CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN NSW

NSW GOVERNMENT CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE ACTION PLAN 2018
MESSAGE FROM THE NSW PREMIER AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

Culture matters. The values, histories and aspirations that we as a people and a nation treasure are expressed as our culture. Culture is dynamic – ever changing and sets us apart from other nations, even those with similar values and histories.

Australia’s culture reaches back more than 60,000 years. It encompasses the vibrant presence of the world’s oldest continuous culture, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and is complemented and enhanced by a multicultural population from all over the world.

In New South Wales, nine out of 10 residents take part in the arts every year. Access to this culture requires infrastructure, including open air public spaces, community halls, theatres, museums, galleries, archives, libraries and digital platforms.

To maximise our enjoyment and participation, this infrastructure must not only be accessible, it must be contemporary and fit for purpose. As a government we are determined to raise New South Wales’ cultural infrastructure to world class standards, ensuring that as we go forward, we maintain and expand our arts infrastructure on a sound and long-term basis.
In order to achieve this, we will develop a comprehensive Cultural Infrastructure Plan. This Plan will be based on relevant policies and strategies, such as 'Create in New South Wales: New South Wales Arts and Cultural Policy Framework', coupled with consultation across the state.

Thanks to strong fiscal management since 2011 the NSW Government is making a significant investment to rejuvenate arts and cultural infrastructure across the state. Projects already committed or commenced include:

- $100 million for the Regional Cultural Fund;
- Major investment in Parramatta as the heart of Western Sydney, where the Riverside Theatres and the relocated Powerhouse Museum will be core elements of an exciting new cultural precinct;
- $228 million for the Sydney Opera House Stage One Renewal and safety, accessibility and venue enhancement;
- $207 million for the Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct;
- $344 million for the Sydney Modern Project expanding the Art Gallery of New South Wales, including $100 million of private sector funding.

This suite of investments is the biggest commitment to cultural infrastructure since construction began on the Sydney Opera House in 1959. These historic investments address the issues raised in Infrastructure NSW’s advice. This will commence the process of supporting an increasingly dynamic, thriving arts and culture sector in New South Wales. One that makes a major contribution to employment and the state’s economy, that attracts and delivers a great visitor experience and is central to the quality of life we enjoy.

However, the job isn’t finished yet. We want to ensure new investment is shared across the state and that arts, screen and culture in Western Sydney and regional New South Wales are supported and have the chance to flourish.

The advice from Infrastructure NSW (INSW) is a starting point for the development of our Plan. INSW has commended the NSW Government for the progress made to date and acknowledged that the investment of $1.5 billion to $2.0 billion recommended in their advice is a minimum level of necessary expenditure, not a cap. It is likely that new worthwhile investments will be identified.

To identify new investments with social and economic benefits we must ensure the whole New South Wales community is involved. We will consult with the arts and cultural community, local government, business and consumers – the people who buy the tickets, go to the shows and visit the exhibitions. The more collaboration between the community and the cultural sector we have in this process, the better our Plan will be. We invite your involvement to develop this Plan together.

The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian MP
Premier

The Hon. Don Harwin MLC
Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts
Leader of the NSW Government in the Upper House and Vice-President of the Executive Council
INFRASTRUCTURE NSW’S ADVICE

New South Wales is renowned for its culture and creativity.

Infrastructure NSW’s Cultural Infrastructure Strategy 2016: Advice to the NSW Government makes a compelling case for additional investment in cultural infrastructure to nurture communities, support innovation, facilitate economic development and play a part in urban renewal and activation of precincts. This advice sets out evidence that more investment is needed to bring our cultural facilities up to the world class standard we expect in New South Wales.

This advice lays the foundation for a strategic long-term and secure investment approach and stronger partnerships that deliver world class arts, screen and cultural outcomes for the people of New South Wales. It also highlights real economic benefits such as:

- creating jobs and driving innovation;
- attracting visitors to New South Wales;
- defining distinctive and appealing urban culture; and
- supporting urban renewal and regional economic development.

The NSW Government welcomes this advice. We will build on the framework it provides by consulting with the community and cultural sector about future priorities and new projects before we respond formally to Infrastructure NSW’s advice. We want to make sure our long-term plan for cultural infrastructure benefits from this feedback.

Since INSW’s advice was received we have established the Cultural Infrastructure Program Management Office. This office, the first of its kind, is dedicated to the planning and delivery of cultural infrastructure, to enable a sector-wide, coordinated approach to cultural infrastructure in New South Wales.

Figure 1. Key themes of INSW’s advice

**Keep pace: asset renewal and technological improvements**

Investments to address a backlog of asset renewal and maintenance to keep pace with fast moving trends and ensure NSW’s cultural institutions are maintained and preserved.

**Achieve excellence: modernise and upgrade state cultural institutions**

Staged infrastructure renewal of the state’s cultural institutions to meet performance standards and expectations of the people and visitors to NSW.

**Leverage opportunities: build NSW’s competitive strengths**

New investments to address gaps and allow NSW to take up emerging opportunities in Sydney, Western Sydney and regional NSW.

**A new Cultural Infrastructure Investment Framework**

Implementation of a coordinated approach through better planning across the arts and cultural sector, greater fiscal discipline and a much stronger emphasis on providing significant public benefit and achieving value for money.

Source: Summarised from INSW Cultural Infrastructure Strategy: Advice to the NSW Government 2016.
A roadmap to 2025 to sustain and develop a vibrant cultural landscape.

The NSW Government Plan will take the state forward to 2025 with clear priorities and measurable outcomes. In the 10 years beyond 2025 the NSW Government will set further goals and aspirations, shaped by the learnings and experiences between now and 2025. This 2025+10 Plan will demonstrate the NSW Government’s commitment to the arts and cultural sector by delivering world class cultural infrastructure in the Asia Pacific region.

The NSW Government has already acted on many of INSW’s recommendations such as investing in significant cultural infrastructure across the state to deliver social and economic benefits for all New South Wales communities. These commitments are part of the NSW Government’s Cultural Infrastructure Action Plan 2017-18 and are the first step towards revitalising and improving the quality and competitiveness of our cultural sector.

Key priorities such as the Regional Cultural Fund and the Sydney Modern Project are already committed by the NSW Government and are underway. However, the NSW Government will need to look beyond committed projects to ensure future cultural infrastructure investments enrich the lives of everyone in New South Wales. Acting now will ensure development of a pipeline of new projects that meet community needs and deliver on the NSW Government’s vision.

The NSW Government will also place high priority on ensuring regional New South Wales receives a suitable share of cultural infrastructure investment and the social and economic benefits it delivers. The Regional Cultural Fund is an important first step, however to support future investments a longer-term plan is needed. A key focus of the Plan will be to map future needs in regional New South Wales, alongside Western Sydney and metropolitan areas.

The vision for the New South Wales Cultural Infrastructure Plan is that it will:

- deliver a strategic, long-term and secure approach to investment in cultural infrastructure that reflects community needs and expectations;
- help develop distinctive cultural infrastructure and precincts that support creativity, participation and job growth in metropolitan and regional New South Wales;
- support delivery of cultural infrastructure through stronger partnerships that are sustainable, thriving and have social and economic benefits.
**Priority Projects Already Committed**

- Regional Cultural Fund ($100 million)
- Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences New Museum in Western Sydney
- Parramatta Riverside Theatres joint venture
- Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct ($207 million)
- Sydney Opera House Stage One Renewal and safety, accessibility and venue enhancement ($228 million)
- The Sydney Modern Project ($344 million, including $100 million in private contributions)

**Regional Cultural Fund**

Investing in arts and culture in regional New South Wales supports regional economic development and helps ensure regional communities remain attractive and vibrant places to live. Announced in June 2017, the Regional Cultural Fund will invest $100 million over four years to support cultural infrastructure projects in regional New South Wales (local councils outside Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong). Projects may include new or refurbished local cultural facilities, digitisation of collections, repurposing existing infrastructure and projects that support touring exhibitions and community cultural engagement.

**Western Sydney – Parramatta Cultural Precinct**

The NSW Government has committed to building a New Museum in Western Sydney, which will be the flagship campus of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences. To further support development of a vibrant Parramatta Cultural Precinct, the NSW Government has entered into an agreement with the City of Parramatta Council to invest in new cultural infrastructure in Parramatta, including the redevelopment of the much-loved Riverside Theatres. City of Parramatta Council has agreed to invest $40 million into arts and culture in Parramatta over a 20-year period.
Art Gallery of NSW – the Sydney Modern Project

The Art Gallery of New South Wales’ Sydney Modern Project will transform the Gallery into a 21st-century art museum that will inspire both local and international audiences. The project will serve future generations of local and international artists and provide visitors with new and expanded spaces for art, live performance and film. Dedicated spaces and facilities for learning and participation, as well as enhanced digital capabilities will expand engagement with schools, regional communities, artists and visitors. These new spaces will also enable New South Wales to host more major international exhibitions and increase capacity to share the Gallery’s art collection.

Sydney Opera House Stage One Renewal and Joan Sutherland Theatre Upgrade

The Sydney Opera House’s program of renewal works will ensure the world-famous performing arts centre and Australia’s premier tourist destination meets the future needs and expectations of audiences, artists and the 8.2 million people who visit each year.

Upgrades will replace technology and machinery that has reached the end of its working life, improve acoustics and accessibility, open new areas to the public and ensure the Opera House is properly equipped to welcome as many visitors as possible.

Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct

The refurbished Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct will be a vibrant hub for performing arts that will enhance Sydney’s reputation as a global cultural capital. The redevelopment will double the arts and cultural offering at Walsh Bay, including the adaptive re-use of Pier 2/3 providing new arts facilities such as a 200-seat and a 350+ seat theatre/performance space, five rehearsal rooms, a heritage commercial events/art space for the Sydney Writers’ Festival, Biennale of Sydney and a range of artistic events.

This will provide resident companies with a world class base from which they can increase engagement with communities in Sydney and across New South Wales.
NEXT STEPS: DEVELOPING A NSW CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Much has changed in the cultural infrastructure landscape since INSW prepared their Cultural Infrastructure Strategy advice. The research and analysis supporting the recommendations will be updated to ensure it supports the current and future state of cultural infrastructure in New South Wales.

Community and stakeholder consultations along with updated research and discovery will inform development of the NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan (the Plan). The Plan will address the needs of the community and cultural sector, as well as emerging trends, challenges and opportunities through to 2025 and beyond. The Plan will also address gaps in INSW’s advice to ensure comprehensive coverage of cultural infrastructure priorities across the state, including regional New South Wales, Western Sydney and metropolitan areas.

This will ensure a principled, transparent approach to help guide future planning and investments in cultural infrastructure. The newly formed Cultural Infrastructure Program Management Office will lead development of the Plan, for release in 2018. Figure 2 outlines the phases of the Plan.

Figure 2. Phases of a NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan

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<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Strategic Priorities</th>
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<td>Engagement</td>
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<td>• Centralised project management</td>
<td>• Community and cultural sector</td>
<td>• Review, mapping and international benchmarking</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Continuing learning and evaluation</td>
<td>• Submissions, surveys, pop-ups, and workshops</td>
<td>• Identifying opportunities and priorities</td>
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NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan

- Objectives and principles for investment in cultural infrastructure
- Long term investment plan to 2025 covering short, medium and long term projects in Sydney, Western Sydney, regional NSW and other metropolitan areas
- A framework to guide investment in line with strategic priorities and ensure economic and social benefits
- Monitoring and evaluation of impacts of investment in cultural infrastructure
- A focus on each of the 14 Regional Arts Development Organisation regions, including analysis of existing infrastructure and needs

Create in NSW: Arts and Cultural Policy Framework – Excellence, Access, Strength: Developing a sustainable and resilient cultural sector, equitable distribution of resources, investment and support for Western Sydney and regional NSW

State Priorities: Increase cultural participation by 15%; Building infrastructure

State Infrastructure Strategy Update 2014: Need for a standardised cultural investment framework and a broader cultural infrastructure strategy

Regional Development Framework: Quality services and infrastructure in regional NSW; supporting growing regional centres; activating economic potential
ENGAGEMENT

Actions

- Community engagement about new and future projects including pop ups and workshops across Sydney, Western Sydney, regional New South Wales and other metropolitan areas (Newcastle and Wollongong)
- Invitation for written submissions and an ongoing feedback portal
- Targeted engagement with the cultural sector

The NSW Government will engage with the community, cultural sector, local government and business to ensure new and future projects reflect community and sector needs and expectations.

We will engage with communities and stakeholders about:

- Objectives and principles for new cultural infrastructure investment;
- The value they place on cultural infrastructure and its benefits;
- Their priorities for cultural infrastructure investment and how new investments should be prioritised;
- Additional cultural infrastructure needs or gaps in Sydney CBD, Western Sydney, other metropolitan areas and regional New South Wales.

We want this engagement to be as wide-ranging as possible to allow exploration of innovative ideas across our museums, galleries, performing arts centres and libraries. It should encourage dialogue with all facets of arts and cultural activity and should be accessible to all members of our community.

We will structure this consultation process to ensure maximum engagement of both the arts and cultural sector and community across regional New South Wales, Western Sydney and metropolitan areas. This process will be complemented by an online survey and portal for feedback to provide an understanding of gaps and opportunities to be addressed. A presentation will be prepared to inform facilitated discussions and ensure the final Plan is integrated with other related NSW Government plans and strategic priorities.
RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY

Actions

- Update research and analysis supporting INSW’s advice
- International and national benchmarking
- Research on the value of different types of cultural infrastructure to the community and its contribution to the New South Wales economy
- Mapping existing infrastructure to identify gaps and opportunities

Evidence to deepen understanding of investment needs and impacts is critical to ensuring the NSW Government can make the best financial decisions.

Benchmarking how New South Wales’ cultural infrastructure compares to other states and internationally will be undertaken to understand competitive strengths and weaknesses. We will map existing cultural infrastructure to identify gaps and draw on research about the value of cultural infrastructure and the impacts it can have for the community. A study on the value of cultural infrastructure in New South Wales will help us understand the social and economic benefits of this infrastructure.

Digital technologies present us with opportunities to bring the state’s extensive and vibrant collections from libraries, museums and archives, live productions, educational resources and interactive experiences to people across the state. While some cultural institutions have commenced digitisation projects, there remain significant, statewide barriers to digital platforms, particularly for our regions. Work has commenced in scoping a holistic approach to digitisation for the state and the possibilities are both exciting and challenging.
PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK

Actions

- Implement Prioritisation Framework
- Establish governance arrangements

The Investment Framework recommended by INSW will be refined, strengthened and integrated with the long-term planning processes of the NSW Treasury. This tool will ensure all projects are assessed and prioritised against a consistent set of objectives (see Figure 3). An expert Independent Cultural Infrastructure Advisory Panel with widely drawn membership and clear accountability will oversee application of this framework.

Figure 3. Prioritisation Framework

### OBJECTIVES

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<th>Assessment against a standard set of performance outcomes</th>
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<td>Contribution to good development outcomes</td>
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While there are limits on the amount of public monies available, we will work to ensure proposals incorporate clear evidence they can access additional sources of funding, particularly from the commercial sector and philanthropy. All projects must be committed to design excellence and expected to include the active involvement of the NSW Government Architect.
Dear Minister Harwin,

In October 2016, Infrastructure NSW submitted the Cultural Infrastructure Strategy: Advice to the NSW Government setting out our advice on the infrastructure investment priorities to enhance the State's cultural sector over the next 10-20 years.

Since our report was submitted, the Government has made substantial progress on cultural infrastructure investments, all of which are in line with the direction recommended in our report. Recent commitments include the following:

- $344 million has been allocated to deliver the Sydney Modern Project, including a $100 million contribution from the private sector.
- Heads of Agreement have been reached with the City of Parramatta Council to acquire land for a New Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences and to establish a joint venture for the Riverside Theatres Redevelopment, a combined commitment of $140 million.
- $100 million has been reserved over four years for the Regional Cultural Fund, currently in its first year of delivery.
- A further $68 million has been allocated for the Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct, in addition to the $139 million already committed at the time of our report.
- Some $26 million has been allocated to improve accessibility, and for acoustic and operational upgrades, at the Sydney Opera House in addition to the $202 million already committed to the Opera House Stage One Renewal at the time when our advice was submitted.

In addition, the NSW Government has committed to the establishment of the flagship campus for the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences in Western Sydney. I understand that an extended business case for this project is close to finalisation.

The Government is to be commended on these significant investments which clearly demonstrated the Government’s commitment to securing the future vitality and competitiveness of our important cultural institutions and assets.

I also understand that, in line with our advice, a Cultural Infrastructure Program Management Office has been established within the Department of Planning & Environment to provide a coordinated approach to cultural infrastructure planning and investment. The Office will play a key role in planning for the other project priorities identified in Cultural Infrastructure Strategy. As planning work progresses, in line with good practice, it is to be expected that some of the preliminary funding estimates we provided in our report may change as final business cases are completed.

Our report estimated that total investment in the order of $1.5-$2.0 billion is needed over the next 20 years to address immediate deficits in the condition and capacity of the State’s key cultural institutions and to ensure that they continue to provide the quality experience expected by contemporary visitors and patrons. This represented a minimum level of necessary expenditure, not a cap. It is likely that, as the Government develops and applies the Cultural Infrastructure Investment Framework recommended in our report, new worthwhile investments in the cultural sector will be identified as future priorities.

Minister, I hope that this letter provides a useful update for you and your Ministerial colleagues in framing the Government’s formal response to Infrastructure NSW’s recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Bradley AM
Chairman
Infrastructure NSW
School Holiday Workshop at Sydney Dance Company. Photo: Pedro Greig

TAKE A LOOK

To view the Infrastructure NSW’s Cultural Infrastructure Strategy 2016: Advice to the NSW Government visit: www.arts.nsw.gov.au
CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN NSW

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
Cultural Infrastructure Program Management Office
Level 3, 320 Pitt Street Sydney NSW 2000
Email: ci@arts.nsw.gov.au
www.arts.nsw.gov.au