NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework

Create in NSW
Art this way. Photo © Alex Wisser 2013.
Uncle John Kelly opening the 2014 Saltwater Freshwater Festival, on Dunghuti country, with a smoking ceremony. Photo © Cassandra Sutton.
NSW will be known for its bold and exciting arts and culture that engage our community and reflect our rich diversity.

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'Arts and culture stimulate and engage peoples’ individual creativity. They build perspectives, creative thinking and ideas of humanity, human beauty and accomplishment. And they tap into parts of ourselves that work, home life and traffic jams do not—inspiring and lifting our sense of self. These are relatively high and largely unmeasurable outcomes and yet we know them to be true.'

We have a bold vision for our arts and cultural community, built on the mutually reinforcing ambitions of excellence, access and strength. The actions in this policy framework will extend the reputation of NSW as the leading state for arts and culture, and will support job creation and the visitor economy.

We are proud of our artists and our arts and cultural organisations. We will partner with them as they explore, create and challenge us to see things differently. We also want to ensure the treasures held by our State Cultural Institutions are accessible to everyone across NSW.

The NSW Government, through this policy framework, will play an important role in supporting the development of excellent arts and culture over the next 10 years. Support for artists and arts and cultural organisations as well as the development of major infrastructure is central to our vision. We will ensure the sector is resilient and strong.

Our policy framework seeks to build and sustain better partnerships. It is a deliberate whole-of-government strategy with State agencies working closely together on many actions. The framework also recognises that arts and culture provide a platform for international engagement and exchange, with the ability to raise NSW’s global profile.

But we know government alone cannot fulfil our ambitions. We are open to new ideas and investment models, and we invite business, private donors and the broader community to work with us.

This is a policy framework for all of NSW, from Greater Sydney to regional and rural communities. We recognise that NSW is home to 40% of Australia’s total creative industries workforce. The value of this is economic, cultural and social. We recognise that the experience of arts and culture is deeply personal, and we want everyone to have opportunities to participate in the artistic life of our community.

Through this policy framework our Government will help build a great future for arts and culture in NSW.
This is a policy framework for contemporary New South Wales. It draws on the strengths and ambitions of our residents, artists and cultural workers across the diverse communities of Metropolitan Sydney, Western Sydney and Regional NSW.

This whole-of-government policy framework complements and reinforces the NSW Government’s Visitor Economy Action Plan and Creative Industries Action Plan. It also supports our regional and urban development strategies, which recognise how arts and culture are intrinsic to transforming NSW into a global creative leader.

The NSW Government invests over $300 million every year in direct support of arts and culture throughout the State. Our focus is on a clear direction for the future. Our ambitions — excellence, access and strength — will guide our actions and investment over the coming years.

The policy framework commits to a suite of immediate actions towards these ambitions — but this is just the start. We will introduce new actions over time, building on our foundations. Effective investment is a cornerstone of our approach. We will undertake a rigorous process of research and business case development for prioritising investment decisions into the future.
Casula Powerhouse installation by Mehwish Iqbal, The Silence of the Sea 2012, paper and fishing line.
Excellence

Our ambition for excellence will be achieved through a focus on:

Innovation
We will support and encourage our artists, organisations and State Cultural Institutions to take risks and extend the boundaries of their artforms and practices. Wider use of digital platforms will deepen the opportunity for access and artistic collaboration for people across NSW. New pathways and opportunities will draw upon NSW’s great strength — our cultural and linguistic diversity.

Leadership
We will champion leadership across the arts and cultural network. We have ambitious plans for our State Cultural Institutions — extending their reputation and impact, and exploring deeper and closer connections with the communities of NSW.

Aboriginal arts and culture
Aboriginal arts and culture in NSW is vibrant, distinctive and contemporary. We will extend opportunities to support the professional development of Aboriginal artists and cultural workers. We will also support Aboriginal communities’ ongoing connection with culture and language.

International connections
NSW stories will be told around the world. Arts and culture, already embedded in the identity of our State, will become essential to our thriving visitor economy. International exhibitions, partnerships and exchanges will grow, supporting and extending Sydney’s reputation as a global city, and progressing artists’ careers internationally.

Revitalising infrastructure
Cultural infrastructure enables the people of NSW to access the arts, contributes to urban renewal, and builds the State’s national and international reputation, supporting robust local and visitor economies. Arts and cultural facilities and precincts are essential platforms for creation and presentation for artists and cultural workers. We will scope opportunities to renew our cultural infrastructure and ensure we have sound business cases for development, prioritising opportunities with the largest impact to deliver our vision for the people of NSW. Our plans to transform our flagship cultural infrastructure, enhance arts precincts and support new opportunities will require private and public funding partnerships and innovative funding models.

Vision
NSW will be known for its bold and exciting arts and culture that engage our community and reflect our rich diversity.

Ambitions

Regional NSW

Access

Sydney

Strength
**Access**

Our ambition for access will be achieved through a focus on:

**Participation**
Arts and culture are embraced by many people in NSW — as creators, workers, volunteers and audience members. We will increase opportunities for people to take part in and shape arts and culture. We will enable new arts experiences outside of the traditional spaces of galleries and theatres, as well as new ways of engaging to enhance enjoyment and learning opportunities. More than ever, our State Cultural Institutions will make NSW’s extraordinary treasures accessible to the wider community through touring, educational outreach and partnerships.

**Arts for young people**
We value the powerful and positive impact that arts and cultural participation can have on young people. We will work to broaden creative learning, and arts and cultural career opportunities. We will develop a deeper dialogue with young people about reshaping our cultural life, empowering them to contribute to our plans and priorities.

**Strength**

Our ambition for strength will be achieved through a focus on:

**Professional development**
We want NSW to remain a location of choice for the mobile creative workforce. We will enable artists and creative practitioners to have new opportunities to grow their practice, connect with their peers and build sustainable careers.

**Business sustainability**
We will support and encourage the State Cultural Institutions and arts and cultural organisations to be entrepreneurial, exploring new markets, alternative investment models and deeper relationships with the business sector. Streamlining and simplifying funding, and reforming regulatory and statutory requirements, will enable arts organisations and institutions to prosper. We will also explore opportunities for enterprise partnerships and social impact investing.

**Networks and partnerships**
We will enable collaborations, interdisciplinary works and partnerships between artists and arts organisations. Embedded throughout the policy framework is our new commitment to explore ways in which we can sustain and nurture engagement with arts and culture across agencies.

**Research and evaluation**
Improved understanding of the value and impact of arts and culture for the community and visitor economies, as well as the broader economy, is critical. We commit to evaluating the impact of actions in this policy framework to inform future directions.

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**Actions**

- Innovation
- Leadership
- Aboriginal Arts and Culture
- International Connections
- Revitalising Infrastructure
- Participation
- Arts for Young People
- Professional Development
- Business Sustainability
- Networks and Partnerships
- Research and Evaluation
NSW is home to a thriving arts and cultural sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUSTRALIA’S LARGEST PERFORMING ARTS SECTOR WITH 11 OF AUSTRALIA’S 28 MAJOR PERFORMING ARTS COMPANIES</th>
<th>59.3% OF ALL AUSTRALIANS EMPLOYED IN SCREEN PRODUCTION ARE BASED IN NSW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>PUBLIC AND REGIONAL GALLERIES</td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>PUBLIC AND REGIONAL MUSEUMS</td>
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<tr>
<th>AUSTRALIA’S LEADING MUSIC COMPANIES</th>
<th>AUSTRALIA’S LEADING THEATRE AND DANCE COMPANIES</th>
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<tr>
<td>AUSTRALIAN BRANDENBURG ORCHESTRA</td>
<td>BANGARRA DANCE THEATRE</td>
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<td>AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA</td>
<td>BELVOIR</td>
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<td>MUSICA VIVA AUSTRALIA</td>
<td>BELL SHAKESPEARE</td>
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<td>OPERA AUSTRALIA</td>
<td>SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY</td>
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<td>SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA</td>
<td>SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY</td>
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<td>THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET</td>
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| 225 LOCAL LIBRARIES IN REGIONAL NSW | 290 COMMUNITY-RUN MUSEUMS |
that invites participation and...

5 MILLION people attend small-to-medium museum and gallery events in NSW annually.

2 MILLION attendees at major NSW arts festivals annually.

129,900 arts and heritage volunteers across NSW.

9 out of 10 NSW residents take part in the arts every year.

contributes to our economic growth.

$1.5 BILLION NSW screen production business annual income.

NSW companies generated 81% ($607M) of all film and television drama production in Australia in 2013-14.

42% ($351M) of all Australian film and television drama production took place in NSW in 2013-14.

NSW is #1 for live performance revenue in Australia.

8.3 BILLION dollars was spent in 2013 by cultural and heritage visitors.

Almost $4.8 billion in business income was generated by NSW’s arts and cultural industries.

86 BILLION dollars contributed to Australia’s GDP through cultural and creative activity.

Data was correct at the time of publication.
Arts and culture are part of our lives in NSW, across a diverse range of people and their communities right around the State. Nine out of ten residents in NSW take part in the arts every year — an industry that generates almost $4.8 billion in annual business income for the State.

Recognising this, the NSW Government has developed action plans for three key regions:

- Regional NSW
- Western Sydney
- Metropolitan Sydney.

Our policy embraces the unique nature of each of these regions by focusing on the elements that are most important to their communities.
A policy for our diverse communities

Travel songs of sea and land, Shopfront Contemporary Arts and Performance, 2013. Photo © Lucy Parakhina.
Regional NSW

Regional NSW is the largest and most significant regional economy of any Australian state. Its diverse communities make up one-third of the State’s population.

Arts and cultural activity in Regional NSW is thriving — strongly self-determined and reflecting varied landscapes and cultures. Regional NSW has Australia’s most extensive network of art galleries and public libraries, and many dynamic performing arts and screen organisations. Hubs of community activity showcasing work by local, regional and touring artists, and acting as vital conduits for ideas and resource exchange include HotHouse Theatre, Northern Rivers Screenworks, Outback Theatre for Young People, and the Western Plains Cultural Centre.

Regional NSW also offers outstanding examples of contemporary infrastructure such as the Albury Regional Museum and Library, Four Winds Festival’s Windsong Pavilion in Bermagui, the Glasshouse in Port Macquarie and the new Margaret Olley Art Centre at the Tweed Regional Gallery.

The major regions of the Illawarra, Hunter and Central Coast are important centres of arts and culture. They are home to the Newcastle Art Gallery, Illawarra Performing Arts Centre, This is Not Art (TiNA) in Newcastle and training organisations such as the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA).

Arts and cultural programs drive many regional tourism strategies. Events such as the Tamworth Country Music Festival, Saltwater Freshwater Festival, the Byron Bay Writers’ Festival and the Byron Bay International Film Festival attract many visitors. Innovative new programs like the Kandos-based Cementa festival have a strong reputation across the State.

A network of 14 Regional Arts Boards works with local communities to provide essential support for arts practitioners. The Regional Arts Boards also work with Aboriginal Arts Development Officers to support the cultural life of their communities. The State Cultural Institutions and major performing arts companies regularly partner with regional organisations on tours, exhibitions and education programs.

The NSW Government has established an Economic Development Strategy for Regional NSW, which positions arts and culture as an important element of rebuilding the State’s economy. The strategy’s goals include increasing the value of the visitor economy, attracting foreign investment, supporting business growth and improving connectivity. Arts NSW will ensure that arts and culture are included in the Regional Action Plans developed in consultation with communities across NSW as part of the implementation of the Strategy.

Regional communities have specific challenges relating to professional development, infrastructure and audience engagement. This policy framework will broaden participation statewide, increase capacity of regional arts organisations and develop leadership. The NSW Government will develop links between organisations, communities and local governments — capitalising on current programs, practices, partnerships and opportunities.

Key actions include:

- collaborating with local governments in Regional NSW, with a focus on opportunities for creative hubs and cultural precincts
- enhancing performing arts touring by developing a Regional Partnerships and Touring Framework for the State Cultural Institutions
- supporting self-determined practice and creating professional development pathways for artists and for arts and cultural workers
- supporting the development of digital platforms to extend the reach of the State Cultural Institutions’ collections, programs and events to schools, universities, family historians, researchers, artists and cultural practitioners across NSW
- promoting opportunities for cultural tourism through Destination Management Planning (DMP) — in consultation with the Regional Arts Network and Destination NSW.
The Faces of the South West public art and online project aims to explore the realities of life in small towns. © Alicia McInnes (Wakool Shire) 2014.
Western Sydney

Western Sydney is one of the fastest-growing regions in Australia. It has 47% of Greater Sydney’s residents, and over the next 20 years, its population is expected to increase by 50% to over three million. Western Sydney is also one of the State’s most multicultural regions, with a population representing over half the world’s nations. It is also home to NSW’s largest population of Aboriginal people.

Western Sydney has an innovative arts and cultural sector, which is attracting new audiences and providing significant growth opportunities. State and local governments have invested significantly in the region to strengthen and expand the network of arts centres and cultural facilities.

Western Sydney is home to important arts facilities, including Bankstown Arts Centre, Blacktown Arts Centre, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Penrith Performing & Visual Arts Ltd and the Riverside Theatres, Parramatta. These centres present vibrant programs that draw upon the best of the region’s arts and culture to tell the stories of their communities. Western Sydney is also home to two Living Museums, Elizabeth Farm and Rouse Hill House and Farm.

Western Sydney’s opportunities — its size and diversity, the characteristics of its economy and the increasing pressure on relatively new infrastructure — are also its challenges. As one of the fastest-growing sectors of the State’s economy, the creative industries can play a part in developing the region. Supporting culturally relevant, accessible arts programs is the key to success in Western Sydney. This will provide opportunities for artists and cultural practitioners, and help future employment and urban renewal.

In supporting the growth of arts and culture in Western Sydney, the NSW Government will build on existing collaborations with local government and investigate new partnerships. We will also work with the State Cultural Institutions as they deepen their presence in Western Sydney.

In addition to community and government investment, the private sector now plays a critical role. This is demonstrated by the region’s first substantial philanthropic venture, the Crown Resorts Foundation’s new Western Sydney Arts Initiative.

Planning arts and cultural infrastructure for Western Sydney will be aligned to, and integrated within, broader strategic planning for liveable communities, employment opportunity and urban development. We will provide advice and support for local communities in the planning process, while local government leads the way. Acknowledging Western Sydney’s unique qualities and great creative promise, this policy framework includes specific actions to support growth across its subregions, harnessing potential and maximising opportunity.

Key actions include:

- mapping the arts and cultural landscape in Western Sydney to inform strategies, investment and infrastructure development decisions
- scoping cultural infrastructure opportunities in key Western Sydney centres
- investigating the relocation of the Powerhouse Museum to the Parramatta Cultural Precinct
- encouraging screen activity in Western Sydney, including scoping new infrastructure to enable screen production
- convening a Western Sydney arts and cultural roundtable with leading practitioners to enable responsive and effective policymaking
- increasing strategic investment in Western Sydney to grow arts opportunities and support local Aboriginal artists.
Sydney is the nation’s premier city. It is Australia’s economic capital and one of the world’s leading destinations.

Sydney drives NSW’s expanding cultural tourism landscape. Arts and culture are an increasingly key part of Sydney’s visitor economy. In 2013, cultural and heritage visitors spent $8.3 billion in NSW. Sydney is home to artists, arts organisations and creative industries, which contribute to financial growth and a global reputation as a vibrant, multicultural and highly liveable city.

Sydney’s arts and cultural ecosystem is layered with an interconnected network of artists and features a cluster of internationally significant organisations. Leading the way are the State Cultural Institutions — Sydney Opera House, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, the State Library of New South Wales and the Australian Museum. Their outstanding collections, programs and facilities are vital to the visitor economy. Other outstanding organisations include Carriageworks, the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney Theatre Company, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art and Opera Australia. These are complemented by small-to-medium organisations, artist-run initiatives and commercial galleries.

Away from the central business district, there are important facilities supporting arts and culture across local communities. These include the Concourse in Chatswood, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre in Sutherland, the Manly Art Gallery & Museum and the Mosman Art Gallery.

Sydney is a place of growth for Aboriginal artists and organisations, including the Eora Centre in Chippendale and the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE).

It is also home to the ANZAC War Memorial, Hyde Park Barracks Museum, the Mint, the National Maritime Museum, and the Museum of Sydney. Educational facilities include the National Art School, the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), the New South Wales Conservatorium of Music and UNSW Art & Design.

Sydney is also renowned for major annual events. Sydney Festival, Sydney Writers’ Festival, the Biennale of Sydney, Vivid Sydney and Sydney Film Festival all welcome huge audiences and provide exchange between local and international artists.

The NSW Government will continue to support the vitality and growth of this dynamic local sector. One focus is to extend the reach of Sydney-based institutions and organisations to participate more broadly in the cultural life of NSW. Our plans to work with the State Cultural Institutions, to improve and expand their facilities, are important to their future programs and outreach.

Recently, there has been a movement for creating bold new arts and cultural spaces out of remnants of ‘old Sydney’, such as power stations, naval facilities and railway sites. This has given us cultural precincts like Carriageworks and the Walsh Bay Arts Precinct, and venues such as Artspace at the Gunnera and the Eternity Playhouse. We are supporting redevelopment in other critical places, such as Pier 2/3 and Wharf 4/5, and will scope opportunities to integrate arts and culture into future developments.

Key actions include:

- extending partnerships between State Cultural Institutions and arts and cultural organisations across NSW
- the Sydney Opera House Trust is developing a staged approach for the renewal of the Sydney Opera House to ensure this World Heritage-listed icon continues to represent the best of Australia
- the State Library of New South Wales and the Australian Museum are developing plans for future investment
- finalising the design competition and master plan for Sydney Modern — the Art Gallery of New South Wales’s ambitious expansion
- finalising plans for the redevelopment for the historic Pier 2/3 and Wharf 4/5 to create an internationally significant working arts precinct for Australia’s leading major performing arts organisations
- scoping arts and cultural opportunities across redevelopments in Sydney with other government agencies and private developers. This includes Barangaroo, Bays Precinct, the Central-to-Eveleigh Corridor and others as they emerge.
Florentijn Hofman's Rubber Duck, Sydney Festival 2013. Photo © Jamie Williams.
NSW State Cultural Institutions manage significant cultural heritage collections and provide services and programs throughout the State. They perform a vital role in promoting arts and culture and encouraging people to participate in the sector. Together, these institutions provide a unique and irreplaceable archive of our history and contemporary culture. These ‘creativity archives’ provide a unique resource for research and inspiration. The Sydney Opera House provides innovative ways to engage communities worldwide.

Increasingly, the important resources the State Cultural Institutions provide are being made available online, making them accessible to people in regional areas and the rest of the world. These resources are also being toured regionally through a range of mutually beneficial partnerships with regional galleries and museums.

All of these institutions have developed strong international relationships, playing a vital role in education and research throughout Australia and beyond.

This policy supports our State Cultural Institutions and sets in place programs to encourage their growth and expansion. The State Cultural Institutions belong to the people of NSW and are vital players in arts and culture.
Sydney Opera House
Sydney Opera House is a global icon, the most internationally recognised symbol of Australia and one of the great buildings of the world. It is also one of the world’s busiest performing arts centres, with seven primary performance venues in use almost every day of the year. In 2013–14, 1,738 live performances were enjoyed by more than 1.39 million people. Sydney Opera House is central to the national cultural fabric and an important piece of tourism infrastructure. More than 8.2 million people from Australia and around the world visit Sydney Opera House each year, and in 2013–14, 325,180 people took part in guided tours. In July 2007, the iconic building was inscribed on the World Heritage list by UNESCO as a ‘masterpiece of human creative genius’.

Australian Museum
The Australian Museum is Australia’s first museum and is the fifth oldest in the world. The Museum holds over 18 million items, making up the largest natural history and cultural collection in the southern hemisphere. The Museum hosts over 400,000 visitors each year, and approximately 30% of these are international tourists. Staff at the Museum deliver learning services on-site to over 37,000 students per year. They reach thousands more through the annual Science Festival, the Biota Science Program and Museum in a Box.

In recent years, the Museum has presented a number of successful temporary exhibitions. In 2013-14, Tyrannosaurs: Meet the Family was seen by over 218,000 visitors and featured objects on-loan from the Beijing Natural History Museum and the Field Museum, Chicago. The associated Tyrannosaurs mobile app has been downloaded over a million times so far. Half of these are from outside Australia. In 2014-15, the Museum’s major temporary exhibition was Aztecs. The exhibition featured over 200 objects from Mexico’s major museums and was attended by more than 63,000 visitors.

Art Gallery of New South Wales
From its base in Sydney, the Art Gallery of New South Wales serves a wide audience, attracting over one million visitors each year. It collects, preserves, interprets and displays Australian and international art and is a forum for scholarship, arts education and the exchange of ideas.

The Art Gallery’s collection is a significant asset for both NSW and Australia. It presents programs for a wide range of audiences, providing access to information and ideas through numerous activities and publications. The gallery runs dedicated education programs for students and provides a range of online services for regional and international audiences.

State Library of New South Wales
A world-leading library, the State Library of New South Wales informs and educates on site, online and on tour. One of NSW’s most valuable assets, the library’s collections document the heritage of Australia and the Pacific. The library works in partnership with the public library network to enrich the lives of people and communities across NSW. Public libraries anticipate the needs of children and families, students, working people, older people and visitors. They also serve Australia’s Indigenous peoples and multicultural population. Local branches are extended by information services, educational programs and exhibitions provided through the expertise of the library’s staff and the strength of its partnerships.

Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences
The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) includes the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney Observatory and the Powerhouse Discovery Centre, Castle Hill. Australia’s contemporary museum for innovation in the hybrid disciplines of arts and sciences, MAAS provides impact through education, outreach and visitation to its venues. Recognised for the calibre of its scholarship and exhibitions, the museum holds a unique and internationally regarded collection. The museum operates an extensive regional services program, in partnership with museums, galleries and communities across NSW.
## State Cultural Institutions

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<th>Indicator</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Over 1.1 Million</strong></td>
<td>Visitors attended the <strong>Art Gallery of NSW, Brett Whiteley Studio</strong> and six touring exhibitions across 19 venues</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.5 Million</strong></td>
<td>Free and fully searchable NSW newspapers digitised by the State Library of NSW, providing local and global audiences with free online access to over 250 NSW newspaper titles</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>35+ Million</strong></td>
<td>Visits to NSW public libraries per annum</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8,400 Jobs</strong></td>
<td>Are directly and indirectly supported by Sydney Opera House</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5 Million</strong></td>
<td>Online visits to the State Library of NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5 Million</strong></td>
<td>Online visits to the Australian Museum Research Blogs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8,2 Million</strong></td>
<td>Visit Sydney Opera House site each year</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Over 325,000</strong></td>
<td>Took a guided tour of Sydney Opera House 2013–14</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>140,711</strong></td>
<td>Digital items created, transcribed or imported by Australian Museum in 2013–14</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8 Exhibitions</strong></td>
<td>Tour by the Australian Museum to 14 organisations with 372,727 visitors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6,000 Visits</strong></td>
<td>To the Australian Museum Research Blogs</td>
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<td><strong>10.6 Million</strong></td>
<td>Visits to the Australian Museum website</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>60,000 Facebook Followers</strong> and <strong>31,000 Twitter Followers</strong></td>
<td>Engaged in conversation with the Art Gallery of NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>60,000 Facebook Followers</strong></td>
<td>and <strong>31,000 Twitter Followers</strong></td>
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Data was correct at the time of publication.
‘The Opera House was conceived as one concert hall and one opera theatre on the site of an old tram depot. What we have is so much more: the symbol of modern Australia, the nation’s premier tourism destination — attracting more visitors than either the Taj Mahal or the Eiffel Tower — and a World Heritage listed masterpiece. It demonstrates what boldness and creativity can deliver.’

— Louise Herron, CEO, Sydney Opera House, 2014
‘The rehearsal room is a space that allows for failure. Everyone has to be able to try things out, and if something doesn’t work the first time, it might lead to something that does work the seventh…’

— Andrew Upton, Artistic Director, Sydney Theatre Company, 2014
Excellence is possible when artists are supported to be bold and ambitious. Excellent art and culture is about life-changing experiences that can have intellectual, emotional and social impacts. Excellence manifests in art, events and programs that are relevant and connect with communities in new ways. This in turn cultivates diverse perspectives. Excellence is also about reflecting our distinctive strengths.

Our ambition for excellence will be achieved through a focus on:

- Innovation
- Leadership
- Aboriginal arts and culture
- International connections
- Revitalising infrastructure.

A creative and vibrant arts and cultural sector is marked by innovation and risk-taking in the creation of work, as well as the pursuit of excellence in approaches to management and audience engagement. Together, these elements invite broader and deeper participation, and develop a sustainable sector.

Supporting a culture of leadership is vital in the pursuit of excellence. The NSW Government is dedicated to growing an arts and cultural sector that thrives by being interconnected and collaborative, and pursuing best practice in leadership. Ensuring a diversity of voices, artists and leaders at all levels of arts and cultural organisations across NSW, supports creativity and job growth.

The Aboriginal arts and cultural sector in NSW is vibrant, diverse and contemporary. This policy framework includes support across all artforms, and offers skills development and major opportunities for invention, export and employment opportunities.

International connectivity, which places NSW’s arts and cultural work in a global context, is critical to ensuring a culture of excellence. We will work to achieve this through artist-exchange opportunities and export support to showcase our artists, companies and their works to the widest possible audience.

The NSW Government is dedicated to drawing the most from our current assets and infrastructure. We will do this by revitalising key places, increasing their visibility and expanding awareness of the artistic, heritage and cultural offerings across the State. This includes growing and managing the collections of our State Cultural Institutions, which are crucial assets.
Innovation is about nurturing curiosity and the courage to embrace new possibilities.

The NSW Government will support our artists, organisations and State Cultural Institutions to take risks, experiment and extend the boundaries of their artforms and practices. This includes developing artistic practices, extending artforms and developing new ways of presenting arts experiences. In turn, it will encourage deeper participation and develop a more sustainable arts and cultural environment.

Wider use of digital platforms will increase opportunities for access and artistic collaboration for people across NSW. New pathways and opportunities will draw upon one of NSW’s great strengths — our cultural and linguistic diversity.

Our State Cultural Institutions are embracing the challenges of the 21st century with plans to renew their approaches, broaden collaborations and engage new audiences. They are developing new partnerships and drawing on the creativity and expertise of our artists, curators, librarians, scientists and creative workers.

Organisations supported through Arts NSW are ready partners to this work, providing platforms for experimentation, creative development and presentation.
Support contemporary arts practice through the Arts & Cultural Development Program
The NSW Government will invest in artists and arts and cultural organisations statewide through the renewed Arts & Cultural Development Program (ACDP).

Carriageworks, the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, significant festivals, major performing arts organisations, visual arts leaders and small-to-medium arts organisations across NSW will be supported to explore work within and across disciplines.

Our ACDP reform program will also shift investment towards Western Sydney and Regional NSW to better reflect NSW’s diversity.

We will work with arts organisations on artist development opportunities, including residencies and fellowships. We will also support the NSW Government’s flagship awards and prizes.

Grow television drama production in NSW
We will develop a plan to grow television drama production in NSW while maintaining our strength in other production genres.

Encourage screen activity in Western Sydney
Although NSW is a great location for screen production and shoots — particularly Regional NSW and Western Sydney — it does not have certain critical infrastructure often sought by filmmakers. We will scope the costs of developing some infrastructure elements to further enable screen production in Western Sydney.

Map the arts and cultural landscape in Western Sydney and Regional NSW
Arts NSW will map the arts and cultural landscape in Western Sydney to inform strategies, investment and infrastructure development actions. This includes artist development and needs.

Arts NSW will also research and map cultural activity in Regional NSW to identify key regional hubs with existing infrastructure and arts networks.

Increase strategic investment in Western Sydney
Arts NSW will introduce a new strategic investment fund for Western Sydney to further support developing arts practices, partnerships and participation strategies in Western Sydney, including support for local Aboriginal artists. We will also introduce a Western Sydney Artist and Arts Workers’ Fellowship.

Promote regional arts excellence
The NSW Government will build on Arts NSW’s investment in the NSW artists’ showcase at the 2016 Regional Arts Australia conference. We will develop, in consultation with key partners, a new four-year program to promote regional arts excellence throughout NSW.

Support the development of digital platforms
Digitising priority areas of the NSW cultural collections is vital to improving access and educational engagement. It is a major area of current investment by Government. For example, we have invested $48.6 million for the initial 5 years of a 10 year digitisation program for the State Library of New South Wales. Sydney Opera House also has a wide digital-education outreach program consisting of live digital tours, workshops and streamed performances.

We will investigate the costs and benefits of further developing digital capacity within State Cultural Institutions and the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia to extend their reach to schools, universities, family historians, researchers, artists and cultural practitioners across NSW.

We will also investigate opportunities to explore new ways for the arts to further engage with digital technologies.

Excellence
Fostering artistic innovation
Sydney Theatre Company

Artistic innovation is in the DNA of Sydney Theatre Company (STC). Founding artistic director, Richard Wherret said, the STC ‘exists to provide first class theatrical entertainment for the people of Sydney — theatre that is grand, vulgar, intelligent, challenging and fun.’ This idiosyncratic philosophy has been honoured by successive artistic directors, making STC not only the seventh largest non-profit theatre producer in the English speaking world, but also one of the most distinctive.

The company, its artists and audiences have jointly developed a mainstream theatre culture in Sydney, which is markedly more adventurous than other theatre capitals around the world. Some of the world’s most acclaimed theatre makers have benefited from periods of supported development at the company.

STC provided provocateur Barrie Kosky with a platform for some of his earliest major scale theatre works. Kosky is now artistic director of Komische Oper Berlin. He was named Best Director at the 2014 International Opera Awards and has made the Komische one of the world’s most innovative arts organisations.

Benedict Andrews is another in-demand director whose career was nurtured by STC. In July 2014, Andrews’ productions of A Streetcar Named Desire for the Young Vic and The Maids for STC opened back to back in London and New York. Streetcar won rave reviews across-the-board. The Maids – an iconoclastic reading of Genet’s classic text with a strong Australian accent – thrilled and divided reviewers, while delighting audiences at the Lincoln Center Festival.

The ongoing development of arts practitioners is a high priority for STC as it continues its commitment to artistic innovation, and to nurturing confident, sophisticated and discerning local audiences.
Groundbreaking digital installation
Australian Chamber Orchestra

ACO Virtual is a world-first interactive experience bringing cutting-edge technology to the heritage arts. It gives audiences a unique and vivid perspective on the work of the Australian Chamber Orchestra (ACO).

With ACO Virtual, visitors step ‘inside’ the performance, immersed in a 360-degree cinematic experience, surrounded by the musicians. Inside the installation, ACO musicians appear as projections on walls or screens, while each musician’s sound is heard from the direction of their image. A touch-screen ‘music stand’ allows an audience member to spotlight the sound and visuals, highlighting one particular musician, a section of instruments or their own desired selection of players. This individual layering provides a unique understanding of how music is constructed. The installation includes the musical score streaming below each musician’s projection.

This groundbreaking digital installation was developed by Mod productions in collaboration with the ACO, with support from Screen NSW’s Interactive Media Fund.

The installation can be staged in various venues, including galleries and museums. A supplementary education kit, with resources and activities for teachers and students deepens their understanding before, during and after visiting the installation.

Since its launch in mid-2013, ACO Virtual has reached over 20,000 audience members across regional and metropolitan Australia.

In 2014, ACO Virtual was exhibited at Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, the Glasshouse in Port Macquarie, the Melbourne Recital Centre and Virgin Australia’s Melbourne Airport Lounge. It is an outstanding example of the arts, education and technology working together in innovative new forms.
Leadership

Stewardship for the future

Ambitious and courageous leadership is essential for excellence and is a priority across this policy framework. The NSW Government will grow an arts and cultural sector that thrives on being interconnected and collaborative, and pursues best practice in leadership. We will support a diverse, inclusive workforce.

Leadership in arts and culture can be seen in many places across the State — among individual artists, small-to-medium organisations and within partnerships. Leadership is a priority that runs throughout this policy framework.

Many organisations demonstrate leadership across their business and arts practice, and mentor the next generation of cultural leaders. These include the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Carriageworks, major performing arts organisations, Western Sydney arts leaders such as Campbelltown Arts Centre and small-to-medium organisations around the regions such as Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery.

We have ambitious plans to extend the reputation and impact of our State Cultural Institutions and explore deeper and closer connections with the communities of NSW as well as extend their reach internationally. The State Cultural Institutions and Arts NSW will promote skills sharing and provide opportunities for artists, arts workers and leaders across the State to connect, network and discuss topics relevant to the local community. We will also focus on supporting the professional development of artists and arts workers, and collaboration across all levels of government.
Promote diversity in the State Cultural Institutions and arts and cultural organisations
The NSW Government will ensure the State Cultural Institutions’ governing bodies are both skills-based and reflective of the diversity of NSW, and include representatives from Aboriginal communities, Regional NSW and Western Sydney. The State Cultural Institutions will also work to reflect the diversity of NSW’s population in all aspects of their organisations, including more culturally relevant programming. Arts NSW will work with funded organisations to promote a workforce that reflects the diversity of NSW’s population.

Leadership in Western Sydney
We will convene a Western Sydney arts and cultural roundtable with leading arts and cultural practitioners to enable responsive and effective policymaking in Western Sydney. This will be the key platform for developing policy and actions to support arts and cultural growth in Western Sydney.

Regional arts leadership
As a first step to support regional arts leadership, we will undertake an independent review of the network of Regional Arts Boards and support the reforms needed to enable growth and support of regional arts.

Extend partnerships between the State Cultural Institutions and arts and cultural organisations
Our State Cultural Institutions will extend the long-term loan arrangements and programming partnerships with cultural facilities in Western Sydney and Regional NSW. This will help ensure the cultural treasures held by the State Cultural Institutions on behalf of the people of NSW are accessible to all.

Develop creative partnerships with Western Sydney
We will focus on ways for major performing arts companies, major visual-arts organisations, festivals and service organisations to increase their engagement in Western Sydney, building on the success of C3West.

‘Artistic leadership is about collaboration — if you’ve got a dozen bright people in the room, you’d be crazy not to listen to them.’

—John Bell, Co-Artistic Director, Bell Shakespeare, 2014
Blacktown Arts Centre, in partnership with the Australian Museum, presented *Stitching the Sea*, which focused on the storytelling traditions and narratives contained in the various weaving practices of local Pacific communities. Artists working in a wide range of disciplines responded to traditional objects in the Pacific Collection of the Australian Museum and collaborated with groups in the Blacktown local government area.

The exchanges culminated in new artworks on display for the first time. The artworks demonstrated the various linkages between traditional and contemporary artistic practices — making a rich cultural heritage accessible to a wide audience in Western Sydney.

Participating artists included Seve Faleupolu Gooding, Sione Falemaka, Veisinia Kami Lasalo, Greg Semu, Angela Tiatia, Julie Wharerau with Ana Walters and Cook Islands community Vaine Tini.

Seve Faleupolu Gooding  
*Penina O le Pasefika.*  
Pandanus, ribbon, wool, 160x120cm,  
2014. Photo Jennifer Lehry,  
© Silversalt Photography.
For almost two decades, Artistic Director, Carlos Gomes, and Theatre Kantanka have led the way in showcasing diversity in NSW through visionary contemporary theatre. Founded in 1996, Theatre Kantanka is a research-based company that creates original performance. Gomes is a theatre and performance maker whose singular work looks at Australian society through the eyes of Kantanka’s culturally diverse ensemble artists. Originally from Brazil, Gomes has explored the richness of Australia’s cultural mix that forms our society today. His work seeks a dialogue about contemporary society via unique collaborations and artistic concepts.

Gomes creates work that engages diverse communities. His acclaimed productions include *The Book Keeper of Rua dos Douradores*, based on the work of Portuguese poet, Fernando Pessoa; and *Fearless N*, a Bollywood-themed extravaganza about Mary Evans, an Australian woman who became an icon of Hindi cinema in the 1950s and 1960s. Recently Gomes directed *Missing the Bus to David Jones*, which explores the world of nursing homes, and *Bargain Garden*, a feverish sound and performance installation about mass consumption (in collaboration with contemporary music group Ensemble Offspring).

Kantanka performed its latest work, *Club Singularity*, an investigation of the origins of the universe through the eyes of astronomical amateurs, at Campbelltown Arts Centre and Performance Space. In 2016, Kantanka will celebrate 20 years of pushing the boundaries of Australian theatre.
Alex Wisser is a multi-disciplinary artist from Kandos, NSW. His practice employs photo media, video, installation, performance and web-based media platforms. He is a co-founder and director of Index Art Space an artist-run initiative in Sydney.

In 2012, along with Georgina Pollard and Ann Finnegan, he launched Cementa, a biennial contemporary arts festival in Kandos. The festival brings together artists from urban and regional communities for a four day celebration, which doubles the town’s population.

His practice is centred on representing our lived experience and seeks to challenge our perceptions of the world we live in. He is interested in how ethical concern is embedded within ontological experience.

Wisser describes his artistic process as ‘working on the fly’. He believes art is intrinsically social and has the ability to provide new collaborations and deep connections to other artists and communities. Wisser says, ‘If I had to make art alone in a garret somewhere, I’d give it up.’

Originally from Sydney, Wisser is aware of the lack of access to large institutions, galleries and international art that can be part of living in a small town. However, he sees his regional context as an opportunity to initiate new projects that assist in developing a contemporary art scene within the region. The rural environment of Kandos influences his practice and provides insight into pressing social and environmental issues.
Sydney Dance Company, 2 One Another 2014.
Photo © Peter Greig.
Celebrating Aboriginal artists and community cultural expression

Aboriginal artistic and cultural expression is based on traditional and contemporary practice. Arts and culture are intrinsic to contemporary Aboriginal society and an important part of the social fabric of NSW’s Aboriginal people and communities.

Aboriginal arts and culture in NSW is vibrant, distinctive and contemporary, ensuring a diversity of voices, artists and leaders at all levels of arts and cultural organisations across NSW support creativity and job growth. This policy framework includes support across all artforms, and offers skills development and major opportunities for invention, export and employment opportunities.

The NSW Government will extend opportunities to support the professional development of Aboriginal artists and cultural workers. We will also support Aboriginal communities’ ongoing connection with culture and language.

Under the NSW Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy 2010-2014, Arts NSW reshaped its investment in, and commitment to, Aboriginal arts and culture. Investment of over $3.8 million has seen a significant growth in opportunities for Aboriginal artists, communities and audiences. Stage 2 of the strategy, NSW Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy 2015–2018: Connection, Culture, Pathways, builds on the achievements of the past four years. It will focus on Direction 4, supporting the creation of jobs in the arts and cultural sector. It will emphasise professional and market development, mentorships and secondments for NSW Aboriginal arts workers — especially in Western Sydney, where the majority of Sydney’s Aboriginal people live. It will focus on creating career pathways into the sector for young Aboriginal people in particular.

The NSW Government’s approach is underpinned by partnerships with the sector, as well as business, community and other government agencies at all tiers. This approach is aligned with OCHRE (opportunity, choice, responsibility, healing empowerment), our plan for Aboriginal Affairs.

Our approach also reflects feedback from the consultations for this policy framework, including:

- creating multiple pathways for intergenerational engagement and participation of Aboriginal young people, Elders, carers and Aboriginal people with disability
- reflecting the multiplicity of practice throughout Aboriginal communities in NSW by reframing terminology and policy to Aboriginal arts and cultures
- encouraging interagency collaboration to increase access to learning Aboriginal languages and incorporating language in practice
- increasing Aboriginal employment opportunities in Sydney’s State Cultural Institutions and in regional arts centres.
‘Arts and culture are inseparable. Country can really inform practice.’

— Lily Shearer, freelance artist based in Brewarrina, 2014

**Actions**

**Extend State collections and programming**
The collecting State Cultural Institutions and Sydney Opera House recognise the significance of Aboriginal communities in artistic programs, collections, exhibitions, and language. This covers their history as well as their traditional and evolving contemporary cultures. We will extend and deepen this commitment.

**Invest in professional and market development**
Arts NSW will invest in a range of programs that have been effective in increasing both professional employment opportunities for Aboriginal arts workers and new markets for Aboriginal art. These include:

- Aboriginal Regional Arts Fund
- Aboriginal Quick Response Program
- Accelerate (in partnership with the British Council)
- NSW Aboriginal Arts Fellowship
- Troy Cassar-Daley scholarship for an emerging Aboriginal country music artist.

**Support career pathways**
Our support will assist Aboriginal school students in accessing the arts and cultural sector, and will develop career pathways for Aboriginal young people. This will include support for arts camps and talent identification programs, as well as the investigating partnerships with registered training organisations such as TAFE and ArtsReady.

**Partner across all tiers of government**
As part of our whole-of-government approach, relevant NSW Government agencies will collaborate on Aboriginal cultural and intangible heritage, language and education. This will ensure that Aboriginal people have both authority and responsibility in cultural-heritage protection through proposed legislative reforms.

Arts NSW will partner with the Commonwealth Government on significant actions in the Aboriginal arts and cultural sector. It will build on partnerships previously developed with other agencies, including NSW Health and Housing NSW, to benefit Aboriginal communities.
The world-renowned Bangarra Dance Theatre is Australia’s leading Aboriginal performing arts company. Now celebrating its 25th year, Bangarra has built important relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Bangarra now seeks to expand its audience base to ensure a vibrant and sustainable future.

After research trips into NSW communities, Bangarra began the Rekindling program in 2013. It is designed to inspire and develop the next generation of Aboriginal storytellers using dance to reconnect them with their culture. With guidance from Elders in their community, participants research and gather stories, which are developed into dance theatre. Since its inception, Rekindling has visited many NSW regional communities.

Bangarra also has a partnership with the NSW Department of Education & Communities’ Arts Unit. The Youth Program Department engages Aboriginal children across NSW to take part in the NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company. The program develops future artists by providing opportunities for the Bangarra repertoire to be taught more widely. The children then deliver a major performance as part of the NSW Schools Spectacular.

Bangarra also takes part in major events throughout the year, recently performing for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge during their 2014 Australian tour. The company has a number of programs for audiences in the growing region of Western Sydney, including free outdoor performances in partnership with the Western Sydney Wanderers and Sydney Festival. Through these activities, Bangarra looks to increase its already formidable influence on the Australian arts and cultural landscape.
One of the most popular and acclaimed Australian films of recent years, The Sapphires is a model of Australian screen-content development.

The story, about a group of Yorta Yorta women on tour in Vietnam, was first produced as a play in Melbourne in 2004. It was inspired by the life of author Tony Briggs’s mother. It was redeveloped in 2005 at Belvoir in Sydney, with support from Arts NSW and the Australia Council for the Arts. The play was revived in 2010, and went on to be performed at the Adelaide Festival, at Daegu International Musical Festival in South Korea and at London’s Barbican Centre.

The film adaptation was produced with assistance from Screen NSW’s Regional Filming Fund, Development Fund, Production Finance Fund and Production Loan Fund. Directed by Wayne Blair and starring Deborah Mailman, Jessica Mauboy and Chris O’Dowd, it was produced by NSW company, Goalpost Pictures.

The production injected over $7.7 million into the NSW economy and created more than 546 jobs for cast and crew. This included, jobs for 97 Aboriginal cast members and eight key creatives.

The Sapphires had its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival, where it was the only Australian feature selected that year. Distributed internationally by the Weinstein Company, it opened in Australia as the number one film, taking more than $2.5 million the first weekend. It became the biggest Australian film of 2012, earning more than $20 million worldwide and winning numerous awards. The Sapphires is an exemplary case of an Australian story that is both highly personal and universally accessible, succeeding across different forms and formats and reaching audiences around the world.

Photo courtesy of Goalpost Pictures Pty. Ltd.
Placing our arts and culture in a global context

NSW is the engine of Australia’s creative industries. It is home to the nation’s largest, most diverse and sophisticated creative sector. International connectivity is critical to ensuring a culture of excellence. The NSW Government will facilitate this through artist exchange opportunities and export support to showcase our artists, companies and their works to the widest possible audience. We will also partner across government and the sector to lift NSW’s profile as a bold, innovative and multicultural state.

By implementing the Creative Industries Action Plan, we will enhance the profile of the State, highlighting Sydney as a global centre and an Asia-Pacific leader in the arts. This long-term plan expands access to new markets and drives the development of the new economy.

NSW has a reputation as a culturally dynamic and globally connected state. Our rich and diverse arts and cultural sector is complemented by a strong events calendar, which includes the Biennale of Sydney, Handa Opera on the Sydney Harbour, Sydney Festival, and visual arts ‘blockbusters’ such as the Picasso exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Our major performing arts companies — from Sydney Theatre Company to Bangarra Dance Theatre to the Australian Chamber Orchestra — have a reputation for quality and distinctiveness. Our State Cultural Institutions have excellent relationships with international peers.

NSW has not had a sustained or integrated strategy to grow long-term cultural exchange with our near neighbours. Reciprocal, respectful and challenging cultural exchange is critical for our artists and communities to grow and prosper. Working closely with our State Cultural Institutions and arts and cultural organisations, we will seek to put our engagement in Asia, in particular, on a more stable and strategic footing.
Focus on Asia
Arts NSW will undertake research to examine the breadth of international arts and cultural activity, capacity and opportunities for enhancing international exchanges and cultural exports to Asia. This work will generate a baseline and inform future investments and programs.

Support international partnerships, exchanges and tours
The NSW Government will support artists, practitioners and organisations to undertake international partnerships, exchanges and tours, through partnership with the Commonwealth Government and other tiers of government. We will also support opportunities to ensure international artists and exhibitions are part of our arts and cultural landscape. This includes key festivals such as Sydney Film Festival, Sydney Festival, the Biennale of Sydney and Sydney Writers’ Festival. We will work with key organisations currently undertaking work in this area to strengthen our approach.

Enhance NSW cultural exports
We will maximise existing government services to build on the profile and engagement of the NSW arts and cultural sector across export activities and marketing programs. In 2013, we established the Office of International Engagement and released the NSW International Engagement Strategy. This identifies critical industries to promote.

NSW Trade & Investment has business offices in key international locations. International trade missions and exhibitions organised by NSW Trade & Investment, offer export-ready NSW companies an effective way to identify new international business opportunities. They also help companies to acquire the knowledge and connections critical to export success. Opportunities for key discussions with consular networks are a priority.

‘Artists are working in an increasingly globalised context. The traditional model of production at home followed by international touring has now been superseded by a flexible model with international engagement occurring at many stages of the production and distribution process.’

—Rosemary Hinde, CEO/Executive Producer, Stalker and Marrugeku, 2014
Building new relationships in China
Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Over the past five years, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (SSO) has established a highly rewarding relationship with Chinese audiences and collaborators. Touring, innovative partnerships, digital technology, cultural exchange and education programs have helped create a special bond and an impressive example of international outreach. By taking a leading role in ‘soft’ diplomacy, the SSO has promoted NSW as a leading arts and cultural destination.

The SSO, when touring mainland China for the first time in 2009, saw a growing demand for Western classical music. On that visit, the orchestra performed a gala concert in Guangzhou to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the sister-state relationship between NSW and the Chinese province of Guangdong. Soon the SSO made China a regular part of its touring schedule. The orchestra’s 2014 tour, its third and so far most extensive, has seen it perform in seven mainland cities.

The SSO has developed an enthusiastic following among Chinese audiences, and a strong relationship with local officials and education organisations. In 2012, the SSO formalised partnerships with Beijing’s National Centre for the Performing Arts and the Xinghai Conservatory of Music in Guangzhou. The next year the orchestra hosted students from the Xinghai Conservatory in Sydney. They were reunited on the recent tour when the SSO returned to the conservatory to hold another workshop.

Significant financial support from both Australian and Chinese companies has followed the SSO’s successes, marking NSW as a welcoming place for Asian companies to do business. The NSW Government has been part of the SSO–China story from the beginning, lending support to the SSO’s first tour to the mainland. This ongoing relationship helps strengthen the bond between NSW and its northern neighbours, and enriches the arts and cultural tapestry of both destinations.

David Robertson conducting at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, June 2014. Photo © Julian Kingma.
Sydney-based Critical Path is renowned for facilitating world-class choreographic and interdisciplinary workshops for emerging and established artists. Established in 2004, its goal is to support research and innovation among NSW choreographers.

Critical Path’s Interchange program is a South Asian regional initiative over a five-year period. Its objectives are to develop collaborations and build intercultural understanding between Asia and Australia.

Critical Path’s partnership with the Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts in Bangalore, India has been a pivotal part of the program. Attakkalari is South Asia’s premier organisation in contemporary movement arts. In 2013, Critical Path funded award-winning choreographer Jade Dewi Tyas Tunggal, from Yamba in the Northern Rivers region, to travel to India and participate in Attakkalari’s FACETS mentorship program. In 2015, Critical Path will support a NSW choreographer to make new work in India under FACETS. These artists may also present at the Attakkalari Biennial’s Platform 15 showcase for emerging South Asian choreographers.

Also driving Critical Path’s Interchange program is the initiative to host an Australian version of Monsoon, a cross-cultural residency program curated and facilitated by German choreographer Arco Renz. Ten artists from Europe, Asia and Australia, including Indian choreographer Hemabharathy Palani, will take part. Immediately prior to Monsoon, Critical Path will present two days of public showings promoting the work of emerging intercultural collaborations. Critical Path’s investment in the Interchange program benefits artists and audiences alike in Australia and Asia, cementing a valuable international relationship.
Creating new opportunities

Arts and cultural facilities enable the people of NSW to access the arts, build the State’s brand and reputation, increase employment, contribute to urban renewal and support the visitor economy. They are essential platforms for creation and presentation for artists and cultural workers.

The opening of the iconic Sydney Opera House in 1973 marked Australia’s international reputation as a contemporary and forward-looking nation. It provided a spectacular structure that tourists from around the world still want to visit and an aspirational place of performance for our artists. The building is a signature example of the transformative impact of arts and cultural infrastructure.

A broad spectrum of arts and cultural facilities is vital for the depth and diversity of artistic production and community engagement with the arts. These range from low-cost pop-up spaces to purpose-built studios, theatres and rehearsal halls through to world-class museums and performance venues.
Well-designed cultural facilities contribute to an energised public domain and are an essential part of liveable cities and places. Developing cultural infrastructure requires robust planning, stakeholder engagement and assurance processes. Plans must include a focus on design excellence and consideration for how the proposed project will deepen and extend arts and cultural practice and participation.

Three strategic directions will guide and inform our decision-making for revitalising infrastructure:

1. Expanding the arts and cultural facilities available to the people of Western Sydney, including the development of a precinct in Parramatta with the optimal mix of community, cultural and commercial uses.

2. Taking an active partnership role with local government in Regional NSW to investigate opportunities for strengthening cultural facilities.

3. Growing NSW’s visitor economy, strengthening the creative industries and, through Sydney, positioning the State as a cultural leader in the Asia-Pacific region. This will be underpinned by our plans to renew the State Cultural Institutions and maximise arts and culture in major urban redevelopments.

As part of Rebuilding NSW: State Infrastructure Strategy 2014, $600 million was identified for an Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Program. This is subject to releasing capital from leasing the State’s electricity businesses.

We are working with Infrastructure NSW to develop sound business cases and we are prioritising opportunities that bring maximum value to the State. Investment will also prioritise projects where there is co-funding from philanthropic, private, local or Commonwealth Government sources, and where commercial opportunities have been maximised. Any NSW Government investment in cultural infrastructure must demonstrate a sound return on investment and must have passed robust planning and assurance processes.

To reaffirm Sydney as a major centre for the arts in the Asia-Pacific region, Rebuilding NSW: State Infrastructure Strategy 2014 also outlined that priority will be given to developing an arts precinct in the CBD. Priority investment will therefore be considered for the Sydney Opera House, Walsh Bay Arts Precinct and the Art Gallery of NSW: Sydney Modern. Future investment in the Australian Museum and NSW State Library will be considered in long-term plans.
Actions

Western Sydney

Create a Parramatta Cultural Precinct
We will create a Parramatta Cultural Precinct in partnership with Parramatta City Council, private sector partners, Western Sydney arts and cultural organisations and local artists.

We will work with our partners towards an enhanced Riverside Entertainment Precinct, ensuring the city’s extraordinary heritage, as well as its arts and culture, drive urban renewal and attract visitors to the precinct.

Scope cultural infrastructure opportunities in Western Sydney
We will scope other cultural infrastructure opportunities in key centres in Western Sydney. This will include repurposing and refurbishing existing facilities, relocating existing facilities and identifying opportunities for new facilities. We will work with local councils to determine how improved public places can create opportunities for arts and cultural life.

Additionally, we will encourage screen activity in Western Sydney. This includes providing location assistance for film and television productions, and support for professional development for screen practitioners.

Regional NSW

Support infrastructure in Regional NSW
We will actively collaborate with local government in discussions around opportunities for cultural facilities in new release areas, regional centres and in areas of urban consolidation. We will focus on collaboration and innovative responses to opportunities.

We will also clarify funding and partnership opportunities and provide advice and expertise, where required to ensure stronger business cases and sound co-funding opportunities. Further, we will explore and maximise opportunities for creative hubs and cultural precincts across the State.

Fund public library infrastructure
We will work with councils to enhance library services and facilities across NSW. We have increased public library infrastructure funding and remain committed to assisting councils to improve their public libraries to better meet the demands of local communities.
Develop an Arts Precinct in the Sydney CBD
We will create an arts precinct in the Sydney CBD to reaffirm Sydney as a major centre for the arts in the Asia-Pacific region and enhance collaboration amongst our State Cultural Institutions for better use of collections and facilities.

We will scope the revitalisation of our State Cultural Institutions. Private-sector partnership funding and innovative funding models will be sought for these large, ambitious redevelopments. Revitalising the State Cultural Institutions will enable them to compete nationally and internationally and to expand their activities into Regional NSW.

Priority investment will be given to the Sydney Opera House, Walsh Bay Arts Precinct and the Art Gallery of NSW: Sydney Modern. Future investment in the Australian Museum and NSW State Library will be considered in long-term plans.

The following projects are in development subject to sound business cases and funding availability:

Sydney Opera House
The Sydney Opera House Trust is developing a staged approach for the renewal of this iconic building, addressing safety, access, acoustics, capacity and technical support issues. This will ensure this World Heritage-listed icon continues to represent the best of Australia. The Sydney Opera House is Sydney’s foremost tourist attraction, with over 8.2 million people visiting every year.

Walsh Bay Arts Precinct
Plans are being finalised for the redevelopment for the historic Pier 2/3 and Wharf 4/5 to create an internationally significant working arts precinct for Australia’s leading major performing arts organisations. These include Sydney Theatre Company, Sydney Dance Company, Bangarra Dance Theatre, the Australian Chamber Orchestra and Bell Shakespeare, as well as key organisations like Australian Theatre for Young People.

Art Gallery of New South Wales
The Art Gallery of New South Wales is updating its master plan to double its size and increase visitation from 1.2 million to 2 million a year. The proposed extension will significantly expand learning experiences for school, tertiary and community groups. It will help reposition the Art Gallery of NSW as one of the world’s leading art museums.

The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences
The museum has commenced master planning for all sites (Sydney Observatory, the Powerhouse Museum and the Powerhouse Discovery Centre). The strategic plan includes a target to see a 100% growth in audiences over the next five years. The Government is also investigating the relocation of the Powerhouse Museum to the Parramatta Cultural Precinct.

Australian Museum
The Australian Museum’s master plan, The New Australian Museum, encompasses significant new refurbishment of permanent galleries. Particularly important is the development of the museum’s outstanding Indigenous Australian and Pacific collections, many of which have never been displayed. A larger temporary exhibition space, an expanded discovery and learning centre and a new Australian Centre for Wildlife Genomics are other features of the project.

The State Library of New South Wales
The State Library of New South Wales aims to reposition itself as a civic hub, with a proposal to create new public exhibition and study spaces, and improve storage and preservation of its collections worth $2.1 billion. It will create a new 500-seat auditorium, and will address issues relating to accessibility, compliance, safety and heritage preservation.

Arts Portfolio Approach to Asset Management
The NSW Government is increasing collaboration between the State Cultural Institutions to introduce savings and efficiencies in the asset management of these significant facilities. We aim to ensure all expenditure is focused on service delivery to best meet producer, performer and visitor needs.
Transformed into a major centre for art and creative learning
Museum of Contemporary Art Australia

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) is building a strong reputation as Australia’s leading contemporary-art centre. It has seen record-breaking attendance in recent years, with two million visitors between 2012 and 2014. This is a strong indicator of its continuing contribution to the cultural makeup of NSW.

The MCA opened its doors in 1991. Australian expatriate artist John Power, who left his personal fortune to the University of Sydney to educate Australians about international visual art, established the museum through a bequest. It is the only major arts establishment in Sydney dedicated to supporting living artists.

In 2002 the MCA commissioned a master plan for expansion from Australian architect Sam Marshall. The objective was to increase its size by almost 50% and provide spacious galleries and public spaces embracing one of the world’s most famous locations. Marshall created a building that brings together old and new to create a context for art in the 21st century.

A $53 million capital campaign enabled the redevelopment. This included major contributions of $13 million from the NSW Government and the Commonwealth Government, as well as $1 million from the City of Sydney. The remainder was raised from private donors and corporate sponsors through successful fundraising by the MCA.

The redevelopment transformed the museum into a major centre for art and creative learning that reaches huge international audiences. For the first time, a selection of over 280 works by more than 170 Australian artists was put on display in the new permanent collection galleries.

The MCA has also developed ongoing relationships with visitors with increased educational programming and innovative offerings, such as the monthly ARTBAR, talks, film screenings and workshops. The unveiling of the National Centre for Creative Learning (NCCL) marked one of the most significant commitments to art education in Australia. The NCCL includes programs for children under five, including ArtBaby and ArtSafari. It also includes the Bella in the House Program in partnership with Sydney Opera House, which is targeted at children and young people with specific needs. Students are able to access art through digital learning programs, which are free to schools outside of Metropolitan Sydney.
Four Winds Festival is a biennial celebration of classical, cultural and world music. It is held every second Easter in a natural bush setting in an amphitheatre near Bermagui on the Far South Coast of NSW.

Since 1991, Four Winds has offered audiences the opportunity to hear some of the best Australian and international musicians playing classical and contemporary work, in programs drawn from a wide diversity of traditions. The festival attracts a loyal audience from the local area, as well as from around Australia and overseas.

The Windsong Pavilion is a purpose built performance space that features state-of-the-art acoustic design and seating for 160 people. The pavilion enables Four Winds to be a full-time arts and cultural hub and place for the community, the region and beyond.

The capital development of the building includes acoustics, lighting and staging, enabling it to be used for residencies, composing, rehearsals, broadcasting, recording and performances.
Access
Access is about welcoming people to participate in the artistic and cultural life of NSW. The NSW Government is dedicated to increasing participation. We want people to encounter art as part of their daily lives. This is a cornerstone of our policy framework.

Participation in the arts significantly enriches lives and can have particular impact on the lives of young people. The importance of engaging with the community is reflected in our ambitions for volunteering, expression of cultural and linguistic diversity and our partnerships with the disability sector.

The arts and cultural sector in Regional NSW is diverse and contemporary. We will work to encourage the exchange of ideas and arts experiences in this area and across NSW. Unlocking the State’s treasures is a critical priority. This will enable access to arts and culture, as well as learning and development opportunities for communities statewide.

Expanding access to resources is crucial when building the reach and capacity of arts and culture. New uses of existing spaces, and new approaches to underutilised spaces, will support arts and cultural practice.

Two key themes underpin our ambition to increase access:

- Participation
- Arts for young people.

‘The thing about a great performance is its ability to deeply inspire those who crave it, or to be enjoyed by those wishing to simply be entertained. It can be a reflection of its community or an offering for the community to try something new.’

— Kiersten Fishburn, Director, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, 2013
Encouraging increased involvement in arts and culture

Participating in arts and culture benefits people socially, personally and economically. NSW is home to Australia’s most culturally diverse population. This diversity is an asset, making our State an exciting and vibrant place to live.

Distinctive to NSW are varied lifestyles and an already high level of participation in arts and culture. This includes roles as artists, audience members, workers and volunteers as well as a broad engagement in festivals across the State. The NSW Government plans to increase participation by better communicating the benefits and relevance of arts and cultural experiences in ways that connect with people from all walks of life — regardless of where they live or their access to resources.

There are a number of participation targets in NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One. These include increasing participation in arts and cultural activities in Sydney and Regional NSW by 10%. These opportunities include Aboriginal cultural activities and events, a greater emphasis on multicultural activities and events, and community events that are planned and delivered locally. More than ever, our State Cultural Institutions will make their collections accessible to the wider community through touring, educational outreach and partnerships.

We will increase participation through a range of platforms including online and virtual engagement. We will provide more opportunities for people to enjoy arts and culture as part of their daily lives — breaking down barriers to involvement and the notion that arts and culture are ‘not for me’.

Drawing on the strategies in the Creative Industries Action Plan, Arts NSW will partner across agencies such as Destination NSW and within NSW Trade & Investment to increase arts and cultural experiences for audiences across the State, as well as nationally and internationally. This partnership will also grow the visitor economy across NSW and boost job creation for artists and the sector more broadly.

We will work to increase the opportunities for people to take part in, and shape, arts and culture. We will enable new arts experiences outside of the traditional spaces of galleries and theatres, enhancing enjoyment and learning opportunities.

‘Collections should be there for people to engage with — digitally and physically.’

— Alex Byrne, State Librarian, State Library of New South Wales, 2014
Support for the NSW Arts and Disability Partnership
The NSW Arts and Disability Partnership will continue in 2014–15 as a partnership between the NSW Department of Family & Community Services, Arts NSW and Screen NSW, to build on existing achievements that support social inclusion and increase the profile of NSW artists with disability.

The partnership is part of our commitment to the National Disability Strategy, and accords with the goal in NSW 2021 of developing partnerships to enhance the participation of people with disability in arts and culture.

Support the Creative Ageing Program
Arts NSW will showcase the value of engaging older people in arts and cultural life as outlined in the NSW Ageing Strategy.

Reform and revitalise festivals
We will provide ongoing support to Sydney Festival, the Biennale of Sydney, Sydney Writers’ Festival and Sydney Film Festival to enhance their success and explore opportunities to extend their reach across NSW. Festivals enliven a range of places and communities, enabling the permeation of arts and culture into everyday life. These events are critical to NSW’s cultural tourism.

Investigate a Sydney culture pass
A Sydney culture pass will integrate ticketing and benefits across arts and cultural organisations and help boost the visitor economy. It will be designed in partnership with each arts and cultural organisation. Benefits might include concessional entry, priority access and discounts at venue stores and cafes.

Develop regional partnerships and a touring framework for the State Cultural Institutions
The touring framework will be based on the principles of reciprocity and relevance — ensuring the State Cultural Institutions bring more of the State’s cultural collections to communities throughout NSW. We will achieve this by extending partnerships with regional organisations and by holding streamlined and coordinated programs. Working with the NSW Cultural Institutions Chief Executive Officers’ Forum, we will ensure these touring partnerships are designed to reduce costs and maximise efficiencies.

Enhance regional performing arts touring
We will monitor the effectiveness of new funding arrangements (introduced in 2014) that support long-term commitments to Regional NSW and encourage stronger relationships with artists, producers, venues and audiences. We will also review current approaches to showcasing tour-ready work to determine whether improvements can be made.

Promote regional arts and culture within Destination Management Planning
Arts NSW will develop a best-practice guide for Destination Management Planning (DMP), in consultation with the Regional Arts Network and Destination NSW. This will help to promote opportunities for cultural tourism and include arts and culture in all DMPs.

Support cultural volunteering
We will explore ways to support and increase the involvement of volunteers in the arts and cultural sector as part of the NSW Volunteering Strategy. Volunteering plays an important role in building community networks and sustainable relationships. For example, in 2013–14, 149 volunteers at Sydney Living Museums provided 5,000 hours of service to the organisation covering a variety of roles from guiding to events. Specific projects, such as the Sydney Open, had approximately 600 volunteers.

Its economic impact is significant, with arts and heritage volunteers contributing around $756 million to Australia’s GDP (Australian National Accounts: Cultural and Creative Activity Satellite Accounts, Experimental, 2008–09).

Ensure programs reflect our culturally and linguistically diverse community
We will create opportunities for artists and cultural practitioners from culturally diverse backgrounds to develop sustainable and successful careers.

Arts NSW will also partner with key organisations and other State agencies to ensure there are more platforms for artists from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their work.

We will support programming across our arts organisations and State Cultural Institutions, as well as culturally relevant productions supported by Screen NSW.
In 2013, Sydney Living Museums, in partnership with the City of Sydney, developed an innovative and award-winning audio guide for the Hyde Park Barracks Museum. The audio guide significantly increases access for non-English speaking visitors. It also improves access for deaf and hearing-impaired visitors fluent in Auslan (Australian Sign Language).

The Auslan version is the first of its kind for cultural venues in NSW. It was produced with Acoustaguide Australia, and is delivered through the OpenMi app, which features captioned videos of signing interpreters. It provides a 20-stop, self-guided tour in multiple languages that reveals previously hidden aspects of this World Heritage-listed building’s history.

Translations are provided in Mandarin, Korean, Japanese, Spanish, French and Italian. It introduces people who lived in, worked on, or visited the site over the past two centuries, and gives insights into the building’s design, location and significance to the city’s cultural heritage.

The audio guide tells stories about ‘real people in real places’, and is enriched by characterisations of convicts, immigrants and court workers. It offers perspectives and historical insights from the museum’s architect, a leading Sydney historian, an Irish community leader and the museum’s curator.

In November 2013, the guide won Museums & Galleries of NSW’s coveted Imagine Award, part of the Education & Audience Development category for organisations with over 20 staff.
Increasing regional access
Australian Museum

The Australian Museum’s virtual volunteer program is available for anybody in Regional NSW to engage with the museum and learn about its vast collections, while helping to make them accessible online. This crowdsourcing site provides opportunities for volunteers from regional communities to participate in the arts in a unique way.

By June 2014, the museum had about 350 virtual volunteers, who over the past three years had added more than 100,000 images to the museum’s digital records. There were over 226,704 images created, 58,676 items transcribed and 73,135 records of the Natural Sciences Collections imported into Emu (the museum’s collections database).

In addition, the Australian Museum has digitised its entire ethnographic collections, making these rarely exhibited artefacts highly accessible around the world. They also represent a significant NSW state asset, valued at $240 million, and comprising 120,000 International, Pacific and Indigenous artefacts.

DigiVol and the Volunteer Portal program (supported by the Atlas of Living Australia) has ongoing funding for ‘virtual’ volunteer coordinators in the Natural Sciences Collections until June 2015.
Connecting communities through art
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul was a landmark exhibition for the Art Gallery of New South Wales. In close collaboration with members of Sydney’s large Afghan community, the gallery developed multimedia projects, events and lectures associated with the exhibition. It’s an example of a valuable long-term relationship forged between a State Cultural Institution and the community.

The exhibition brought to Australia more than 230 priceless treasures, unlocking them for local audiences. These objects, believed lost or destroyed through war and political instability, were uncovered in 2003 in vaults in the central bank of the presidential palace. They had been secretly placed there for safekeeping by National Museum staff. It was the first time the prized material had been seen in Australia, offering visitors a rare opportunity to better understand the extraordinarily rich heritage of Afghanistan.

The exhibition was exceptionally popular among Sydney’s Afghan community, with many visiting the gallery for the first time. As part of the programming partnership, Afghan refugees and migrant groups were offered free entry to the exhibition. The programs were extremely successful; attracting over 12,300 participants, with many repeat visits.

Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul also coincided with The Haunted Lotus, the first exhibition at the gallery by Sydney-based Afghan Hazara artist Khadim Ali. New connections and opportunities for cultural collaborations have emerged through the work displayed in both of these exhibitions.

One of a pair, this gold, turquoise, garnet, lapis lazuli, carnelian and pearl pendant showing the ‘Dragon Master’ dates from the first century A.D © Thierry Ollivier, musée Guimet.
Participating in arts and culture positively impacts young people through creative learning and multiple platforms for expression. The NSW Government recognises this and will work to expand arts and cultural career opportunities for young people, and build a dialogue with them to contribute to our plans and priorities.

Children and young people (defined in NSW as 0–24 years old) have some of the highest creative participation rates in NSW. 15-34 year olds enjoy the highest levels of participation in visual arts and crafts, theatre and dance, creative writing and music.

Over the next decade, we will encourage and support creative learning models to sustain and deepen young people’s involvement in arts and culture.

In NSW, participation by young people is supported by a vibrant youth arts sector that covers many art forms and scales of activity. This includes the Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP), Gondwana Choirs, Sydney Youth Orchestra, and smaller regional companies such as fLiNG Physical Theatre in Bega. Sydney Living Museums offer young people immersive education programs in authentic historical contexts attracting over 50,000 students annually across 12 heritage sites.

Recognising the importance of connecting school children with our State’s living heritage, the growth of education programs at our heritage sites will continue to be supported.

The major performing arts organisations actively educate and inspire students and the broader community. Major performing arts company education programs reach one in five Australian school children every year.

These companies work closely with schools and communities to develop content, including literacy programs and tutoring of regional bands and orchestras via digital links. These programs engage both students and teachers. Teachers benefit from techniques that use the arts to activate learning, and the programs provide broader learning skills for students.

Our State Cultural Institutions place significant emphasis on education programs. One example is Sydney Opera House’s partnership with the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia to run the program Bella in the House. Designed for students with physical, intellectual, behavioural or sensory disability, the program combines teaching with a visit to the Sydney Opera House.
Convene a youth arts roundtable
Arts NSW will convene a roundtable of arts organisations working with and for young people. It will provide young people with the opportunity to voice their ideas and plans, improving what we do for them.

Broaden admissions to the collecting State Cultural Institutions
To encourage more young people to participate in the arts, we will explore entry and membership conditions for the collecting State Cultural Institutions for people under 16 years of age.

Facilitate artists in residency program
Fresh AIR (artist-in-residency) is a three year, targeted initiative designed to build on previous AIR programs and further develop best practice. It is a collaborative project between Arts NSW, the Australia Council for the Arts, the NSW Department of Education & Communities and leading arts and cultural organisations.

Work with NSW Education Authorities to build support for Creative Arts Disciplines
The Australian Curriculum: The Arts was made available to states and territories in February 2014, with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) developing curriculum to be taught in NSW schools. The NSW Creative Arts curriculum developed by BOSTES is internationally recognised for its quality and scope, with a focus on promoting engagement with arts practice and critical and creative thinking, authentic practice, problem solving and innovation.

The National Arts and Culture Accord (which the NSW Government is a party to), will provide a strong base for state, territory and local governments to work with the Commonwealth Government to build support for, and ensure consistency in, the implementation of the Australian arts curriculum, including through resources and training for teachers.

‘Engagement with the arts — as audiences, as participants and as practitioners — expands and develops young minds to be creative, inquisitive, collaborative and quick to empathise.’

— Young People and the Arts Australia response to ‘Framing the Future: Developing an Arts and Cultural Policy for NSW Discussion Paper’, 2013
Bringing performing arts to children everywhere
Sydney Opera House

Sydney Opera House is focused on finding innovative ways to engage audiences and communities across NSW, Australia and the world. Its digital education programs and live-streaming programs underpin its digital outreach.

In early 2012, Sydney Opera House launched its Digital Education Program to further its engagement through education. The program consists of live digital tours, workshops and streamed performances for primary and secondary students and teachers.

In 2013–14, Sydney Opera House held 116 digital-education workshops, reaching about 6,000 students from 97 schools. Thirty-six schools and more than 1,500 students participated in Regional NSW. The program has received positive feedback, particularly from regional teachers who are looking for technology based, interactive learning opportunities.

The most recent addition to Sydney Opera House’s digital education program is a digital excursion, Guwanyi Walama: To Tell and Return. Presented by Aboriginal performers and narrators, the 45-minute tour combines live footage from Sydney Opera House precinct with cutting-edge animation of pre-settlement Bennelong Point to explore the history of the area.
The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) is helping to develop science education in Australia by engaging high school students in an exciting new endeavour.

MAAS’ Mars Lab is focused on the search for life on Mars and the technologies that make it possible. It integrates a robotics lab with a re-creation of the surface of Mars to provide innovative educational experiences. Some of the concepts being trialled include real-time remote access to, and live control of, two Earth-based Mars rovers; telepresence video conferencing with global experts and interactive professional development for teachers.

The Mars Lab is a research collaboration between the Powerhouse Museum, the Australian Centre for Astrobiology at the University of New South Wales and the Australian Centre for Field Robotics at the University of Sydney. Working alongside these research collaborators are teachers and students from connected schools across three states.

The Mars Lab is one of 13 government trial education projects within the Broadband Enabled Education and Skills Services Program. It provides schools with remote access to equipment for running experiments with practitioners in the fields of science, engineering and mathematics. The project aims to lift student participation rates in science, and will support the National Curriculum for Science.

The project’s education aims are to cover science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) knowledge as prescribed in the Australian National Curriculum, provide opportunity for original research, and connect young people at school with role models at university. During 2014, over 1,900 young people and teachers from 35 schools participated. The Mars Lab was awarded first prize in the 2014 AARNet Excellence Awards.

Extending digital outreach to Mars
Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences

‘The future I want to see will place more emphasis on what artists can offer to this process of creativity, starting from early learning programs through to engaging with cultural activities, to employing artists to address issues of concern for governments and businesses.’

Of great importance to the arts and cultural sector is the talent and capacity of its practitioners and workers. The NSW Government’s goal is to make the State a location of choice for the mobile and innovative creative workforce.

Through Arts NSW, we will develop networks and partnerships across the sector — between major performing arts bodies and the small-to-medium sector, and between the State Cultural Institutions and regional organisations and beyond.

It is part of our role to help build strength in the sector by clearing the path for artists and arts workers to make art. We will review the regulatory environment and identify further policy opportunities to ensure arts and culture are embedded across key strategies from a whole-of-government perspective.

In the information age, data is a valuable resource. Open access to better research and thoughtful analysis is of huge benefit in helping both the sector at large, and individual organisations. This helps to quantify the outcomes and benefits of government investment in arts and cultural infrastructure and programs. Strength is about growing the investment base as well as expanding and diversifying funding sources.

Building strength in arts and culture in NSW will be achieved through:

- Professional development
- Business sustainability
- Networks and partnerships
- Research and evaluation.
Unlocking the full potential of artists and cultural practitioners

Professional development that unlocks the full creative potential of artists and cultural practitioners through access to education, training and professional opportunities is a crucial investment in the growth and sustainability of the sector. This includes artists developing their creative practice and arts administrators strengthening their skills and expertise, empowering collaboration in innovative ways.

The Government wants NSW to remain a location of choice for the mobile creative workforce. We will enable artists and creative practitioners to have new opportunities to grow their practice, connect with their peers and build sustainable careers.

Contemporary, practical experience is crucial to artists and cultural practitioners thriving in a competitive sector. Along with business and technical support, individual artists need access to resources to help them identify and commercialise their creative intellectual property. For new and emerging artists wishing to broaden their artistic practice, this includes opportunities for ongoing practice in supported and mentored environments with established practitioners.

NSW has a number of well-recognised tertiary and training institutes for arts and culture. These include the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA), the National Art School, and universities. However, changes to TAFE arrangements and the range of courses delivered by universities means there are gaps in opportunities, particularly in Western Sydney.

The Creative Industries Action Plan identifies the need to support the development of creative careers and strengthen the industries’ capabilities through enhanced coordination between government, peak industry bodies and education providers.
‘We create a learning environment for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people that inspires them to create, to find their expression, and in doing so, strengthen their culture and open career pathways for themselves that they may not have imagined before.’

— Kim Walker, Artistic Director, National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA), 2014

Actions

Create career development opportunities and explore partnerships with education and training organisations

We will establish a taskforce with representatives from State Cultural Institutions, major organisations and arts peak and service organisations to:

- establish partnerships to enhance professional skills and career development

- investigate and implement professional development opportunities for regional artists and arts workers

- develop a program of opportunities to support the career development of culturally and linguistically diverse artists and cultural practitioners

- work with training and university organisations to explore opportunities for courses and programs, particularly in Western Sydney

- consult and advise the Department of Education & Communities on skills that are in demand by the arts and cultural sector for consideration in the NSW Skills List.
Entertainment and innovation 
enhances the learning experience 
Bell Shakespeare

Bell Shakespeare’s Professional Learning program is one of Australia’s most extensive, comprehensive and wide-reaching education programs. It uses engaging, entertaining and innovative methods and technologies to bring Shakespeare into classrooms to enhance the overall learning experience.

Bell Shakespeare’s learning programs for teachers offer both new and experienced teachers across Australia access to these methods. During the year, they hold a variety of Australian Curriculum-linked Professional Learning sessions for primary and secondary teachers across Australia. This includes regional venues in every state and territory.

Bell Shakespeare also collaborates with the University of Sydney to provide sessions for pre-service primary teachers as part of their university training.

The company’s Regional Teacher Scholarship further supports access to high-quality professional learning experiences for regional and remote teachers. Bell Shakespeare selects 12 teachers a year, after a nationwide call for applications, to take part in four days of rigorous, specialised professional learning with them in Sydney.

This program has had immense impact in building the confidence, knowledge and skills of regional teachers and, as a result, their students. The scholarship alumni are in regular contact with Bell Shakespeare and their regional and remote counterparts. The company will cultivate connections with follow up performances and residencies to ensure deep and lasting impact for these teachers and their school communities.
Regional artists forming national and international partnerships
The Cad Factory

Narrandera artist Vic McEwan has used opportunities arising from NSW Government support to form multiple partnerships on a national and international level. The learnings from exchanges with national and international artists have, in turn, benefitted his community.

McEwan, the co-founder and artistic director of the Cad Factory, an artist-run space in the Riverina, was the inaugural winner of the $30,000 NSW Fellowship for Regional Artists. The fellowship enables an artist living in regional or remote parts of NSW to undertake a self-directed program of professional development.

McEwan travelled to the United Kingdom to be mentored by Clive Parkinson of Manchester Metropolitan University, a leading expert in the arts and health sector. The 18-month fellowship will expand McEwan’s practice which, has focused on using art to promote social wellbeing in the community and will include a residency at the National Museum of Australia.

The Cad Factory, an artist-run space in the Riverina, also recently announced a major partnership program between the National Association of Visual Arts (NAVA), the National Museum of Australia and Performance Space. Over 18 months, each organisation will engage with Regional NSW artists, landscape and communities, and participate in a skills exchange to enable growth and development. These opportunities showcase regional Australia abroad, while enabling artists to bring new learning back to their regions and share it with their communities.

Reverberate Project 2013,
Outback Theatre for Young People with Vic McEwan and Danielle O’Keefe. Photo © Kate Butler.
Entrepreneurial thinking is about recognising opportunities and understanding how to capitalise on them. It is central to the continued success of our State’s arts and culture over the next decade.

The NSW Government will help build business sustainability by developing capacity and sharing resources, promoting business-skills development and leveraging new opportunities to engage with the arts. We will support and encourage arts and cultural organisations to be entrepreneurial by exploring new markets, alternative investment models and deeper relationships with the business sector.

Streamlining and simplifying funding, and reforming regulatory and statutory requirements, will enable arts and cultural organisations and institutions to prosper. For Arts NSW this means investigating new models of investment in arts and culture. There is a body of work developing around social impact investment — the practice of investing for positive social outcomes that are measured alongside financial returns.

Research into new models may lead to changes in the way the NSW Government structures programs over the long term, encouraging new markets and additional revenue streams. We will investigate new investment models and public and private partnerships for major initiatives such as those outlined in the Revitalising Infrastructure section.

Our State Cultural Institutions are constantly working to take advantage of opportunities and ideas as they emerge and to develop new business partnerships and audiences. It is important the accountability arrangements that apply to them support their growth.

For the wider sector, the cultivation, maintenance and improvement of business and financial skills are essential. The NSW Government recognises that limited financial resources and networks make developing these skills challenging for individual artists, small-to-medium organisations and those located outside Metropolitan Sydney. We will work closely with the small-to-medium organisations across NSW to support their uptake of these skills.

We also recognise that corporate support and private donors are critical to the health and wellbeing of the arts and cultural sector. We welcome this leadership and commit to support those who seek to grow these relationships.
Convene an arts and business roundtable
This roundtable will bring together leaders to promote the business sector’s role in arts and culture in NSW. It will focus on extending business engagement in Western Sydney and Regional NSW.

Reduce red tape for State Cultural Institutions
We will work in partnership with the State Cultural Institutions to reduce red tape that applies to them, promoting a streamlined accountability structure. This will enable a modern regulatory environment more conducive to entrepreneurship.

Facilitate improved business skills
Arts NSW will facilitate targeted, specialist training and support to improve the capacity of arts and cultural organisations in strategic planning and financial analysis. Wherever possible, this will be delivered in partnership with co-funders or existing networks. The NSW Creative Industries Business Advisor is available to support businesses in NSW.

Broaden income streams
Arts NSW will investigate new financing and investment models, including the micro-financing opportunities provided by Forresters Community Financing. It will also investigate social impact investment and pilot projects to test their utility in NSW.

‘Working within an ever-changing film industry, innovation is essential in supporting our vision to create ground-breaking films. To achieve this we challenge our core beliefs, implement new strategies, nurture talent and seek out opportunities that are beneficial to the film industry in Australia.’

— Sharon Taylor, Head of Production, Animal Logic – winner of the inaugural NSW Creative Laureate Award and 2014 Ambassador for NSW Creative Industries.
Entrepreneuring income through partnership and collaboration
Carriageworks

Carriageworks has emerged as a nationally important home for new arts and culture.

In 2007, the NSW Government redeveloped the Eveleigh Carriageworks site, following the $15 million purchase of the historic Carriage Workshops building. Arts NSW committed an additional $49 million to develop the former railyard building. The adaptive re-use of the building provides a fully serviced multi-venue precinct that inspires and meets the ambitions of artists from across NSW, Australia and the world.

Since the implementation of a new five-year strategy and the expansion of the precinct to twice its original size, Carriageworks’ audiences have doubled each year, with over 500,000 people attending in 2014. This growth has been achieved through a highly successful mix of government support, a partnership approach to programming and a strong entrepreneurial attitude. Arts NSW’s operational funding and infrastructure support are critical to its ongoing success.

Carriageworks leverages this investment to self-generate 75% of its income. The additional space has enabled Carriageworks to further expand its programming, present large-scale events, such as Sydney Contemporary, and become a major venue partner of the Biennale of Sydney.

Carriageworks’ entrepreneurial strategies have helped it build a reputation for supporting excellence in film, fashion, food and other creative industries. It is now the home of Mercedes Benz Fashion Week Australia — a multi-year partnership that has provided additional commercial income and attracted other fashion events. With the reputation of the Eveleigh Farmers Markets, Carriageworks has attracted large-scale food and wine events including Rootstock Sydney, Craft Beer Festival and the Oz Harvest CEO Cook-Off. It now regularly presents conferences and events for the creative industries including Semi-Permanent, the Electronic Music Conference (EMC) and LSN Global Trend Briefings.

These strategic areas of commercial activity, alongside a partnership approach to programming, have established Carriageworks as NSW’s fastest growing arts and cultural venue. Along with continued government support, this coordinated approach to commercial and artistic programs ensures income growth for the future. This gives Carriageworks a strong sustainable basis to continue to grow and develop for the benefit of NSW.

Providing affordable spaces for artists
Brand X and Fraser Studios

Brand X re-purposes space for Sydney’s performing and visual arts communities to practice their craft. Formerly known as Queen Street Studio, this Sydney-based not-for-profit arts organisation is run by artists for artists. It stimulates a vibrant cultural life for Sydney by providing independent artists with support while reinvigorating local communities and economies. Brand X addresses the lack of affordable space for artists to practice their craft. Working closely with developers, landlords and government, Brand X delivers workspaces as well as creative-development programs.

In 2008, Brand X managed the Fraser Studios facility for Frasers Property, which introduced a new initiative to make creative use of vacant warehouse space in the old Kent Brewery development site on Broadway. Three warehouses in Chippendale were temporarily transformed into a multidisciplinary art space made possible through Frasers Property, the City of Sydney and Arts NSW. Fraser Studios was returned to the developer in 2012.

The organisation currently manage six resources for the performing, visual arts and live music community; Preshana in Darlinghurst, The Palace Studio in Marrickville, Camperdown Bowling Club in Camperdown, TWT Creative Precinct in St Leonards and Tempe Jets in Tempe. In addition, they also run Brand X Studio as a creative retail store in Surry Hills.

The success of Brand X makes a strong case for forward-thinking entrepreneurialism in the arts and cultural sector.
Networks and partnerships

Collaborations are critical to the vitality of the sector. Across the arts and cultural sector, large and small organisations are working in partnership and building networks. These maximise creative, business and professional development opportunities through the sharing of expertise, skill sets and networks.

The NSW Government is committed to exploring ways to sustain and nurture networks and partnerships in the arts and cultural sector across the State. We will enable interdisciplinary works and collaborations between artists and arts organisations.

We will also develop partnerships across government agencies. A whole-of-government approach maximises our effectiveness and the impact of specific actions. It allows best practice to be shared, and creates opportunities for funding investment to be matched for arts and cultural organisations.

We will encourage the clustering of like organisations within facilities and precincts. This provides a time and cost effective way to share expertise and skills. Through co-location, arts organisations have ready access to staff and resources, increasing efficiency and promoting the sharing of ideas.
**Actions**

**Partner with local government**
We will create stronger collaborations with local government to support arts and culture through contributory funding for the Regional Arts Boards, infrastructure projects, public library funding and specific support for local programs. Local government is a critical leader in supporting the aspirations of the community to create and participate in arts and culture.

Strategic partnerships are central to the delivery of high-quality regional arts and cultural activity in NSW. The establishment of creative hubs reflects Recommendation 17 of the *Creative Industries Action Plan*, which suggests we ‘establish smaller scale innovation hubs in major regional centres, based on niche specialisations and the region’s existing strengths.’

**Work with service organisations**
Service organisations build and maintain networks in the arts and cultural sector. Arts NSW will work with these organisations to build the strength of the sector. This will include scoping opportunities for organisations to locate in Western Sydney or Regional NSW, so they can work more effectively on the growing needs of the arts communities in those areas.

**Promote our Living Heritage**
We will work with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and the Sydney Living Museums to identify opportunities for intersection with arts and culture to expand awareness, and enable a broader experience of tangible and intangible heritage across the State.

**Partner across NSW Government agencies**
Arts NSW will partner with other NSW Government agencies to marshal expertise, resources and networks to achieve outcomes for the community.

These include:
- the Department of Family & Community Services, on the NSW Arts and Disability Partnership
- the NSW Department of Education & Communities, on initiatives such as Fresh AIR
- Destination NSW
- the Department of Planning
- UrbanGrowth NSW
- Transport for NSW and Roads & Maritime Services
- NSW Health, as co-signatories of the National Arts and Health Framework, on integrating arts and culture in the planning of health facilities.

**Support live music**
We will work collaboratively with local councils, such as the City of Sydney. We will also work with the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, Department of Planning & Environment, the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and the Office of the NSW Small Business Commissioner. Together, we will develop policy and regulatory settings to support the continued growth and vibrancy of music in NSW.
Weaving Wellbeing is a community public-art project for the new Orange Health Service facility. It is a lasting piece of art, which challenges stigma around mental health, celebrates Indigenous culture and humanises clinical environments. It places creativity and community at the heart of the facility.

Weaving Wellbeing is part of Orange Health Service’s Arts & Health Strategy, a partnership between Western NSW Local Health District, Orange City Council, Orange Regional Gallery, Orange Regional Arts Foundation, Orange Regional Conservatorium, Arts Out West and the local community.

The installation includes traditional Aboriginal woven elements with non-traditional techniques. Artists Gabriella Hegyes and Bev Coe led the weaving workshops. Seventy volunteers including artists, community members and mental-health staff worked together to make this a significant and collaborative effort. It celebrates the talent of regional artists, volunteers and those often marginalised by society, and shows how people from diverse backgrounds and skill levels can work together with government towards a shared vision.

Weaving Wellbeing has resonated strongly with staff, patients, and visitors at the health service. The result is a highly visible community presence in the Orange Health Service.
Collaborating on unique, immersive theatre
Urban Theatre Projects and Northern Rivers
Performing Arts

My Radio Heart is a new Australian work that uses dance, large-scale audio-visuals, punk rock, electronica and country-and-western music to create a surreal fiction about finding love in the 21st century. Part installation, part audio journey, the work creates an omni-sensory experience with a universal theme. It also provides a supported platform of exchange between people with disability, professional artists and theatre makers and arts organisations.

My Radio Heart was commissioned by the Lismore City-based Northern Rivers Performing Arts (NORPA) in 2013, developed in collaboration with Tralala Blip and Western Sydney-based Urban Theatre Projects (UTP), and supported by Accessible Arts and local disability service providers RED Inc., Multitask and RealArtWorks. It draws on material from a series of multimedia community workshops and creative development for more than 80 participants with disability. It premiered in March 2014 during NORPA's season at Lismore City Hall. It was followed by performances at Bankstown Arts Centre in Western Sydney.

The project was supported by the NSW Arts and Disability Partnership between the NSW Department of Family and Community Services and Arts NSW. The development and presentation were supported through grants from Arts NSW’s Regional Partnerships, the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation and the Australia Council for the Arts.

My Radio Heart demonstrates the great potential in collaborations among arts organisations across NSW.
Screen Stories from the region

The Gods of Wheat Street

The Gods of Wheat Street is a six-part television drama series about a contemporary Aboriginal family that aired on ABC TV in 2014. The series was shot entirely on location in the northern New South Wales town of Casino. Creator and writer Jon Bell was inspired by memories of his upbringing in Bundjalung country to develop the first long-form drama series created and written by an Aboriginal screenwriter.

The production was also supported by Bundjalung Elders Council, Richmond Valley Council and Lismore City Council. The series injected more than $2 million into the local economy and created 222 NSW jobs, many of them for local people. 138 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people were employed, including 15 in key creative roles.

Taking treasures to the bush
State Library of NSW

Since 2012, the State Library learning team has travelled to rural and regional schools across NSW delivering an interactive Australian history workshop, the FAR Out! program. It is designed to address the NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum.

Fifteen tours of FAR Out!, between March 2012 and July 2014, have inspired 7,450 students from 142 schools. Students are from areas as varied as Bourke, Cobar, Broken Hill, Menindee and Wilcannia, Ashford, Eugowra, Rocky River, Bald Blair, Henty and Tumbarumba.

FAR Out! has had an extraordinary impact in many communities across NSW. Geoffrey McCostner (pictured) from Ashford Central School made the journey to the State Library following a FAR Out! workshop in November 2013. His parents were delighted the library had left such an impression on him and suggested that Geoffrey be a friend of the library forever.

The program, delivered by State Library educators (all trained teachers), takes some of the library’s iconic, original materials to isolated schools to engage in workshops about the story of Aboriginal heritage and British colonisation.

The Reaching Out! program for teachers in country schools mirrors the success of FAR Out! It involves State Library educators leading workshops endorsed by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) in regional locations. Between 2012 and 2014, 821 teachers from 308 schools attended 18 workshops across NSW.

FAR Out! is generously funded by the Caledonia Foundation, the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation and the State Library of New South Wales Foundation.

Geoffrey Mc Cosker of Ashford Central School at the Mitchel Library. Photo © Bruce York Imaging Services, State Library of NSW.
There is strong public recognition of the benefits of participation in arts and culture. Good data assists the NSW Government to communicate our achievements and evidence the impact of arts and culture. It is crucial for evaluating the success of the actions under this policy framework and is essential in building stronger communities, in line with the goals of NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One.

It is our plan to capture, evaluate and showcase the social, economic and community outcomes of arts and culture to provide a compelling case for further investment. We have identified a range of opportunities to enhance our data gathering, and consolidate and accessibly present existing data and research. Data capture frequency, comparability and communication are areas for focused improvement.

Recent work commenced by the Western Australian Government, and documented in Measurement and Capture of Public Value of Arts and Culture, is a new and potentially robust approach. We are keen to explore the applicability of this work across NSW.
‘While it is important that a quantifiable economic evaluation of cultural investments is considered... it is equally important that the intrinsic value of arts and cultural expression to society is not lost, and that the social impact of arts and cultural investment is also recognised and evaluated…’

— City of Sydney response to ‘Framing the Future: Developing an Arts and Cultural Policy for NSW Discussion Paper’, 2013

**Actions**

*Improve inter-jurisdictional data and statistics activity*
We will collaborate with our inter-jurisdictional counterparts to improve the quality and availability of data on arts, culture and the creative industries. We will do this by working with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Australia Council for the Arts and the Statistic Working Group, in the context of 2014 ABS changes.

Arts NSW will improve the release and quality of data collection through its grant acquittal process.

*Collaborate on audience research and dialogue*
Arts NSW will collaborate with the Australia Council for the Arts in its research and data collection project *Arts in Daily Life: Australian Participation in the Arts* to expand our understanding of audience trends, and discuss strategies to broaden and deepen audience engagement.

*Build an economic performance project*
We will build the information base about the economic impact of our investment in arts and culture. As a first step, an economic research report, looking at the arts and cultural sector in NSW, will be released in 2015.

*Evaluate and review this policy*
Arts NSW will establish an evaluation framework to track and report on the implementation of this policy. This will include developing a set of performance indicators to assess the impact of the policy. We will communicate the progress of actions each year.
From consultation to crucial collaborations on the Central Coast

Art Central

Art Central is an Arts NSW partnership supporting the professional arts sector on the Central Coast. It was developed following detailed research into the arts sector in the region, and allows programs to be tailored to the community’s cultural landscape and needs.

In 2010, Arts NSW commissioned Lois Randall Creative Consulting to consult with local stakeholders and produce the Central Coast art + community report 2010. The report profiled the arts in Gosford and Wyong, and identified possible partnership projects. Arts NSW subsequently developed Art Central, a regional partnership with Gosford City Council, Wyong Shire Council, and Regional Development Australia Central Coast.

The Art Central partnership delivers on key recommendations of Lois Randall’s report. Recent Central Coast projects supported by Art Central include: Central Line, a collaborative online platform by design studio Treehouse Creative; a music-industry development initiative by Innov8Central Music, with workshops in Ourimbah, Gosford and Wyong; Civic Melancholy Brackish Songs, a collaborative project between composer Christopher Sainsbury and photographer Jamie Holcombe; and Art Whispers, a multimedia project led by Gosford artist Gabrielle Somers and documented by Gosford photographer and youth arts worker Sharon Aldrick.

With a population of 320,000, the Central Coast is the third largest residential region in NSW. It is also one of the fastest growing, with a further 100,000 residents expected by 2031.


Photo © Onur Karaozbec courtesy of DS Vision.
Please Refrain from Wearing Shoes 2013, by Amanda Airs.
New England Regional Art Museum.
7. Appendix

7.1 Terms of reference
The NSW Arts & Cultural Policy will outline a vision and 10 year strategy for arts and culture in NSW to 2022, including the development of practical ambitions and public reporting, which will:

- set out clear actions to support creativity, inquiry and an inclusive arts and culture environment; and enable sustainable growth and productivity for the arts and cultural sector
- strengthen the approach to arts and cultural investment, including better measurement and an improved evidence base
- identify key performance indicators, progress and outcomes metrics and clear benchmarks for major initiatives.

In developing the NSW Arts & Cultural Policy, we will consider:

- trends in growth and innovation
- opportunities to recognise and reflect the diversity of NSW
- the role and contribution of artists, writers, organisations and State Cultural Institutions
- ways to improve services and products for the people of NSW through outreach and an enhanced regional presence
- the effectiveness of funding and governance models across major programs and the broader arts and cultural sector, including the Arts Funding Program
- ways to enhance business and development partnerships for arts and cultural investments, in line with the considerations of the State Infrastructure Strategy
- the integration and utilisation of Government services and infrastructure

7.2 Consultation
A ministerial reference group was appointed to provide the broader arts sector’s perspective in developing this policy framework. The group members were:

- Chris Freeland, National Managing Partner, Baker & McKenzie; Chair, Sydney Film Festival
- Professor Deborah Stevenson, Institute for Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney
- Scott Howie, Regional Arts Development Officer, Eastern Riverina Arts
- Lisa Havilah, CEO, Carriageworks
- Ben Quilty, artist, 2011 Archibald Prize Winner, Art Gallery of New South Wales Trustee.

A discussion paper, Framing the Future, was released for public consultation in October 2013. Consultations included statewide stakeholder meetings, an online community forum and social media. It finished in December 2013, with a wide range of submissions from across the arts and cultural sector, the community and government.

7.3 Your input
In developing this policy framework, we started a focused dialogue. Framing the Future set out the priorities and opportunities we observed through our direct engagement with arts organisations and State Cultural Institutions; and through our local, national and international scan of arts and cultural ecosystems.

To inform our approach we invited written submissions, held public workshops across NSW and set up an online community via the Have Your Say website. We consolidated the findings from the discussion paper into a Consultation Outcomes Report, which is now available on the Arts NSW website.

7.4 What you said about…

Arts access for everyone
Among respondents there was a strong commitment to arts being accessible to all. Although NSW’s cultural diversity, in particular, was viewed as a great asset, respondents felt there were still barriers for culturally diverse artists and communities fully participating in arts and culture. Forum participants emphasised that economic, cultural and educational barriers to participation existed for both audiences and those producing art.

Value of the arts
The importance of the policy framework in articulating and promoting the intrinsic value of the arts at both a personal and societal level was clear among respondents. The arts were viewed as integral to wellness, happiness and identity.

Respondents also emphasised that the policy framework should highlight the role the arts can play in contributing to other government policy outcomes. This included quantifying its economic benefit to NSW. Its role in contributing to community development, social capital and intercultural understanding was also highlighted. Case studies of successful partnerships with sectors such as health and education were emphasised.

Support for Aboriginal artists
Respondents in all consultations, including regional and city locations, recognised and supported the continued and strong representation of Aboriginal identity and culture in developing and presenting the policy framework.
Aboriginal art was seen as central to our NSW identity. The contribution of Aboriginal artists was seen as essential in portraying our artistic endeavours, both at home and around the world.

Arts in the regions
Regional stakeholders welcomed the inclusion of a focus on Regional NSW. In particular they wanted recognition that regional communities are creating world-class arts and culture. The need for reciprocal touring and partnership relationships between Sydney and the rest of NSW was also acknowledged.

As the strengths and needs of regions across NSW vary greatly, it was important to regional stakeholders that the policy framework did not represent Regional NSW as a homogenous area.

Key points raised across the consultations and submissions included the significant role local government plays in regional arts and culture.

Also indicated were regional infrastructure needs, as well as the lack of adequate training and professional development opportunities that force artists and arts workers to relocate to metropolitan areas.

Investment
The need for a broader frame of investment for arts and culture was continually emphasised. There was a key recognition that in tight economic times the sector had to consider alternative approaches and evolve its funding sources and revenue streams. Options for new funding partnerships and models needed to be investigated in consultation with the arts community.

Arts ecosystems
The important role that local government plays in the delivery of arts and culture was also a recurring theme, as was the role of individual artists, the community cultural development sector and small-to-medium arts organisations.

The value of volunteers to the sector was also raised in a number of submissions. Many wanted further acknowledgement of their importance and support for them, as volunteer burnout and the need for skills development were raised as serious concerns. Many also wanted a quantitative assessment of the economic contribution of the pro bono work that volunteers do.

Western Sydney
The need to make Western Sydney more of a priority was a strong theme that was echoed beyond that region. In terms of population and diversity, Western Sydney loomed large in consultation discussions, with a broad acceptance of the need to work on an integrated strategy in the coming years.

Youth arts and arts education
A consistent emphasis across the sector was the centrality of youth arts and arts education, as these parts of the sector ‘nurture our cultural future.’ Arts education was considered an essential foundation for the building of arts appreciation and skills. It was also seen as encouraging current and future arts and cultural consumers, producers and workers.

Training and skills development
Artists and smaller arts organisations were thought to lack skills in certain areas and therefore require further training, support and resources. Specific areas of need identified were digital technology and online content, obtaining non-government funding, administrative and marketing skills, governance and lack of opportunities at TAFE.

Technology
The critical importance of emerging technologies was an important consideration and theme across the consultations. Respondents felt the impacts of the digital age need to be understood and taken advantage of in as many ways as possible, and made available as broadly as possible. This was particularly emphasised in regional consultations.

Cultural infrastructure
A recurring theme was the limited range of affordable spaces and venues available for artists in NSW. Some respondents said existing spaces are not being used to their full capacity.

There was also a strong interest in making spaces in schools and TAFEs available as studio and performance and exhibition spaces. Major organisations identified the importance of investment in infrastructure to enable access and continue to deliver excellent programs.

Connecting internationally
A number of submissions highlighted the important role arts and culture can play in developing cultural understanding and enhancing NSW’s global tourism brand.

A focus on developing Asian markets for NSW’s work was seen as particularly critical. Both artists and arts organisations described feeling insufficiently supported to capitalise on international opportunities across the Asia–Pacific region.

Some suggested the NSW community is not actively engaged in a two-way artistic and cultural exchange.