

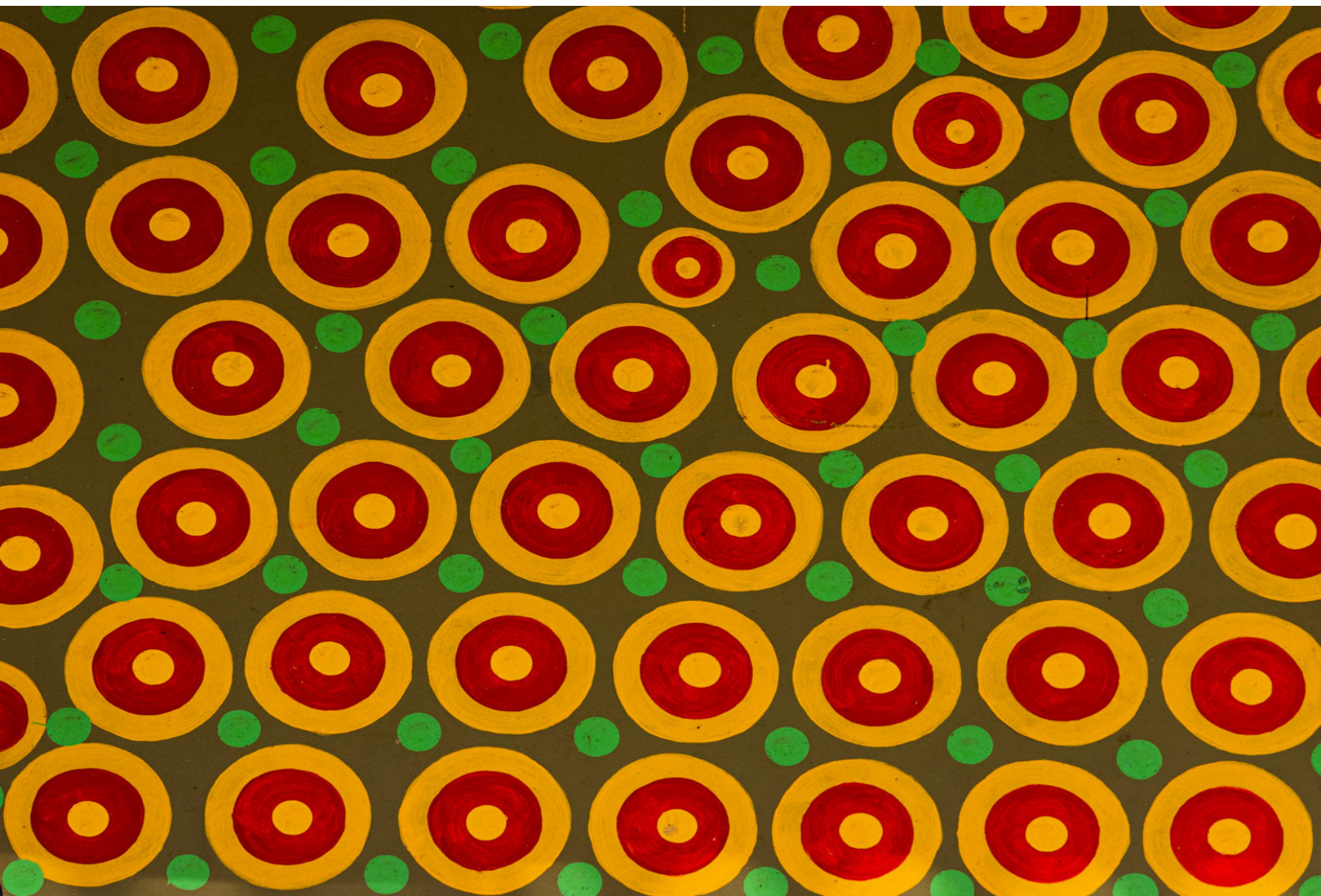


# Strategic Renewal and Development Plan 2022-2024



**brilliant places**

## we acknowledge ...



Arts Upper Hunter acknowledges the First Nations people who are the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we live and work.

We recognise their deep connection to country and their ongoing cultural and creative practices.

We pay our respects to the members of those communities and to Elders, past, present and emerging.

Arts Upper Hunter is committed to supporting and celebrating Aboriginal-led arts and cultural development in our region, undertaking meaningful consultation with Aboriginal people and seeking collaborative participation by Aboriginal people in our programs.

*Image:* Reconciliation Mural, Muswellbrook, designed by George Anderson. George was lead artist with Les Elvin, Brad Franks and John Neville assisting artists. Photo Anna Rankmore

*Photographs by:* Anna Rankmore cover b & c, page 2, 3, 7, 10 b & c, 11 b & c, 16 abcef, 42b, Katrina Partridge cover a, page 8 a & b, 10a, 11a, 42a, Roger Skinner page 6, Donna Cavanough page 9, Jacqui Bakewell page 16d.

*Design:* Tabbil Forest Design

# chairperson's message

Arts Upper Hunter (AUH), is a community organisation which supports and promotes opportunities for people and organisations involved in the Creative Industries across the Shires of Dungog, Muswellbrook, Singleton and Upper Hunter.

This Strategic Plan is aligned with the six Priority Service Areas which have come from Create NSW's Review of NSW Arts and Cultural Sector Service Needs, namely the development of more high-quality web-based digital resource material and services; increasing capacity to assist artists and arts organisations to manage, produce and market their work; enhancing connections to promote collaboration on career development pathways, mentoring, entrepreneurship and business development for NSW artists and arts organisations; better engagement with First Nations artists, arts organisations and communities; more targeted support for and engagement with artists, arts organisations and communities from the NSW Government's other priority populations including Regional NSW, people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds, people with disability and young people; and assisting the sector to find affordable space to make and present work.

We also recognise that Covid-19 will continue to have an impact on government service delivery and budgets and on the sector, and that all stakeholders will need to work together to assist the sector's recovery.

In addition, Arts Upper Hunter has a number of local priorities which are outlined in this Strategy, including connecting with the communities of the Upper Hunter, continuing to work closely with our current four Local Councils, namely Dungog, Muswellbrook, Singleton and Upper Hunter; increasing and diversifying our income; and building on existing partnerships and developing new ones.

This Strategic Plan has been specifically developed to assist the Board and Staff of AUH in the delivery of a three-year funding program with CreateNSW and explains the program plan to Local Government and other funding partners who might benefit from the described action plan included in this document. However, this strategy is also intended to be useful to local individuals, businesses and other organisations, and to visitors to our region, that are planning creative practices in local communities. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the development of creative and cultural enterprise.

Arts Upper Hunter looks forward to working with Local Councils, individuals, community groups and other organisations to provide day to day and strategic support for the Creative Industries in the Upper Hunter.

**Ivan Skaines**, Chair, Arts Upper Hunter Inc





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# executive director's summary

## Brilliant Places

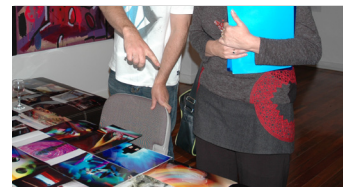
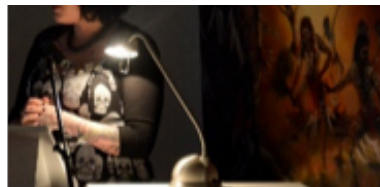
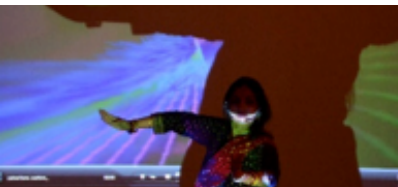
As one of fourteen Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADO) that are located across NSW, Arts Upper Hunter (est. 2002), holds the support and development of cultural and creative people and places as an organisational vision to ensure that:

*“participation in the arts and creative industries contributes to the social, cultural and economic well-being of individuals and the communities that they live in. We believe that best arts practice supports and celebrates creativity and diversity.”*

Our region is coming out of a difficult time. The drought, bushfires, floods and then the COVID-19 pandemic have massively impacted activity and connection. Our program of renewal and development work starts with the need to renew our relationships with our creative practitioners and businesses and community organisations – to understand the region anew, its main players, its least connected.

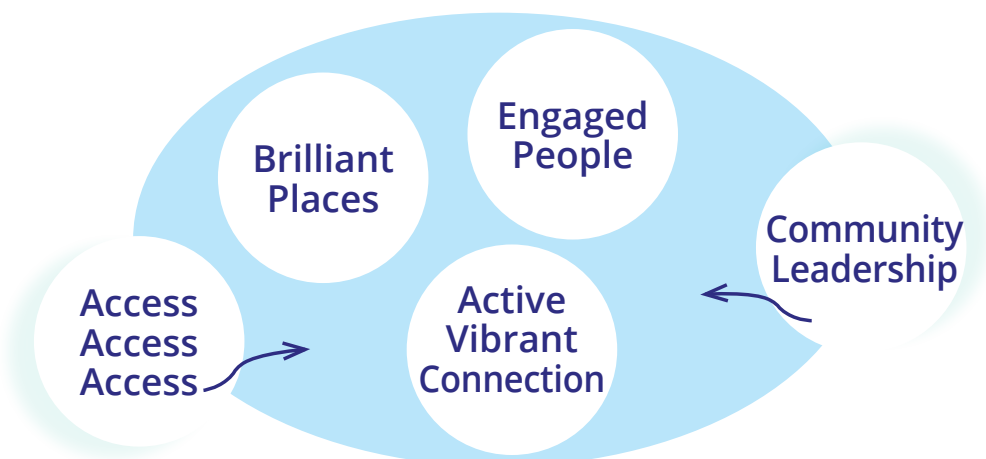
The 2022-24 triennial strategy is Arts Upper Hunter’s plan to be a key part of that re-engagement, of the reinvigoration of our brilliant places and creative communities.

**A new vibrancy** in regional areas arose during the closed borders of 2020 and 2021. That vibrancy was not uniform or universal, and might not be sustained. Our goal must be to make those benefits sustained. And to spread those benefits more widely and deeply. We will also be inclusive of diversity, awake to the needs of the vulnerable people in our population, keen to deliver accessible creative opportunities with social outcomes.



**Renewal requires collaboration**, above all, with the Local Councils in our region, with communities and groups, with individuals. Since art is also deeply collaborative (no painting without a viewer, no dance music without dancing), we will be seeking to enhance the collaboration, communication and leadership skills to be found across the region.

The goal for Arts Upper Hunter looks a little like this:



Arts Upper Hunter plays its part in the creative infrastructure of the Upper Hunter Region through:

- Connections
- Programs
- Grants
- Forums
- Celebrations
- Conversations
- Consultations
- Workshops
- Professional resources
- Promotions



**Our principal partners in the journey** are Create NSW and the four Local Councils. Create NSW provides not only our core funding, but support, expertise relevant to our strategic initiatives, grants opportunities for individuals and organisations, resources and linkages across NSW. The Local Councils of Upper Hunter, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Dungog also provide crucial funding, guidance and facilities through a process that we will be making increasingly transparent and responsive.



muswellbrook  
shire council



## The path from here

*"My microgrant saved me," quote from an artist in the 2020 program.*

Arts Upper Hunter's goal is for renewal and re-energisation. We aim to re-establish our place as an essential part of the creative infrastructure of the region by:

- doing what we do well, only more so, by growth and a renewed commitment.
- filling the gaps of engagement – access for the disengaged and the hard-to-reach, for young people, people with a disability, those living more remotely, older people – as both audiences and practitioners.
- collaboratively creating new links and opportunities with First Nations communities.
- building revenue streams tied to bold creative outcomes.

- being flexible to new possibilities and explorative in the regional arts and creative industries – as well as world arts trends and activities – including digital and hybrid art and promotions.
- avid collaboration, meaningful consultation, responsiveness to social issues and needs.
- functioning as a key facilitator and broker between community, governments, media, businesses, the education and health sectors, and other regional service providers to increase support for cultural development.
- great systems – management, governance, data collection, KPIs, processes, a digital strategy, a communications strategy.

**This plan is about responding to the local** – from villages to townships to Shires, from small groups of weavers to cultural groups and First Nations people, from like-minded music-lovers and performers to health and education providers, community centres and land managers. To strengthen the resilience of our creative communities and promote cultural vitality, we will reach into the communities themselves, listen and articulate, then respond to their particular needs.

Some of those solutions will be region-wide.

Some will allow artists or groups or venues to move to the next stage of their journeys.

Some will be about promoting cultural tourism and business opportunities.

Some will focus on social needs.

## Specifically ...

In the three-year period 2022-24 Arts Upper Hunter will invest more than half a million dollars back into the AUH region to support the development of creative practice and outcomes that welcome:

- Increased participation and opportunities for First Nations artists, groups and individuals.
- Growing revenue from a growing range of sources, with a concomitant increase in programs, promotions and staff engagement that serve the creative industries here.
- Increased participation in culture and the arts by young people, people with a disability, those living more remotely, and older people, including but not limited to hybrid and digital delivery.
- Enhancing the activation of local places and spaces across the Local Government Areas we serve.
- Development of social benefit and impact across the region linked to cultural and creative outcomes.
- Increasing skills and knowledge development for creative people, community groups and audiences, while encouraging access, excellence and growth.
- Evolving management and governance processes..

Working with our partners and other stakeholders, from small groups to businesses to local institutions and government bodies, we will promote, curate and present a range of programs.





**An Aboriginal Arts Officer** is to be added to AUH in late 2021, building the employee team to one full-time and two part-time staff. S/he will assist in the development of strong and meaningful relationships and an understanding of future strategic program development that supports Aboriginal People across our Region. A longer goal is for creative projects, workshops etc to be devised and delivered by Wanaruah and other communities who will gain economically and socially from their work.

**More staff** will be engaged temporarily on a project-by-project basis or for other goals – these could include project officers for large or small events, a communications officer to enhance promotion and engagement and participation, and a sponsorship officer to develop more focused sponsorship-seeking. Arts Upper Hunter will investigate other ways of securing people resources including University, TAFE and other tertiary students needing to complete practical components of their courses, as well as volunteers and allied groups.

**A major connection:** we will also work to develop a major event or program that will have a regional theme but local expression – this will bring people together, focus on local distinctiveness, be collaboratively visualised and allow maximum creativity and potential for audiences. And will be open to both traditional crafts and to cutting edge new media. Our aim is to develop several “near-shovel-ready” projects, which can take full shape if the right conditions, collaborators, funding opportunities or sponsors appear. Several directions are already being explored: an “art in working life” or “creativity at the workplace” theme that links strongly to our industrial history and current industrial landscape; and an environmental theme that draws from the river systems and unique national parks in the region are just two.

We will continue to look for opportunities for revenue and program locally, and begin to consider seeking opportunities across NSW and even nationally and internationally. These could be partnerships or revenue-raising opportunities appropriate to our local strengths and market (eg leverage our expertise in working with FIFO and DIDO workers into a broader national set of programs).

**Understanding us.** Through 2021, in conjunction with the delivery of the NSW Government’s Restart Program, we began the process of sketching community profiles across the Arts Upper Hunter footprint. These profiles have identified creative opportunities and cultural assets which, as our understanding of the region evolves, will form the main elements for successful ramping up of engagement, building creative partnerships and strategies.

**The private, community and volunteer sectors** must be supported for their capacity to organise and implement programs and projects within their communities. We will continue to support these individuals and organisations with information and other resources on the importance of governance frameworks and business development principles during 2022 to 2024.

**We use the term Brilliant Places in the everyday sense.** The goal is that a visitor to one of our villages, towns or localities, whether they’re from across the valley or half a world away, will tell their friends they’ve been to a brilliant place, and what they’ll mean is a community, where place and people welcomed them, and something valuable was experienced. So much of that experience can come from creativity and cultural presence.

**John O’Brien**  
Executive Director



# brilliant places

When people visit and want to come back.

Where brilliant creative works are aspired to and achieved.

Where nature and heritage are framed and challenged and elucidated by art. It all fits, even (especially) when it doesn't.

Where the culture and practices of First Nations people are recognised as imbued into the fabric of creative community; where First Nations people create, according to their own lights and needs.

Where it feels like things are happening, fresh, thought-provoking.

Something is sparkling, gleaming, flashing.

The hard-to-engage get to engage. There's less loneliness. The busy ones find time to reach out. We are always asking, "Who is missing out?"

Where everything connects.

From Cassilis to Clarence Town, from Putty to Gundy, from the Wollemi to the Barringtons, from mining towns to farming towns, from riverbanks to First Nations sites.

Many people get involved. Creativity reaches deep. Lots of folk have a go. Experimentation is encouraged. And it's not scary but bright and enticing.

Where *this* amazing stuff could only happen in *this* amazing place because of *these* amazing people.

Can be online, streamed, digital, hybrid, IRL ... and still be from round here.



Brilliant places are nests of stories, stories told over and over, sometimes with an ironic wink, sometimes with a melodic seriousness, and new stories invented for new re-tellings.

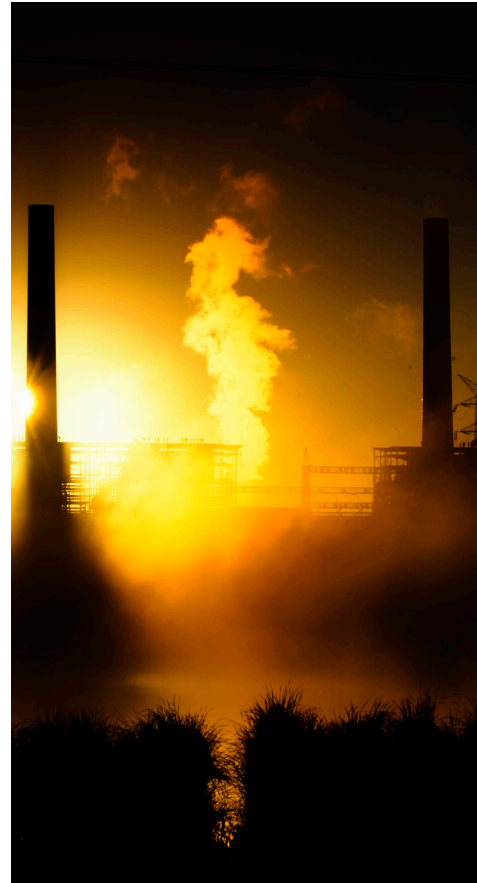
Music plays, lit by practicals. Or else there's a background of complex birdsong.

Where the place is loved because the people love being alive there because. Because!

As place + people = community.

When visitors ask, "What's happening up there?  
Is there something in the water?"

Where we can find renewal. Where we can breathe.



## our vision

A region which embraces all arts and cultural practice as part of its social, economic and environmental development.

## our mission

To collaborate, promote, support and provide opportunities for individuals and groups in the Upper Hunter Region to embrace all arts and cultural practice.

## our values

Inclusive. Collaborative. Engaged.  
Social. Acknowledging. Creative.  
Resourceful. Local. Kind. (tbc)

# our “BIG PICTURE” goals 2022-24

## Developing and Supporting Cultural Identity and Creative Outcomes

In healthy sustainable communities (in Brilliant Places), creativity and culture are recognised as primary community resources that deliver vibrant economies and celebrate diversity.

Renewal and re-energisation of the cultural communities of our region cannot be left as a “marginal add-on”, something that can easily happen coming out of the disasters of drought, fire, flood and pandemic.

To that end, our 2022-24 “Big Picture” Goals are:

Objective	Goal 2022-24
Understand our region	To articulate a deep comprehension within Arts Upper Hunter and the Upper Hunter Region of the creative communities, resources, assets, histories, individuals and groups that make up the creative industries and participants here.  <i>Our understanding of and advocacy for the creative industries is core to our existence and responsiveness in this region.</i>
Connect to place, people, community	To embrace local distinctiveness and local strengths, especially through the natural environment and uniqueness of villages and towns, through engaged communities, placemaking, partnerships with Local Councils and beautification of public places.
Increase capacity within communities – skills and resources	To increase the artistic and professional skills and knowledge of individuals and groups, to grow the leadership and collaborative participation of all our creative communities.
Increase capacity within communities – enterprise	To embrace creative businesses and initiatives of whatever size as partners, clients and providers in the local arts ecosystems.
Provide opportunities to our creative people.	To provide opportunities for artists and cultural workers at whatever level to produce and market work, deliver program d connect to others.  To encourage networking and communication between artists, arts groups, Local Councils and other creativity stakeholders in the region. <i>(The best advocates for the arts are the arts groups themselves.)</i>
Increase engagement with and promotion of First Nations arts and cultural activity	To work collaboratively with First Nations bodies to promote First-Nations arts and cultural activities.
Increase access and participation – digital	To increase participation by developing hybrid and digital skills in creative people and groups, and increase the audience’s ability to access such works.
Increase access and participation – priority groups	To increase participation by working collaboratively to identify and support arts and cultural projects that target young people, children, people with disability, CaLD communities and older people.

Objective	Goal 2022-24
Ensure best-practice management and governance of Arts Upper Hunter.	To work together to develop our systems to ensure a professional, responsive, efficient and contemporary Arts Upper Hunter.
Increase our revenue.	To increase our total revenue and diversify the sources of our income, strongly allied to creative outcomes and building AUH's position in the regional community.
Creatively promote and advocate for the creative industries round here – promotions	To improve, develop and energise promotions from Arts Upper Hunter on behalf of artists and cultural groups and the region as a whole.  To build audiences for creative works and experiences across a range of levels – taking into account access for priority groups, a diversity of levels of artistic expression, excellence and participation.
Creatively promote and advocate for the creative industries round here – AUH itself	To promote ourselves as a trusted and professional part of the creative infrastructure for local arts organisations and others across the region.
Creatively promote and advocate for the creative industries round here – advocacy	To ensure that arts and the creative industries are represented wherever possible and where appropriate in decision-making across the region – to advocate that artists' voices can be heard where they need to be heard.  To promote the importance of arts and cultural activities in creating liveable communities. To promote creative industries as tools for economic growth including growing the number of visitors to the Region.

The goals are supported by these plans, which you'll find hereafter. Some are further detailed in the appendices.

- The Management Plan, Risk Management Plan, and SWOT Analysis
- The Financial Plan and Revenue Policy
- The Promotions Plan
- The Action Plan – 1-year and 3-year goals
- Annual Forward Plans (a draft version of our 2022 forward plan is included in this document as part of the Action Plan)
- An Engagement Matrix is also included as Appendix 3 – providing a useful alternative checklist to explicate our various goals.

# the financial plan

## ... and a new Revenue Policy

Arts Upper Hunter is one of the smaller Regional Arts Development Organisations in terms of turnover, staff etc, with a small mix of revenue sources.

We are embarking on a diversification of our income streams through developing a crucial new Revenue Policy, commencing late 2021 and delivering outcomes aligned to an evolving series of targets and dates over the coming years. Our goal is to build AUH's capacity and financial sustainability to ensure our ongoing viability. The Revenue Plan will include recommendations around philanthropic and corporate partnerships, a sponsorship plan, and the potential to expand our activity into new locations.

We also aim to develop a slate of "near shovel ready" projects – such as festivals, a membership program, creative workshops, resources – of various sizes and fitting the various needs of our creative industries. The 2021 NSW Restart Program demonstrated our ability to deliver more programs and projects across the region if additional funding was available: feedback from audiences and creative practitioners on the importance of this injection of funds highlights how critical it is to increase our 'presence' in the region.

The forecast budget below assumes a small increase in our revenue through this process – with a view to much more significant changes in the next four-year planning period. Note that the deficit in 2022 includes several projects budgeted for 2021 (2021 therefore had a significant surplus) but carried over into '22.

## Forecast Budget

	2022	2023	2024
<b>Income</b>			
Council Membership	41,991	42,831	43,687
Create NSW	200,000	200,000	200,000
Create NSW CASP	17,000	17,000	17,000
Earned Income	2,625	7,125	10,000
Grants and Subsidies		4,000	34,000
Sponsorships & Philanthropic Income		4,000	10,000
Other Income	1,500	1,500	1,500
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$263,116</b>	<b>\$276,456</b>	<b>\$316,187</b>
<b>Less Operating Expenses</b>			
Program Expenses	12,725	6,125	7,100
Salaries and Wages (Creative Practitioners)	3,950	3,250	3,950
Fees paid to Creative Practitioners	13,500	6,500	8,000
Salaries and Wages (Staff) *1	177,500	180,350	183,700
Administration & Office Costs	54,280	49,330	47,630
Governance Costs (Board)	4,800	4,300	4,400

CASP	17,000	17,000	17,000
Major Project/s		4,000	36,000
Promotion & Marketing	9,400	4,200	4,200
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$293,155</b>	<b>\$275,055</b>	<b>\$311,980</b>
<b>Operating Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>-\$30,039</b>	<b>\$1,401</b>	<b>\$4,207</b>

(1) Includes on-cost (superannuation, worker's compensation insurance, fringe benefits tax, leave allowances, travel costs & professional development)

For the budgetary assumptions and more detail, please see Appendix 1: The Financial Plan. A more comprehensive budget and set of KPIs is available as a separate document.

## the management plan

Our Board of Management currently includes four (4) Local Council nominees and two (2) co-opted members. We have the option to co-opt another four (4) members on the basis of skills they bring to the Board including an Aboriginal representative (currently vacant). Existing Board members bring an impressive array of skills, knowledge and abilities to their roles on the Board; they are also passionate about the arts and their communities.

Our staff consists of an Executive Director, Office Manager and part-time Aboriginal Arts Officer (to be filled by the end of 2021). This lean team functions well but in order to avoid burnout and difficult absences, and open ourselves to fresh and innovative approaches, we aim to increase staff numbers and broaden skills across the three years of the strategy.

The Local Councils that define the Arts Upper Hunter Region are themselves dynamic, changing, and committed. They are key partners in developing Creative Industries here. Across the next three years we intend to:

- Develop a more transparent and consultative relationship with all the Councils, via Memoranda of Understanding and regular interactions.

Renewal in our Management Plan consists of many things, and we need to undertake them with consideration and review rather than urgency and imposition. Over the next three years AUH intends to:

- Increase the size of the Board, expanding on the Board's skillset and creative experience
- Review and revise the Constitution into a more modern, streamlined format
- Upskill our staff, first in growing our skills (Professional Development) and second in spreading those skills (to help us better cope in emergencies and absences)
- Review and rethink our Mission, Vision and Values statements ahead of the 2025-28 Strategic Plan
- Develop or review policies in several areas: Working From Home, Communications, Human Resources, Revenue, Board/Staff Induction, Environmental, among others
- Improve our revenue position via a Revenue Policy developed by a working party of the Board
- Expand our staffing levels, both in number of permanent staff (currently 2) and flexible positions offered as required (eg Project Officers)
- Collect useful data better, using our own resources and those of our partners

Of these, the first three should be completed through 2022; the others will begin in 2022 and some will be works in progress. Most are or will be reviewed annually.

Our Risk Management Plan, also reviewed annually, is particularly important for our systems and security, but also is a good reference document for all material.

Please see Appendix 2 for a detailed Management Plan, Risk Management Plan, SWOT Analysis and Succession Plan.

## Current Board

The list of current Board Members is published on the AUH Website. As at mid November 2021: Ivan Skaines, Chair and Co-opted Member. Ivan joined the board in 2019.

Cr Robert Booth, Vice Chair and Dungog Shire Council’s delegate. Robert joined the board in 2015.

Kim Manwarring, Treasurer and Muswellbrook Shire Council delegate. Kim joined the board in 2020.

Jacqui Bakewell, Upper Hunter Shire Council’s delegate. Jacqui joined the board in 2020.

Cr Danny Thompson, Singleton Council’s delegate. Danny joined the board in 2016.

Peter Carlin, Co-opted Member. Peter joined the board in 2018.

The First Nations position is currently vacant.





# the promotions plan

Reviewing and reinvigorating our promotions is central to Arts Upper Hunter’s overall renewal project. Promotions have many goals – from promoting our own presence in the cultural world of the region, to promoting events and artists and services, to promoting opportunities, to promoting thought and experience about the arts and creativity itself. We also act as an advocate for the arts in the broader world, engaging with Local Councils and institutions within and beyond our borders.

A more considered review of all our promotions and communications strategies will take place over the next year. For now, this table represents our first steps in undertaking the review.

## Marketing channels:

	<b>Delivery or updates</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
Website	Updated weekly or as required	News, events, opportunities	To be revamped through 2022.
ArtSparks e-bulletin	Twice monthly	News, events, opportunities	Continue as is, included in promotions review
Facebook & InstaGram	Linked to website, with frequent updates and commentary	News, events, opportunities	Continue as is, included in promotions review
Twitter	Linked to website	News, events, opportunities	Continue as is, included in promotions review
ABC & other local radio stations	Occasional interviews	AUH events and activities	To be included in promotions review
Newspaper column	Regular column in Hunter River Times	News, events, opportunities, invitations, thoughts	On offer, work in progress.
Media Releases	To all relevant papers	AUH events and activities	Continue as is, included in promotions review
	To relevant newsletters	AUH events and activities	Continue as is, included in promotions review
	To other stakeholders including Create NSW, community groups, Local Councils, Parliamentarians, etc	AUH events and activities	Continue as is, included in promotions review
Paid advertising	Newspapers, FB boosts, radio ads, etc	Event & activity dependent	To be included in promotions review
Channels	YouTube, Spotify, Soundcloud, IGTV, Web Video	Events (live & recorded), Documents, playlists	To be developed with promotions strategy
Other pathways	Word of Mouth, forums, committees, billboards, public artworks, flyers, other radio including community radio, attendance at events, news outlets, arts “challenges” etc etc etc	Numerous possibilities	To be included in promotions review

# the action plan

## Cultivating Brilliant Places

Our three year goals are aspirational, and are working towards more significant longer-term goals. For now our approach is on renewal. The one-year goals – our Forward Plan for 2022 – lay groundwork for those three-year objectives.

The following table suggests the key focus areas of AUH over the approximate next three-year period of Create NSW funding and the current LGA terms of Council. They focus on developing:

- Creative and Cultural Identity
- Creative Practice
- Creative Outcomes and Impacts

This plan is a living document. During the plan's life, the Board of Management and changing environment may require additional strategies and changes of direction. Our annual Forward Plans will be the key expression of any shifts, while the core objectives and goals will likely remain substantially the same.

## Charting our success: Key Performance Indicators

Create NSW requires Arts Upper Hunter to report on a set of mandatory Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which align the funding it provides us to Government priorities. The Regional Arts Development Organisation network also has a set of KPIs built around a model of service delivery areas. Both models are thorough and useful.

Rather than reinvent the wheel, for the 2022-24 triennial we have combined the two sets of KPIs and added a priority area of our own, namely celebrating Aboriginal arts and cultural expression. The full set of KPIs is included as Appendix 4

## True collaborative enterprise

This raft of plans and goals is not going to be accomplished by Arts Upper Hunter alone. Partnering with numerous stakeholders, large and small, leveraging our skills and knowledge with those of others, is the only way to achieve our objectives. Collaborating. Co-visioning.

## Our goals, 1 year and 3-year

Objective	Goal	Forward plan 2022	By the end of 2024 ...
Understand our region	<p>To articulate a deep comprehension within Arts Upper Hunter and the Region of the creative communities, resources, assets, histories, individuals and groups that make up the creative industries and participants here.</p> <p><i>Our understanding of and advocacy for the creative industries is core to our existence and responsiveness in this region.</i></p>	<p><b>Continue to engage</b> with creative activities across the Region, meet people, hold networking activities, attend events (festivals, workshops, performances), communicate and document cultural activities. <i>Throughout the year.</i></p> <p><b>Identify gaps</b> and needs in communities across the region, by visiting and consulting with stakeholders at all levels throughout the year.</p> <p><b>Identify the strengths</b> especially of individual places and groups.</p> <p><b>Develop and share resources</b> (culture trails, website, links, social media) that celebrate and catalogue the many Brilliant Places in our region. Continue to improve and increase the number of resources where needed. <i>Throughout the year, evolving resources, first culture trails.</i></p>	<p>... our bold aspirational goals for the <i>next</i> strategic plan 2025-28 builds on distinctive local strengths and needs, engages with all stakeholders, and recognises the central role of Arts Upper Hunter in understanding the Region.</p> <p>... a growing number of communities is participating in the programs of AUH, its partners and cultural organisations in the region.</p> <p>... we have a slate of hybrid and digital resources dedicated to the distinctiveness and commonalities of our localities, villages, towns and Shires.</p>
Connect to place, people, community	<p>To embrace local distinctiveness and local strengths, especially through the natural environment and uniqueness of villages &amp; towns, through engaged communities, placemaking, partnerships with Local Councils &amp; beautification of public places.</p>	<p><b>Develop culture trails</b> that embody the unique qualities of our Brilliant Places, allied to each Local Council's cultural plan and identified strengths. <i>1 trialled in 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Develop a slate of "shovel-ready" projects</b> and programs, with draft schedules and budgets.</p>	<p>... across the region, villages and townships are increasingly feeling the impact of creative programs tailored to their needs, and discovering that the arts are a part of the mix that makes rural living worthwhile.</p>

Objective	Goal	Forward plan 2022	By the end of 2024 ...
<p>Increase capacity within communities – skills and resources</p>	<p>To increase the artistic and professional skills and knowledge of individuals and groups, to grow the leadership and collaborative participation of all our creative communities.</p>	<p><b>Identify, promote and support</b> networking events, professional development (PD), educational opportunities and innovative practice throughout the region. <i>1-2 in 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Produce or acquire skills-focused resources</b> (professional and creative resources and links) as part of new website. <i>2-3 resources trialled.</i></p> <p><b>Collect and catalogue online database</b> of local artists with appropriate skills and certifications for work with schools and health authorities (HALT-TA program). <i>By October 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Develop &amp; seek funding for a leadership program</b> for emerging leaders in our community groups.</p>	<p>... a lively grapevine of creative people and groups engages in talk about the arts and art practice and discovery of what’s new and what’s great in the creative world.</p> <p>... we are offering a focused and evolving suite of accessible professional and creative resources – including pdfs, videos, links, self-guided courses and co-hosted resources – for both individuals and groups.</p> <p>... artists with appropriate skills fill in our active “Heath &amp; Learning Through The Arts” database; they are producing works for, delivering workshops into and mentoring people in schools and health institutions. We often celebrate works and outcomes.</p> <p>... the leadership program for emerging community leaders across the region is completed and delivering results. <i>Completed 2023, results ongoing.</i></p> <p>... we are undertaking a series of consultations towards the next Strategic Plan 2025-28.</p>

Objective	Goal	Forward plan 2022	By the end of 2024 ...
<p>Increase capacity within communities – enterprise</p>	<p>To embrace creative businesses and initiatives of whatever size as partners, clients and providers in the local arts ecosystems.</p>	<p><b>Identify and include</b> commercial enterprises, larger institutions and groups bringing income to their members in our understanding of the Hunter, and as partners and clients.</p> <p>Begin to work with Local Councils and others to develop a slate of potential projects, specific to local areas or more broadly based.</p> <p>Idea for Create Hunter Artisanal Industrial.</p>	<p>... the list of galleries and venues bringing economic and skills benefits and excitement to our communities is growing and increasingly entangled with Arts Upper Hunter.</p> <p>... our “shovel-ready” program of potential projects includes ones dedicated to increasing the role of creativity in working life, from mines to offices to retailers to homes.</p> <p>... the “art at the workplace” program is evolving into a competition between large companies and small businesses to artistically enhance their workplaces, with more artist residencies on the horizon.</p>
<p>Provide opportunities to our creative people.</p>	<p>To provide opportunities for artists and cultural workers at whatever level to produce and market work, deliver programs and connect to others.</p> <p>To encourage networking and communication between artists, arts groups, Local Councils and other creativity stakeholders in the region. <i>(The best advocates for the arts are the arts groups themselves.)</i></p>	<p><b>Deliver CASP grants, microgrants</b> and other funding opportunities into the region, with employment of artists one of the criteria for selection. <i>Open Feb. Acquitted November.</i></p> <p><b>Provide support</b> for artists and communities through active assistance, letters of support, advice etc.</p> <p><b>Hold forums or workshops</b> on professional themes identified by our local creatives. <i>One program in 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Ensure promotions plan</b> and our promotional materials (calendar, Artspark, WoM, directories) has a marketplace and skills focus.</p>	<p>... a small, changing program of workshops, markets, opportunities, facilitated by AUH in partnership with others, including the other RADOs, offers much needed connection and employment for local artists.</p>

Objective	Goal	Forward plan 2022	By the end of 2024 ...
Increase engagement with and promotion of First Nations arts and cultural activity	To work collaboratively with First Nations bodies to promote First-Nations arts and cultural activities.	<p><b>Develop knowledge, communications &amp; consultation processes</b> with Wanaruah LALC and other local First Nations people. <i>The main work of new AAO in 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Run first program/s</b> aimed at First Nations artistic practice and audiences. <i>A completed exhibition or program by November.</i></p> <p><b>Connect with leaders</b> in First Nations creative industries anywhere. <i>Throughout the year and continuing.</i></p>	<p>... an Aboriginal Arts Officer is employed for up to 3 days a week, possibly on a shared basis, with a view to more employment during a major project.</p> <p>... a significant multi-year local-First-Nations-devised project (or series of smaller projects) is underway.</p> <p>... there is growing engagement of First Nations audiences in and outside the region.</p> <p>... we continue to identify social benefits from arts engagements with young Aboriginal people.</p> <p>... we are reviewing the economic equity of First-Nations projects for Strategic Plan 2025-28.</p>
Increase access and participation – digital	To increase participation by developing hybrid and digital skills in creative people and groups, and increase the audience’s ability to access such works.	<p><b>Identify digital skills and gaps</b> that have come to the fore during the Covid years.</p> <p><b>Celebrate high-level digital outcomes</b> throughout the year.</p> <p><b>Promote hybrid and digital</b> documentation and delivery in grant applications and promotions. <i>Through the year and continuing.</i></p> <p><b>Build a new website to be live</b> by Nov 2022.</p>	<p>... hybrid and digital work (and documentation) forms a significant part of the way in which many artists and groups engage both locally and outside our region.</p> <p>... an increasing number of venues / channels are accessing digital creations (eg age-care centres).</p> <p>... we are putting together a Digital Access Policy aligned to our priority groups and local skills and technologies.</p>

Objective	Goal	Forward plan 2022	By the end of 2024 ...
Increase access and participation – priority groups	To increase participation by working collaboratively to identify and support arts and cultural projects that target children, youth, people with a disability, CaLD communities and older people.	<p><b>Enable youth-devised theatre</b> with out-of-town group (Tantrum) in Dungog shire. <i>First half of 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Ensure measurable focus on priority groups</b> for large-scale event (see below).</p> <p><b>Trial live-streamed local music</b> into one or more aged-care facilities in collaboration with residents &amp; carers.</p> <p><b>LGBTQI+</b> connections made with Hunter Pride.</p> <p><b>Include access in review</b> of venues and groups through the region. <i>Already underway.</i></p>	<p>... there's growing access to – and participation in – cultural activities by priority groups across the region ...</p> <p>... and with the support of peak organisations, priority groups are increasingly the artists, devisers and collaborators themselves.</p>
Ensure best-practice management and governance of Arts Upper Hunter.	To work together to develop our systems to ensure a professional, responsive, efficient and contemporary Arts Upper Hunter.	<p><b>Review AUH constitution &amp;</b> consider revamp into a leaner more flexible model. <i>Research through 2022.</i></p> <p>Ensure Board has a mix of skills. <i>(See Mgmt Plan.)</i></p> <p><b>Identify training gaps</b> for ED, OM, AAO &amp; other employees. <i>1-4 opportunities each in 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Mitigate risks.</b> <i>(See Risk Management Plan for details.)</i></p> <p><b>Develop systems &amp; processes</b> to measure the impacts and outcomes supported and delivered by AUH.</p>	<p>... we have a modern constitution and representative Board</p> <p>... Professional Development for staff is regular and tailored.</p> <p>... we are reviewing our Risk Management Plan ahead of the 2025-28 Strategic Plan.</p> <p>... and reviewing our data collection processes.</p>

Objective	Goal	Forward plan 2022	By the end of 2024 ...
Increase our revenue.	To increase our total revenue and diversify the sources of income, strongly allied to creative outcomes and building AUH's position in the regional community.	<p><b>Develop</b> &amp; review new Revenue Policy. <i>Interim policy in first half 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Develop a sponsorship toolbox</b> for AUH internal use. <i>Part of Revenue Policy review.</i></p> <p><b>Build a region-wide event or continuing program</b> that targets potential revenue streams. Collaborative development. <i>Proposal stormed and hammered by end of 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Ensure our goals align with stake-holders</b> Create NSW, our Councils, funding bodies, First Nations etc.</p> <p><b>Interrogate financial figures</b> through the year.</p>	<p>... Arts Upper Hunter's broad responsive revenue mix reflects a growing ability to serve the region's creative industries and stakeholders. Revenue from outside our core funding to have increased by 30%.</p> <p>... a new region-wide event (or on-going program) engages creatives, attracts tourists and local audiences, excites funding bodies / sponsors, and allows a galvanic local expression of a regional theme or need; it started as a small but very engaging event and is highly likely to grow.</p>



Objective	Goal	Forward plan 2022	By the end of 2024 ...
Creatively promote and advocate for the creative industries round here – promotions	<p>To improve, develop and energise promotions from Arts Upper Hunter on behalf of artists and cultural groups and the region as a whole.</p> <p>To build audiences for creative works and experiences across a range of levels – taking into account access for priority groups, a diversity of levels of artistic expression, excellence and participation.</p>	<p><b>Develop a Creative Communication Strategy</b> that identifies unique creative opportunities for the ED, the website, Artsparks, Board Members and creative groups to organise or participate in. <i>Evolving through 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Develop a Cultural Calendar</b> as part of the website, with contributions being offered by the creative community. <i>Prototype in 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Manage &amp; partner</b> in events and activities throughout the Region.</p> <p><b>Ensure access at events</b> – where appropriate seek to promote the most relevant or exciting or excellent or participative engagements.</p> <p><b>Be vibrant, accessible</b>, while still being accurate and responsive, to community promotions needs.</p> <p><b>Develop Cultural Trails</b> in collaboration with LGAs that meet local needs and tourist needs. <i>First ones in 2022.</i></p> <p><b>Promotions Plan review</b> including consideration of AUH’s own YT channel, Spotify playlist, music+art program etc.</p>	<p>... Arts Upper Hunter’s active, dynamic and creative Communications Strategy continues to change with the times; it is an essential part of the framework of arts promotions across the region.</p> <p>... more and more groups are availing themselves of AUH’s Creative Calendar.</p> <p>... our Promotions Officer is moving to more days a week with responsibilities of advertising and celebrating events – tied with digital strategy.</p> <p>... we are a trusted source on any and all local arts activities, diverse, bold, challenging, entertaining, innovative, traditional etc etc.</p> <p>... the suite of broad cultural trails, used by tourists and locals alike; new interactive, bespoke trails are in the planning stage.</p>

Objective	Goal	Forward plan 2022	By the end of 2024 ...
Creatively promote and advocate for the creative industries round here – advocacy	<p>To ensure that arts and the creative industries are represented wherever possible and where appropriate in decision-making across the region – to advocate that artists’ voices can be heard where they need to be heard.</p> <p>To promote the importance of arts and cultural activities in creating liveable communities. To promote creative industries as tools for economic growth including growing the number of visitors to the Region.</p>	<p><b>Negotiate with our Local Councils</b> clear goals for 2023, expressed in MoUs, identifying creative practice relevant to the LGA’s integrated planning documents, cultural plans, strategies and policies. MoUs will need to evolve with their own cultural goals, which are also evolving. <i>July-Aug 2022</i></p> <p><b>Work with well-placed bodies</b> such as Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Lions, key creative groups, Councils, Art Centres and Conservatorium, plus groups serving the regions such as Create NSW and its parts, to make sure the concerns of <i>our</i> creative communities are heard.</p>	<p>... those trusted partnerships between Local Councils and Arts Upper Hunter that meet their annual goals as expressed in the MoUs, continue to be negotiated annually.</p> <p>Local Councils are actively engaged in the next Strategic Plan 2025-28.</p> <p>... AUH is missed if we can’t make it to a meeting.</p>
Creatively promote and advocate for the creative industries round here – Arts Upper Hunter itself	To promote ourselves as a trusted and professional part of the creative infrastructure for local arts organisations and others across the region.	<p><b>Ensure AUH’s involvement</b> is read loud and clear (and appropriately).</p> <p><b>Stay in touch</b> with local practitioners and groups.</p> <p><b>Promote our successes</b> in partnership with the groups and locales we serve.</p> <p><b>Strategically grow</b> the organisation, with a clear-eyed game plan while still being flexible to new opportunities.</p> <p><b>Understand that we are small</b> but focused, responsive and useful.</p>	<p>... there’s a growing and continuing engagement of AUH’s knowledge, connections and services by people, groups and organisations across the region ...</p> <p>... and we (or our partners) are in the news quite a lot ...</p> <p>... and we are re-branding.</p>

# appendix 1. the financial plan

## Finance and Accounting Systems

Arts Upper Hunter (AUH) has transparent, timely and sound management systems in place including relevant financial and administration procedures and reporting processes that are managed by a part-time Office Manager (OM) in partnership with the Executive Director.

The OM is responsible for ensuring that XERO reporting practices, accounting and auditing outcomes are delivered in an accurate and timely manner.

To ensure solvency, the organisation holds 20% of its annual expenditure costs to ensure the ongoing delivery of projects and programs within the current and next triennial strategy. In addition, quarterly budget forecasts are developed to include financial resource management that allows for known capital and non-capital expenditure. These forecasts include items such as; recruitment, marketing and promotion, board meetings, professional development and travel and general operating costs.

A future focus on diversifying revenue streams through a Revenue Policy (RP) will be developed and delivered before 31 December 2022. This will include actions that build AUH's capacity and sustainability to ensure the ongoing viability of an organisation that is heavily reliant on external funding sources as core revenue streams. The RP will include recommendations around philanthropic and corporate partnerships that assist in the program deliveries during 2022-25 and expansion of the activity into new locations.

The 2021 NSW Restart Program demonstrated the ability of the organisation to deliver increased programs and projects across the region if additional funding was available, and the feedback received from audiences and creative practitioners on the importance of this injection of funds highlights the expectations of the communities of the Upper Hunter in the future and the focus of the current board to increase the 'presence' of AUH in the region.

A more comprehensive budget including cash-flow forecast, is available as a separate document.

### Budget Assumptions

#### a) Indexations

A number of indexations have been assumed in future budget forecasts. Council contributions are calculated on a per capita basis at the beginning of each financial year and indexed at CPI. Rate pegging has not been considered as a part of the AUH fees and charges that are applied to Council contributions. This should be reviewed and considered as a part of the Revenue Policy and future Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with each Local Council that AUH supports. Staff salaries and wages should equally be indexed in future to meet the NSW Government salary index. The revenue policy will set this amount and the period of increase.

#### b) Unsecured funding

The current forecasted budgets during the period of this Strategic Plan will occasionally assume the funding of large scale projects achieved through regular funding applications at both Federal and State program levels, Office of Arts, Australia Council for the Arts, Create NSW, the NSW Government and other funding partners. Some of these sources of revenue could be from non-traditional sources, such as the NSW Environmental Trust and Settlement Grants.

#### c) Forecasted Budgets

Budgets will be developed and delivered in response to the Revenue Policy and Actual Expenditure reported as a part of funding acquittal, audited financial statements and regular AUH Board Meeting Agendas. The forecasted budget does not assume a reduction in expenditure associated with the permanent closures of the AUH office (which would bring AUH in line with a number of RADOs that are continuing to work on a rotational basis throughout their regions

- significant savings would allow for additional project management hours). However AUH is considering this action during the triennial period.

In addition, there are a number of assumptions about provided projects that will be targeted for sponsorship and grant funding that are specific and one off contributions to the organisation. These really come to the fore in 2023 and 2024.

It is also assumed that the adopted Revenue Plan will consider a more accurate process for developing Forecasted budgets that includes quotes, expression of interest processes and written project plans.

## appendix 2. the management plan

Our Board of Management includes four Local Council nominees, at least two co-opted members and an Aboriginal representative. They bring an impressive array of skills, knowledge and abilities to their work; they are also passionate about the arts and cultural activities and their communities.

Renewal in our Management Plan consists of many things, which we will undertake with consideration and review rather than urgency and imposition. Over the next three years AUH intends to:

- Increase the size of the Board, expanding on the Board's skillset and creative experience
- Review and revise the Constitution into a more modern, streamlined format
- Upskill our staff, first in broadening our skills (PD) and second in spreading those skills (to help us better cope in emergencies and absences)
- Review and rethink our Mission, Vision and Values statements ahead of our next four-year Strategic Plan
- Develop policy in several areas: Working From Home, Communications, Human Resources, Revenue, Induction and others
- Expand our staff, both in terms of staff numbers (currently 2), number of permanent days worked and flexible positions offered as required (eg Project Officers)
- Improve our revenue position via a Revenue Policy developed by a working party of the Board
- Collect useful data better, using our own resources and those of our partners

Of these, the first three should be completed over 2022; the others will begin in 2022 and some will be evolving works in progress. Some, such as the skills mix of the Board, are reviewed annually. The release of 2021 Census data towards the end of 2022 provides us with an opportunity to review the socio-demographic profile of our region.

### Governance and Management

AUH is an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation that is registered for GST and is a registered Charity. AUH is governed by the Board of Management and the Board is responsible for setting the organisations strategic direction, mission, vision, values and performance objectives, and the final approval of policy, program deliveries and budgets that are proposed by staff. The Board monitors the operation of the business to ensure that high delivery standards of financial management and legal requirements are met. The Board also acts as advocates for the organisation and assists with fundraising.

The AUH Constitution guides the Board on the delivery of the organisation's objectives. Contributing Local Governments appoint nominees for the period of the term of each Council (usually four years) who have the necessary demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities to contribute to the strategic direction of the organisation.

The Board will comprise a combination of the following knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's):

- Arts Education and Training\*\*
- Cultural Tourism
- Community Development
- Economic Development\*
- Media and Marketing\*
- Policy Development
- Arts Management
- Arts Administration
- Governance\*
- Law\*\*
- Financial Management\*
- Human Resourcing

These skills will be outsourced when there is a deficiency in the Board KSA or filled as opportunities arise with Board Member movement/ retirement/resignation.

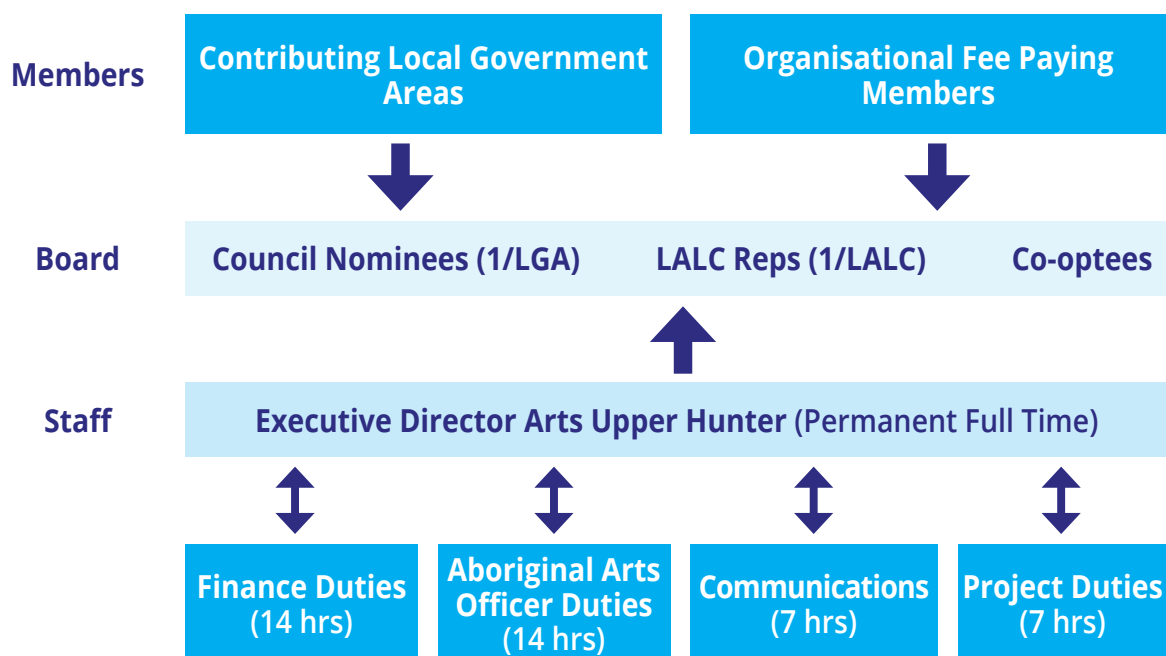
Under the Constitution the Board is formulated as follows; one nominee to be appointed by each financial local government area; one nominee to be appointed by an LALC in the area of service; two to four co-opted Board members with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to contribute to the Board. Board members are required to serve for no more than four years and no less than twelve months.

The Board meets up to six times per year to receive and review performance reports on all key business areas. Where possible these meetings align to the quarterly reporting schedule of Create NSW, and Local Government partners, financial statement development and annual audit periods.

The Organisation adheres to a Code of Ethical Practice and Conflict of Interest Policies which are reviewed and adopted at the AGM along with the Constitution of the organisation.

## Organisational Structure 2022-24

**Table 2.0 – Proposed Organisational Chart (2022/24)**



The above table defines duties not the roles of AUH. The OM is currently completing finance, communications and a good amount of project work over a nine-day fortnight. The Aboriginal Arts Officer role is accounted for in the 2021 year of delivery. The Restart Project officer's contract finalised on 30 May 2021 and continued on a casual basis through to August.

We will also be reviewing our Human Resources process, activity and efficiency: in the first half of 2022 we will trial working from home offices and vehicles, producing some savings.

## Succession Planning

The Board of AUH recognise the responsibility of making provision for the capable governance of the organisation. The Board recognise that interim leadership transitions are inevitable and therefore the Succession Plan, based upon other Regional Arts Development Organisation Succession Plans, considers the following;

### a) Planned Staff Absences

Will be approved by the ED and communicated to the Board Chairperson and Deputy. Planned leave of absence (excluding Time in Lieu). ED leave will be approved by the Chairperson or Deputy Chair (excluding Time in Lieu).

Time in Lieu will a negotiated process at operational level to ensure the continuity of business.

Relevant leave forms will be completed digitally and filed in accordance with accounting standards and legal requirements.

### b) Unplanned Temporary Absence of Executive Director (ED)

In the situation where the Executive Director is absent, temporarily and determined to be unable to the carry out the roles and responsibilities of the organisation the following will apply:

- i. Within five business days after the date of the ED's absence, the board authorises the Board's Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson to appoint an individual(s) to carry out the ED functions.
- ii. The Chairperson is responsible to ensure that temporary leadership arrangements are communicated to the board, staff and key stakeholders (including LGAs)
- iii. These appointments will remain in place until the ED is able to resume their responsibilities, a temporary ED is appointed by the boards or until such time that other appointments can be made by the board or the selection committee acting on behalf of the board. The appointments will be made under contract for an initial term of not more than four months. The Board maintains the option to extend or decrease the contract with thirty (30) days' notice if required.
- iv. As soon as possible after the notification of an unplanned absence of the ED, the chairperson shall convene an Executive Committee meeting to affirm the procedures in this plan or modify them as required to suit the situation.
- v. The Chairperson will remain in contact with the interim ED at least weekly to monitor the progress of the organisation.

### c) Replacement of the Executive Director (Resignation, Termination, Serious Illness of death)

In the event of permanent replacement of the ED the Board may take the opportunity to review the needs of the organisation and appoint a temporary ED as above.

AND within four (4) weeks of a known permanent vacancy in the ED position, the Board will appoint a selection committee comprising a minimum of 3 members of the board including at least one office bearer. This committee will:

- i. Review the position description and salary to ensure that market rate is being met.
- ii. Carry out the recruitment process.
- iii. Offer the position to successful candidate.
- iv. Enter into contract negotiations and take the offer to the full Board for approval.
- v. Develop a transition plan/timetable and support tools for the new ED.

#### d) Board Renewal and Maintenance

The Board of AUH recognises the renewal of board members to ensure that the skill set of the Board is relevant to the current activities of the organisation. To this extent the following activities exist;

- i. No Board member can serve for more than four years, except where that Board member has been nominated by a local government funding partner.
- ii. To ensure that the continued corporate knowledge of the board exists, renewal of board members will be staggered.
- iii. Potential future Chairpersons should be identified at least six months prior to the end of the current Chairpersons term to allow for a handover of process and knowledge.
- iv. Annual review of skills and qualifications should occur at each AGM.
- v. AUH will develop and deliver new board member induction packs that are reviewed annually.
- vi. Board interactions with each other should be regular and informative of opportunities for the organisation.
- vii. New Board members should be recruited to fill skill gaps.

#### e) Conflict of Interest, Dispute Resolution and Performance Management

The Board of AUH recognise the possibility for conflicts between the Board and the Executive Director (ED), conflicts with the Board and the performance of the ED, Board and office bearers, and that if these instances occur there is the possibility of loss of reputation, financial loss and possible legal implications. To avoid this the following processes exist;

- i. The board will conduct annual performance reviews of the Executive Director
- ii. Conflict of Interest and Dispute Resolution Procedures will be outlined in the ED's contract.
- iii. The constitution will outline clear procedures of disciplinary action and these should be reviewed at the same time as the constitution.

The Board also recognises the possibility of conflicts within the Board. According to the AUH Constitution, disputes between Members (in their capacity as members) of the Association and disputes between members and the Association are to be referred to the Community Justice Centre for mediation in accordance with the Community Justice Centres Act 1983.

# risk management plan

Type of Risk	Cause of Risk	Control of Risk
<b>Environmental (Internal)</b>	<p>The service area of AUH is broad and the ED is required to travel many km's annually.</p> <p>Office Equipment is outdated or unsafe.</p> <p>Staff working from home or from the AUH car with possible WHS consequences</p>	<p>Ensure Safe Vehicle is provided with sufficient funding to allow overnight stays when deemed necessary</p> <p>Use the AUH Asset Plan to identify end of warranty and recommended safe operating and replacement period and include these costs in forecasted budgets</p> <p>Undertake WHS assessment of home offices and vehicles.</p>
<b>Financial</b>	<p>Loss of earned income within the forecasted budget.</p> <p>Loss of expected Grant funding.</p> <p>Local Government Partnerships dissolve due to boundary adjustments or poor service deliveries from AUH</p>	<p>Ensure budgets are realistic and adhered to. Obtain EOI before delivery of projects to ensure uptake.</p> <p>Seek sponsorships and in-kind support to minimise loss.</p> <p>Ensure adequate marketing and promotion budgets.</p> <p>Ensure compliance with Create NSW contract.</p> <p>Diversify revenue streams.</p> <p>Ensure AUH is an essential part of each Council's Cultural Planning process.</p> <p>Deliver on MoU arrangements with Local Councils.</p>
<b>Loss of Reputation</b>	<p>Failure to deliver on Strategic Plan</p> <p>Misrepresentation of organisation's position in the media</p>	<p>Ensure delivery of the activity within the plan.</p> <p>Ensure all staff and Board members are aware of the communication plan, roles and responsibilities.</p>



<p><b>Governance</b></p>	<p>Board unable to fulfil its governance role due to lack of awareness, skills and abilities.</p>	<p>Undertake annual review of Board Member skills and qualifications and fill the gaps through outsourcing, professional development or targeted recruitment.</p> <p>Ensure rigorous Board Inductions are undertaken.</p> <p>Budget for Board training sessions and pre-determined AUH representation.</p>
<p><b>Operational Risk</b></p>	<p>Small delivery team, possible burn-out from too many tasks and distance.</p> <p>Ability to attract suitable staff</p> <p>The chance something harmful or unexpected could happen including the loss, theft, or damage of AUH assets, or possible injury to AUH Board members and staff.</p>	<p>Ensure budget allows adequate resourcing to allow enforced annual leave and TIL.</p> <p>Ensure a dynamic, innovative and respectful workplace.</p> <p>Allocate funding for professional development</p> <p>Ensure adequate insurance coverage on assets</p>

Where relevant each risk should be considered during the preparation of each organisational policy, Forward Plan and associated Management Plan.

# SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New ED with fresh ideas and listening skills – we are “starting again”.</li> <li>• Very active and engaged board.</li> <li>• Support from local councils.</li> <li>• Expertise in a range of artforms.</li> <li>• Good writing skills and a range of other skills.</li> <li>• Strong financial management and governance, including well-filled reserves.</li> <li>• Region is rich in artists and art groups.</li> <li>• Some towns &amp; groups are especially “arty”.</li> <li>• Strength of RADO network &amp; relationship with Create NSW.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thinly staffed – not enough people and too much to do, potential for burn-out</li> <li>• Board needs extra people &amp; has mandated turnover of members.</li> <li>• ED’s lack of experience.</li> <li>• Over-reliance on OM who will need to take leave.</li> <li>• Lack of revenue from non-core sources.</li> <li>• Some quiet localities in terms of artistic interest.</li> <li>• Reputation currently not high enough: relatively unknown in some quarters, even by creatives.</li> <li>• Small number of councils means relatively small core fund.</li> <li>• Need to “modernize” website, online activities and digital systems.</li> <li>• Geographical area stretches resources.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New AAO (TBC) with chance to build strong First Nations connections.</li> <li>• Recent funding lift &amp; good cash reserves.</li> <li>• Potential sponsors in the region – potential further revenue sources incl philanthropy, membership program.</li> <li>• Some councils are devoting considerable resources to creative industries.</li> <li>• Strategic partnerships offering new opportunities for sharing projects and resources.</li> <li>• Transition in terms of mining possibly offer new funding opportunities.</li> <li>• Widening our coverage area with the addition of new Council areas.</li> <li>• Developing a national or international reputation for expertise in a particular area or for staging a particular event.</li> <li>• Emerging technologies &amp; new creative industries esp to attract and engage youth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sudden changes in funding policies.</li> <li>• Economic downturn – especially given the potential effects of climate change.</li> <li>• Emergence of competitors operating in local area.</li> <li>• Lack of interest in people becoming Board members.</li> <li>• Loss of business continuity including pandemics, cyber-attacks, incapacity of key staff.</li> <li>• Loss of local council support.</li> <li>• Loss of reputation.</li> </ul>

# appendix 3. engagement matrix

The matrix below was developed by Acting Executive Director Carolyn O'Brien in mid 2021 and functions as a useful checklist for thinking through some of the parameters within our 1-3 Year Goals. They are provided here as a handy list.

<b>Engagement Matrix. How can AUH develop and support creative identity and practice across the region?</b>	
Developing Cultural Identity	Developing Creative Practice
Develop and strengthen a sense of place and community identity	Creative Engagement Creative Thinking Creative Activity
Develop community alliances and respect for difference and diversity	Bring people together/connections Enable dialogue Promote understanding Celebrate difference Placemaking Consult
Develop Creative Partnerships	Facilitate exchange of ideas Build trust between stakeholders
Develop and Beautify Public Places and Natural Environments	Celebrate local distinctiveness Promote interest in/care of the environment Educate, excite and attract Create positive recreation options/placemaking
Develop opportunities for self-expression and encourage active communities	Develop leadership, self-confidence, personal development and skills  Develop the organizational skills of individuals and communities that foster innovation and creative initiatives within Preparing for STEAM economies
Develop and engage people's creativity	Support creative problem solving Encourage critical thinking
Stimulate economic activity	Encourage enterprise Encourage visitation Encourage audience participation Build public and private sector partnerships Generate employment & income-generation opportunities

**Table: How can AUH support creative practice across the region? (Carolyn O'Brien, 2021)**

## 36 appendix 4. key performance indicators

Includes Mandatory KPIs required by Create NSW through Negotiated Funding Agreement, plus some useful KPIs (marked \*\*) devised by the RADO network.

NSW Govt Priority Area / Goals	Measurement	Target Yr 1	Actual Yr 1	Target Yr 2	Actual Yr 2	Target Yr 3	Actual Yr 3	Examples Forward Plan (2022 unless indicated)	Notes
Gov't Priority area: Great arts and cultural experiences are available to everyone	RADO delivery area: SERVICES							** = not mandatory KPIs for Create NSW	** these are optional, our own targets, or RADO network targets
Maintain strategies for growing and engaging new and diverse audiences	Number of attendees/participants/users that access the services of the RADO	279		350		1900			Start-up festival/program (2024) developed through implementing Revenue Plan
	Number of programs and projects that target these priority areas:								
	Regional NSW	16		19		21		Tantrum Outpost, CASP, Regional Futures & First Nations projects, Microgrants, Culture Trails trial, Health-Arts database and more	See Forward Plan 2022 (sep Board document)
	CaLD	0		0		1			
	Western Sydney	0		0		0			
	ATSI People	3		3		5		Regional Futures, First Nations project	
	Young People	2		2		4		Tantrum Outpostx2, AAO project	
	People with a Disability	1		1		1		Health-Artists database	
	Seniors**	2		3		4		Health dB, live streams	

NSW Govt Priority Area / Goals	Measurement	Target Yr 1	Actual Yr 1	Target Yr 2	Actual Yr 2	Target Yr 3	Actual Yr 3	Examples Forward Plan (2022 unless indicated)	Notes
	Number of attendees/participants / users at programs and projects that target these priority areas:								
	Regional NSW	279		350		1900		Start-up festival/program (2024)	
	CaLD	0		0		20			
	Western Sydney	0		0		0			
	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander People	44		50		100			New AAO influence
	Young People	60		40		200		Tantrum + AAO workshop	
	People with a Disability	5		5		5		Disabilities service providers	
	Seniors**	50		70		80		Digital access program	
Support councils to work across a variety of responsibilities, assisting in areas including tourism, economic development, cultural planning & cultural infrastructure	Number of council projects or developments supported by attending meetings or planning committees, contributing funds, contributing staff time, providing advice.	11		12		14		Local Council meetings, MAGiC project Murrurundi, Dungog Cultural Plan, Singleton Art Centre, Museum of Rural Life, Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre	Not including letters of support
Support & assistance: Help artists & communities become viable by achieving artistic & business goals	Number of artists, organisations & businesses that interact with AUH for advice, support, assistance, connection	101		100		100			Both through AUH networking and sought by artists & communities
	Number of letters of support written**	10		11		12			

NSW Govt Priority Area / Goals	Measurement	Target Yr 1	Actual Yr 1	Target Yr 2	Actual Yr 2	Target Yr 3	Actual Yr 3	Examples Forward Plan (2022 unless indicated)	Notes
PD: Deliver professional development opportunities	Number of RADO initiated PD programs delivered	2		5		6		Prototyping online PD resources; business webinar; leadership program	Pending success Rado Leadership idea (BRRLI application)
	Number of attendances at RADO-initiated PD programs	25		70		120			
Govt Priority Area: NSW arts organisations are considered vital sector leaders	RADO delivery area: REACH								
Be recognised as a leader within the arts and cultural sector	Number of programs/events/ activities (services delivered, excludes PD programs)	14		14		15			
	Number of programs delivered digitally	2		4		5			Incl. some hybrid delivery
	No. of digital attendees / participants**	80 / 5		100 / 6		200 / 6			excludes singalongs
	Number of programs delivered F2F	13		14		13			
	Number of F2F attendees / participants**	200 / 70		250 / 70		1700 / 75			
	% of attendees/participants/users reporting satisfaction with the services provided (collected via survey)	75%		80%		80%			low target but some prototype programs
	% of attendees/participants/ users acknowledging quality of the services provided (collected via survey)	75%		80%		80%			

NSW Govt Priority Area / Goals	Measurement	Target Yr 1	Actual Yr 1	Target Yr 2	Actual Yr 2	Target Yr 3	Actual Yr 3	Examples Forward Plan (2022 unless indicated)	Notes
Aboriginal arts and cultural expression is celebrated: support & celebrate First Nations artistic and cultural leaders**	Number of First Nations led programs and projects**	2		2		4		AAO to deliver First Nations small initial program in 2022	Significant project to commence 2024; + key part of "shovel ready" event
	Audiences overall for First Nations work**	31		100		600			
	FTE of First Nations employees**	0.4		0.4		0.5		2024 increase dependent on grant success	
	RADO Delivery Area: CONNECTION								
Help our creative communities through networks**	Number of attendances at networking events, F2F and online**	60		60		60		Reg Futures consultations; AUH inclusion at other events; "Art Mixers" from 2023;	
Share work and stories through a variety of platforms**	Number of regular media partners**	15		15		15		1 news column; 5 newspapers; 4 radio stations; 5 local newsletters	
	Number of unique website visits**	3500		4200		5000		new website late 2022, new calendar 2023, culture trails	
	Number of ArtSparks subscribers / click-throughs**	430 / 1500		450 / 1500		500 / 1500			
	Number of FB / IG / Tw**							possible added IG "opportunities" page	
	Number of YouTube/Spotify/FBLive attendees**	80		120		500		Digital streams / Music channel & playlists being developed	
	Number of newspaper articles featuring AUH news**	20		20		25		newspapers / radio	

NSW Govt Priority Area / Goals	Measurement	Target Yr 1	Actual Yr 1	Target Yr 2	Actual Yr 2	Target Yr 3	Actual Yr 3	Examples Forward Plan (2022 unless indicated)	Notes
Gov't Priority area: NSW arts & cultural organisations adopt best practice in governance and sustainability	AUH Delivery Area: GOVERNANCE & FINANCE								
Demonstrate good governance and financial management	% of reserves	20%		20%		20%		at least 20%	
	Does the RADO have a diversity inclusion plan and / or skills matrix for their Board?	no / yes		no / yes		yes / yes		Develop diversity & inclusion matrix by mid 2023	
	If yes: select an improvement goal (or goals) from the Diversity and Inclusion plan					strongly diverse mix			
	If yes: select an improvement goal from the Board Skills Matrix, if skills matrix not already satisfied	First Nations member				festivals or arts admin			Likely high Board turnover in 2022 & 2023



NSW Govt Priority Area / Goals	Measurement	Target Yr 1	Actual Yr 1	Target Yr 2	Actual Yr 2	Target Yr 3	Actual Yr 3	Examples Forward Plan (2022 unless indicated)	Notes
	RADO delivery area: PARTNERSHIPS								
Demonstrate capacity to engage in strategic partnerships and secure revenue from diverse sustainable sources	% turnover non-Federal, State or Local government	1%		3%		5.30%		Revenue & Sponsorship plan to have significant effect in 2024-25	possibly fewer grants available in post-covid, though
Develop partnerships with other orgs, businesses and government departments to develop arts & cultural activity in the region	Number of partnerships with:								
	Organisations	4		6		9		Wanaruah LALC, Paterson Allyn Williams Science Hub, Hunter Region Business Hub, Health/ Education bodies	This will grow over triennial through Revenue Plan
	Business	0		1		2		Corporate partner through sponsorship plan/Shovel Ready projects	
	Government (other than Create NSW)	4		5		6		Local Councils plus potential partners for large event 2024	not including health & education groups for database
	Financial value of partnerships (indicate cash or in-kind) from:								Not including LGA core contributions
	Organisations	\$12,000				\$23,000		Science hub, Wanaruah LALC	in-kind rent AAO office
	Business	0		\$2,000		\$15,000		In 2024 a sponsor or festival partner.	
	Government (other than Create NSW)	\$2,000		\$2,000		\$10,000		In 2024 a sponsor or festival partner.	DPIE, Education, Destination NSW

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