

SUBMISSION PREMIER’S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RECOVERY ADVISORY COUNCIL.

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Executive Summary

Communities are defined not only by their physical infrastructure and natural boundaries, but also by the daily activities and actions of the people who live, work and play there. This initiative is for the delivery of a suite of unique and socially inclusive creative programs to assist in recovery and renewal in Tasmanian communities.

Artists are innovators and instigators who drive small-scale tourism and creative events in cities and regions across Tasmania. The livelihoods of independent creative practitioners have been severely impacted by COVID-19 but they have, largely, been left out of National and State arts stimulus packages that prioritise the performing art companies, the entertainment and screen-based sectors, event producers and digital production. This initiative complements the Tasmanian Governments’ priority to create “new ways of doing things, and new ways of working”; it will enable people to work together to shape their local communities in creative and exciting ways. It also complements the Federal and State priority to “get Australians back to work” through direct work for Tasmanian artists.

High unemployment, isolation and increased rates of depression, as a result of COVID-19, make this initiative apt and timely. Community creative development projects have positive effects on health and well-being; they build community pride, optimism, resilience and cohesion, keeping communities together, through emphasis on “what we have in common, what we share and what we value as a result.”¹ In addition, community creative development has economical value: impact studies show that arts activity is an asset to communities, driving economic recovery and urban renewal. Community vibrancy and neighbourhood liveability are vital to retain and attract new residents, and new forms of investment.

Summary of Impact

	0-6mths	7-18mths	Total
Number of workers	4	21	
Number of participants	16-20	2,100-10,000*	
Employee expenses	47,500	293500	\$341,000
Operational expenses	12,200	115850	\$128,050
Funding administration	10,000	20,000	\$30,000
			TOTAL \$499,050

* 2,100 direct participants (300 x 7 projects) with up to 10,000 extended participants. For full budget details see page 8.

This is an independent submission, but it has been developed through wide sector consultation. In addition, it is submitted with the support of: Mr Saul Eslake, (Vice-Chancellors Fellow at the University of Tasmania and independent consulting economist); Ms Leanne Minshull (Director, The Australia Institute); Michael Edwards, (Director, Contemporary Art Tasmania); Ms Eleanor Downes, (Coordinator Arts & Culture, Moonah Arts Centre, Glenorchy City Council); Priscilla Beck, (Director, Constance ARI Hobart); Ms Sue Nettlefold (Coordinator, Spring Bay Studio and Gallery, Triabunna); Liam James (Director, Sawtooth ARI Launceston); Travis Tiddy, (Director, Unconformity, Queenstown),

Overview

This initiative complements the recently announced arts grants from the federal government, leveraging federal investment to deliver uniquely Tasmanian outcomes. It seeks State Government investment in a two-year, state-wide program of socially engaged art projects and a mentor-based training program in the principles and practices of socially inclusive arts practice. These programs will employ 21 artists and cultural workers (a curator, a producer, two mentors, an arts administrator, 12 artists, a photographer, 2 writers, editor, a graphic designer and a web designer) and include hundreds of participants. In addition, they will support community recovery through use of accommodation and food services, the hire of facilities and technical support, contracts for design and printing services, and through purchase of materials from local businesses.

While it is difficult to anticipate exact numbers, the ‘The Public Notice Project’, Hobart, (2009), a mid-to-large community project, is indicative of the participatory scope of this initiative. That project included “nearly fifty households, three primary school classes and four local businesses ... over three hundred people. When coupled with visits from their friends and extended families, passers-by, the audience of the month-long accompanying exhibition at a prominent gallery, of the radio interviews, and the readers of the front-page article in the Mercury, it is clear that the reach is extensive.”² This initiative is for 7 comparable projects.

The training aspect of this initiative– for 16-20 participants– will build arts sector expertise and provide the necessary oversight and peer support essential to ensure artists’ capacity to work with genuine depth to affect positive social change. At this time, when estimates have recorded a 30%³ unemployment rate in the arts and recreation sector, this initiative will provide a substantial boost and benefit the State’s arts ecology and economics in the long term.

This initiative is great for Government, great for Tasmanian artists and great for Tasmanian communities.

For details of an excellent example of the regenerative capacity of community creative development see the work of ‘Super Slow Way’ under Further Reading, p.7 of this document.

Background

The Museum of Old and New Art has brought international focus on Tasmania through the showcasing of world art. This has been instrumental in shaping Tasmania's economy and culture. But support for individual artists and small-to-medium arts organisations has stagnated. Decades long national political campaigns focusing on the economic value of these sectors⁴ (and its significant number of jobs⁵), has not cut through politically; it has failed to garner the investment essential to a sustainable sector. Artists are among the lowest income earners in Australia yet most work long hours, often in multiple jobs⁶ and, now, COVID-19 has dealt them a further blow through the cancellation or postponement of exhibitions, events, shows, workshops and performances. Deloitte Access Economics assessed a \$6.5bn hit over four months to wages and profits⁷, identifying the creative industries as the second-worst impacted after accommodation and food services.

Julian Meyrick recently wrote that, "Something has gone fundamentally wrong with the relationship between government and Australian culture. This is important to acknowledge, because behind the question of how the nation should support the cultural sector is the larger one of what value the sector truly provides. Now is the moment to reconsider the whole cause and case of arts and culture, their place in Australian life."⁸

Models of social arts practice— and avenues of training— have proliferated in the UK, Europe and America but not to any great extent within Australia. This may be due, in part, to the setup of our arts training institutions that tend to favour individual and conventional training that prepares individual artists toward the delivery of goods to art dealers and gallerists, institutional gallery directors and curators. Yet, there are an increasing number of artists wanting to engage in collaborative and social arts practice and who seek new pedagogy that emphasises artistic citizenship, community development and the social impacts of art. Tertiary art education providers have yet to find meaningful ways to position social art practice befitting the needs of such artists, students and citizens. It would require a different set of institutional, temporal and contextual circumstances to ensure its graduands are equipped to bring transformative methods, empathies and capacities to social life.

With the changing landscape brought about by COVID-19 there is *opportunity to reconsider the role, place and value of arts in Tasmanian lives* and to maximise the positive changes brought about by MONA *through investment in local artists and local communities to shape their communities in creative and exciting ways.*

Tasmania, with its unique social, cultural and environmental settings, is ideal for participatory projects of this nature: *the local knowledge, history, cultural and social structures of smaller communities becomes the source for creative activities that truly make Tasmanians feel part of the places in which they live.*

Methods, value and impact

The positive social outcomes of this initiative are many, immediate and into the future; creative community development can have last effects on a community's capacity for positive change. A growing body of research is "demonstrating the impacts of intentional and organised arts-integrated approaches on community development goals of all kinds."⁹

Socially engaged art as a form for creative engagement within communities has gained traction in the past decade. Its practitioners act as creative instigators in civic life; they contribute creative programs to a broad and diverse public, within and across the communities in which they live. A significant factor in the success of social art practice is the building of relationships in a community and the development of creative programs specific to the local community. Typically, programs are delivered through collaborative models, that bring together artists, the people in communities, the service organisations that deliver service to communities, local businesses and sometimes urban planners. Community organisers rely on the artists to envision compelling work, while artists rely on organisation personnel to facilitate the community environment to ensure they are welcomed into a community and are connected to people, potential partners and businesses. The resulting collaborations are socially engaged because they *deliver locally specific and community outcomes for communities*.

"People want to be where they feel welcomed and supported, feel like they can have a role, have a sense of pride and community identity, have interesting and enjoyable things to do, where they can run into friends. Without this, not only do people have less incentive to stay and invest where they are, they literally have fewer relationships upon which to draw during times of stress."¹⁰

Socially engaged art programs are highly participatory, and research shows that they play an important part in better public health and well-being.¹¹ The creative programs and innovative outcomes empower people with a sense of pride, belonging and ownership, making for stronger communities with greater connectiveness. Its methods are great for breaking down barriers and strengthening peoples belief in their own abilities to make change happen. Healthy, creatively active and more resilient communities are great for Tasmania, with the economic benefit of less cost to public services.

Socially engaged art is *arts for communities and place*, it arises in peoples' exceptional stories, their insights and accounts about localities in which they live. In this, this initiative aligns with the Brand Tasmania's mission to, **"inspire and encourage Tasmanians to quietly pursue the extraordinary, while supporting local communities to tell their unique stories."**

For more information research on the value of socially engaged art see 'Regional Development: The Impact of the Arts in Regional Australia' 'Mapping the Landscape of Socially Engaged Artistic Practice' under Further Reading, p.7 of this document.

Tasmania is home to a group of internationally respected and experienced practitioners of social arts and community creative development who choose to make Tasmanian home, but who work in an national and international context.

For examples of the excellent work done by local practitioners see [Examples of Socially Engaged Art Practice](#), p.7 of this document.

Details

This initiative is for a two-year program comprising of training and community focused art projects. It proposes seven communities participate in this program– inclusive of western, north-western, northern, central, eastern and southern districts– making it a truly state-wide initiative. Further, 16-20 artists are trained in creative community development. Governance is embedded through appointment of an organisation to auspice the programs. The independence of this organisation is important, so that programs remain free of unnecessary bureaucracy and so that payment to artists and providers is expeditious and direct. It is essential that goodwill is the underlying driver of these programs, that there is trust and confidence in the capacity for artists to deliver excellence. Details about the development, timing and delivery of these programs need finalising; its execution, though, would entail the following:

1.	The formation of a Steering Committee of local professional cultural workers and business people. The Committee would be responsible for all appointments and their oversight.
2.	The contract, through competitive application, of a Curator with expertise and experience in socially engaged practice, the delivery of large-scale projects and budgets, and operational skills. They will also be responsible for brokering community participation and partnerships; the design of the framework for delivery of the projects and, that of the training program; perform oversight of both; and for undertaking the assessment and evaluation of the artistic models and social outcomes of these programs.
3.	Contract, through competitive application, of a Producer (2020-21) with responsibility for site and project preparation; health and safety; obtaining Council and other permissions; compliance matters, the observation of proper and correct protocols; and the sourcing of project materials.
4.	The contract, through competitive application, of 2 expert mentors, knowledgeable in social arts practice, to run the training program. Participants will be selected through an expression-of interest application. The program will include skills essential to well-conceived, well-executed and safe programs, for example: ethics and social responsibility, critical thinking, relational skills, cultural competency, social and relational skills, trust building, authorship, models and principles of practice, leadership and networking, practical skills and, health and safety.

5.	The contract, through competitive application and interview, of artists to deliver social art projects in seven locations across the State. Each project has a fixed monetary allocation; artists may choose to work as individuals or in teams.
6.	Appointment, by the organisation who will auspice the program, of a part-time Administrator responsible for accounting, grant acquittals, general administrative work and administrator of the mentor program.

Conclusion

The Tasmanian Government needs to think creatively about how to maximise opportunities essential to the generation of positive futures for Tasmanians. This initiative offers *an exciting and authentic way for Tasmanians to work together towards those futures, creating opportunities and celebrating distinctive local identities and stories*. Creative cultural development is a new approach to regional development and renewal; one that promises great outcomes and effective use of public resources. Localised and participatory creative experiences act as counter to those of large international art exhibitions that cater to external audiences and often have little, or no, relationship to the peoples and places in which they occur.

“For me, being involved in something that began as an idea 8 months ago and seeing it grow and having a role in nurturing the various strands of work has been personally very rewarding. As a community worker it has been enriching to see something new and fresh to our cohesion work and it has brought in different angles and art, which usually isn’t a theme in bringing communities together, but it has done that very successfully. It’s all about making Pendle a stronger place and this project is sowing the seeds for the continuation.”¹²

It takes time to build meaningful relationships and experiences in communities. It takes time and support for people to actively shape their community. This initiative would go part way towards these ends. An aspiration is for these programs— their principles, framework and models— to establish the groundwork for creative community development as a permanent and central plank within a creative Tasmania. The training program could be readily accredited and thereby equipping community leaders and artist with the knowledge and skills to partner programs, artists and communities on an ongoing basis. This would make Tasmania a national leader in creative community development, ensuring its reputation as a vibrant and healthy place to live.

It is timely for Tasmanians to rethink what we value in life and to account for wider generous and imaginative perspectives, which celebrate forms of value beyond systems structured by profit. Artists contribute resources and energies to build, imagine and ignite our sense of collective purpose and well-being. Art can revitalise the importance of place and story in our lives and help us see and think about the world in different ways. Without creativity, without curiosity, without imagination, without beauty, without risk, without spontaneity are lives are dull indeed.

Examples of Socially Engaged Artistic Practice

Elizabeth Woods and Kevin Leong

‘The Homesickness Project’ (2015) <https://www.logan.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/356/homesickness>

‘See You Tomorrow’ (2019) <http://www.siriusartscentre.ie/visual-art/see-you-tomorrow>

‘Public Notice’, (2009), <https://www.situ.net.au/projects-woods/14-the-public-notice-project>

Justy Philips and Margaret Woodward

‘The People’s Library’, (2017-18) <http://thepeopleslibrary.net>

Justy Philips and James Newitt

‘write/here’, (2007), <http://www.jnewitt.com/PDFs/write-here-book.pdf>

Lucy Bleach

‘Homing’, *Integration Again*, (2011), <https://lucybleach.com.au/lucy-bleach/selected-works/homing/>

Lucy Bleach (John Vella)

‘Night Garden (Overgrowth)’ (2016) <https://www.utas.edu.au/news/2016/10/4/166-activating-a-township-through-gardens-of-horror/>

Lucas Ihlein

‘Sugar versus the Reef’ (2018-19) <http://lucasihlein.net/Sugar-vs-the-Reef>

‘Reef and Watershed Land Art Project’ (2018) <http://lucasihlein.net/Watershed-Land-Art-Project>

Further Reading

Ruth Rentschler and Kerrie Bridson, (2015), ‘Regional Development: The Impact of the Arts in Regional Australia’, Victoria: Deakin University, <https://regionalarts.com.au/uploads/files/Stats-Stories-5-Regional-Development.pdf>.

Super Slow Way, UK

‘Super Slow Way Annual Report’, <http://superslowway.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/SSW-Annual-Report-2016.pdf>

‘Creative Peoples and Places’

https://www.creativepeopleplaces.org.uk/sites/default/files/EcorysCaseStudyCPP_SlowSuperSlow.pdf

Alexis Frasz & Holly Sidford, Helicon Collaborative, (2017), ‘Mapping the Landscape of Socially Engaged Artistic Practice’, licensed under a Creative Commons Attributions-ShareAlike 4.0 International License,

http://artmakingchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Mapping_the_Landscape_of_Socially_Engaged_Artistic_Practice_Sept2017.pdf

Budget

The Budget below has been worked out on the basis of the model provided above. Wages and fees for contract of a Curator, a Producer and two Mentors to run the training workshops form a large component and were determined through the National Association of the Visual Arts (NAVA) document ‘Schedule of Fees’. The sum of \$33,000 allocated to each of the seven projects has been determined through canvas of like funded programs. Participants in the Mentor Training Program are not paid—there are no charges for their training.

CURATOR 24-mth P/T	Fees	70,000
	Accommodation and Travel	7,000
	Public Liability	4,000
PRODUCER/ 18-mth P/T	Fees	40,000
	Accommodation and Travel	7,000
	Advertising	5,000
	Graphic Design	2,000
ADMINISTRATOR 18-mth P/T	General admin; admin of mentor program; accounting; grant acquittal.	30,000
	Contingency budget	35,000
CATALOGUE	Photographer	7,000
	Accommodation	1,000
	Travel	1,000
	Essay Writers x 2	2,500
	Printing	8,000
	Web site design and maintenance	4,000
	Social media and maintain info (12 months)	3,000
	Content once established/ Editorial Editor	4,000
	Domain hire	400
MENTOR PROGRAM		
Mentors x 2	Wages and research \$15,000. Weekend workshops at each location	30,000
	Accommodation and Travel	4,000
	Venue Hire \$200 per venue (7 venues across State) (= \$1,400)	1,400
	Materials @ \$250 x 7 (= \$1,750)	1,750
PROJECTS x 7	Concept development @ \$1,500 x 7 (= \$10,500)	
	Wages @ \$1500 per month x 4 months = \$24,000 per project x 7 locations (= \$168,000)	
	Materials @ \$3,500 x 7 (= \$24,500)	
	Accommodation and Travel @ \$4,000 x 7 (= \$28,000)	
Total Project Costs	Budget per project @ \$33,000 x 7 (= \$231,000)	231,000
TOTAL		499,050

Endnotes

1 Julian Meyrick, ‘The politics of dancing and thinking about cultural values beyond dollars’, *The Conversation*, June 5, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/friday-essay-the-politics-of-dancing-and-thinking-about-cultural-values-beyond-dollars-139839>.

2 Elizabeth Woods, *Interview*, 2016.

3 The Grattan Institute, 20 April, 2020, <https://grattan.edu.au/news/the-employment-impact-of-covid-19-its-bad/>.

4 The creative and cultural sector contributes at least \$111.7bn to Australia’s GDP, representing some 6.5% of the economy ‘The economic value of cultural and creative activity as at most recently available figures (2016-2017)’, Australian Government Bureau of Communications and Arts.

Research, <https://www.communications.gov.au/departamental-news/economic-value-cultural-and-creative-activity>.

5 The creative and cultural sector employ, nationwide, 600,000 people including 50,000 professional artists. Prof. David Throsby and Dr Katya Petetskaya, ‘Making Art Work: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia’, 12 Nov, 2017, <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/making-art-work/>.

6 Prof. David Throsby and Dr Katya Petetskaya, ‘Making Art Work: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia’, 12 Nov, 2017, <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/making-art-work/>.

7 National Association of the Visual Arts, media release 09 April, 2020, <https://visualarts.net.au/news-opinion/2020/nava-welcomes-first-australian-governments-COVID-19-arts-industry-measures/>.

8 Julian Meyrick, 'The politics of dancing and thinking about cultural values beyond dollars', 05 June, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/friday-essay-the-politics-of-dancing-and-thinking-about-cultural-values-beyond-dollars-139839>.

9 Kubisch, Auspos, Brown and Dewar, (2010:38), 'Voices from the Field III: Lessons and Challenges from Two Decades of Community Change Efforts', Washington: The Aspen Institute, <https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/images/rcc/VoicesfromtheFieldIII.pdf>.

10 Audience Member, 'Love Bombs and Apples', *Kinara Festival*, <http://superslowway.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/SSW-Annual-Report-2016.pdf>.

11 Colin Greaves and Lou Farbus, 'Effects of creative and social activity of the health and well-being of socially isolated older people', 27 January 2006, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Colin_Greaves/publication/7042547_Effects_of_creative_and_social_activity_on_the_health_and_well-being_of_socially_isolated_older_people_Outcomes_from_a_multi-method_observational_study/links/02e7e522ec8305cf8d000000.pdf.

12 Rauf Bashir, Project Manager, *Building Bridges*, Pendel, UK, <http://superslowway.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/SSW-Annual-Report-2016.pdf>.