Cairns Regional Council

Towards a new Culture Strategy 2017/2022

Community Engagement

SUMMARY PAPER

PROCESS AND MILESTONES

STAGE 1
STRATEGIC REVIEW

Information Gathering

› Assessment of the 2009/14 Cultural Plan HYPERLINK

› Cultural Industries Assessment HYPERLINK

› Cultural Resource Mapping HYPERLINK

STAGE 2
STRATEGY SETTING

Community Engagement

› **Discussion Paper:** Circulated in July/August 2016 to provide a starting point for further conversation.

› **Focus Group Discussions:** Met with 47 individual organisations/groups to identify challenges, opportunities and expectations. August–December 2016

› **Community Engagement Report:** Containing key findings from the focus group discussions. Distributed in December 2016. HYPERLINK

› **Sector Group Discussions:** Meetings with 9 individual sector groups (representing 58 groups and organisations) to gain consensus on priorities and map planned sector programming that may assist in addressing these priorities. February – April 2017.

› **Community Engagement Summary Paper** Containing key observations from the sector group discussions. Distributed in May 2017.

› Strategy Setting Forum – June 2017

› Draft Plan

STAGE 3
ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Adoption by Council

› Implementation

› Monitoring

› Review

A snapshot of what we have learnt along the way
August 2016 – May 2017

SOME OF OUR COMBINED KEY STRENGTHS

External

- Strong arts and cultural sector **capacity** and **willingness** to **partner** and **participate**
- Current high-level **strategic planning, advocacy** and **contribution** to national dialogue across a whole range of sectors
- Cairns region accommodates the **highest concentration of creative industries** workers in the Far North Region (Cummings Economics 2014)
- An abundance of **new assets** and **resources** and a rich **landscape** of cultural **organisations, artists** and **craftspeople,** cultural **facilities, festivals** and **events**
- **Tourism** in TNQ contributes **$3.6B** to the Qld economy.*TTNQ Visitor Economy 2016.
- **Economic Springboards** – Advance Cairns new Regional Economic Plan, TTNQ and TEQ Destination Tourism Strategic Plan, Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan 2013-2018.
- New or redeveloped **creative arts courses** at CQU, JCU, TAFE and U3A
- **Partnerships**, collaboration, skill sharing and co-production with **State** and **Federal** theatres and arts institutions
- From 2014/2015 to 2015/2016 output by The Creative and Performing Arts Activities sector in Cairns rose **from $7.1M to $8.2M** representing a **15% rise** in output.
- From 2014/15 to 2015/2016 - there was a **2% rise** in those **employed** in The Creative and Performing Arts Activities sector in Cairns

Internal

- Strong and persuasive **vision** to become the **Arts Capital of Northern Australia**
- Valuable and long-term **partnerships** and collaboration between CRC, State and Federal **Governments**, local **industry** partners, **education**, community-based arts and cultural **organisations** and individuals
- Continued **investment** in new, state of the art **infrastructure** for the arts and cultural development – Munro Martin Parklands, School of Arts, Cairns Performing Arts Centre, Court House and Cultural precinct
- **Grants,** resources and in-kind **support** - Arts and Cultural Infrastructure, RADF, Festivals and Events, Community Development, Industry Development, Economic Diversification and Community Sustainability
- Cairns Arts and **Culture Map** – a new **online** presentation, promotion and networking tool
- **Festivals** – Cairns Festival, Children's Festival, Eco Fiesta, Understory Film Festival – encouraging and inspiring local talent
- Exhibition **programs,** Residency programs, Critical Thinkers programs; Urban Spaces program and Professional Development programs
- Public Art and **placemaking** initiatives, urban renewal and revitalisation projects

SOME OF OUR TOP PRIORITIES, NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

These things are important to most of us

- The biggest obstacle for around 44 percent of groups and individuals that we spoke to is lack of affordable and accessible production, storage and operations spaces.
- The challenge of short-term funding cycles and its impact on forward planning also rates high on the list, as does retaining our young and emerging creative talent.
- Over a third of those we spoke to see the need for a shared narrative and a better process to market and promote our artistic talent and cultural offerings to the world.

MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SPACE NEEDED

RECOGNISING AND GETTING BUY-IN AND CONSENSUS ON OUR UNIQUENESS

MARKETING AND PROMOTION ASSISTANCE NEEDED

YOUTH FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS

FUNDING SECURITY RESTRICTS PLANNING AND ACTIVITY

WHAT SOME OF US ARE DOING TO ADDRESS THESE PRIORITIES
Compiled from discussions with 58 arts and cultural organisations. February – April 2017

KEY PRIORITY

MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SPACE NEEDED
Space for presentation, production & storage – it's a critical need that impacts on the sustainability of the sector

14 **of the organisations we spoke to have space available for meetings, theatre rehearsal, and/or creative production.**

› Plenty of short-term space available but networking platforms for promoting "available space" are required.

› Solid and focused consortium of stakeholders required to address the paucity of long-term creative space.

KEY PRIORITY

RECOGNISING AND GETTING BUY-IN AND CONSENSUS ON OUR UNIQUENESS
Marketing and Promotion – improved cross-promotion, letting people know we exist and building capacity through critical mass

16 **of the organisations we spoke to promote/present and/or produce local content and work with local artists to develop new high-quality and creative regional work.**

› There is an opportunity to maximise national platforms such as CIAF which already has a strong marketing presence interstate.

6 **of the organisations we spoke to contribute to national dialogue through targeted advocacy, strategic planning and partnerships with major state and federal arts bodies.**

› Organisations are partnering with peak art institutions and companies, but these could be further developed to increase touring opportunities for locally produced work.

› The disconnection the Screen Industry feels from national and state peak bodies needs to be addressed.

KEY PRIORITY

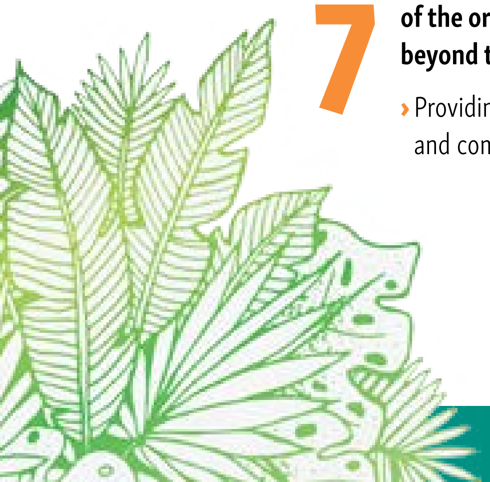
MARKETING AND PROMOTION ASSISTANCE NEEDED
Recognising and getting buy-in and consensus on our uniqueness and expressing our point of difference

7 **of the organisations we spoke to promote local artists through their marketing platforms and/or provide opportunities for networking within the sector.**

› Better collaboration and networking across the sector is required to drive cross-promotion and to ensure we're not programming in competition for the same audience.

7 **of the organisations we spoke to build new audiences by performing or showcasing local content beyond the stage, gallery and museum.**

› Providing opportunities for new audiences to experience arts and culture is critical for audience development and community engagement.



KEY PRIORITY

YOUTH FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS
Young People – Building pathways to a career for young people

27 **of the organisations we spoke to offer professional development programs, workshops, mentorships, training or pathways to further study.**

› There is great deal of positive and innovative activity in this area but a real lack of focused strategies for industry development and job creation.

7 **of the organisations we spoke to create additional employment opportunities within the arts and cultural sector.**

› Short-term and project-based employment is available but there are limited long-term or permanent employment opportunities.

13 **of the organisations we spoke to nurture partnerships and/or collaborate with schools and other youth groups.**

› Strengthening the partnerships already in place and creating new relationships between schools and arts professionals.

KEY PRIORITY

FUNDING SECURITY RESTRICTS PLANNING AND ACTIVITY
There is less money and more competition

3 **of the organisations we spoke to have secured multi-year funding support to deliver specific programs.**

› Long-term operational or ongoing event funding security is an issue for the majority of groups.

THESE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT TO INDIVIDUAL ARTS AND CULTURAL SECTORS

Indigenous Cultural Development

- Principles, protocols and procedures for engagement – need to define the word 'culture'
- Defining our identity and unique point of difference for Indigenous Culture and Tourism
- Creating a cultural hub for creating work across art forms
- Preserving Cultural Heritage

Museums and Heritage

- Volunteerism – connecting volunteers with organisations and building volunteer capacity
- Conservation, presentation and promotion of our cultural heritage
- Space and resources for storage, exhibitions, education programs
- Collaboration and cross promotion across art-forms

Advocacy and Arts and Cultural Leaders

- Promotion of regional identity – Innovation and entrepreneurialism, promoting our creativity and tropical identity, exporting our talent
- Solutions and Empowerment – innovative solutions to barriers affecting people with a Disability
- Mentoring, training and education – building careers and productivity
- Economic Development – building a strong and diverse creative economy

Visual Arts, Presentation and Writing

- Space for presentation, production and storage
- Income/funding/insurance security and support
- Encouraging and inspiring emerging and local artists
- Cultural tourism opportunities such as a dedicated Arts Festival, Cultural Trail, Arts Loop Bus
- New models of collaboration including publicity and promotion

Artist-Run Initiatives

- Space for production and exhibition
- Youth arts – skills development
- Having a framework for collaboration – not Council controlled, but initiated
- Building new audiences for the arts
- Measuring and communicating the intrinsic value of the arts and culture

Screen Industry

- Building networks, employment and profile
- Developing critical mass for the industry in FNQ
- Building stronger relationships with national and state peak bodies i.e. Screen QLD
- Building a case for investment in FNQ.

Performing Arts

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

Tourism and Economic Development

- Economic realities – over-reliance on tourism, underemployment and lagging construction
- Presentation and promotion of our cultural assets – promoting the collective appeal, unifying networks, internationalising Cairns and giving it a heart that beats
- Playing to our strengths – leveraging our unique regional competitive advantages
- Drivers for Cultural Tourism – Indigenous tourism and events tourism

Education

- Youth – pathways into cultural industries, real jobs and more arts education
- Celebrating our uniqueness – what's our point of difference?
- Sustainability and funding – everyone is fighting for the same funding
- Investing in innovation – partnerships for research, mentoring and innovation
- Maximising our collective resources – mentorship, creative residencies and partnerships

What the arts and cultural sector expect from Council

- Council's role is as a cultural **leader** and **advocate**, not just a manager of venues
- Council's support is important to **encouraging others to invest**
- Council's role is **infrastructure** and on-going **investment**
- Council's role is to provide **a vibrant place** for visitors and a **platform for cultural expression**
- Council's role is to support **publicity** and **marketing**

What the broader Cairns community values in respect to the arts and culture

'OUR CAIRNS' - COMMUNITY ENGAGMENT FINDINGS - from 6,400 Survey responses September 2016

- Environment, liveability and sustainability rated as the top three important things for Cairns to focus on to meet the needs of the community both now and into the future
- Region's Strengths - A region noted for its green, tropical, natural assets (49%); relaxed lifestyle (38%); and tourism destination (36%); 28% believe the economy was led by tourism, and a quarter (24%) believe Cairns' strength is based on its events and activities
- 67% of survey respondents believe Council excels in hosting good festivals and events. 39% gave Council credit for its work with performing arts (music, theatre and dance)
- 62% of survey respondents said they would like Council to focus on festivals and events by 2020. Followed by performing arts and facilities and venues for Culture and the Arts. Respondents also saw an opportunity for more work on preserving built and natural cultural heritage (36%)
- Future proofing our economy considered the most important complex question across all age groups (50%); Retaining young people and best talent in Cairns (31%); what do we need to do to be an innovative region that makes the most of changing technology (25%)

The following are reflections on the importance of arts and culture made by the broader community during the 'Our Cairns' forums.

- Creative Industries create liveability within the region – develop creative pathways
- Important to integrate creative industries into tourism to support diversification
- Priorities for the Arts and Cultural Sector in regard to events and activities included: Infrastructure to support accessible cultural events/activities; continued support for business events (conferences) to diversify the visitor economy; support the artists who provide the content for events; promote/marketing improvements; add more diversity; more cultural tourism; collaboration between organisations/Council on events and activities in the region to market families/tourists
- Quadruple bottom line approach to planned infrastructure across economic, social, cultural and environmental needs
- Drawing on the infrastructure associated and already developed with tourism, Cairns has the opportunity to develop complementary service-based industries. These include sport, tertiary education including TAFE and Universities and Indigenous culture. These industries support liveability and sustainability

What Arts Qld is telling us?

- More ambitious creative economy focus in a global perspective, links to Asia pacific market places, cultural tourism, innovation and creative technology focus
- Vision should be future focused, succinct and ambitious – position Cairns as the creative marketplace or cultural centre of the north (or to be more ambitious, the Asia Pacific)
- There is opportunity to leverage (or define) the uniqueness and identity of Cairns – How do we play to Cairns' strengths?
- Consider the shift in consumer trends (moving to prosumers – consumers demanding more of a say in how their cultural experiences are shaped) and megatrends (digital disruption, Asian century)

Other Strategic Plans that will influence/support our culture strategy

- Tropical North Queensland Destination Tourism Plan - TTNQ
- Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia
- Cairns Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan 2013-2018
- Tropical North Queensland Regional Economic Plan 2011-2031 – Advance Cairns
- 2013-16 Regional Road Map – Regional Development Australia Far North Queensland and Torres Strait
- Australia Council for the Arts Strategic Plan 2014-2019
- Arts for All Queenslanders Strategy 2014-2018 – Arts Queensland
- Tourism and Events Queensland 2016-2020