i>
<i>To mix &amp; mingle with people from all walks of life</i>
<i>I just love the venue I thought you should have charged a small entrance fee for adults as quite a few left at interval and it was such a great evening</i>
<i>Great atmosphere</i>
<i>Setting is amazing .... Great outdoor entertainment</i>
<i>Venue is great and it is the first event I had been to there</i>
<i>Love the venue</i>
<i>It was free lovely night and venue interesting story</i>
<i>We went as a part of a group and this venue loaned itself to adults and children alike so young families could be included.</i>
<i>Great venue</i>
<i>I love the Munro Martin Parklands and having locals performing was great.</i>
<i>I love outdoor events, free events, family activities</i>
<i>Loved the Munro Martin parklands, everything went well</i>
<b>Art and cultural inspiration</b>
<i>Art is important to life.</i>
<i>Indigenous cultural experience</i>
<i>Cairns needs some cultural events, music, art, performances!!!!</i>
<i>I already have a great interest in the arts.</i>
<i>Already motivated to attend arts &amp; cultural events.</i>
<i>I like most kinds of shows</i>
<i>Affordable and entertaining</i>
<i>Just love the arts</i>
<i>Because attending arts and cultural events has always been something that fascinates me and I can always get a taste of other cultures without leaving Cairns.</i>
<i>I enjoy them</i>
<i>Because it was good</i>
<i>We attend a lot already</i>
<i>Any good performances mean you want to have another experience</i>
<i>I love music and it was a fantastic event at a beautiful venue</i>
<i>It's a reminder of how far Cairns has matured culturally, the days of amateur productions has passed.</i>
<i>Gimuy people are great and this is what we do. We do the arts good.</i>
<i>Proud of our cultural heritage and would like to immerse in it more</i>
<i>Because my wife and I enjoy going to concerts, musicals, etc</i>
<i>I enjoy the arts, and go to as many as possible</i>
<b>Local talent inspiration</b>
<i>It was a showcase of what Cairns has to offer</i>
<i>It was fantastic</i>
<i>To experience Cairns amazing talent</i>
<i>Important for us and CRC to support local art and artists.</i>

---

*Volunteers can do great things in a short time*

---

*Great to see local talent in Cairns*

---

*The level of talent is to be commended and encouraged*

---

*The degree of professional local talent here in Cairns is great.*

---

*Excellent local entertainment*

---

*Locally produced arts, including theatre and music allow our local artists to hone their skills, while telling stories about ourselves.*

---

*It was so awesome and all local*

---

*Showcased amazing local talent*

---

*It was a beautiful experience watching local people perform*

---

*To support cairns artistic culture*

---

*All local artistic endeavours deserve support*

---

**Other inspiration**

---

*Because I enjoyed it so much*

---

*It was a very enjoyable night*

---

*If this show was indicative, then yes yes*

---

*It's easy to get busy and forget that these events are available*

---

*Breathtaking*

---

*Great to see everyone getting out and involved. Great for kids.*

---

*It was amazing*

---

*It was a beautiful show*

---

*Went with a group which was great fun*

---

*Great show*

---

*Enjoyable evening*

---

*It was good clean, light entertainment.*

---

*Because it was an insight for many people on the beginnings of the north*

---

*It made me realise what was possible, even in a smaller place like Cairns! It was wonderful.*

---

*It's fun*

---

*Because I like learning about our city's history*

---

*Reminded me of the huge and wonderful cultural diversity of this area*

---

*It was a wonderful event to take the whole family*

---

*Good*

---

*It was just such a pleasurable and emotional experience that I thought I need to do that more often.*

---

*A great show*

---

*Uplifting*

---

*I have always enjoyed this type of event. Wonderful that Cairns City Council put this on a free event.*

---

*Because it was such a massive project which was inclusive for everyone*

---

*My kids enjoyed it so we'll go to future events*

---

*Good experience*

---

*I enjoyed the performance & which in turn creates the hope of repeating the experience*

---

*It was beautiful and spectacular. The theme resonated with everyone. I was part of the choir. I want to do it again.*

---

**Not Inspired**

---

*How do I say this in a nice way. I was embarrassed for Cairns. Some of the singers were atrocious. I understand the point of the show but the execution was dismal. This was not a good a good quality show to represent Cairns. I don't mean the content of the show it was the professionalism of the production.*

---

*Performance was not executed well.*

---

*Poor vocals and I believe the story line could of been more entertaining. I know it's true events but was quite boring there was a lot of talk about how fantastic it was going to be I didn't feel that when I left.*

---

*Very slow moving production. Singers singing obviously flat- disappointing. Sound and lighting very good.*

---

*Didn't like the content of the show. It is portraying negative side of white people (and I am not a white fella) very one sided. The Chinese actors were pathetic can't sing and you could have got a better English speaking cast. I can't understand a word they said. The story seemed to focus on how Aborigines were hard done by with all the historical facts. I think there should be happier and positive notes about how everyone whites blacks browns band together to make Cairns a better place for all. And the Japanese were not mentioned. They have a huge impact to the tourism industry. Can't understand why the focus on Chinese!!! We left feeling unwelcome by the Aboriginal people to be living here. It is not a happy ending beginning story. Sorry won't support such program in future.*

---

*The concept was great but some of the singers were very disappointing.*

---

*Low quality production and a missed opportunity to express the truth about colonisation*

---

*Music, sound & lighting were good. Actors/main singers & dancers were terrible. This was like a bad school play. We left at half time - would have left earlier but didn't want to appear rude.*

---

*The performers gave it their all, but due to poor direction and very poor sound engineering, feedback, mic's off when performers were singing, a long with some of the performances being totally flat both speaking and singing roles, I believe this is an opportunity that was sorely missed. For all the hours and hours of rehearsal that went in to that show, I think the behind the scenes people really let their cast down, badly! The choir were amazing though, when we could hear them.*

---

*I felt it was not of a high standard*

---

*This is good for the feeling of belonging to a community, it made me happy*

---

*Very amateurish production. Embarrassing to listen to the vocalists*

---

*Depends who's involved*

---

*Very disappointed*

---

*Singing and diction let the rest down*

---

*It wasn't of a high standard*

---

*I left at interval. it was amateurish, slow, uninteresting, worse than a high school performance! very disappointing*

---

*It was way too long, the choir was not to be seen or acknowledged, some of the lead singers were painful.*

---

*I have been to several performances at Munro Martin Park and this was just not up to the standard of other performances there. The story line was unclear, the sound was not as good as other shows, bass kept booming, the calibre of the performers Was a little disappointing*

---

*It was cheesy at times and more like a high school performance. Some singers were good (Lenni Stone) but the Chinese people can't sing and spoke very bad English.*

---

*Boring*

---

*Many lead singers were poor. Choir needed to be highlighted more. Overall sound was inadequate.*

---

*Less than half the lead performers should have been put on stage and asked to play a major role.*

---

*Despite the limitations of the performance (some of which was really good), the main difficulty was not being able to hear clearly (a combination of poor sound and other patrons talking loudly and constantly throughout the performance), I would love to see more at the venue. I will simply make sure I'm there earlier to get a position closer to the stage.*

---

## **Cairns Festival (2018) – Audience**

---

### **For enjoyment**

---

*It was very enjoyable.*

---

*I really enjoy outdoor concerts*

---

*They were enjoyable*

---

*Great atmosphere achieved by venue and performance*

---

*We really enjoyed the evening.*

---

*Enjoyed this so much :)*

---

*It was a lovely show, and the Parklands are a very beautiful, relaxing place to attend an event.*

---

*I enjoyed seeing a full size, quality orchestra. Also the town had a good buzz.*

---

*Quality of event*

---

*QSO is a fantastic orchestra. It was awesome to have them in Cairns. The special guest group were not really needed and was a flat spot in the night.*

---

---

*It's beautiful to see multiculturalism*

---

*The standard was so high.*

---

**Cost**

---

*The variety and cost*

---

*Easy and cheap entertainment*

---

**First introduction**

---

*Relatively new to Cairns with a toddler and we want to explore more of our surroundings, culture, history, etc*

---

*More aware of what's going on in Cairns. I've been in Mareeba 9 years & never knew about the Festival*

---

*We haven't been to any others and now are looking forward to more events at next year's events*

---

*We were regular subscribers to the SSO & ACO when we lived in Sydney. More live classical music in Cairns would be most welcome.*

---

**Regular attendee**

---

*I always attend everything I want to anyway*

---

*Because we would go anyway!*

---

*I already attend heaps of things*

---

*I would attend any way.*

---

**Negative**

---

*Wasn't as good as past years. Particularly Carnival on Collins.*

---

## **Wicked the Musical (2019) – Audience**

---

**Performance**

---

*So impressed with the calibre of the show. On par with the national productions!*

---

*This was excitement usually experienced with CCS performances. Early in the season so perhaps they will settle into the new space soon. a good quality performance. The sets were excellent. Felt it was missing the energy and*

---

*The standard of the production, the staging, costumes and performance were outstanding.*

---

**Love of theatre**

---

*It's been a while since I've been to a musical - Wicked was fantastic and reminded me how much I love them.*

---

*I love plays and musicals. Any good theatre production. I have recently moved from Sydney to Port Douglas.*

---

*We have a love of performing arts and wish we had more touring shows here so we didn't have to keep going to Brisbane.*

---

**Talent**

---

*Amazing talent in Cairns.*

---

*Showcase of local talent-easily comparable with capital city offerings*

---

*We should be very proud of the level of talent in our local community*

---

**Venue**

---

*The CPAC was amazing and I'd like to see other performances on the stage.*

---

*Great venue for more performers to come to Cairns*

---

*New venue made performance enjoyable*

---

**Professional**

---

*Very professional production, especially the orchestra, the sound quality, the sets and the costumes! The seating gave a really good view of the stage and the atmosphere in the theatre was fabulous!*

---

*The professionalism and quality of all areas of the production were outstanding.*

---

# Covid Live Recovery (2020) - Audience

<b>Cairns Performing Arts Centre</b>
<i>Arts and Culture are essential to life and living.</i>
<i>Excellent performance.</i>
<i>Forgotten how much I enjoyed them pre-Covid</i>
<i>Getting out to the theatre is always in uplifting experience.</i>
<i>I love supporting local talent</i>
<i>Live performance is enjoyable</i>
<i>Live performances are always inspiring.</i>
<i>Live stage performances are wonderful</i>
<i>Live performance is special.</i>
<i>Well-presented and professional</i>
<i>Shows it is possible even now</i>
<i>Support the arts in general</i>
<i>Yes because it was good to get out and help out the local economy</i>
<i>Support local community</i>
<i>I go to arts events I am interested in and this was one</i>
<i>It didn't uninspire me.</i>
<i>There have been none I am interested in</i>
<i>Was not to my family taste</i>

<b>Tanks Art Centre</b>
<i>Because Greta is phenomenal.</i>
<i>Great venue</i>
<i>I enjoyed it and appreciated having something real to go to.</i>
<i>I like TANKS</i>
<i>I love them</i>
<i>I really enjoy the Arts</i>
<i>The venue is so unique.</i>
<i>Love love music.</i>

# Understory Film Festival (2020) – Audience

<b>POSITIVE</b>
<b>Appreciation for art and culture</b>
<i>Because our family are entertainers</i>
<i>Being able to see a culmination of Cairns films was wonderful to witness and be apart of</i>
<i>I appreciate seeing the talent in our region.</i>
<i>Local special talent</i>
<i>It was enjoyable</i>
<i>I like short film</i>
<i>Love to see creativeness in all arts cultural events</i>
<i>See more emerging artists</i>
<i>The creativity and energy is wonderful.</i>
<i>Very welcoming and a good way to show off local talent</i>
<b>Venue</b>
<i>Great venue</i>

---

*The seat I had was great*

---

*Good to just get out of home*

---

*Networking*

---

---

**NEGATIVE**

---

**Already a supporter**

---

*Already attend as many as I can afford.*

---

*Already go to a lot of arts events*

---

*Because I attend them anyway*

---

*Because we go to whatever appeals*

---

*I already have the desire to.*

---

*I go to arts and cultural events. This was a film and award night,*

---

*Unchanged*

---

**Venue**

---

*As much as I like art in all forms, competition is what draws me every time and others. More people competing more people they bring too... Bigger amount of people coming bigger the hype! Like the red carpet entrance that was pretty hype!*

---

*Wrong venue.*

---

*If I was answering this question specifically on this one event then I would say no however the venue is far superior in terms of comfort and ease for patrons than the previous venue at the Tanks. Certainly a better attendance.*

---

**Film entries**

---

*It's not the fault of the organising side of things, I guess the submissions were of lower quality... but overall it felt like a school event as the majority of films were student submissions.*

---

*The quality of some of the films wasn't very high*

---

# APPENDIX K: UNANTICIPATED IMPACTS

## Beginnings (2018) - Audience

### About the performance

*The Indigenous artists of this production were exceptional. When the leading female was shot, I wept openly with sadness.*

*It was a dreadful performance. If you want to do any of what you listed above you should put some proper planning and pay for lead performers. The background roles such as choir were well performed by the amateur volunteers. You need to set your expectations of what a performer is capable of doing based upon their level of experience and capability.*

*Cairns has a great showcase of talent.*

*The show was very good but it was too long / the story to be told*

*Some of the performers were criticized for lack of musical talent, but overall everyone did a great job.*

*Made me realise once more, how many talented people we have in various areas and how important it is to give space for them to express their talent for everybody to enjoy and for giving them a boost for trust in themselves and pursue their dream.*

*The engagement of local and very talented musicians was well worthwhile to demonstrate the cultural depth that exists here in Cairns. It was such a shame that it was only on for one night and so many people missed out on getting tickets. Such a lot of work for only one night's performance.*

*Inspires me to be on the lookout for more events.*

*I think it was a great performance*

*The stage set-up and everyone involved from the sound technicians, performers, security guards etc. was of a very high standard. I noticed that most people stayed right to the end which indicates that there was genuine interest in the performance.*

*Appreciation for talent and effort that was put in to putting on the production. As it was free - made me feel that the City valued its population to reward them with such a visual and artistic treat.*

*Wonderful*

*I enjoyed the show but a lot of singers were out of tune and 3 hrs is very long!*

*The choosing of people from all different cultures & walks of life to present an awesome cultural event.*

*I would like to see more events at this venue*

*Great to see the fabulous talent that's around*

*Great how it was*

*Beginnings was a competent amateur performance. I am pretty cognisant of the history and culture of Australia but it was nice to have a Cairns flavour to it*

*Provides a great new venue for amateur theatre*

*A fabulous event!*

*This performance is something shown nationally*

*Allowed me to appreciate the breath of local talent across our multicultural communities*

*Created strong personal and professional connections in the arts*

### About Cairns and Community

*Made me leave wanting to know more about the people and history of Cairns.*

*If had info in booklet would also help, background info on the events etc.*

*This was amazing to showcase the history of this town and basically nation. As a traditional inhabitant of this land, its not about what happened back then anymore, we just want white people to see and understand what happened. Not looking for any sympathy or anything just to understand and educate themselves on what took place so that we can live harmonious together in love and peace now.*

*I had not really realised the big part the Chinese had in Cairns*

*Not only excellent performance but relevant to Cairns and FNQ and our first peoples history.*

*I didn't like the focus on how bad the Aboriginals were treated vs others. How about focusing on how everyone Aboriginal, whites, Asians have worked hard to make Cairns what it is today? I know many ATSI people who did 3 jobs and bought properties on acreage they brought their kids up all went to*

## Cairns Festival (2018) – Audience

---

*Thank you! It was a great night!*

---

*Creates interest and talk with the locals.*

---

*Surprised by the number of people in Cairns who were interested in classical music.*

---

*Bringing the QSO here was fantastic for the city and we hope that they come back again. Was so nice to have freedom to wander at the Carnival without worrying about traffic - in fact we cycled there as did many other families.*

---

*Enjoyed my first trip to Munro Martin Park.*

---

*Also became aware of how small our city centre is. A benefit usually but it was bursting at the seams on firework night.*

---

## Cairns Festival (2018) – Producers

### Project objectives being met

---

*Strengthened community.*

---

*As an unfunded and financially under-resourced event the reliance on goodwill and existing relationships, particularly with Indigenous artists, was tested. In the future, resourcing discussions with the festival organisers will need to start from the appropriate financial arrangements for community and professional artists engagement and commitment process. The expectation of professional artists involvement will need to be a starting point for the events development so that there is no risk of being exploitative.*

---

*There are lots of areas in which to volunteer and participate in the community.*

### Personal impact

---

*The project identified potential creative pathways that engage underrepresented artforms and combinations of artforms.*

### Professional development

---

*Fun people to meet*

---

*Helping other businesses in Shields street be more engaged with the festival and bringing business to them.*

---

*Developing a production within an environmental / recreation reserve is challenging and has some artistic risk associated with it. The 2018 production provided insights to that process that will assist with future event planning and creative development.*

---

*It's evolving and improving yearly*

### Local art and culture sector

---

*The ephemeral nature of site-specific production is transferable to many different environmental contexts, really anywhere in the city and surrounds can be engaged as a cultural and artistic site. This opens up the potential for artistic engagement and allows specific places to be interpreted through the lens of art practice. (Artist)*

---

*Met lots of lovely people in the public sector and staff. I was able to assist people with their queries and direct to right areas. (Volunteer)*

### Audience and community benefit

---

*I found it very satisfying to help and participate in community events. (Volunteer)*

---

*I did not receive an artist's fee for involvement, however, I have provided a small budget to provide the artists involved with a token appearance fee. (Artist)*

---

## Wicked the Musical (2019) - Audience

### About Cairns Art and Culture

---

*I think you're doing enough to establish the readiness and enjoyment of culture in Cairns.*

---

*It reaffirms my love of live theatre in Cairns*

---

*It was an excellent performance and I think that if there are more musicals of this calibre in the future, word of the quality will spread which can only help CPAC and Cairns on the whole.*

---

*It would be good to see some international shows come to CPAC*

---

*Just want to say I love the cultural art works especially the Ghost Net piece from Erub Island.*

---

*Looking forward to bigger & better productions that will be able to come to Cairns because of our improved venue!!*

---

*Looking forward to more experiences at CPAC*

---



---

*People from all over come to watch*

---

*Put Cairns on the map*

---

*Put Cairns out there*

---

*We are as good if not better than the bigger cities*

---

*For the population of Cairns there are more than enough cultural and artistic venues. CRC needs to cater for locals, not tourists.*

---

*It's a good start but Cairns has a long way to go. Shows should be aimed at the greater area not just Cairns. Cairns has little to attract me as it is geared to the tourist and how much we can charge.*

---

**About the performance**

---

*All very enjoyable*

---

*Appreciation of talent in Cairns. Music soundtrack*

---

*Cairns Choral Society were a classy act with Wicked and great to have such talent in Cairns*

---

*Could match it with the capital cities*

---

*Enjoy opportunity to see talent from FNQ*

---

*Excellence of local productions*

---

*I am looking forward to attending many more events*

---

*I am proud to say this is what Cairns can offer. I took a relation from Sydney with me and they were impressed.*

---

*I believe Wicked opened my eyes to the amazing talent Cairns has to offer.*

---

*I took a visitor from the UK, and she loved it! We've seen the show in London, and it was just as great.*

---

*It made me appreciate the talent we have here in Cairns. The singers were wonderful.*

---

*It was a great show, but I expected nothing less*

---

*Local talent*

---

*Loved the performance.*

---

*Our local talent was incredible.*

---

*Showcases the broad and rich talent obviously available in Cairns. Having seen many shows in London, New York and Paris, Cairns*

---

*The costuming was excellent. As was the direction and staging. The weak point of the production was the singing, especially amongst the men. Overall the acting was good. The show just left me feeling unexcited. I would not spend money for this experience again.*

---

*The shows put on by our Coral society equal any I have seen in Brisbane and in London also*

---

*There is no need to travel to other Australian Capitals to see and enjoy presentations.*

---

*They did a good job with poor material*

---

*This is a community production produced to a high level*

---

*Top night thanks*

---

*Totally enjoyed experience*

---

*Very good.*

---

*We will get more people wanting to support the locals*

---

*Well done Cairns Choral Society for presenting such an amazing production. You make me proud. And thank you Bob manning & the CRC for delivering our community such a fantastic arts centre*

---

*Wicked was a great choice as the inaugural production for CPAC.*

---

*Wonderful to be able to see amazing theatre productions locally without having to travel down south.*

---

*Wonderful to watch all local production that are levelled with big city art productions. Once again well done team!*

---

**About the Venue**

---

*Cairns has long needed such a theatre. Now we have one and I'm delighted with it.*

---

*CPAC's visible and concealed design features are impressive*

---

*Great Indigenous artwork, inside and out.*

---

*Great venue for attracting artists and performers of every kind to our city.*

---

*High standard of venue & facilities. Fantastic.*

---

*I feel proud of my town's performing culture.*

---

*I just hope our reputation as an award winning venue for entertainment is recognised by the top performers*

---

*I look forward to many more visits to the venue*

---

---

*I think having a new, more vibrant venue will attract more artists*

---

*Locals appreciate a venue which is adequate.*

---

*Looking forward to my next visit there*

---

*Made me proud to be a Cairns resident*

---

*New theatre is lovely, but it doesn't cater for the future needs of Cairns, not spacious enough!*

---

*Provides a place of glamour*

---

*So proud of this new improved venue*

---

*The complex is a great asset to our region*

---

*This is a venue for Cairns to be truly proud of.*

---

*This venue is a great plus for Cairns and surroundings because it gives us more chances to see excellent plays and musicals.*

---

*Show was average, performance was mediocre and again the chairs were too uncomfortable*

---

## **RADF Program (2021) – Grant recipients**

---

*A reminder about how many great creative and talented people there are in Cairns!*

---

*Amazing support from the industry and arts community in pursuing in the development of this project.*

---

*The results of the photography works project also added the importance of recording our cultural practices for our next generation to learn from.*

---

*Yes. the beautiful, surprising and very moving relationship with the trees.*

---

*There was an initial delay with the venue undergoing renovations, which meant that I had to apply for an extension. Then there were the COVID-19 restrictions, which occurred right at the time of instigating my community engagement element of the project. COVID also impacted the way I could engage with the public (no workshops or room brochures).*

---

## **RADF Program (2021) – Grant recipients**

---

*A movement of increased health, passion and engagement for and from the environment as experienced by the artist and the audience. A new genre of music in collaboration with the trees. A new language in art.*

---

*There was a wide range of audience members who expressed desire to continue seeing youth productions, that champion young creatives in the region.*

---

*Yes definitely.*

---

# APPENDIX L: SUGGESTIONS FOR INFORMATION DELIVERY AND ADVERTISING

## Cairns Festival (2018) – Audience

<b>No suggestions</b>
<i>I think it was pretty well advertised</i>
<i>Thought you did a good job!</i>
<i>Not very well advertised</i>
<i>Not everyone is social media user!</i>
<b>Print media</b>
<i>Have Festival brochures available at lots of outlets like Newsagents or Newspapers including the Atherton Tablelands.</i>
<i>More consistent newspaper advertising, sometimes events seem to disappear from the paper</i>
<i>Posters of events, perhaps in shopping centres, along with hand out brochures</i>
<i>The pictures on the advertising look quite generic. I think it would be better show more pictures of past events to give people an idea of what the event is like. Advertising directly to school would be a good idea.</i>
<i>Maybe get the word out earlier away from Cairns</i>
<i>Sometimes more advertising is needed</i>

## Covid Live Recovery (2020) – Audience

<b>No suggestions</b>
<i>No, its fine (n=9)</i>
<b>Frequency</b>
<i>Earlier notice of event and then a reminder please. More consistent newspaper advertising, sometimes events seem to disappear from the paper</i>
<i>If one is on an email list fine... but perhaps more posters around - In shops and notice boards to get new people involved.</i>
<i>Regular updates</i>
<i>Same information on social media as on the website</i>
<i>Do better surveys</i>

## Understory Film Festival (2020) – Audience

<b>Print media</b>
<i>More advertising and more targeting of different age groups. Potentially advertise within schools more and youth. Pulling together large groups of young people is easier than you think!</i>
<i>Maybe email schools of upcoming dates as our schools Film and TV teacher, does not do social media, so was unaware of dates.</i>
<i>I did meet people who did not know about it. Maybe letter drops could help?</i>
<i>Post the venue timetable more clearly in advance</i>
<i>Use TV n radio</i>
<i>Will it be published in the Cairns Post on Monday of the winners?</i>
<b>No suggestions</b>
<i>Communication was great</i>
<i>Keep on going - getting the information to the public so the festival can grow. It was so good to see so much local content. And the calibre of entry was amazing</i>

# Cairns Children’s Festival (2021) – Audience

<b>Event Detail Reminders</b>
<i>I don’t use social media, so email alerts to upcoming events would be awesome.</i>
<i>Provide clear details on social media. I had to search out different venue sites to find exactly what was on and when. But this is not really a problem.</i>
<i>Reminders about when I had booked.</i>
<i>Repetitive SMS exposure.</i>
<b>Increased advertising</b>
<i>Maybe advertise more. I didn’t know it was on until my mum called and told me.</i>
<i>I didn’t realise that the regurgitator event was part of the bigger festival and was surprised to see this upon arrival. Perhaps more communication regarding this when advertising for individual shows as part of the event would be more helpful.</i>
<b>Ticketing</b>
<i>The performance for Pogogo Show at the Tanks was great but friends of ours didn’t get to come in with us as they capped the numbers. Perhaps making it a ticketed event next time? We didn’t realise they would cap the numbers and that we wouldn’t be able to attend with our friends which was very disappointing for our 7 year old. We all thoroughly enjoyed the show though!!</i>
<b>Other</b>
<i>A map with features and show times so I can prepare ahead</i>
<i>No, its fine (n=2)</i>

## APPENDIX M: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Beyond the Waves (2020) – Producers

---

*I learnt so much, and had the opportunity to be involved in a week long creative development which was one of the most special, and useful weeks I have experienced in my 30 year long career. [Artist]*

---

*Learning our body moves that commer our feeling the puppet. Production crew were right on point because we need approve ourself professional. I so grateful opportunity be part of DPS, CQU music students...etc more [Participant; Artist; Volunteer]*

---

*The creative professional collaboration returning to theatre after many years working in film - writing/directing working in collaboration with council and the dead puppets society and learning how to operate puppets/create live performance with puppets and working with talented team and working with CQU musical students working with my incredible, dedicated ARC performers opportunity to potentially tour the show professional development as a director - big learning curve - wonderful opportunity [Facilitator; Artist]*

---

*The high calibre of artistic input both local and state wide and the professionalism [Facilitator]*

---

*Working with Karen Jackson, velvet, props, the team and working with puppets [Participant; Artist]*

---

*Working with Karen Jackson, working with velvet, working with puppets and props and working with the team [Participant; Artist x 2]*

---

### Cairns Childrens Festival (2021) – Producers

---

*Actually the expertise of the ARC workers who understand their participants so well that they could support them to bring a creative development into a full blown outstanding production. And that we do need to be seen as expert in our field and be in the consultation room when props are being designed for people with disability to use. To allow us the lead voice in giving feedback when something won't work.*

---

### RADF Program (2021) – Grant recipients

---

*Creative problem solving towards the best outcome pushed my practice and me beyond my comfort zone.*

---

*Great challenge and personal artistic growth.*

---

*I developed a great team - invaluable. My team were happy in the process - priceless.*

---

*My personal experience was wonderful - other than the general stresses of managing a 3-month program for students, I was greatly enriched by the experience and inspired by the student's creativity.*

---

*New skills in online production due to variance required to present online.*

---

*Personally and culturally, it provided us the opportunity to pass on knowledge to the next generation about the subject matter that we were capturing.*

---

### RADF Program (2021) – Grant recipients

---

*Great learning process for performance skills in public space and responding to unexpected circumstances.*

---

*Positive experience entering the public eye.*

---

### Tank 4 Exhibition (2021) – Producers

---

*Community engagement is not a regular part of my art practice. Having access to the general public is a valuable service however it is challenging to predict the quantity and quality of those engagements. Although unpredictable I found the outcomes beneficial.*

---

*Exposure to see the wider community.*

---

*This was my first solo exhibition so I was proud of what I achieved with the assistance of The Tanks Team.*

---

## Court House Gallery (2023) - Producers

<i>An opportunity to highlight Urban sketching at two wonderful venues (Scottsdale Artists' School and the Court House Gallery). A chance for the public to see Urban Sketchers and Urban sketching.</i>	Cairns Sketchfest 2022 Exhibition
<i>Frustration. Difficulty with understanding a project manager with English as a second language. Funding reporting program with error faults for a year. Not repaired after many reports to project officer.</i>	Cairns Sketchfest 2022 Exhibition
<i>Gained more confidence, can never guess who will buy your work.</i>	Cairns Sketchfest 2022 Exhibition
<i>I sold 3 pictures of 4 exhibited.</i>	Cairns Sketchfest 2022 Exhibition
<i>Opportunity to see and experience art from other urban sketchers chapters.</i>	Cairns Sketchfest 2022 Exhibition
<i>Our child is 4, so professional development is not really on her list of priorities although she was super stoked to be involved and it very much encouraged her to continue marking art.</i>	Children's Festival
<i>It's a walking the walk opportunity which is vital part of professional development.</i>	I am who I was when I was ten Exhibition
<i>My child likes pottery.</i>	Insects Rule
<i>The opportunity to bring 34 artists to exhibit as part of the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair who otherwise would not be able to participate.</i>	Past, Present, Future Exhibition
<i>Ideas for connecting to wider community.</i>	Tell Me a Story Exhibition
<i>Recognition on my PDP for engaging with the community.</i>	Woven Stories Exhibition

# Addendum 3 - Internal and External Factors and Trends

STRATEGY FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS 2022 REPORT CARD

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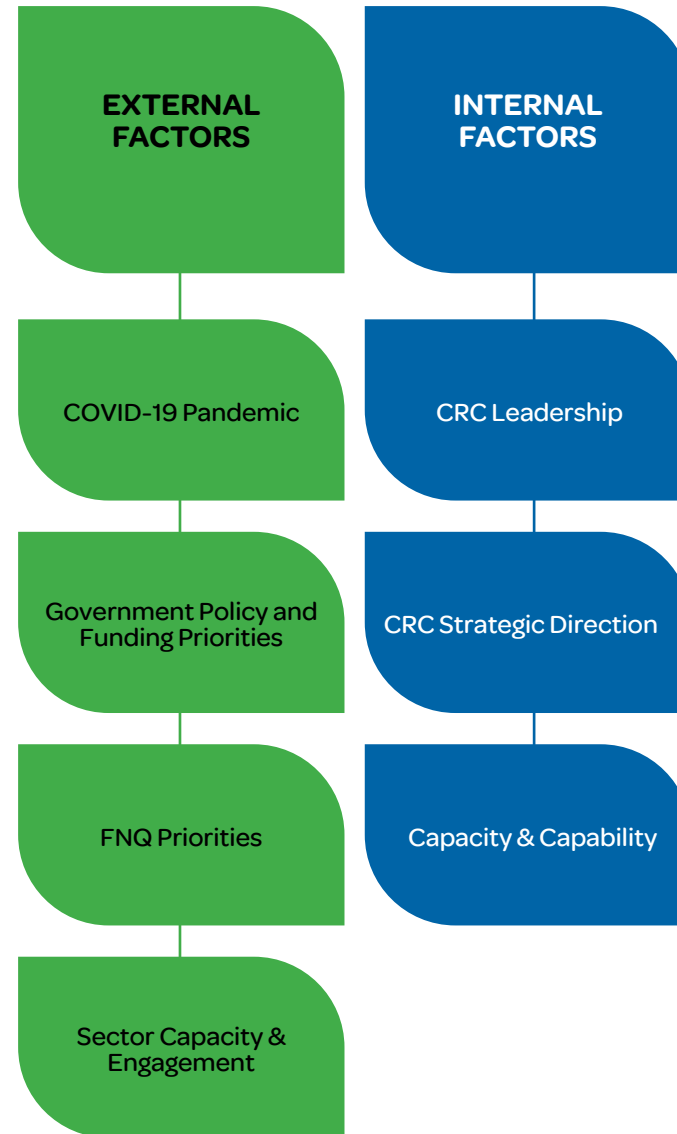
# Internal and External Factors and Trends

Addendum 3 summarises some of the dynamics influencing the implementation and delivery of the strategy, and playing a pivotal role in shaping its outcomes and determining its success.

Without a doubt, the COVID-19 Pandemic was one of the primary challenges. The global arts and recreation services sector faced unprecedented obstacles between 2019 and 2021.

Across Australia and here in Cairns, the cancellation of festivals, cultural events, live performances and creative projects had a devastating effect on the sector. This highlights the importance of imbedding economic and sustainability factors in future planning priorities.

This major disruption to 'business as usual' has triggered a tangible shift in all sectors of the arts and cultural field over the past few years. The unified voice of the cultural and creative sector, together with Parliamentary Enquiries, has played a crucial role in implementing new public policies and a better understanding of the value of arts and culture. <sup>\*(2)</sup>





5.1 External Factor	Trend
<p><b>COVID-19 Pandemic</b></p> <p>“The COVID-19 Pandemic has disproportionately impacted industries that are predicated on the free movement and gathering of people, including cultural and creative industries. This has prompted both significant disruption and necessitated the beginning of significant reform” <sup>*(3)</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nationally, arts and culture organisations and businesses accessed more than \$4 billion of COVID-19 support in the last four months of the 2019–20 financial year. Of this amount, 98.8% came from the Federal Government; however, only half the States and Territories were able to report on their Covid-specific cultural spending. <sup>*(4)</sup></li> <li>Data generated by Regional Arts Australia showed the arts and cultural sector in the Cairns region received a significant portion of the arts recovery funding released by the Federal and State governments. <sup>*(5)</sup> In addition, the sector was agile in being able to realign production and product offering quickly and effectively to online digital delivery methods, while taking advantage of temporary COVID-19 funding initiatives. <sup>*(6)</sup></li> <li>Despite the ongoing challenges associated with COVID-19, over the course of 2021 the cultural and creative sector in Cairns remained buoyant and continued a cycle of growth. This growth benefitted from members of the Cairns community who turned to arts and creativity during the pandemic to maintain their wellbeing and community connections. <sup>*(7)</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Federal and State Government Policy and Funding Priorities</b></p> <p>“Australia’s Federal, State and Territory and local governments all invest in arts and culture to provide opportunities for people to access, experience and keep creating Australia’s heritage and culture” <sup>*(8)</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsibility for cultural expenditure is closely balanced between Federal (39.0 percent, down from 45.7 percent a decade ago), State and Territory (34.8 percent, up from 31.9 percent) and local government (26.2 percent, up from 22.4 percent). This expenditure is split fairly evenly between three overarching categories: Film, Radio and Television (32.5 percent, a new low); Museums, Art Museums, Archives, Libraries and Cultural Heritage (37.7 percent) and Arts (29.7 percent, a new high). <sup>*(9)</sup></li> <li>The Federal Government’s National Cultural Policy, <i>Revive: A place for every story, a story for every place</i>, encapsulates a five-year plan to revive the arts in Australia. Key objectives include: Recognising and respecting the crucial place of First Nations stories; Strong Cultural Infrastructure; Arts and Disability; Regional Arts funding; and Supporting education programs that draw from cultural and creative sector expertise. <sup>*(10)</sup></li> <li>Arts Queensland’s <i>Creative Together 2020-2030: A 10-year Roadmap for Arts, Culture and Creativity</i> is delivering its second action plan Grow 2022-2026. Key objectives include: Elevating First Nations arts and cultural products and experiences; Increased activation of high quality and diverse arts experiences that grow place-based cultural tourism; and Embrace Brisbane 2032 across Queensland. Grow 2022-2026 is underpinned by an investment of \$50 million over four years. <sup>*(11)</sup></li> </ul>

5.1 External Factor	Trend
<p><b>FNQ Regional Priorities</b></p> <p>“The regional vision for Far North Queensland is for a stronger, more liveable and sustainable community” <sup>*(12)</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Queensland Government’s Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031 targets strategies for a stronger, more liveable and sustainable community. It supports cultural development and the arts through the planning and provision of infrastructure and spaces for cultural events, entertainment, sport, and conventions to foster creative art, recreation and leisure industries that will stimulate wealth and job creation. <sup>*(13)</sup></li> <li>• Regional Development Australia (RDA) Tropical North’s strategic focus aims to turn the region into the most productive and most liveable region in Australia’s north. Economic development strategies identify key priority development areas and infrastructure projects canvassing land-use perspectives, emerging growth industries and considerations for population growth and liveability. <sup>*(14)</sup></li> <li>• Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) Destination Tourism Plan positions events as a vital part of the tourism offering in Tropical North Queensland. <sup>*(15)</sup> The Cairns &amp; Great Barrier Reef Event Strategy 2025 vision sees TNQ internationally recognised as a unique, natural and vibrant major events destination. <sup>*(16)</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Sector Capacity and Engagement</b></p> <p>“Engagement with stakeholders suggested that the breadth and significance of arts, cultural and creative activity is in a sustained period of growth” <sup>*(17)</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant investments in infrastructure and organisations by all three tiers of government have seen growth in the capacity and reach of local Indigenous visual and performing artists, with increased access to tourism and export markets providing economic and social benefits to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Cairns and the Far North Queensland region. <sup>*(18)</sup></li> <li>• In 2021/22, the Arts and Culture industry in Cairns was estimated to have generated \$79m in direct, plus an additional \$46m in indirect impacts for a total contribution of \$125m 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. Indigenous cultural experience, as well as Screen Queensland’s new studio complex in Cairns, together with the city’s world-class cultural facilities are identified as major opportunities for the future. <sup>*(19)</sup></li> <li>• Volunteer work and non-monetary contributions are crucial in the sector, particularly for small-to-medium arts organizations. Many recreational arts entities depend solely on volunteers for their day-to-day operations, filling in resource gaps and supporting the organization’s mission. The economic impact of volunteers’ contributions is substantial and should be considered in future economic analyses for a more comprehensive perspective. <sup>*(20)</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <p>“There is a palpable sense that Cairns really believes in the value of aspiring to be the arts and cultural capital of Northern Australia and probably already is, given the extraordinary levels of investment that underpin this branding” <sup>*(21)</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council’s strong strategic and operational framework allows it to effectively manage its cultural resources and services. By actively responding to policy and plan development, the Council ensures that its initiatives are aligned with broader sector goals.</li> <li>• Stakeholders acknowledge the prominent level of cultural planning that has led to the successful provision of arts and cultural infrastructure and beautifully landscaped parts of Cairns. <sup>*(22)</sup></li> <li>• Council’s support for the arts, cultural and creative industries underscore its commitment to fostering a holistic and balanced approach to FNQ’s development, one that prioritises the well-being of its residents, the growth of its economy, and the preservation of its unique natural environment.</li> </ul>

5.1 External Factor	Trend
<p><b>Strategic Direction</b></p> <p>“We need to look to the future and plan for the next phase of growth. Good design and planning will help us protect and embrace many of the things that make Cairns special: our unique environment, economic, social and cultural values” <sup>*(23)</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council’s Corporate Plan 2021-2026 strives for better and equitable social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes for the Cairns community. Emphasising Community and Culture, the Plan aims to foster a vibrant and healthy community with strategies that promote Cairns as the arts and cultural capital of Northern Australia, improve sustainability for community groups and increase visitation and activation of Council venues. <sup>*(24)</sup></li> <li>• The Towards 2050 growth strategy is a long-range, community-driven project to establish a clear vision and guiding principles for the future growth and development of the Cairns local government area. The strategy shifts focus from the triple bottom line to consider growth factors such as climate change, risk management, lifestyle, heritage preservation, and the city’s economic competitiveness. <sup>*(25)</sup></li> <li>• Council’s Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026 aligns with Council’s Corporate Plan and identifies the Arts and Culture sector as an important contributor to the Cairns economy with strengths and opportunities in Indigenous arts and culture, as well as in film and the performing arts. Major and economic events are also a key focus of the strategy, where Council aims to work with key stakeholders towards a diverse portfolio of events that will elevate the profile and economic sustainability of the Cairns and Great Barrier Reef region. <sup>*(26)</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Capacity &amp; Capability</b></p> <p>“Stakeholders in the field recognise the Cairns Regional Council as a critical enabler and partner in delivering cultural and artistic expression to its constituents” <sup>*(27)</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The alignment, collaboration and adaptability of Creative Life teams, and their diverse range of skills which encompass technical, production and curatorial expertise, industry acumen and leadership, has shaped and influenced the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022.</li> <li>• An inclusive organisational culture that has invested in continuous improvement, effective front-line services and creative excellence and innovation, has attracted strong cultural leaders to the region and increased ambitions and capabilities.</li> <li>• The significant rise in the level of engagement in Council’s diverse arts and cultural offerings indicates an inclusive, participatory and collaborative approach in the planning process, resulting in a more engaged community.</li> </ul>

# STATE OF THE ARTS IN CAIRNS REPORT FINAL 2023 (SoARTS)



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and First Peoples of the lands on which the State of the Arts in Cairns research took place. Cairns Regional Council also acknowledges all First Peoples within the region, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. We recognize and respect your languages and the unique beliefs and pride within your customs and cultures that define your continuing relationships and responsibilities to Land and Sea. We extend this respect to Elders both past, present and emerging.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Chief Investigators:** Russell Milledge and Lisa Law (James Cook University) in association with Northsite Contemporary Arts

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**Graphic Design:** Cairns Regional Council

**Student Design Team:** Christine Houston, Emily Robinson, Samantha MacQueen

**Student Urban Planners for public art trails:** Patrick Hobson, Magnus Kuttainen, Mercedes McGhee, Cassie Tregoe, Henry Wells

**Advisory Panel (2019/20):** Mayor Amy Eden from March 2024 (CRC), Mayor Bob Manning until February 2024 (Cairns Regional Council [CRC]), Stephen Foster (CRC), Nick Masasso (CRC), Destry Puia (CRC), Henrietta Marrie (Traditional Owner, Central Queensland University), Jeanette Singleton (Traditional Owner), Patricia O'Neill (Cairns Chamber of Commerce), Jodie Duignan-George (Central Queensland University), David Craig (James Cook University), Michael Healy MP, Warren Entsch MP, Curtis Pitt MP, Kim Houghton (Regional Australia Institute), Ros Abercrombie (Regional Arts Australia), Tania Hall (Arts Queensland), Mark Olsen (Tourism Tropical North Queensland), Amber Grossman (Overall Arts) and Sonja Johnson (Regional Development Australia Tropical North Inc.)



# FOREWORD

## MESSAGE FROM CAIRNS MAYOR AMY EDEN

This report reaffirms that the creation, celebration and sharing of arts and culture is important to social cohesion, community connectivity, our economy and inspires people to visit, revisit and settle in this region.

Understanding the region's cultural make-up goes a long way to inform the health and wellbeing of the industry.

Culture, arts and the creative experience is an important driver for tourism.

While arts and culture are important for tourism, they also add a richness and depth to our liveability, with emerging and established artists choosing to call Cairns home.

The growing creative landscape has supported and diversified the visitor offer over the last decade.

First Nation led programs and activations are strengthening and will be further enhanced with the opening of the Mulgrave Gallery mid-2024.

The stories of our past are an important learning point to inform how we go forward, and it is wonderful to see the celebration of First Nation's continuing to play a role in the creative and cultural life of the region.

Mulgrave Gallery opening will be a significant milestone in moving us closer to a world class gallery precinct in the heart of our city.

There is still much work to be done and we recognise the need to take our stakeholders on the journey with us.

The opening of Screen Queensland Studios in Cairns offers a new hub for the screen sector and sends a message that the creative industries are thriving in this region.

We are becoming much more aware of the need to take an inclusive approach in all that we do.

The SoArts report is a reminder that working in partnership, collaboration and seeking co-designed approach to solving shared challenges and opportunities with strengthen organisations and the industry over the longer term.

I want to thank the authors and researchers involved in the production of this report.

Due to your hard work, we have clear evidence that Cairns region is becoming a significant destination of choice to live, visit, study and do business.

For the past five years this annual report has been an important reminder that there is much to celebrate with that constant reminder that we cannot rest on our laurels.

There is more work to be done.

Thank you to everyone committed to developing the creative and cultural life of the region.

The difference makers sit within the community who seek out new connections, the artists who share their view of the world through a creative lens, the organisations that continue to raise the bar and present quality creative programs, exhibitions, performances and so much more.

You all make such a difference, and we look forward to continuing to work across the creative ecology and beyond as we enter the next phase of our cultural planning cycle.

We want to continue to work with you in strengthening our position as a destination for culture where transformational and creative experiences are part of our everyday lives.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This final State of the Arts in Cairns (SoARTS) 2023 report is the culmination of the independent research embedded in Cairns Regional Council's (CRC's) five-year Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022.<sup>1</sup> The Strategy provides Council with a framework to "prioritise, co-ordinate and manage the city's resources, and deliver ongoing programming and provision of grants and infrastructure that will stimulate and sustain the cultural and creative vitality of the region". The SoARTS reports sit alongside the Strategy and aim to understand and enhance the cultural landscape of the Cairns region. The reports examine stakeholder perspectives on the cultural ecosystem, including artists and creatives, their institutions, networks, as well as their views on the infrastructural support provided by Council. Reports also include case studies and insights into tourism in our UNESCO World Heritage-listed reef and rainforest region.

Key findings in this report highlight the diversity and resilience of the ecosystem, driven by the passion and efforts of Council plus the region's artists, cultural organizations, and community networks. Since the inception of the Strategy, and through the difficult years of COVID-19, the landscape of Cairns has transformed. The region has award-winning cultural amenities such as the Munro Martin Parklands, and the Court House Gallery, which has conserved an important building for the city. The Gallery Precinct remains an exciting possibility, the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) continues to grow, and Bulmba-ja has brought an important Indigenous presence to the arts and culture offering. The well-established Tanks Arts Centre continues to be a hub for community and the music scene, and the new 1.5-hectare film studio will be a valuable part of the Queensland film industry. All these investments make a profound mark on the cultural vitality of the city, making the Cairns Region highly liveable.

Alongside this vibrancy, the research also identifies gaps in funding, accessibility, and infrastructure that can hinder the sector's full potential. The sector remains reliant on government

funding, and, for example, urgently requires safe storage for sensitive historical Indigenous artifacts and has regrettably lost university pathways to the creative arts. Despite Cairns being an important domestic and international tourist destination, the reports have found few tourists know much about engaging with the sector (beyond CIAF which is one of the few sector initiatives promoted by Tourism Tropical North Queensland). The sector still needs a cultural hub or "village green" to facilitate innovative collaboration and resource-sharing, and there is a voiced desire for a cross-disciplinary leadership group for sector cohesion, transparency and growth.

To address these challenges and capitalise on opportunities, the SoARTS report presents a summary of some of these positive developments/opportunities as well as suggestions to elevate Cairns' cultural profile and foster long-term sustainability. Cairns is a distinctive tropical place with unique cultural influences, networks and creative practices. The sector finds creativity and resilience in the region's isolation and remoteness and this should be embraced.

The 'Key Findings' section below highlights the main points and issues highlighted throughout the report, including stakeholder insights, tourism data, information about the Cairns Art and Culture Map and a case study for how we might 'place brand' Cairns with an arts and culture focus.

In conclusion, the SoARTS report represents a collaborative effort to evaluate the impact of the Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022. By embracing the recommendations outlined herein, the Cairns Regional Council can continue to foster a dynamic, inclusive, and resilient arts ecosystem that enriches the lives of residents and contributes to the region's prosperity and identity.



# KEY FINDINGS

## INFRASTRUCTURE, RESOURCES AND SKILLS

- Most stakeholders utilise Cairns Regional Council's cultural and arts infrastructure
- There is an urgent need for a leadership group with cross-disciplinary representation for sector cohesion, transparency and growth of the sector
- The Tanks Arts Centre is essential for showcasing student, emerging, alternative, and community-based arts activity
- Stakeholders expect the 'Gallery Precinct' to incorporate Cairns Art Gallery, Mulgrave Gallery, and the Court House Gallery, along with a new purpose-built contemporary gallery, but they are uncertain about completion timelines, purpose, and duplication (an interim plan to co-ordinate activities would be beneficial)
- A policy framework for Indigenous representation at a governance level would help meet sector expectations for Cairns Art Gallery
- There is a critical need for storage, production and preparation spaces, including safe storage for sensitive historical Indigenous artifacts and climate-sensitive rehearsal and studio space
- There is an expressed desire to co-locate cultural, arts and creative industries in a precinct in the town centre
- The Botanic Gardens, Centenary Lakes and Greenslopes Street form a zone with a combined botanical and creative focus, with potential for extended festival activity or temporary public art programming
- There are growing levels of local community participation and critical engagement with the national and regional sectors
- Locally operating universities have recently disestablished pathways in the creative arts, shifting the responsibility of sector education to the regional industry



## CULTURE, HERITAGE AND PLACE

- Cairns has several significant and long-standing associations and clubs catering to art lovers, recreational artists, and hobbyist practitioners
- Authentic Indigenous creative activity is of global significance and offers pathways to employment and self-determination
- The increasing membership and use of facilities recorded by these groups represent the value of the volunteer-managed arts and cultural infrastructure
- The success of funded small and medium arts organisations leads the way for the region's networking, collaboration, and touring efforts, but hurdles must be overcome to inject these into national and international circuits.

## A ROBUST CULTURAL ECONOMY

- Cairns is a uniquely positioned tropical hub with potential to showcase the unique cultural influences, networks, and practices that abound in the region
- The Cairns region's culture and arts sector shows resilience and commitment to place, with isolation and remoteness as strength and weakness
- The Cairns region has great potential to contribute to Queensland's film industry, with the new 1.5 hectare studio raising awareness of filmmaking and extending to many areas of the sector
- Support for remote and regional arts practice through RASN offers potential, and the activities to support regional and remote groups and practitioners are essential
- The Cairns Regional Council has assisted sector growth by developing critical infrastructure and a strategic focus for its role and delivery within the sector, and stakeholders strongly advocate for continued investment in a cultural strategy and planning tool derived from an inclusive sector consultation and co-design process
- Although several stakeholders do not see Cairns as a city for the arts, they suggest investment in cultural and artistic experiences develops public value, well-being, and social inclusion as well as economic benefit

## MAPPING CREATIVITY

- The Cairns Arts and Culture Map has continued to grow, with 39 new contributors and a total of 1,294 listings at the end of 2022. Page views steadily increased, reaching more than 45K in 2022.
- Carnival on Collins and Starry Night Cinema are consistently popular pages. The most consistently popular category is Public Art, although Festivals consistently appear in the top four.
- The Map continues to be most popular with those in the 25-34 age group.

## TOURISM

- Central Queensland University conducted a survey of visitors departing Cairns from the domestic terminal of the Cairns International Airport between July and December 2022.
- The results show that over a third of domestic and two-thirds of international respondents consider the availability of cultural opportunities as an important factor in their selection of holiday destinations. However, arts and cultural motivations, such as 'experience Aboriginal culture' and 'visiting arts and cultural spaces', were not ranked as significant motivations for visiting Cairns.
- The research indicates a lack of awareness, or a perceived lack of availability, around the types of arts and cultural activities in the Cairns region. Tourists would like to see more Aboriginal cultural experiences as well as outdoor activities and performances.

## CASE STUDY

The case study for this SoARTS report is a dialogue with James Cook University Master of Philosophy student researcher Yee Mun Loong. Yee Mun is researching how the image of Cairns as a 'reef and rainforest' tourist destination misses key aspects of the city's arts and culture offerings. He shares insights to his place brand co-creation study conducted with young artists in Cairns, emphasising the importance of bottom-up processes to leverage real people and experiences in place branding.



# SECTOR INSIGHTS

The SoARTS 2023 research follows a series of State of the Arts in Cairns (SoARTS) reports providing sector insights in 2019, 2020 and 2021.<sup>1</sup> The interview group included 28 stakeholders from across the sector - representatives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous visual arts, festivals, dance, arts services, writing, recreational arts, contemporary arts, galleries, museums, art fairs, music, inclusive arts, youth arts, arts education, State government, architecture, film, circus and theatre. It should be noted that an additional 12 culture, arts and creative industry leaders were identified from the field. However, these significant contributors were either unavailable or beyond the research timeframe.

Indigenous arts<sup>ii</sup>

festivals<sup>i</sup>

Dance<sup>i</sup>

Indigenous and non-Indigenous arts services<sup>iiii</sup>

Writing<sup>ii</sup>

Recreational arts<sup>ii</sup>

Contemporary arts<sup>i</sup>

Gallery<sup>i</sup>

Museum<sup>i</sup>

Art fair<sup>i</sup>

Music<sup>i</sup>

Inclusive arts<sup>i</sup>

Youth arts<sup>i</sup>

Arts Education<sup>iii</sup>

State Government<sup>i</sup>

Architecture<sup>i</sup>

Film<sup>ii</sup>

Circus<sup>i</sup>

Theatre<sup>i</sup>

A series of 18 questions were uniformly asked to elicit the stakeholder's current state as an overall impression of the sector. The interview questions were divided into a series of three interest areas:

- **Infrastructure, resources, and skills**
- **Culture, heritage, and place**
- **A robust cultural economy**

For the research and to help elucidate the overall cultural and arts services sector more effectively, we use three generalist categories: cultural activity, arts organisations, and creative enterprises and industries.

Broadly, it is understood that cultural activities are those engaged in defining a place and its people. Therefore, cultural services and enterprises include heritage practices, regional museums, historical societies, and groups identifying through ethnicity or location-based values.

Arts organisations and enterprises represent cultural activity within the visual, performing, crafts, music, cinema, and literary arts associated with developing and presenting imaginative, aesthetic, or intellectual content. These entities might be government departments, government-funded, non-profit, independent, or community-based entities.

Creative enterprises and industries are operators and producers who trade on intellectual property or service cultural and arts activity, including architects, publishers, graphic designers, filmmakers, galleries, and independent micro businesses. We acknowledge a variety of cross-overs between the types of activity within the field.

The participating stakeholder group for this research consists of arts and creative industry leaders from many disciplines; their insights, understanding, and specialisations provide an invaluable account of community participation and engagement in the sector. Through their operational and enterprise structures, they represent sub-sectors as communities of practice. Consequently, the research does not include responses representing individual artists directly.

The participants have responded to future-focused questions, such as their ideal vision for culture and arts in the Cairns region and how they fit into the sector's existing structures, disciplines, and networks. The interview responses show that the culture and arts activity field is diverse and thriving, with established practices operating in determined priority and protocol settings. Besides the apparent distinctions based along the lines of creative disciplines, some of the more pronounced edges in the Cairns region include:

- the many long-serving and well-established voluntary administered recreational arts, museum and heritage groups and associations,
- the numerous nationally recognised non-profit small to medium arts organisations,
- the growing impact and success of Indigenous visual and performing arts organisations and producers,
- the successful Cairns-based creative industry businesses,
- the strong presence of Local and State government sector representation and infrastructure,
- in decline, locally provided face-to-face university-based creative arts education.

These tiers represent the critical edges in the Cairns region's pathways and ecology of culture and arts activity. Every area of culture and arts has both positive and negative trends. The field enjoys growing levels of local community participation and critical engagement with the national and broader regional sectors. However, locally operating universities that have recently disestablished Creative Arts and Urban Planning degrees have abandoned many disciplines. The non-profit small to medium arts organisations have grown to new levels of success and exposure with renewed public investment. Still, **insufficient** fit-for-purpose spaces as well as barriers to infrastructure access continue to bottleneck the full potential of production and expression. The recreational arts groups provide a social and creative space for a growing number of hobbyists. However, intergenerational succession is becoming difficult because of the changing nature of volunteerism. While the field grows, and its impact and benefit to society are deeply appreciated and acknowledged, challenges to adequately resource, house, showcase and move forward with culture and arts activity in the Cairns region remain critical. The area has few deep pockets, and the provision for resourcing culture and arts falls mainly to the three tiers of Government. Stakeholders in the field recognise the Cairns Regional Council as a critical enabler and partner in delivering cultural and artistic expression to its constituents.

## INFRASTRUCTURE, RESOURCES AND SKILLS

The sector's specialised physical infrastructure requirements include storage, preparation, production/office, and presentation spaces. Participant stakeholders can be service-, production-, or presentation-oriented - 15% are accommodated in Cairns Regional Council buildings, and 11% access exclusive purpose-built infrastructure on council easements - 15% are accommodated in the Queensland State Government's Bulmba-ja Arts Centre - 11% access resources associated with educational institutions. The remaining 48% are scattered in office rentals or private facilities across the city and region. There is an expressed desire to co-locate cultural, arts and creative industries within a precinct in the town, while individual autonomy is also considered essential. Participants suggest the "village green" approach facilitates innovative collaboration, networking, and resource-sharing, leading to a more robust and sustainable future. However, State and local governments provide significant cultural and arts infrastructure within a 4km radius of Cairns CBD, suggesting a solid sector presence within this zone.

Each discipline area has unique infrastructure requirements. Some common areas of critical need include storage, production, and preparation spaces. The requirements range from safe storage of sensitive historical Indigenous artefacts to accessible climate-aware and conducive rehearsal and studio spaces to develop new work.



Cairns Regional Council's cultural and arts infrastructure continues to be accessed and utilised by most stakeholders. The Tanks Arts Centre fulfils the significant requirement of showcasing student, emerging, alternative, and community-based engagements. Long-term partnerships with special interest groups who use Tanks 3 and 4 at the Tanks Arts Centre have contributed significantly to the quality of experience and creative expression for critical areas of community, inclusivity, youth, and emerging arts. The annual *Energy Exhibition* in Tank 4 combines visual artworks from the region's high schools. It is augmented by several follow-on opportunities for young people, such as those offered through the council's Flame program. Extending services through participatory programs for young people creates tactile touch points for emerging practitioners. Additional sector partnerships along the lines of the Flame program will be an essential catalyst and pathway for young people entering the arts, cultural and creative industries. Tank 3 has hosted Tropical Art's annual *Shakespeare at the Tanks*,<sup>2</sup> an inclusive theatre program with a positive impact on disabled and diverse artists. The Cairns Regional Council has facilitated access to Tank 5 (the only climate-controlled space available for rehearsals across the Collins Avenue venue), for the artists from ARC Disability Services Inc.<sup>3</sup> However, as a music venue by night, Tank 5 is perceived to operate under a different value proposition, catering to musical acts, primarily bands and popular music styles, with ticket sales driving a need for revenue and cost recovery. Stakeholders representing the music industry see Cairns Regional Council as having the most capacity for leadership in developing a thriving music ecosystem. However, it is suggested that it should not be a one-solution model. Engagement with QMusic<sup>4</sup> extends potential and industry awareness within a broader context. Cairns Regional Council needs to continue developing sector relationships that assist local musicians and producers to have a seat at the table and have their voices heard. The Tanks Arts Centre brings art forms together in one zone within a botanical precinct. Consequently, it is highly valued by the sector and exemplifies the symbolic placemaking character of the wet tropics geographic region.<sup>5</sup>

The Creative Life division of Cairns Regional Council<sup>6</sup> manages the Tank 4 Gallery, Court House Gallery, and Mulgrave Gallery, all owned and operated by the council with senior positions of director, curator and Indigenous curator, program co-ordinators and technical staff. However, there is no board or sector reference group in place. The emphasis for these gallery spaces is community access and inclusive representation. Exhibitors can be required to cover the costs of their exhibitions and the costs of gallery staff for installation and de-install. The perception of a cost recovery model when considering the Court House Gallery for staging exhibitions is reported by stakeholders as prohibitive. However, the Creative Life division provides vibrant marketing and promotion, and clients can apply for an In-kind Assistance Grant to cover some of the exhibition overheads incurred by the Council. The Court House Gallery is used as a hub during

the Cairns Festival, and the footprint and configuration of festival activities on the site will increase with the opening of the Mulgrave Gallery in 2024.

Stakeholders view the Court House Gallery and the Gallery Precinct<sup>7</sup> proposal with positive interest, yet they need clarification about predicted completion timelines, purpose, and potential duplication. There remains an expectation that the 'Gallery Precinct' will incorporate the Cairns Art Gallery, Mulgrave Gallery, and Court House Gallery, along with a purpose-built contemporary gallery on the site. However, there is no clarity around the ongoing vision for this development. In addition, the cohesion of the existing buildings and programs within a precinct is under-informed. An interim plan to coordinate activities and programs would benefit this precinct's overall amenity and user experience.

The stakeholder group is divided regarding the duplication associated with the visual arts infrastructure in Cairns. Some identify clear distinctions in activities and programs in the visual arts. Others perceive that there is more visual art gallery infrastructure than resources for other creative disciplines, suggesting an inequity. The visual art representatives in the stakeholder group consider a hierarchy associated with the publicly funded visual arts infrastructure a common standard.

Cairns Art Gallery<sup>8</sup> provides national and international research-based curatorial programs and direct commissioning support for established and high-calibre artists. The overall program is supported by a director, curator, and retail and gallery staff. They also present the recurring exhibitions of the long-standing Cairns Arts Society and the Cairns Potters Club. The Cairns Art Gallery does not seek to recover operational costs from exhibitors but may limit the duration of their exhibitions. The Cairns Art Gallery has removed entry fees, making visitation more accessible. This gallery receives a substantial allocation for operating costs from the Cairns Regional Council in the form of financial contribution, peppercorn premises lease and covering electricity costs, allowing a level of operation far exceeding that of other galleries in the city or region. The parent entity is Cairns Regional Council. As such, the board of directors includes several councillors; however, a policy framework for Indigenous representation at a governance level would bring it in line with national sector expectations.<sup>2</sup>

The small to medium organisation, NorthSite Contemporary Arts,<sup>9</sup> operates galleries at Bulmba-ja, an Arts Centre managed by the State Government's Arts Queensland<sup>10</sup>. There are dedicated exhibition spaces that directly support the presentation of emerging and established artists. NorthSite engages in off-site exhibition opportunities, professional development and other professional services directed towards artists and industry groups. Some of this activity is facilitated through NorthSite Studios in the Greenslopes Street Cultural Precinct. A chief executive officer, artistic director, first-nations curator, and retail and program staff support its research-

based curatorial work. The program includes developing, presenting, and selling new contemporary work. NorthSite has an independent Board of Directors, including policy for at least three professional artists and Indigenous representation.

There are no university art galleries or museums in the region. This means significant resources for curatorial projects are limited to the will and capacity of government-funded small to medium organisations. Still, the Technical and Further Education Cairns Campus (TAFE)<sup>11</sup> has the Banggu Minjaany and Gallery Y exhibition space, which complements the Diploma of Cultural Arts and Diploma of Visual Arts courses.

A limited number of alternative exhibition spaces operate in the Cairns region. Crate59 has been operating in the Cairns CBD since 2009. It is an artist-run initiative (ARI) managed by a volunteer collective which plans partnerships with the Cairns Regional Council's Cairns Festival and an ephemera archive project with the Cairns Museum. Along with a regular exhibition program, Crate59 hosts a series of artist studios and works with emerging and visiting artists.<sup>12</sup>



Of significance is the Indigenous arts organisation UMI Arts, approaching its twentieth anniversary. UMI Arts is an Indigenous Art Centre supporting artists across artistic disciplines. It assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in maintaining, preserving and protecting cultural identity through artistic and creative practices. The Board of Directors are all Indigenous. The organisation operates outside the CBD zone in a shopfront gallery premises in the Cairns suburb of Manoora. Umi Arts also creates partnerships with Cairns Regional Council venues to present its major First Nations festival (Big Talk One Fire) at Munro Martin Parklands, as well as important exhibitions at the Court House Gallery.<sup>13</sup>

Arts Queensland manages the Bulmba-ja Arts Centre in Abbott St. Cairns. It is a space that has evolved from a Centre of Contemporary Arts to a First Nations-branded building with the addition of an Indigenous performing arts profile. The centre's rebranding adds Indigenous infrastructure as a façade to a State Government controlled resource. Tenant Miriki Performing Arts<sup>14</sup> appreciates the infrastructure provided for their youth dance activities, particularly the

'safe dance' sprung flooring utilised for regular movement training classes. However, the Centre cannot cater to the scale of production that the group often presents. Larger rehearsal spaces and an adequate food catering option are critical to successful creative development. Rehearsals for their Indigenous dance productions with thirty or more participants are conducted elsewhere.

For more extensive group work, Miriki accesses the Nintiringanyi Cultural Training Centre,<sup>15</sup> of which this group is a subsidiary. Miriki are working towards accredited training provision for young Indigenous participants.

Other Indigenous enterprises provided with tenancy at Bulmb-ja are The Pryce Centre for Culture and Arts<sup>16</sup> and Minjil. Both are active contributors to the sector at local and national levels. Minjil is a Traditional Owners (TO) group that provides cultural performances for events and tourism packages. They represent TOs at cultural, tourism, and civic events through acknowledgement, Welcome to Country and traditional dance gatherings and ceremonies.<sup>17</sup>

The centre has non-Indigenous tenants as allies to First Nations values. Tenants NorthSite Contemporary Arts and JUTE Theatre Company collaborated to jointly establish the previously badged Centre of Contemporary Arts through a 2.7 million Millennium Arts Infrastructure grant awarded to them in 2001 by the State Government.<sup>18</sup> The resilience of these two established small to medium arts organisations to embrace Indigenous values and reconcile cultural sensitivities to celebrate a shared contemporary culture is a hallmark of their continuous excellence over more than three decades in Cairns. JUTE's Dare to Dream program employs an Indigenous Producer and aims to bring contemporary theatre with an Indigenous voice to regional communities.<sup>19</sup>

NorthSite Contemporary Arts has been intrinsically involved in the rise and success of Indigenous visual arts in the State. The rebranding of the building and the introduction of Indigenous-led tenants to share the achievements is a testament to contemporary and professional arts practice in the region. However, the tenancies report that they are hampered by internal barriers to access and information, suggesting a more transparent operating structure would benefit the efficient use of shared infrastructure in the building.

The Bulmba-ja Arts Centre's apparent integrity may be undermined by the State Government's assigning valuable floor space for non-art sector use. Access for non-tenanted Indigenous arts and cultural groups is limited to ad hoc arrangements. A more appropriate vision of space delegation for dedicated cultural and arts use may be worth advocating for the centre.

The Cairns Regional Council owns the heritage-listed 'School of Arts', which houses the Cairns Museum,<sup>20</sup> retail shopfronts, commercial lease spaces, and office spaces occupied by the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF). The building is a significant asset to the sector in the heart of the Cairns CBD, facilitating the continued curatorial

growth of the Cairns Museum and subsidised production offices for CIAF operations. The building was extensively refurbished and extended in 2017. Stakeholders appreciate the amenities of the building and its current contribution to the sector. Some recalled the previous gallery space, c.1907, that occupied a small corner of the site and its role as an intimate, accessible space for emerging and community artists. However, the Cell Art Space, a street-front window space sponsored by Ergon Energy and only a few metres away from the School of Arts on Lake Street, is accessible and currently underutilised.<sup>21</sup>

A Museum Development Officer (MDO) located in the Cairns region is a position associated with the Brisbane-based Queensland Museum<sup>22</sup> and supported by the Cairns Regional Council. The position assists the region's museums subsector and the many outlying heritage groups with collections, including those at Gordonvale and Babinda. Regardless, the catchment for this position includes communities in Cape York, Torres Strait, and inland to Etheridge, well beyond the Cairns local government area and hinterland. Artefact storage and conservation are key challenges, along with the appropriate care and maintenance of sensitive Indigenous material and the repatriation requirements of sensitive material from museum holdings worldwide.

The critical need for 'keeping houses' is an ongoing discussion. An important consideration for the Cairns community is the proposed housing of the significant Lit Sung Goong museum collection under the Cairns and District Chinese Association Inc.<sup>23</sup> custodianship. The group is fundraising with plans to begin constructing the Cairns Chinese Culture & Heritage Centre on the Cairns Regional Council Cultural Precinct easement on Greenslopes Street in 2024.

Several stakeholders use the Greenslopes Street Cultural Precinct. This Council easement runs along Saltwater Creek and fringes the botanical parklands in Edge Hill. The Centenary Lakes and Rainforest Boardwalk connect the Cultural Precinct strip to the Tanks Arts Centre and Botanic Gardens. Although the area has some infrastructure challenges due to its wetland setting, it provides subsidised land and facilities to clubs, associations, and organisations that operate in the non-profit, charity, and volunteer spheres.

There are expectations of further building work and tenant additions to the cluster, including the relocation of the Cairns Municipal Band and Cairns and District Chinese Association. The Cairns Cultural Precinct Association umbrellas several groups and clubs that operate buildings and infrastructure on the easement, but not all of them.

Also located on Greenslopes Street is Cominos House<sup>24</sup>, an historic vernacular high-set Queenslander accessed by the sector for small meetings. It provides minimal storage for non-profit arts groups, including the inclusive theatre group Tropical Arts. However, the building's upstairs meeting rooms do not accommodate disability access.

The Botanic Gardens, Centenary Lakes and Greenslopes Street form a zone with a combined botanical and creative focus. There is potential for extended festival activity or temporary public art curation across this area. Stakeholders have cited an eco-critical art & science biennale or an extension of the Sculpture Botanica<sup>25</sup> event, an ongoing project supported by the Friends of Cairns Botanic Gardens<sup>26</sup>, as essential contributions to consider in this zone. It is also vital to investigate the Federal Government's cultural policy intention to "establish artist residencies to visit Australian World Heritage Sites to produce artworks and tell stories of place and heritage".<sup>27</sup>

Munro Martin Parklands and the Cairns Performing Arts Centre combine to create a flagship performing arts precinct and 'green stage' parkland at one of the major road intersections in Cairns CBD. It is divided by Florence Street, which some stakeholders have argued should be permanently closed to add further amenity to the cohesive precinct. Road closure can be achieved for significant large-scale civic events, though. The focus of these venues is mainstage touring shows, primarily live music, music tribute, and comedy with a sprinkle of theatre, dance, and circus. However, these stages have been available to stakeholders through resource and access agreements that reduce the venue usage costs and reduce financial risk when presenting locally produced or less mainstream presentations.

UMI Art's annual First Nations arts festival, Big Talk One Fire, has transitioned from Fogarty Park to Munro Martin Parklands. This partnership with Cairns Regional Council has expanded the reach and impact of both the UMI Arts event and the artists and cultural practitioners involved. Cairns Regional Council should foster and extend its partnerships and resource agreements with local producers to maintain, grow, and develop regional performing arts in all its forms.

Circa Cairns is a First Nations-led contemporary circus ensemble developed as an initiative of Brisbane-based Circa.<sup>28</sup> It has been critical for the company to adopt an agile attitude when accessing Cairns' arts infrastructure. They operate without a dedicated, suitable rehearsal space under their control and have limited private circus facilities. They have brokered usage agreements with the Cairns Regional Council for office space at the Tanks Arts Centre's pump house and have accessed the rehearsal space at Arts Queensland's Bulmba-ja studio through ad hoc arrangements.

Recognising that access can be a barrier to resources for creative development and production, knowing people in high places has assisted in unlocking infrastructure for the group. When considering the value proposition of Circa Cairns presenting a new work at Cairns Performing Arts Centre, attracting audience numbers to cover costs is not viable. However, the Circa Cairns ensemble is determined to access and provide experiences of contemporary circus to Indigenous communities in Cape York, along with national and international touring engagements.

Several stakeholders access the Shield Street pedestrian mall and Esplanade event lawns to present major arts initiatives. Along with the Cairns Regional Council Reef Lights Festival event, these programs add vibrance and creative interest to the CBD's high-foot-traffic areas. The Indigenous-led *Blaktivation*<sup>29</sup> by CIAF and the *Shine on Gimuy* festival by Shine on Productions<sup>30</sup> and Queensland Music Festival<sup>31</sup> indicate a growing investment in large-scale First Nations-led productions and representation. The ability of Cairns Regional Council to facilitate the highly original nature of the events and their scale, builds confidence and capability in the sector. These events attract significant resources to the region and create a memorable cultural, artistic, creative, and interactive experience for residents and visitors to the city.

The representation of First Nations voices and the elevation of Indigenous cultural identity in the region is significant, adding authenticity through what might be considered temporary public art events. These events draw strongly on collaboration and partnerships; for example, CIAF worked with Renew Cairns to place Indigenous art projections into empty shopfronts along Shields Street for its 2023 *Blaktivation* event.

Shine on Gimuy producers worked with Ports North<sup>32</sup> and the Salt House<sup>33</sup> restaurant to extend its activity into a festival hub. Cairns Regional Council should consider a significant and dedicated fund to support and nurture the scale and ambition of these activities. More investment is needed through the Cairns Regional Council for partnerships with significant independent placemaking events within their jurisdiction. Philanthropic, corporate, state, and federal funding is limited and incommensurate with the artistic and community benefits these activities promote.

Renew Cairns<sup>34</sup> has provided creative producers access to underutilised retail spaces in the Cairns CBD since its engagement by the Cairns Regional Council Economic Development division in 2021. Renew Cairns is a project managed by Renew Australia in its third and final year. The partnership aimed to enliven Cairns City Centre by transforming empty shopfronts into creative spaces. The program has activated ten empty spaces and engaged sixty creative practitioners. It has successfully supported the establishment and visibility of the region's creative makers and artists who have participated.

The program encourages the city's businesses and property owners to participate in the regeneration of the CBD in collaboration with creative practitioners. It provides a mechanism where creative energy can meet urban decline to help produce the required uplift and regeneration that builds towards a vibrant and creative place. It is highly recommended that the Cairns Regional Council consider continuing or instigating a similar program.

The Regional Excellence in Arts and Culture Hubs (REACH)<sup>35</sup> and Peninsula Art Educators Association (PAEAA) are local networks of primary and secondary school art teachers who develop and foster partnerships with the sector, emphasising pathways and professional development for students. In-school creative arts programs offer seminal experiences to emerging generations of students in creative arts disciplines. Study tours to capital city galleries and attendance at events like Vivid Sydney demonstrate vital national benchmarks that inspire participation.





The capacity of the REACH hub has diminished with reduced financial support from Education Queensland and support agreements with Cairns Regional Council coming to an end. However, a communications service to disseminate sector information is maintained.

PAEAA has entered into a resource and performance agreement with Cairns Regional Council to stage the Energy Exhibition each year at the Tanks Arts Centre up to 2026.

The Young Company (TYC)<sup>36</sup> is an independently run youth theatre company that provides after-school theatre training and in-school classroom packages. TYC was established in 2009 and has survived a COVID-induced downturn to continue its collaborations with Queensland Education and Cairns Regional Council festivals, including the annual Children's Festival.

Technical and Further Education Queensland, Cairns Campus (TAFE) maintains certificate and diploma courses in Visual Arts and Cultural Arts. The courses, specifically for Indigenous people in the Cultural Arts, are acknowledged as a significant precedent for the Indigenous art industry in the region. However, the number of enrolments is declining, with a move to block-mode delivery. This means students are on campus for only a few weeks, with the remaining course activities expected to be completed at home, often in remote communities. This diminishes the value and experience of enrolment and indicates a shift in providing Indigenous Cultural Arts at the facility. TAFE non-Indigenous creative arts are experiencing strong enrolments in visual arts and ceramics. The TAFE represents Cairns' only formal pillar for face-to-face accreditation-focused undergraduate visual arts education. It employs local practitioners, and its contribution to the sector is significant.

The infrastructure and resources available to the sector through local universities have drastically reduced, with James Cook University (JCU)<sup>37</sup> and Central Queensland University (CQU) discontinuing complete creative arts degrees and, in the case of JCU, reducing specialised research and teaching staff through redundancies. CQU provides on-campus Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Digital Media degrees in Cairns.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, CQU continues to support many stakeholders through community engagement and access to sound recording studios and expertise.

The decline in pathways for creative arts university education in the region is of great concern to stakeholders. The cost of university arts education is high, leaving students with Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) debts<sup>39</sup>, recoverable through indexed tax repayments to the Federal Government. Secondary school students considering a career in the sector are informed by their career advisors that arts education is an unfavourable investment, citing artists' and creatives' low average incomes. Several stakeholders are investigating micro-credentialing through partnerships with CQU; others are evaluating the process and benefits of becoming Registered Training Organisations through provider accreditation options.

Success in the industry is not predicated on educational qualifications because creative arts disciplines and sector practices are largely unaccredited, and many of these areas are not accountable through unionisation. Cultural practice, industry experience and work-integrated learning placements are tangible pathways for entry into professional practice. However, reliance on internships and placements as entry points requires commensurate resources and capacity within the sector.

The closure of university places in the creative arts shifts the demand and responsibility for sector education and up-skilling onto the regional industry. Expectations shift to those organisations and enterprises within the sector that have or can attract the capacity to deliver entry pathways and professional development. The abandonment of university degree-level creative arts education in the region should be of considerable concern for the Cairns Regional Council and the whole sector. It represents the acceleration of a talent and art worker drain from the region. Cairns Regional Council's major venues and projected plans for a 'Gallery Precinct' would benefit from incorporating programs and strategies for training and professional development for regional practitioners through work-integrated placements and professional development for a broad sector engagement. In doing so, a greater capacity and potential would be developed to service, up-skill expertise, and know-how, to and from the region.

First Nations fashion has emerged from the success of programs such as the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair and the Queensland Government's Backing Indigenous Arts.<sup>40</sup> The charitable organisation *First Nations Fashion Design*<sup>41</sup> is provided production space at TAFE and receives multi-year operational funding from State and Federal arts funding agencies. The community of practice around Indigenous fashion has grown significantly through dedicated entrepreneurial activity. It is a thriving regional export, with several practitioners represented and profiled in high-impact national and overseas fashion events in Europe and America.

The Cairns Convention Centre<sup>42</sup> hosts the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF)<sup>43</sup>. The venue was selected due to its capacity and CIAF expansion, which includes gallery booths, art markets, performances, workshops, and gala opening event activities. Many pressures are at play for this signature arts and cultural event. CIAF stakeholders struggle with the venue's ambience, and the rise of Indigenous art fairs in capital cities around Australia all competing for the best work from Queensland Indigenous Art Centres. Participating stakeholders need to see a return on investment when comparing the outcomes of CIAF to other Indigenous art fairs that access more prominent and more affluent markets.

Consequently, CIAF has initiated programs for Queensland's independent Indigenous artists to participate and access representation in the event. The CIAF organisation has extended its capacity by engaging in presentations beyond the art fair format.

The *Blaktivation* event in Shields Street exemplifies this, and it is proposed as an urban activation of First Nations cultural and artistic expression. Additional extension activities include engagements and presentations 'off-site' in other cities.

With the potential to expand the business model further, taking CIAF to new markets might be worth investigating. For example, extending CIAF expertise to establish an annual capital city-based Indigenous-led Art Fair in Meanjin (Brisbane). The Cairns Indigenous Art Fair expresses Indigenous cultural identity and aspires to a city-wide celebration, with signature events in several locations, such as Cairns Regional Council venues and Arts Queensland's Bulmba-ja Arts Centre. Stakeholders' buy-in, including Cairns Art Gallery, UMI Arts, and NorthSite Contemporary Arts, augments the CIAF event by creating a circuit of functions and attendance over the CIAF period. The scale of the CIAF event adds to the sophistication and perception of Indigenous culture and arts offered in Cairns and requires continued and increased support and investment.

Cairns Regional Council Libraries<sup>44</sup> are an essential resource for the sector. They are intrinsic to the expression of literary arts and writing. They have been used as meeting and workshop spaces and have actively engaged in activities associated with the Cairns Tropical Writers Festival and Youth Week. The Cairns Tropical Writers Festival is an annual event initiated by Tropical Writers Inc. in 2008;<sup>45</sup> and which is now managed independently. The event

is held at an appropriately sized function centre with a corporate venue partner; for example, the 2023 event utilised the Pullman Cairns International with breakout sessions at Cairns City Library. The three-day festival features panel and conversation sessions with networking and book launches. The Cairns Tropical Writers Festival creates a visible presence for what stakeholders describe as an unseen or under-represented art form. The festival is curated and includes Indigenous and non-Indigenous representation.

Over several years, the Cairns City Library in Abbott Street has been used as a canvas for façade projection during the Cairns Festival's City Lights program. The program has consistently and successfully showcased the work of prominent local artists facilitated by producers previously associated with Sydney-based AGB Events. The high-quality façade projection program is a valuable benchmark for the sector. The façade projection program would benefit from being shifted or extended to the Court House Gallery, refreshing its delivery and reconsidering its impact on the overall festival presentation.



## CULTURE, HERITAGE AND PLACE

Cairns has several significant and long-standing associations and clubs catering to art lovers, recreational artists, and hobbyist practitioners. For example, the Cairns Art Society<sup>46</sup> was formed in 1931 and is currently running two shop-front gallery spaces, CAS Gallery at DFO Shopping Centre, Westcourt and another, *Artist@work Studio & Gallery* in the Lake Street CBD. The volunteer-managed, non-profit association partners with the Cairns Regional Council's Tanks Arts Centre to present the annual *Artists of the North* exhibition, and with Cairns Art Gallery in presenting finalists of the *Cairns Art Society Annual Art Award*.

Other long-standing and active volunteer-managed groups include the Cairns Choral Society<sup>47</sup>, Cairns Little Theatre<sup>48</sup>, Cairns Potters Club<sup>49</sup> and Visual Arts Association<sup>50</sup>. The Cairns Choral Society has operated for over a century. It maintains a hall in Greenslopes Street Cultural Precinct and partners with the Cairns Performing Arts Centre to present popular musical theatre standards. The Cairns Potters Club has operated for fifty years. It manages kilns, glaze rooms and ceramic production spaces at its clubhouse on a Cairns Regional Council easement in Grove Street. It seeks to expand its facilities with a building extension. The Cairns Potters Club holds a biannual exhibition, *Melting Pot*, at the Cairns Regional Gallery and will move this showcase to the Court House Gallery in 2024. Cairns Little Theatre is a volunteer-run association operating since 1954. It manages the Rondo Theatre within the Greenslopes Street Cultural Precinct.

The increasing membership and use of facilities recorded by these groups represent the value of the volunteer-managed arts and cultural infrastructure. They add a low-stakes social structure that can be measured regarding community cultural health and providing pathways into the sector through supportive community engagement. The volunteer contribution is significant, even immeasurable, considering the decades of collective service these associations and clubs demonstrate. Stakeholders from this subsector report issues with intergenerational succession due to the changing expectations of volunteerism. To offset this, some groups promote youth-oriented programs and entry points. The ongoing support and investment by Cairns Regional Council is justified as the volunteer-run subsector provides substantial value as grass-roots social structures that develop community health and belonging. They are seed beds for developing appreciative audiences and inclusive participation in the arts.

Stakeholders consider the sector to be siloed and unco-ordinated. However, collaborations and partnerships are highly valued. There is evidence of solid roots, but the industry in Cairns needs help making headway. Organisations still need an ongoing mechanism to gather information, collectively celebrate, effectively network and co-design a creative future. There is a high instance of stakeholder

organisations entering collaborations within their art form disciplines. Some of the networks for collaboration are sophisticated and highly focused. For example, JUTE Theatre engages in *Driving and Activating the Regional Theatre Sector (DARTS)*<sup>51</sup>. This program builds on collaboration and partnership networks in regional Queensland through cross-regional development, production, and touring programs. As a regional theatre company producing original new works for the stage, JUTE has contributed significantly to local capacity and independence in delivering professional theatre arts. This legacy requires additional enhancement and support to expand its national and international impact and potential.

Stakeholder representatives from NorthSite Contemporary Arts engage in an alliance of 30 Asia-Pacific and Australian festivals and platforms. Melbourne-based AsiaLink manages the Regional//Regional Alliance<sup>52</sup>, seeded in 2022 to support cross-cultural collaborations between Australia and the Indo-Pacific region. NorthSite currently has two staff members representing the Alliance. Miriki Performing Arts has a long-term partnership with the Australian Ballet that has evolved over several years.<sup>53</sup> It has exposed the Indigenous youth dance company to new creative forms and extended their experience of dance as an art form. The cross-cultural collaboration brings youth training in Indigenous cultural dance into contact with ballet's artistic vocabulary. This has increased self-esteem, confidence in the company, training, and employment. As part of Brisbane-based Circa Contemporary Circus (Circa), Circa Cairns operates within a framework with highly formalised engagement expectations. As part of the National Performing Arts Partnership Framework (Partnership Framework) administered by Creative Australia, Circa shares in the release of considerable touring funds to 37 national arts companies that have an average turnover of \$1.6 million.<sup>54</sup> The Partnership Framework benefits organisations with up to 8 years of stable funding to tour presentations of their creative work to Australian audiences. Townsville's DanceNorth 55 is based in northern Queensland and has a stake in the Federal Government's Partnership Framework.

The success of funded small and medium arts organisations leads the way for the region's networking, collaboration, and touring efforts. However, more is needed, and many hurdles must be overcome to inject Cairns' diverse works of excellence into national and international circuits. Effective relationships, networks, and partners can only overcome these obstacles. Opportunities to host national and international art conferences, alliances, markets, and networks must be actively pursued and supported by the Cairns Regional Council to build capacity and awareness of the region as uniquely creative.

The presence of national and international industry events in Cairns, such as the Australian Performing Arts Exchange (APAX) hosted by Cairns Regional Council in 2023, allows the local sector to participate in the national dialogue around culture and arts

delivery and to pitch itself into competitive markets effectively. An event in the style of a multi-venue contemporary art biennale and a curated arts festival that incorporates processes of co-design and sector-wide involvement is a future that many stakeholders would welcome. Such an event would provide a focus and step up to attract potential touring opportunities with national and international producers and presenters.

Other significant areas of collaboration in the sector include strong intra-regional networks that exist between like-minded volunteer-managed groups. For example, Cairns Potters Club and Cairns Little Theatre engage with similar groups in Innisfail and the Tablelands. The Cairns Writers Festival engages with a national network of writers' festivals. More robust regional networks are suggested to benefit groups like Tropical Arts, where shared experiences and opportunities will strengthen the field for inclusive theatre and tactile touring to enable greater regional autonomy.

The Indigenous Art Centre Alliance (IACA)<sup>56</sup> is a peak body for far north Queensland's regional and remote Indigenous Art Centres. It operates from rented premises in Cairns. This network subsector is affected by many issues, including empowering Indigenous communities through self-determination and Indigenous-led decision-making mechanisms. These art centres have the potential for significant social impact by providing Indigenous community members with pathways into employment and training. Authentic Indigenous art is reported as being "of global cultural significance and an important part of Australia's shared identity" (Kate Fielding, 2021).<sup>57</sup>

IACA has an Indigenous-led board comprising Art Centre managers and Indigenous community representatives. It is concerned with advocating best practices and social enterprise models to its constituent art centres. It works with the Indigenous Art Code and Arts Law to uphold fair and ethical dealings for art centre artists, aligning it with sector standards. IACA maintains relationships with the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Austrade and assists art centre delegations to overseas destinations. The *Belonging: Stories from Far North Queensland* began as an IACA professional development project; however, the collection of 415 artworks by 103 artists representing 11 Art Centres is part of a significant new acquisition by the National Museum of Australia (NMA). The collection has formed a series of connected exhibitions that will feature at the NMA during 2023 and 2024.<sup>58</sup>

## A ROBUST CULTURAL ECONOMY

The Cairns region is recognised for its potential to contribute significantly to Queensland's film industry. Screen Queensland, establishing film studio infrastructure close to the CBD, expresses this potential.<sup>59</sup> It brings Cairns into a network of Queensland Government-owned film industry infrastructure sites, including the Brisbane and Gold Coast facilities. The Cairns studio opened in 2024. Screen Queensland seeks to leverage the region's strong history of

feature films and small media productions. Stakeholders engaged in the film industry suggest there will be a significant impact on filmmakers, and that the benefits will extend to many areas of the sector, particularly the acting and visual arts disciplines.

The Studio's 1.5-hectare site will accommodate events and tenancies under its roof. This will lift awareness of filmmaking art forms in the region and augment Cairns Regional Council's investment in growing *Understory Film Festival* and *Understory High* activities.<sup>60</sup> Stakeholders suggest that the Cairns Regional Council consider streamlining the application process for accessing permissions to film at Council locations and provide efficient mechanisms for the sector seeking to communicate with property and infrastructure owners. Over several years, ScreenWork's<sup>61</sup> presence in Cairns has contributed to the success of local practitioners in both above- and below-the-line professional development, capacity building, talent identification and expertise retention in the region.

The Regional Arts Services Network (RASN),<sup>62</sup> is a devolved arts funding program initiated by the Queensland Government. Proposed as an arts-led soft infrastructure, it includes a Tropical North section. Since its inception, the Tropical North chapter has struggled to provide a coherent or effective set of initiatives that stakeholders can identify. The potential flexibility and responsiveness of a RASN program for the region has appeared slow-moving and risk-averse. Under the non-arts agency of Regional Development Australia, the chapter has gained focused leadership and program development around work-ready training for formerly incarcerated people. It aligns the sector's need for skilled workers with social justice rehabilitation concerns. Support for remote and regional arts practice through RASN offers potential; and the activities to support regional and remote groups and practitioners are essential.

Many stakeholders operating in Cairns provide critical services to remote communities and organisations in the Torres Strait Islands, Cape York Peninsula and Cairns hinterland. The potential for RASN is to bring those producers and providers together to grow current networks and capacity. However, the danger is that RASN Tropical North will create another siloed network disconnected from many stakeholders operating in similar territory.

The Arts Nexus<sup>63</sup> organisation's networking and community cultural development capacity has diminished due to lower funding support. Art Nexus has been active in the Cairns region since 1995, starting from a regional economic development initiative. Many seminal programs vital to the region reside in the organisation's 25-year history. It continues to provide innovative solutions, including a podcast recording studio and arts service infrastructure. Though these network and industry development services appear in decline, programs that support and strategically develop professional capacity for the sector are still critical. The decline indicates that new directions and processes for sector development are required.

A functional leadership group convened with representatives of operational subsectors in the field will provide a network structure to advance the capacity of cultural and arts enterprise as a cohesive sector in the region. Obvious subsectors are formed through segmentation along disciplinary/artform divisions. However, subsectors can also be grouped by organisational and operational clustering. Identifying lateral operational and enterprise tiers provides a robust segmentation and cross-fertilisation of the critical interrelated concerns affecting organisations across disciplinary boundaries. The stakeholders show that communities of practice are mainly self-organising and that extended networks follow disciplinary/artform lines. The critical gap is the need for cross-disciplinary conversations forming sector cohesion, transparency, and growth. Therefore, Cairns Regional Council might consider facilitating a leadership group formed to represent practice and enterprise tiers. This network structure has the potential to fast-track the formative aspects of developing the sector.

Cairns lies at the heart of an active, creative region. It is a critical business and operational hub servicing the rich and diverse expressions of a uniquely tropical Australian culture with intrinsic regional cultural, artistic, and creative values. As a city with a strong tropical identity, it has the potential to specialise in the cultural influences, networks, and practices that abound in the region. This includes Indigenous, Melanesian, Pacifica, migrant and settler heritages. Focusing on these unique values will attract national and international attention, augmenting the reef and rainforest spectacle for which the region is currently promoted through tourism channels.

The Cairns area's regional culture and arts sector shows resilience and commitment to place. Its isolation and remoteness, put into the contemporary Australian artistic and creative context, are both strengths and weaknesses. The Cairns region is positioned to develop and express its unique identity with strong traits derived from its place in the tropical/oceanic Pacific. However, the tyranny of distance still prevails, leading to sector challenges around access,

infrastructure, impact, and financial support mechanisms. The cohort of independent artists, makers, and creative producers is an underutilised resource, and there is a need for more open programs and opportunities to engage with critical elements of the sector. After all, the strength, passion, and vision of our region's creative capital, drive our community's cultural health and well-being and its deep expression of place and the role of the arts within it.

Stakeholders identify Cairns Regional Council as leading the sector regarding arts and cultural capacity and community engagement. However, cultural, artistic and value differences must be nurtured and celebrated to develop regional uniqueness and impact. The Cairns region has enjoyed cultural and artistic growth across several creative disciplines, demonstrating tenacity and excellence. The Cairns Regional Council has assisted this growth by developing critical infrastructure and a transparent and achievable strategic focus for its role and delivery within the sector. Stakeholders strongly advocate for continued investment in a cultural strategy and planning tool derived from an inclusive sector consultation and co-design process. While several stakeholders currently perceive a flattening of both activity and freshness in the regional sector, all are optimistic about future growth.

Similarly, several stakeholders are unconvinced that Cairns has earned the title - a city for the arts - suggesting there is still some distance to cover. For example, the co-ordination of meaningful partnerships and collaborations between organisations and agencies, arts-led approaches to community wellbeing, placemaking, self-determination and belonging can be enhanced.<sup>64</sup> They are indicating that significant gaps remain. However, an overwhelming stakeholder sentiment exists for the continued inclusion and connectedness that arts and culture provide to the community. The sentiment suggests increasing investment in cultural and artistic experiences in the Cairns region will develop public value, well-being, and social inclusion and will also bring economic benefit to the sector.



# MAPPING CREATIVITY

## THE (CAIRNS) ARTS AND CULTURE MAP

The Cairns *Arts and Culture Map* was developed by Cairns Regional Council and launched in 2018 as a one-stop-shop for information on the city's cultural assets. Council-owned art and cultural facilities are listed, including venues for hire, historic sites, information about festivals and cultural organisations and more. Creative businesses and individual artists create their own entry and can use the site to promote their practice. The map works to promote festivals and places as well as individuals and businesses. In 2020 Cairns Regional Council initiated conversations with Tablelands

Regional, Cassowary Coast Regional and Douglas Shire councils about the possibility of extending the map to cover a wider area, and the *Arts and Culture Map* now includes these jurisdictions. In 2021 these councils launched their own versions of the map connected through a shared interface.

Data collected from 1 January to 27 November 2022 appraising the use of the Cairns Arts and Culture Map show the service continued to grow during the calendar year 2022, with 39 new contributors and a total number of listings at 1,294 (Table 1). Page views have also steadily increased, reaching more than 45K in 2022. Further data on map usage is presented below.

Table 1: Comparative data, 2019 to 2022 (January to November)

	2022	2021	2020	2019
Contributors	39 new, 556 total	496	410	300
Total listings	44 new, 1294 total	1,252	1,080	1,412
Users	12,582	8,452	12,713	14,351
Page views	45,793	35,916	36,021	44,425

Table 2 highlights the importance of specific pages and categories. Although the pages fluctuate with events, Carnival on Collins and Starry Night Cinema are consistently popular pages. The most consistently popular category is Public Art, although Festivals consistently appear in the top four.

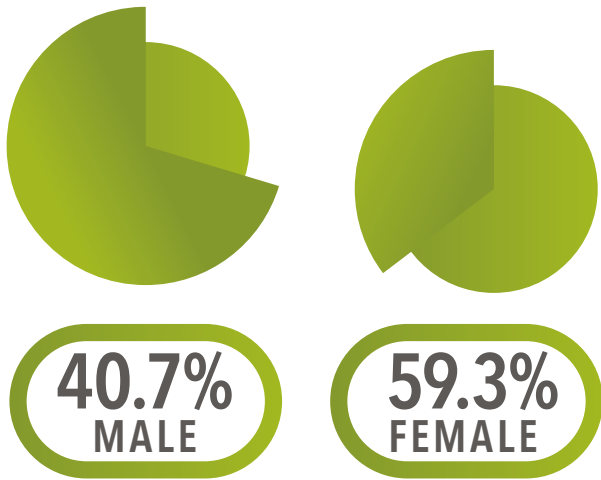
Table 2: Top pages and categories on the Map

Most popular pages in 2022	Most popular pages in 2021	Most popular pages in 2020	Most popular pages in 2019 (Jan to Nov)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yirrganydji Sea Country</li> <li>2. Umi Arts</li> <li>3. Carnival on Collins</li> <li>4. Cairns Historic Chinatown</li> <li>5. Starry Night Cinema</li> <li>6. Tjapukai</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CPAC</li> <li>2. Cairns U3A INC</li> <li>3. Starry Night Cinema</li> <li>4. Carnival on Collins</li> <li>5. Court House</li> <li>6. Freshwater CWA Hall</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Starry Night Cinema</li> <li>2. Cairns U3A INC</li> <li>3. Oktoberfest 2020</li> <li>4. CPAC</li> <li>5. Carnival on Collins</li> <li>6. Cairns Festival</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cairns Festival</li> <li>2. CPAC</li> <li>3. Carnival on Collins</li> <li>4. Cairns Amateurs</li> <li>5. Great Pyramid Race</li> <li>6. Cairns Indigenous Art Fair</li> </ol>
Most popular categories in 2022	Most popular categories in 2021	Most popular categories in 2020	Most popular categories in 2019 (Jan to Nov)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public Art</li> <li>2. Festivals</li> <li>3. Facilities and Spaces</li> <li>4. Individual Artists</li> <li>5. Historical Places</li> <li>6. Cultural Organisations</li> <li>7. Creative Industries</li> <li>8. City Collections</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilities and Spaces</li> <li>2. Public Art</li> <li>3. Artists</li> <li>4. Festivals</li> <li>5. Historical Places</li> <li>6. City Collections</li> <li>7. Industries</li> <li>8. Organisations</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public Art</li> <li>2. Historical Places</li> <li>3. Facilities and Spaces</li> <li>4. Festivals</li> <li>5. Artists</li> <li>6. Organisations</li> <li>7. City Collections</li> <li>8. Industries</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public Art</li> <li>2. Artists</li> <li>3. Festivals</li> <li>4. Facilities and Spaces</li> <li>5. Historical Places</li> <li>6. Organisations</li> <li>7. Industries</li> <li>8. City Collection</li> </ol>

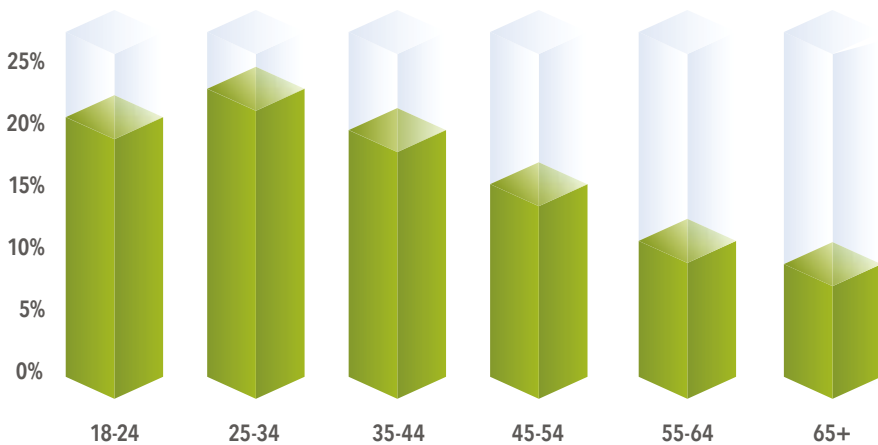
Finally, Figure 1 examines the users of the map by gender and age. Women tend to use the Map more than men, and the most popular age group is 25-34 years, particularly at the end of 2022.

Figure 1: Gender and age of map users in 2021

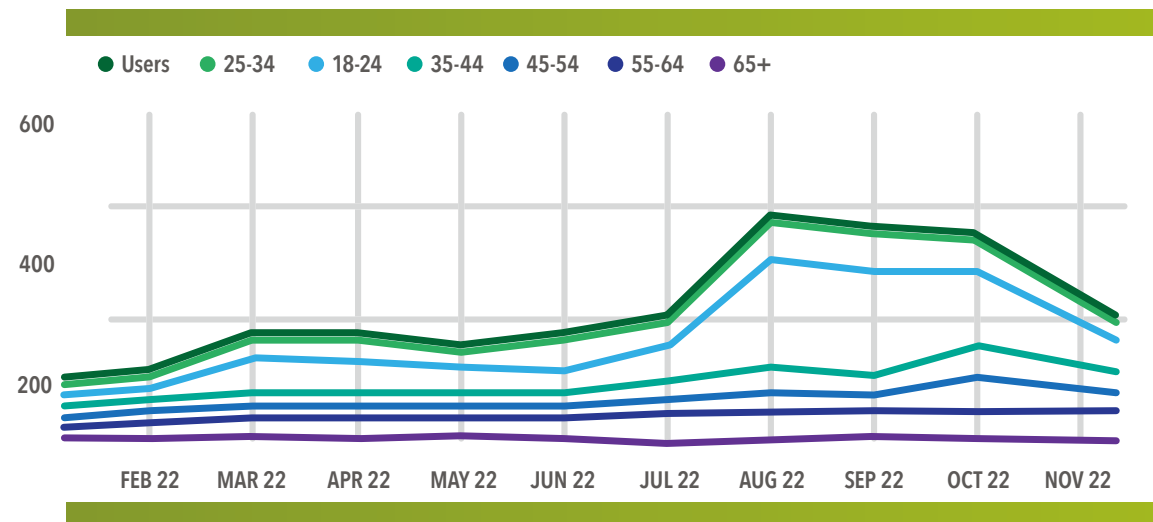
**GENDER (24.84% of total users)**



**AGE (27.57% of total users)**



**USERS**



# ART AND CULTURE TOURISM POTENTIAL IN CAIRNS

For a number of years, Central Queensland University has conducted an exit survey of holiday tourists departing the domestic terminal of Cairns International Airport. In June 2018, several questions were added to the survey to develop a deeper understanding of the arts and cultural activities that tourists engage in. In 2022, the Airport survey was reduced to 2 pages focusing on key features of Cairns as a tourism destination. Additional questions were added to the revised survey, in consultation with Cairns Regional Council, to elicit further information about arts and cultural activities and experiences.

This report outlines the results of surveying of tourists departing Cairns from the domestic terminal of the Cairns International Airport, between July and December 2022. While State and international borders have re-opened, the slow return of international tourists to Cairns in 2022 is reflected in low representation of international responses in the findings.

A convenience sampling approach was used. Survey staff approached potential respondents and enquired if they had visited the Cairns region on holiday. If a positive response was given, they were invited to participate in the survey. A total of 329 valid responses were received from domestic and international tourists to the Cairns region.

## SURVEY LIMITATIONS

As in any survey of this type, there are a number of limitations that need to be brought to the attention of the reader. The results can only be regarded as a limited snapshot of tourists over the survey period and therefore, care should be taken in generalising the findings. In some instances, survey items were general rather than specific. For example, respondents were asked to indicate the importance of 'cultural experiences' without specifying what types of cultural experiences this implied.

The survey was administered in English. Several significant market sectors, including those tourists travelling via road, rail and sea were not surveyed. The slow return of international visitors in the study period should also be noted. It is also acknowledged that there is some potential for the findings to reflect elements of social desirability bias.

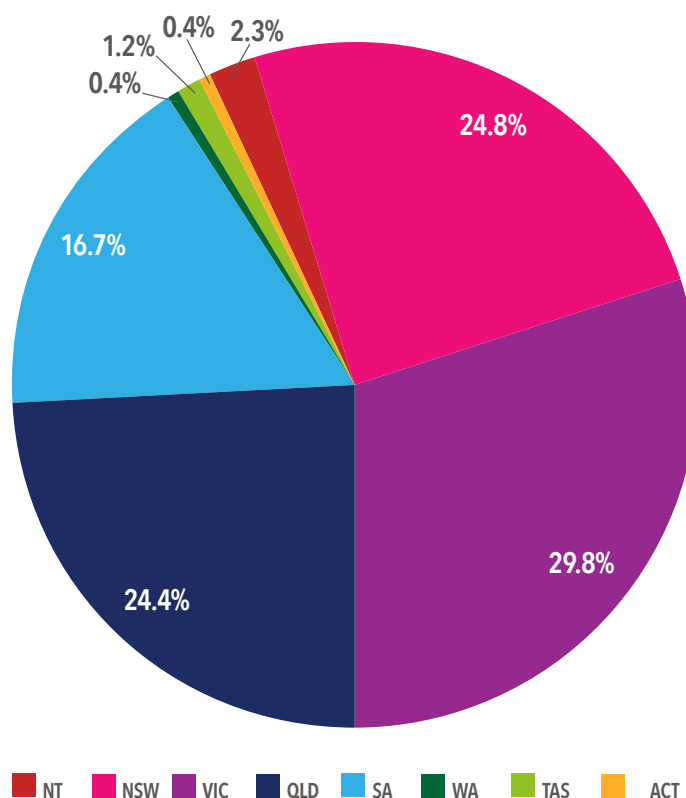
## FINDINGS

The results reported in this discussion are based on the responses of 329 tourists, comprised of 258 domestic and 71 international respondents. Further analysis according to first-time or repeat visitation indicates 92 first-time domestic and 166 repeat domestic respondents, while there were 58 first-time international and 13 repeat international respondents.

## KEY MARKETS AND VISITATION PATTERNS

The sample comprised 78.4% domestic and 21.6% international respondents. Figure 1 shows the distribution of domestic respondents by State, highlighting the return of interstate tourists to Cairns from key domestic markets in Victoria (29.8%) and NSW (24.8%). Similarly, the slow return of international tourists to the Cairns region is evident. The main countries of origin of international respondents were the United Kingdom (n=29), the USA (n=12), New Zealand (n=6), Denmark (n=5) and Germany (n=4).

Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by state of origin (n=258)





**Table 1** shows the breakdown of the sample by gender, origin (domestic and international), and visitation (first-time and repeat). The majority of both first-time and repeat domestic and international respondents was female. The majority of domestic respondents had visited Cairns previously, while international respondents were more likely to be visiting for the first time.

*Table 1: Respondents by gender, origin and visitation (n=326\*)*

	Male	Female	Total
Domestic visitors			
First-time	20 (23%)	71 (42%)	91
Repeat	67 (77%)	97 (58%)	164
International visitors			
First-time	21 (78%)	37 (84%)	58
Repeat	6 (22%)	7 (16%)	13
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>326</b>

\*3 domestic respondents did not indicate gender

The average length of stay in Cairns by first-time domestic respondents was six nights while the average length of stay of repeat domestic respondents was seven nights. The average length of stay of international respondents was slightly higher at 8 nights.

### **HOLIDAY DESTINATION SELECTION**

Respondents were asked to indicate the experiences they regarded as important when selecting a holiday destination. Results are reported in **Table 2**. Nature-based experiences and national parks were the two most important experiences for first-time domestic and international respondents. While nature-based experiences were important for repeat domestic respondents, dining experiences were more highly sought after than visits to national parks. The results also indicate that a significant percentage of respondents looked for destinations that offer cultural experiences, which was highest amongst internationals (63.4%), and slightly more important for first-time domestic (44.6%) respondents than repeat domestic respondents (39.2%). Museums/galleries and festivals were of greater interest to repeat domestic respondents than the other two segments. The Arts, defined as performing and/or visual, were not a major factor in destination selection but were more important to international (14.1%) and repeat domestic (12%) respondents.

*Table 2: Importance of experiences when selecting a holiday destination*

Activities	Domestic First-time n=91	Domestic Repeat n=166	Internationals n=71
Nature-based experiences	78.3%	63.9%	83.1%
Visit national parks	65.2%	52.4%	71.8%
Local food	57.6%	56.6%	50.7%
Dining experiences	47.8%	62.7%	40.8%
Cultural experiences	44.6%	39.2%	63.4%
Activities for children	30.4%	19.9%	8.5%
Special events	20.7%	22.9%	15.5%
Coffee culture	15.2%	21.1%	19.7%
Museums/galleries	15.2%	18.7%	15.5%
Nightlife experiences	14.1%	18.1%	25.9%
Festivals	7.6%	15.1%	11.3%
Arts (performing/visual)	6.5%	12.0%	14.1%

## MOTIVATIONS TO TRAVEL TO CAIRNS

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of a range of motivations to visit the Cairns region, using a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = least important and 5 = most important. The following tables show the breakdown of the top motivations to travel to Cairns by first-time domestic, repeat domestic and international respondents. The results indicate that although arts and cultural activities were not highly motivating factors for travelling to Cairns, these were important considerations in selecting a holiday destination (see *Holiday destination selection*) and that some respondents participated in arts and cultural activities whilst in the Cairns region (see *Participation in arts and cultural activities*).

**Table 3** ranks the importance of motivations to visit the Cairns region for first-time domestic respondents. 'Rest and relaxation' was the highest ranked motive, followed by 'to have fun', and 'visit the Great Barrier Reef'. To 'experience Aboriginal culture', 'visit heritage and historical sites', 'local community markets', 'visit arts and cultural spaces' and 'the event that I attended' were ranked 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 respectively.

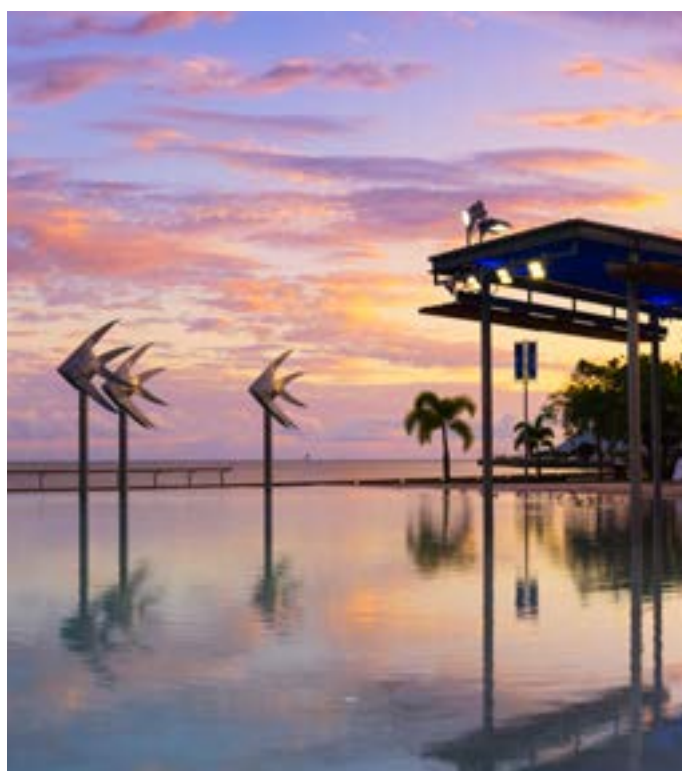
**Table 3: Motives to visit the Cairns region for first-time domestic respondents (n=91)**

Rank	Motivation	Mean
1	Rest and relaxation	4.52
2	To have fun	4.50
3	Visit the Great Barrier Reef	4.34
4	Enjoy the tropical lifestyle	4.30
5	Experience the natural environment	4.29
6	Spend time with my family	4.19
7	See Australian wildlife	4.11
8	Climate	4.08
9	Visit National Parks	4.00
10	The price matched my budget	3.98
11	Visit the Wet Tropics Rainforest	3.97
12	Snorkelling or diving	3.71
13	Experience Aboriginal culture	3.52
14	Visit heritage and historical sites	3.48
15	Local community markets	3.28
16	Visit arts and cultural spaces	3.07
17	The event that I attended	2.62

**Table 4** shows the top motivation for repeat domestic respondents was 'to have fun', followed by 'rest and relaxation' and the 'to enjoy the tropical lifestyle'. Domestic respondents ranked to 'visit heritage and historical sites', 'experience Aboriginal culture', 'local community markets', 'visit arts and cultural spaces' and 'the event I attended' as 12, 13, 15, 16 and 17 respectively.

**Table 4. Motives to visit the Cairns region for repeat domestic respondents (n=166)**

Rank	Motivation	Mean
1	To have fun	4.49
2	Rest and relaxation	4.46
3	Enjoy the tropical lifestyle	4.20
4	Experience the natural environment	4.13
5	Climate	4.10
6	Spend time with my family	4.09
7	The price matched my budget	3.80
8	Visit National Parks	3.65
9	Visit the Great Barrier Reef	3.49
10	Visit the Wet Tropics Rainforest	3.48
11	See Australian wildlife	3.45
12	Visit heritage and historical sites	3.26
13	Experience Aboriginal culture	3.15
14	Snorkelling or diving	3.14
15	Local community markets	3.08
16	Visit arts & cultural spaces	2.87
17	The event that I attended	2.71



**Table 5** shows the top motivation for international respondents was 'to have fun', followed by 'experience the natural environment', and 'visit the Great Barrier Reef'. The main motivations for this segment align with the iconic attractions and experiences that Cairns is known for internationally. International respondents ranked to 'experience Aboriginal culture', 'visit heritage and historical sites', 'local community markets', 'visit arts and cultural spaces' and 'the event I attended' as 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17 respectively.

*Table 5. Motives to visit the Cairns region for international respondents (n=71)*

Rank	Motivation	Mean
1	To have fun	4.66
2	Experience the natural environment	4.41
3	Visit the Great Barrier Reef	4.39
4	See Australian wildlife	4.36
5	Snorkelling or diving	4.11
6	Rest and relaxation	4.07
7	Enjoy the tropical lifestyle	4.05
8	Visit the Wet Tropics Rainforest	4.02
9	Visit National Parks	3.95
10	Climate	3.88
11	Spend time with my family	3.48
12	Experience Aboriginal culture	3.46
13	The price matched my budget	3.45
14	Visit heritage and historical sites	3.39
15	Local community markets	3.20
16	Visit arts & cultural spaces	2.89
17	The event that I attended	2.54



## DISPERSAL AND VISITATION AROUND THE CAIRNS REGION

Respondents were asked to indicate the locations, including specific sites, they visited whilst in the Cairns region. Results are shown in **Table 6**. Kuranda and Port Douglas were frequented by at least two-thirds of first-time domestic respondents, while repeat domestic and international respondents preferred the Cairns Esplanade and Cairns Central Shopping Centre.

While visitation was low to several arts and cultural venues, there were preferences between segments. The Cairns Art Gallery was visited by approximately 10% of domestic respondents, regardless of visit, but only half as many international respondents. The Court House was more popular among domestic respondents rather than internationals, while the Tanks Art Centre was more highly frequented by repeat domestic respondents.

Table 6. Locations visited by domestic and international respondents (n=326)

Place visited	Domestic First-time n=92	Domestic Repeat n=166	International n=71
Kuranda	69.6%	42.2%	56.3%
Port Douglas	67.4%	53.6%	56.3%
Cairns Central Shopping Centre	59.8%	59.0%	64.8%
Cairns Esplanade	58.7%	65.1%	63.4%
Skyrail	58.7%	26.5%	45.1%
Kuranda Scenic Railway	55.4%	21.7%	38.0%
The Daintree	50.0%	29.5%	45.1%
Palm Cove	48.9%	47.6%	36.6%
The Night Markets	44.6%	33.1%	31.0%
Mossman Gorge	43.5%	31.9%	35.2%
The Lagoon	23.9%	22.3%	25.4%
Rusty's Market	23.9%	21.1%	22.5%
The Aquarium	21.7%	19.3%	11.3%
The Botanic Gardens	16.3%	19.9%	18.3%
Atherton Tablelands	13.0%	24.1%	12.7%
Cairns Art Gallery	9.8%	10.8%	5.6%
Court House	6.5%	7.2%	1.4%
Mission Beach	5.4%	7.2%	15.5%
Cairns Museum	5.4%	3.6%	2.8%
Performing Arts Precinct (CPAC, Munro Martin Park)	4.3%	3.0%	2.8%
Tanks Arts Centre	3.3%	6.0%	1.4%
Cairns Library	3.3%	2.4%	5.6%
Tjapukai*	0.0%	1.2%	2.8%

## PARTICIPATION IN ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Respondents were asked about their participation in arts and cultural activities during their visit to the Cairns region. Results are reported in **Table 7**. Of the sample, 14% indicated participating in an arts and cultural activities, with higher participation by repeat domestic respondents. This participation is slightly higher than pre-COVID rates (11%) and during COVID (6%).

Table 7. Participation in arts and cultural activities (n=326)

Respondents	Count %
First-time domestic	12 (4%)
Repeat domestic	22 (7%)
International	11 (3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>45 (14%)</b>

Respondents were asked to name the arts or cultural activities they participated in. **Table 8** shows the range of activities reported by respondents, with Aboriginal arts and cultural experiences the most popular. This corresponds with previous findings that demonstrated the popularity of Indigenous arts and culture activities and experiences. Several local events and experiences (Festival Parade and Art Gallery, and Carols in the Park) were also identified with arts and culture, as well as examples where the link to arts and culture is less clear (Lagoon at Cairns and laser light reef experience). These responses are included in the report to indicate the types of activities some respondents appear to regard as arts or culture related.

Overall, the results indicate that Indigenous arts and cultural activities were more popular than other arts and cultural events. This may reflect the commercial nature of the Indigenous arts and cultural activities. Several of the other arts and cultural activities mentioned by respondents are either free, do not appear on commercial tourism booking web platforms or respondents did not recall the exact name of the activity such as galleries and markets.



Table 8. Arts and cultural activities participated in

Activity	Domestic First-time n=91	Domestic Repeat n=166	International n=71
Festival Parade (festival not specified)	1	0	0
Art Gallery (location not specified)	1	2	3
Cairns Art Gallery	0	0	1
Aboriginal cultural activities	5	1	0
Japanese Festival	0	1	0
Skyrail - Pamagirri Tour	1	1	0
Cairns Festival	0	3	0
Torres Strait Islander Tombstone Ceremony	0	2	0
Daintree Aboriginal Tour	1	1	0
Daintree River Cruise	0	1	0
Port Douglas Food Festival	0	1	0
Green Island	0	1	0
Laser light reef experience	1	0	0
Lights in centre (not specified)	0	1	0
Mossman Gorge Nature Walk	1	0	0
Smoking ceremony	0	1	0
Walkabout Adventure Tour	0	1	1
Carols in the Park	0	0	1
Down Under Tour	0	0	1
Great Barrier Reef	0	0	1
The Lagoon at Cairns	0	0	1

### SATISFACTION WITH ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Respondents who participated in an arts and cultural activity were asked to indicate how satisfied they were on a scale of 1 = very dissatisfied to 5 = very satisfied. There was an overwhelmingly positive response, with 43.5% very satisfied and 41% satisfied with their experience. A small percentage (4%) indicated being dissatisfied with their arts and cultural experience. Comparison of satisfaction by segments showed overall high satisfaction rates, which tended to be slightly higher for first-time domestic and international respondents.

## ADDITIONAL ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Respondents were asked about the types of arts and culture they would like to see offered in the Cairns region. Open ended responses were analysed and grouped by main themes, shown in **Table 9**. Most responses indicated demand for more Aboriginal cultural experiences, of various forms, as well as performance art experiences, local and accessible city experiences. A few responses also referred to outdoor recreation experiences as well as performing arts.

Table 9: Additional arts and cultural activities

Activity	First-time visitor
Aboriginal cultral experiences	Aboriginal culture
	Indigenous dancing
	Indigenous activities
	More Aboriginal experiences, food, bushtucjers, dance, smoking ceremonies
	More Aboriginal run activities
	More Indigenous tours under 4 hours long
	Non-gammin blak tours, it's hard to know what's good for the community and what's not
	We'd have loved a local/Cairns based easy access Aboriginal history tour
Performances	Classical Music
	Theatre
	Dancing
	Performing Arts
Outdoor recreation	Camping activities in the region
	Ocean knowledge
	Reef tour snorkelling
	More theme parks for the youth to prevent crime
Music 'In the city'	Live music
	Street music
Local arts/culture	Expension of local arts/artist walks
Visual arts (free)	Free light art like Van Gogh
Culinary	Cooking classes

## PROMOTION OF CAIRNS' ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Respondents were also asked their opinion on if Cairns was actively promoting arts and culture activities. While 44% indicated 'Yes', Cairns was promoting arts and culture, another 44% were not sure. No differences were identified when comparing responses from domestic and international respondent segments.

## RATING OF CAIRNS AS AN ARTS AND CULTURE DESTINATIONS

All respondents were asked to rate Cairns as an arts and culture destination. While 23% indicated 'no opinion', 35% indicated it was 'very good', while another 31% indicated it was 'good'. There were no differences across domestic and international respondent segments.

## DISCUSSION

Results outlined in **Table 2** show that over a third of domestic and two-thirds of international respondents considered the availability of cultural opportunities as an important factor in their selection of holiday destinations. However, **Tables 4, 5** and **6** indicate that arts and cultural motivations, such as 'experience Aboriginal culture' and 'visiting arts and cultural spaces', were not ranked as significant motivations for visiting Cairns. This may explain why there is a much lower level of reported participation in these activities, as outlined in **Table 7**. Interestingly, when asked what types of additional arts and cultural activities they would like to see in Cairns, respondents indicated more Aboriginal cultural experiences as well as outdoor activities and performances.

The results indicate an apparent gap between the importance of the availability of cultural activities as a motivation for selecting a destination and participation in events and activities of this type in Cairns. This may be explained by the finding that highlighted how almost half of the sample thought that Cairns was promoting arts and culture, while an equal percentage of respondents were 'not sure'. These findings in this report indicate a lack of awareness, or a perceived lack of availability, around the types of arts and cultural activities in the Cairns region. Further research is required to provide insights into this problem.





# CASE STUDY

## CAIRNS' IMAGE AS AN ARTS AND CULTURAL DESTINATION OF NORTHERN AUSTRALIA: A PLACE BRAND CO-CREATION STUDY WITH YOUNG ARTISTS

SoARTS spoke with Yee Mun Loong, a James Cook University Master of Philosophy (2024) research student, who in this interview shares insights into his study of place brand co-creation with young artists. Yee Mun elaborates the background and objectives of his research, as well as the methods he used to co-create an arts and culture image of Cairns. Yee Mun can be contacted at [yemun.loong@my.jcu.edu.au](mailto:yemun.loong@my.jcu.edu.au).

### Can you share with us what prompted you to conduct the study?

I remember a few pivotal experiences demonstrating how place branding can be highly relevant for cities and regions. Over the years, I have found that embracing and weaving the concept of arts and culture into the fabric of cities can result in a more liveable and enjoyable place. There has also been an escalating recognition of, and reliance upon, arts and culture as a means for cities to

differentiate and brand themselves from other places. This is of the view that a place can distinguish itself through the unique culture, values, and characteristics of local peoples. Aiming to become the Arts and Cultural Capital of Northern Australia (ACCNA), Cairns is an internationally renowned destination endowed with images of natural beauty and an attractive lifestyle. From a place branding perspective, the image of Cairns as a popular and well-known holiday destination is more than the current impressions and perceptions of 'reef and rainforest' as it is commonly communicated and perceived. However, it could be argued that Cairns has progressed immensely in the last 20 years and change is noticeable, and such transformation is evidenced at the street level. These multi-dimensional qualities of the evolving image and identity of Cairns require further deliberation, as cities by nature are constantly in a state of change. As such, the study argues that to capture the attention and raise the awareness of different audiences in destination branding, Cairns should foster and even solicit a multitude of images and identities reflecting and capturing the plurality of the existing residents' place experiences, meanings and articulations.



### What are the main objectives of the study?

This study investigates how the image of a city can be enhanced and re-imagined through co-creation with its residents via the perspectives of young artists. The research unpacks the evolving arts and culture images of Cairns in a *hypothetical* place brand co-creation process with artists through meaning-making dialogues as expressed and manifested via place experiences in interviews and focus groups. The concept of place brand co-creation elaborated here explores the relations between people, meanings, and the physical characteristics of places as an ongoing, open-ended awareness creation process. In this sense, artists as residents play an essential role in place brand co-creation as they live and interact with the city. This highlights the significance of internal stakeholders such as the residents and stresses that place brands are not established through conventional communications but are co-created by people through actions and interactions collectively.

### What research method you employed?

The study is structured as a multi-method exploratory, visual analysis to understand the meanings and experiences young artists ascribe to Cairns' arts and culture places. Specifically, the research uses photo-elicitation, semi-structured interviews and a focus-group co-creation workshop with ten (10) young artists. This process of dialogue and knowledge creation with young artists shaped collective, co-created concepts and meanings of Cairns as the Arts and Cultural Destination of Northern Australia.

### What are your key research findings?

The voices of local artists are crucial in the bottom-up place brand co-creation. By understanding their mental and photographic images provided for this research, the findings revealed that the collective imagery of Cairns' arts and culture characters coalesce under the three themes of *people, environment, and way of life*. These co-created collective imagery and narratives of *people,*

*environment, and way of life* constitute the backbone of artists' place stories with place experiences and meanings. As such, it is the stories that originate from the people living in the destination that could be most crucial in influencing visitor perceptions and impacting travel decisions. Hence, the research suggests that these *place stories* shared by the artists could potentially contribute to the foundation of a wider enhanced place brand narrative and place brand image of the Cairns region beyond the current image of 'reef and rainforest'. Place branding should place tourism destinations within socio-cultural contexts and put the residents' place meanings and experiences into the production of place. The findings also support the current trend towards leveraging real people and experiences in place branding communications, moving away from overly fabricated or polished narratives.

### How relevant is your study to future place branding in Cairns?

It is apparent that building and maintaining a successful place brand image or identity is not an easy task as genuine place branding takes time to attain. This study has great potential to fill a gap in the understanding of the arts and culture image of Cairns growing from the community, ground-up grassroots level. In particular, it contributes to the foundational place branding framework for a future city's re-imagining initiatives with the potential to profile real people as citizen/resident brand ambassadors. Having outlined the young artists' arts and culture image of Cairns, perhaps future research could incorporate wider stakeholder participation so that broader perspectives are voiced and represented. Only by understanding how these images are experienced and shared can we gather a more rigorous picture of the arts and culture scene of Cairns. This is in line with the idea that place brands should be developed by multiple stakeholders, including residents, is becoming more and more prevalent in academia and practice. The diversity of place and people was considered an asset that contributes to the development of unique and strong place brand.



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