



TASMANIAN ARTS RESOURCE CENTRE

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT & NETWORK FOR THE
CREATIVES AND WORKERS OF THE TASMANIAN
CREATIVE & CULTURAL INDUSTRY

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PROPOSED BY
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TASMANIAN ARTS RESOURCE CENTRE PROPOSAL



Establish the
Tasmanian Arts Resource Centre.

A unique and unprecedented proposition:
a cross-sector NFP dedicated to support makers, producers, performers, workers and crew, across the creative and cultural industry in Tasmania.

WHAT IS THE TASMANIAN ARTS RESOURCE CENTRE?

This proposal envisions a post-COVID Tasmanian cultural and creative industry that is collaborative and resilient, and has elevated professional, industry and market development opportunities and outcomes for the individuals who contribute to the success of our industry. By focusing on the industry holistically, we can complement support mechanisms already in place and extend services to include those in the industry who are not supported by existing sector-specific organisations, ensuring that all eligible individuals in our industry, regardless of sector/medium or degree of engagement, have access to the resources, networks and opportunities necessary for a productive arts-based career in Tasmania.

COVID-19 emphasised a lack of resilience and the fragmentary nature of our creative and cultural industry as an historical consequence of siloed organisations and often narrow representation in sectors, and a scarcity of national arts organisational representation and engagement in the State. This leaves what we believe to be a majority of individuals - artists and artworkers - with little to no professional support or network, and a general inability to collectively address industry-wide issues or respond to major disruptions. To address this, TasARC will collaborate and form partnership relationships with other Tasmanian and national arts organisations to ensure all artists and artworkers in Tasmania have access to professional support, networking and training opportunities that will elevate the industry as a whole.

Having a small population with a relatively high level of arts participation in independent creative production and in ancillary support, increasing the number of sector-specific peak bodies in Tasmania would indisputably create superfluous administration and duplication of services. Therefore, as appropriate to the scale of the State's industry, an optimal model is a flexible cross-sector organisation/peak body with a broad membership base to complement those already successfully providing services.

Cultural & Creative Industry statistics: Number of workers in 2016: 6541.
Number of businesses in 2018: 2136
(ABS-Tas)

WHY IS TAS ARC NECESSARY?



An industry-wide organisation dedicated to 'hold space' and support and provide resources to individual artists and artworkers in, or emerging into, their professional lives has, to our knowledge, never existed in Tasmania and seems to be unprecedented in Australasia. The peak bodies that already function in this State represent and work - often very effectively - with relatively small memberships. However in being sector-specific they are often unable to address issues beyond their natural scope that are pertinent or necessary to the broader industry.

Significantly, in an economy that is highly dependent on its major annual events, particularly for tourism, event workers, crew and technicians, independent producers and others reliant on the gig economy have little to no local representation or resource support. Additionally, the increasingly part-time nature and casualisation of our industry workforce has left many (who often also support independent creative practices) extremely vulnerable to COVID-19. Large employers of this cohort (e.g. UTAS, MONA) were also impacted and unable to maintain their normal workforce levels.

Issues like this can only be addressed through industry-wide cohesion and never adequately so if applied only on an event-by-event or sectorial basis. A permanent, well-connected and well-supported industry body which is geared to anticipate and adapt to both gradual change and unexpected high-impact events alike, would greatly relieve the effects and shorten the length of adaptation for our industry and those that benefit from our output.

A major example of why such an organisation is critical to Tasmania's cultural future can be seen by Tasmania's high profile events calendar which is largely biennial (e.g. every second year major festivals Ten Days on the Island and the Australian Wooden Boat Festival are presented) and biannual - festival 'season' being largely bookended by the Taste of Tasmania (Dec) and Festival of Voices (Jul). This is a long-standing issue due to the largesse of these major arts events in the warmer months and an equal (but slowly decreasing) dearth of same across the State from July and December (The Unconformity and Junction Festival notwithstanding), creating a relative 'dead-zone' with few to no work opportunities. The vacuum is endured by those workers whose options are few: survive on Centrelink payments until festival season resumes, scrimp on-season to survive the off-season, seek work outside the industry, move or travel interstate to stay in the industry and return seasonally, or leave the State and/or the industry permanently in order to obtain a consistent income. A damaging consequence of there being no better option is often an absence of local expertise and the subsequent and all-to-frequent importation of skilled events workers when festival season commences again.

To gain a better understanding of the impacts of this issue alone, among others, we currently lack the structural ability to collect comprehensive data at a local level, to illustrate the variety, scale, issues and impediments to our Industry, and the subsequent impacts on other industries (e.g. tourism, education, small business), and the value we add to the Tasmanian brand.

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On a simpler scale creative producers also need assistance to alleviate the 'busyness' that detracts from fundamental creative time. Reinventing the wheel, so to speak, is often done via Facebook where the same questions are repeated in forums ad nauseam: Where can I find an accountant with arts experience? How do you acquire a grant? Can anyone help me shoot a video for my song, I'm broke? Does anyone know of a hall on the East Coast with good acoustics and in-house PA?

Provision of a one-stop shop for knowledgeable answers to these questions will build a more efficient and accessible creative economy. Additionally, Tasmania needs to create industry mechanisms to encourage and grow philanthropic culture on a small to medium scale. Our State's small scale and with a shortage of large-scale donors means those that do donate are often overwhelmed by requests. Corporate philanthropy is similarly small scale and almost completely locked up. We can work to improve fertility of small to medium donor culture by creating a 'space' for it by offering private or public, flexible options for direct or indirect, corporate, group and/or individual sponsorship of creativity and cultural production.

TasARC does not seek to be a union, lobbyist or even a booking agency. Its primary focus is to support our members in their professional practice, and in so doing, elevate the level of creative and cultural industry professionalism and increase our resilience for the future. While not a current goal, it may be that over time rather than duplicating services, TasARC's work could in effect, relieve local arts organisations of similar services, and thereby permit them to be pursue other goals.

BUSINESS MODEL

TasARC would be established as an Incorporated Association with a board providing best practice governance, with DGR (charitable) status. As a member service organisation the Board would include member representatives alongside a high level of skill, expertise and wisdom in governance, community, professional (legal, financial and marketing) and arts management.

Advisory groups derived from the membership will help us focus and ensure appropriate cultural and access approaches and to meet the needs of specific sectors, while attending to industry wide issues. Critical to this will be an engaged and enthusiastic Aboriginal Advisory Group to realise this radical and unprecedented organisation and be of the greatest overall benefit to the Tasmanian creative and cultural economy.

The company will engage a small multi-skilled and mobile team of specialist staff to deliver TasARC's objectives across the State under the initial direction of Frances Butler as CEO who has extensive (25+ years) multi-disciplinary experience in arts management and cultural leadership.



HOW IS TASARC DIFFERENT?

Unlike other Tasmanian arts organisations, TasARC's primary purpose is to provide professional support to the individuals working or emerging into a professional life in all creative sectors, including artworkers who are not creators, and particularly those sectors that do not already have a high degree of representation and/or professional support. This would include but is not limited to: visual artists, technicians, buskers/street performers, designers, students, writers, presenters, independent producers, event crew, craftspeople, publishers, musicians, photographers, performers, comedians, actors, directors, mechanists, composers, digital content creators, screen professionals etc. These are professionals who, due to increasing casualisation of the workforce and allied dependence on the gig-economy, and the relative scale of opportunities in the State, often cannot afford large annual membership or union fees, and are not eligible for or do not consider themselves represented by other sector-specific organisations.

The existence of a multi-sector peak body for the Tasmanian arts industry that focuses on cross-sector and individual professional, industry and market development seems logical but has not occurred previously. Anecdotal feedback from discussions about this proposal suggest that in Tasmania old models which instigate competition for arts funding rather than collaborating and complementing each other are still prevalent. So there is little crossover between sectors, for instance, the music and contemporary visual arts, or screen and design except on rare occasions. While this same feedback has shown that colleagues want to collaborate and support each other, without an independent mechanism to encourage or provide the neutral 'space' for this occur, multi-disciplinary fraternisation continues to be effectively thwarted. The unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic has made urgent the need for a similarly unprecedented organisational model to allow us to have broad industry issues conversations as a cohesive industry and to spur cross-fertilisation within the industry.

By building an inclusive and participatory model from the outset, particularly with the guidance of an Aboriginal Advisory Group and other community sectors (including migrant, diversity and ability-focused), TasARC's long term capacity and flexibility to ensure significant industry impacts are addressed with and on behalf of our membership would be assured.

ABORIGINAL ARTS

This often fragmentary and competitive nature of the arts industry in Tasmania has prevented the creation of support mechanisms to anticipate the nascent creative output of the palawa/pakana community. The Aboriginal Advisory Group is active and engaged, and sees the TasARC proposal as an ideal vehicle to offer an independent integrated industry-based framework of ally-ship for further development and cross-fertilisation. Crucially, by establishing this relationship in the preliminary stages of TasARC we can ensure that all the benefits of professional, industry and market development will flow to First Nations cultural and creative output simultaneously, and thus support increasing cultural leadership from the palawa/pakana community through direct participation in the development of TasARC.



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WHY SHOULD STATE GOVERNMENT FUND THIS?

In responding to the Interim PESRAC Report, it is vital that the State Government be at the forefront of supporting innovative ideas to rebuild a struggling creative and cultural industry and activate mechanisms to protect against future negative impacts. As our industry contributes vital and significant content and workforce from which other industries benefit - e.g. tourism, education, and small business - and helps to define the uniqueness of Tasmania via our creative output and in expressing our unique cultural identity, State government financial investment and/or in-kind support would be as logical as its ongoing investment in tourism, or sport.

Due to its broad demographic, TasARC can reasonably expect to achieve and maintain a relatively high membership representation of any arts organisation in the State. However, in order to be accessible, scaling of fees is crucial, and income from fees alone cannot suffice to fund all proposed services and outcomes. Ongoing (as in multi-year) State funding is vital to ensure that TasARC consistently offers appropriate member services, and equally, to gather and disseminate a high level of detailed data to significantly benefit future economic, social and cultural planning at a State level.



INDIVIDUAL ARTIST VS ORGANISATION FUNDING

There is a cogent argument that in dire times it is preferable to directly fund artists rather than organisations. However, the purpose of TasARC is to revive and elevate a state-wide industry. By building a support umbrella to artists and artworkers, many of whom have had no such support previously, and which proposes to address long-standing obstructions to cohesive, year-round functioning of the industry and a more fertile creative and collaborative environment - a longer-term view should be taken, especially when the direct recipients of such support are those individuals who collectively create and maintain our industry.

The breadth of eligibility across sectors and to include artworkers - an entire cohort generally excluded from the direct-to-artists support model - will ensure no one is left out of opportunities and conversations about increasing industry professionalism, resilience and opportunities across the State. Further, as many artworkers also support creative practices we can ensure that necessary conversations are had to improve job prospects within the sectors and improve cross-sector fertilisation and collaborations.

Providing professional and network support for industry, professional and market development, allows TasARC to alleviate the often disproportionate 'busy-ness' that often occurs with, for example, pursuing a creative practice as a sole-trader or while casually employed in cultural events.

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HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

AFFORDABLE FEES

Scaled for individuals who work in any capacity in the creative and cultural / arts sectors in Tasmania.

COMPREHENSIVE DIGITAL PLATFORM

Build an 'organic' CRM for members, and multi-faceted online platform for industry partners and community with degrees of accessibility depending on need including:

- database of research reports, professional resources and templates, job opportunities and events from across the industry
- specialised job centre for events crew, technicians, casual work etc
- database of State wide resources: venues, equipment hire, specialists etc
- self-registration platform for artists/creative producers to advertise products or events, and/or link to own website based on multiple search functions e.g. region, medium
- private donor platform for small to medium philanthropic and sponsorship programs and opportunities to encourage and grow philanthropic culture in Tasmania
- partner/membership platform for intrastate resource sharing e.g. studio or office space, regional accommodation, vehicles etc for increasing intrastate travel and collaboration

SHOPFRONT & REGIONAL OUTREACH

Complement the online platform with CBD shop-front and regular in-region face-to-face delivery of training, networking and professional (1:1 or group) support sessions including:

- Partner with individual LGAs / regions to provide regular face to face and localised programs
- Partner with other arts organisation to share office/meeting space in other regions as required

MEMBER ADVISORY GROUPS

Build sector and cross-sector advisory groups from membership for ongoing policy and industry development advice and discussion and empower often marginalised sectors through specialist groups to advise on issues and lead on policy development in the industry via direct programs, mentorships, and developing targeted resources etc, including:

- Aboriginal Advisory Group to lead in developing policy and encourage the participation of Palawa/Pakana creative producers and cultural workers
- Working directly with neuro-diverse, differently-abled, migrant, refugee and LGBTIQ+ individuals and community based organisations

MECHANISMS TO BUILD RESILIENCE

Establish a set of mechanisms and support options including:

- Tasmanian Cultural Investment Fund via the Register of Cultural Organisations (ROCO) to support independent industry programs
- Establish a members' Benevolent Fund for emergency financial support
- Provide affordable independent auspice and financial management for independent projects
- Develop and support a register of local (and by region) professionals to offer pro-bono assistance and advice to members
- Specialised sector training to build professional skills, mental and physical healthcare resources working with national bodies e.g. Arts Law, Support Act, Arts Wellbeing Collective.
- Collaborate with performance and events sectors to build a professional (RTO) training program for cohorts of events workers/crew and technicians, and develop year-round job opportunities. This may include registration as a training organisation (RTO).

WHAT DO WE NEED?

Using the digital platform and outreach feedback, our initial membership data will contribute to data for an annual Tasmanian Arts Industry Report. Using this base data and subsequent ongoing research, successive annual reports will be able to identify industry issues, patterns and needs, and each year add a distinct sector or issue focus to provide more in-depth understanding to improve not only our services but to discern impacts and benefits beyond our industry.

An accessible Hobart shopfront location will be established as a focal point for our services, a base from which to offer services across the State, and offer reciprocal space sharing with non-Hobart based partner organisations. This will also host a resource library and meeting or training spaces accessible to members.

By being intimately knowledgeable about our Industry, TasARC will be able to offer a unified industry voice and up-to-date set of detailed industry data to aid social, economic and cultural planning, and assist to illustrate our sectors' impacts on and benefits to other industries - tourism, education, small business etc.

TasARC will establish independent income streams through its membership fees, fees for external services, training, fundraising, sponsorship and donor programs. However, in order to ensure accessibility fees will be kept low. This means that government support via organisational grants will be crucial to maintaining TasARC. This will provide time to prove viability and relevance for the organisation, in order to move to multi-year funding programs at a significantly lower rate than during the establishment period.

Participation via membership in arts organisations in Tasmania is traditionally low and thus represents a poor income stream. However this reflects the sector-specific situation, As a cross-sector organisation TasARC will have a broader membership pool to draw from and can thus offer a lower membership rate if subsidised by government support.

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WHO BENEFITS & HOW?

Our members will be:

actors, painters, producers, technicians,
buskers, designers, students, writers,
presenters, producers, event crew, casual
workers, craftspeople, dancers, lighting
designers, printmakers, publishers, musicians,
photographers, actors, directors, choir
directors, puppeteers, mechanists,
composers, comedians, game designers,
cabaret artists, box office, arts administrators,
circus performers, architects, installers, audio
technicians, graphic designers, sculptors,
stage managers, poets ...

TasARC will deliver a broad range of services
to its members through building useful
resources, partnerships and referrals:

- work with professionals to offer pro-bono and paid financial and legal advice
- offer accessible membership – low/scaled fees with high service value
- design and source useful templates for business use
- build state-wide cross-sector network
- offer professional practice training program
- negotiate reciprocal rights with partner organisations
- build an accessible emergency fund
- build small-medium donor/investment programs
- member database and self registration for online promotion
- develop training to improve professional skills, mental and physical health
- build a crew database for supporting local venues, events, festivals, tours
- establish a training program for events workers and crew to elevate local capacity
- conducting business regionally and supporting local providers
- work with and for palawa/pakana community for capacity-building and opportunities
- build relationships with community organisations in other sectors to ensure accessibility and appropriate cultural support for our members
- build sponsorship investment programs to encourage / increase local philanthropy
- auspice independent projects and provide management support



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IMPACTS

CULTURAL

- Increased knowledge of our Industry and its external impacts
- Better able to illustrate the uniqueness and specialness of our Industry
- Increased opportunities for engagement with palawa/pakana arts and culture
- Increased community access to cultural events information and who's-who in our industry
- More unified industry voice to advocate for and promote our creative community
- Improved visibility of the multicultural, physical and cognitive diversity in our industry
- Elevation of local capacity to support tours and major events
- Tasmanian Cultural Investment Fund to enable projects of excellence

SOCIAL

- Increased understanding, acknowledgement and pride in Tasmanian cultural heritage and assets through knowing what we do and how we do it
- Higher visibility of our artists and the achievements of our creative community
- Greater awareness of each other across the distinct arts sectors
- Better community accessibility to the arts and appropriate cultural support for our members via digital platform
- Increased community access and engagement with palawa/pakana creative and cultural producers
- Improved accessibility for regional artists and the statewide exchange of knowledge and resources via digital and face-to-face programs

ECONOMIC

- Increased sector connectivity, collaboration and interdependence
- Increased resilience through better professional skills and networks for dealing with change
- Increased capacity of artists / artworkers to attract grant funding, commissions, sponsorship and commercial representation through professional development programs identified and develop with industry experts
- Identified career pathways for event workers
- Support local providers of industry resources, venues, equipment hire
- More local job security for gig-economy workers and performers
- More skilled locals to fill events jobs around the State, rather than import
- Increased culture of philanthropy and private investment in the arts
- Better information and support for interstate/international tours into Tasmania

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PRIORITIES

CONNECTIVE & INCLUSIVE

- Connect all the sectors in our Industry via online network
- Accessible membership – low/scaled fees with high service value
- Expert support for professional and emerging artists and artworkers in all sectors
- Be a primary point of contact for interstate and international tours into Tasmania
- Build a database of available industry resources, venues, equipment hire

SUPPORTING LOCAL PROVIDERS

- Understand and acknowledge Tasmanian cultural heritage and creative assets and workers
- Celebrate achievements in our industry and understand its impacts and benefits
- Adapt great ideas to our island situation
- Collaborate with other Tasmanian organisations to uplift our creative community
- Be the experts on the Tasmanian creative & cultural industry through its various sectors

BUILDING RESILIENCE AND CAPACITY IN OUR INDUSTRY

- Work to resolve industry-wide and cross-sector issues via our advisory groups
- Develop relevant member-focused service provision for creatives and cultural workers
- Build opportunities to mitigate the Jul-Dec 'dead zone'
- Develop industry voice and advocacy to work for improvement in the gig economy
- Establish non-monetary system of exchange of skills and resources

ENCOURAGING BEST PRACTICE ACROSS THE INDUSTRY

- Exemplify best practice through our governance and management
- Work closely with national peak arts bodies to increase their engagement in Tasmania
- Encourage awareness of artists/artworkers professional rights and obligations
- Work with industry colleagues to offer professional development eg portfolio development
- Undertake and encourage cultural and diversity awareness and application
- Research and keep up with industry developments that effect our members
- Promote/encourage best practice in the industry through collaborative training
- Use DGR status to build a Tasmanian Cultural Investment Fund to support our members
- Promote safe work practices in the industry as well as mental and physical preventative health

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PARTNERING WITH INDUSTRY

Local partnering:

arts sector organisations, venues, resource providers, sponsors, government, event producers, private sector, Aboriginal organisations, peak bodies, legal and financial industry, galleries, ARIs, tourism, community, mental health & disability services

Tas ARC will collaborate with our Tasmanian partners to:



- share resources to avoid duplication and be more effective for our sector
- collaborate on beneficial sector projects that enhance the industry
- encourage best practice models for creative projects and management
- offer accessible professional development training
- work to increase jobs and professional opportunities for members
- discuss and work to resolve whole-of-industry problems
- share data and insights across the industry
- offer reciprocal rights to members with partner organisations
- build localised career paths for events workers

Exemplifying and encouraging best practice in our industry elevates the entire Industry and benefits Tasmania as a whole.

Tas ARC will establish partnerships with national bodies to:

- pursue more national engagement for the Tasmanian C&CI
- extend Tasmanian networks and opportunities interstate
- provide access and referrals for members to national peak and arts specialist organisations
- share data and industry best practice processes and policies
- keep up with and participate in industry adaptation and best practice
- support local providers

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RESEARCH & SERVICES

TasARC's priority will be ongoing sector research to build a comprehensive database and understanding of the resources and assets in Tasmania that contribute to our industry, to other industries and to the cultural and creative wellbeing of our members and our community.

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

- Comprehensive member database
- Focused surveys and research
- Maintain broad/multi-faceted networks
- Partner with industries to gather useful data
- Direct engagement with members on current issues
- Host regular diverse industry and sector advisory group gatherings
- Review platform to encourage and increase peer reviews of events/creative practice
- Invite continuous feedback and commentary on our activities
- Collect industry data from partners and national peak bodies that relate to Tasmania within the national context
- Collect resources/publications related to historical and current creative practice in Tasmania and work with Libraries Tasmania to build a archive of materials

DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE

- Offer seminars for professional, market and industry development
- Provide online and shopfront cross-sector resource library and archive
- Work with national peak orgs to support increased visitation and delivery of services here
- Build linkages and referrals to useful online professional resources/templates
- Host comprehensive cross-sector / industry social media and e-news
- Deliver events, networking & outreach services in regions
- Build a Tasmanian venue & resource database
- Publish annual Tasmanian Arts Industry Report
- Host online artists' promotion and review platform

