



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 – 2024



MURRAY ARTS

Regional Arts Development



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Image credits:

FRONT PAGE: Toby Mobbs - UNLOCKED recipient 2020 - Photo by RokShotz, Yawana, Fork performing in Neighbour by Alyson Evans and Tahni Froudist Credit: Threefold Studio 2021, Creators Art Space UNLOCKED 2020.

THIS PAGE: Leisa Whyte and Elaine Crombie (Pitjantjatjara, Warrigmal, South Sea) working together on CASP funded 'Then He Came Home' play reading.



OUR PURPOSE

**TO ACTIVELY ENGAGE
WITH THE COMMUNITY IN THE
ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF
THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES**

OUR VISION

MURRAY ARTS ARE LEADERS IN THE FACILITATION, PARTICIPATION AND PROMOTION OF ARTS AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE BORDER AND WIDER REGION.

WE ARE ADVOCATES FOR THE REGION'S CREATIVE COMMUNITY AND THE INDUSTRIES THEY SERVE.

OUR VALUES

ARTISTIC
ENDEAVOUR,
CREATIVITY AND
INTEGRITY

THE ARTS AS A
MEDIUM TO
CHALLENGE US
AND EXPLORE
OUR HUMANITY

THE OPPORTUNITY
TO ACCESS,
PARTICIPATE &
EXPRESS OURSELVES
THROUGH CREATIVE
PRACTICE.

COMMUNITY
WELLBEING,
CONNECTION
AND LIFELONG
LEARNING



OUR REGION

Our footprint borders the Indigenous Nations of Dhuduroha, Yaithmathang, Bpangerang, Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta & Wavaroo and encompasses the local government areas of Albury City, Greater Hume, Federation, City of Wodonga, Indigo & Towong.

WHO WE ARE

Murray Arts is the Regional Arts Development Organisation (RADO) in the Border and Northeast Victoria Region. Our footprint encompasses and borders the Indigenous nations of Dhuduroha, Yaithmathang, Bpangerang, Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta and Wavaroo and services six local government areas (LGA); AlburyCity, Greater Hume and Federation in NSW and City of Wodonga, Indigo and Towong in Northeast Victoria. Murray Arts is a not-for-profit incorporated association, governed by a volunteer board.

Murray Arts is one of the 14 Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADO) in the NSW network and the only one of the 14 that works with LGAs outside of NSW. Each RADO was established to respond to their region's unique needs. The NSW RADO network is a state and local government initiative which sees each RADO receive the same amount of annual core funding from Create NSW and then an annual financial contribution from each of their participating LGAs. The NSW RADO network is strong and supportive, we regularly share resources, team up on joint ventures and assist one another to best support our regions as a whole.

Murray Arts' unique position on the NSW and Victorian border means that we are also linked in with Regional Arts Victoria who takes a strong interest in co-supporting our Victorian LGAs.

2021 marked 25 years since the establishment of a RADO, or Regional Arts Board. Over this time, Murray Arts has become recognised as the peak regional arts organisation working across all art forms. We are the central point of information and support for all arts and cultural activity, from the hobbyist through to the established professional.

Murray Arts has been working in partnership with local First Nation artists since 2011 to provide a strategic and sustainable approach to Aboriginal Arts development in our region. An extensive history of positive engagement with our local First Nations community has resulted in Murray Arts gaining the reputation as the go-to organisation for enquiries related to local Aboriginal Arts development.

OUR ROLE

Murray Arts is the peak organisation for arts, culture and regional arts development in the Border and Northeast Victoria. Our role is to identify gaps in the arts and cultural market and champion people, projects, professional development, and content that are not provided by other organisations and groups in our footprint.

While the Murray Arts team maintain a visible profile in the community, much of what the organisation does and achieves is unseen. This 'behind the scenes' work involves linking artists with organisations, developing strategic partnerships, advocacy, advice, professional development, networking opportunities, support, consultations and guidance. Thus, the role of Murray Arts is as that of a connector and moving forward this will be the primary focus of the organisation.

IT IS THE ROLE OF MURRAY ARTS TO ENSURE THAT:

→ The work of local First Nation artists and creative business is celebrated and supported.

→ Access to arts and cultural activities is spread across the local government areas (LGAs) that make up the Murray Arts footprint. This includes ensuring that infrastructure, projects and resources are available across all LGAs.

→ Arts and culture offerings are diverse and are representative of the communities that they serve.

→ Advocacy for the cultural communities that we represent is presented at all levels of government.

→ Artists and workers in the creative industries are supported and represented within the community.

STRATEGIC GOALS

01 Be the central point of information and communication for the creative industries, across the Murray Arts footprint.

03 Forge strong partnerships with government, community, the creative industries, and fellow arts organisations.

02 Build the capacity of local creative practitioners through professional development, partnerships, collaboration, and networking opportunities.

04 Ensure the ongoing sustainability of Murray Arts by continuing to secure funding and beneficial partnerships.

CHANGES

Over the last 6 years, since our last Strategic Plan 2016-18, Murray Arts has gone through significant changes including:

- ▶ Since 2016 the organisation has had a 100% staff turnover.
- ▶ A shift to a skills-based board in 2018 – launch of the Murray Arts Strategic Advisory Council (MASAC) in 2018.
- ▶ The development and adoption of a new constitution.
- ▶ Opening and re-launching/re-imagining of Burraja Gallery – dedicated to local First Nation Artists.
- ▶ Strategic plan rollover and triennial funding rollover from Create NSW.
- ▶ Corowa Shire Council & Urana Shire Council merged to form Federation Council.
- ▶ Albury/Wodonga was identified as creative industry hotspot.
- ▶ The Murray Arts team shifted to predominantly working from home due to the ongoing challenges of the COVID-era.
- ▶ Our footprint which was known as ‘Two Cities, One Community’ has been divided by state enforced Border restrictions; the advantages of living on the Border are now disadvantages. It will take many years to heal the pain caused by ongoing Border closures and restrictions on our once whole region.

- ▶ The COVID-era has also cemented Murray Arts key role in our region’s cultural landscape, being the only organisation that champions all that falls under the Creative Industries umbrella, on both sides of the Border. We have proved how nimble we are and that we are able to respond to the needs of our community swiftly.

*Image: 2019 Pygmy Perch 360 tour in Corowa,
- Dirk Wallace.*



THE COVID-ERA AND NEW MODES OF DIGITAL DELIVERY

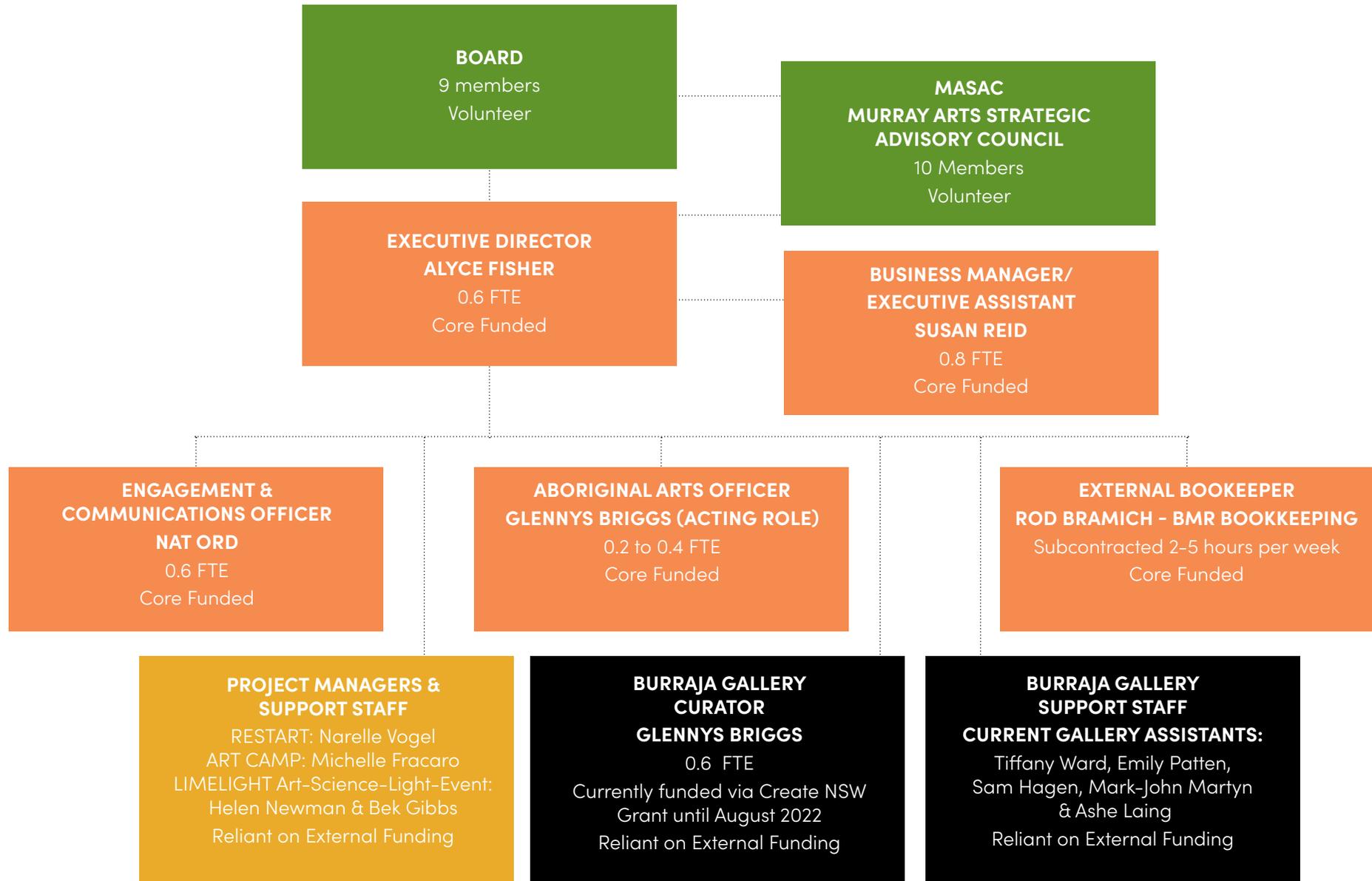
The COVID-era has changed the way we work and deliver our services. In some ways it has brought us together and affirmed new connections, such as being able to hold meetings via ZOOM and online platforms, reducing the need to travel, and honouring how awesome it is when do have face to face events/workshops/meetings. As challenging as it has been and continues to be, it has forced us to review how we deliver services, encouraged us to work smarter, be incredibly flexible, and to always have plans B, C, D, E & F up our sleeves.

Image: Smart Arts ZOOM Play Reading of 'Play #4' by Brendan Hogan, Directed by Alyson Evans and starring Rachel McNarama, Chris Pidd, Kerryn Beatty and Timothy Martin - June 2020.



MURRAY ARTS GOVERNANCE STAFF STRUCTURE

(as of November 2021)



THE MURRAY ARTS TEAM

(as of November 2021)

Alyce Fisher

Executive Director
0.6 FTE

Susan Reid

Business Manager &
Executive Assistant
0.8 FTE

Nat Ord

Engagement &
Communications Officer
0.6 FTE

Glennys Briggs

Taungwurrung, Yorta Yorta & Wiradjuri
Curator Burraja Gallery 0.6 FTE &
Aboriginal Arts Officer 0.2 FTE

Rod Bramich

Sub-contracted bookkeeper
2-5 hours per week

Contracted consultants and Project
Management staff as required to
fulfill specific roles.

Image: Murray Arts Team Photo, Hyphen Wodonga, September 2021.



GOVERNANCE

The Board: In 2018 Murray Arts shifted from a representative to a nine member skills-based board structure and adopted a new constitution at the AGM on 26 April 2018. This move was due to a report and subsequent recommendations from Create NSW for the whole NSW Regional Arts Development Organisation network.

The Murray Arts Board (as of November 2021)

Chair: Richard Hull

Deputy Chair: Diane Shephard

Treasurer: David Thurley

Public Officer: Alyce Fisher

Members: Michael Moran, Rachael Gadd, Donna Caffrey, David Gordon, Position vacant for MASAC member.



Murray Arts Strategic Advisory Council (MASAC):

In response to the recommendations from Create NSW, in 2018 Murray Arts launch the Murray Arts Strategic Advisory Council or MASAC, which is made up of up to 10 representatives from across our footprint that help feed into our strategic direction and planning. Three spaces on the Murray Arts Board are reserved for MASAC members.

MASAC members: (as of November 2021)

Cr David Thurley - representative from AlburyCity

Cr Diane Shephard - representative from Indigo Shire Council

Cr Jenny O'Neill - representative from Greater Hume Council

Karen Walls-Smythe - representative from City of Wodonga

Barbara Pritchard - community representative from Towong Council

Position Vacant for Federation Council representative

Dr Trehna Hamm - Yorta Yorta & Wiradjuri woman, member of Burraja Gallery & Aboriginal Artist Network

Erin Davis Hartwig - Old Stone Hall , Beechworth

Two further positions vacant for community members

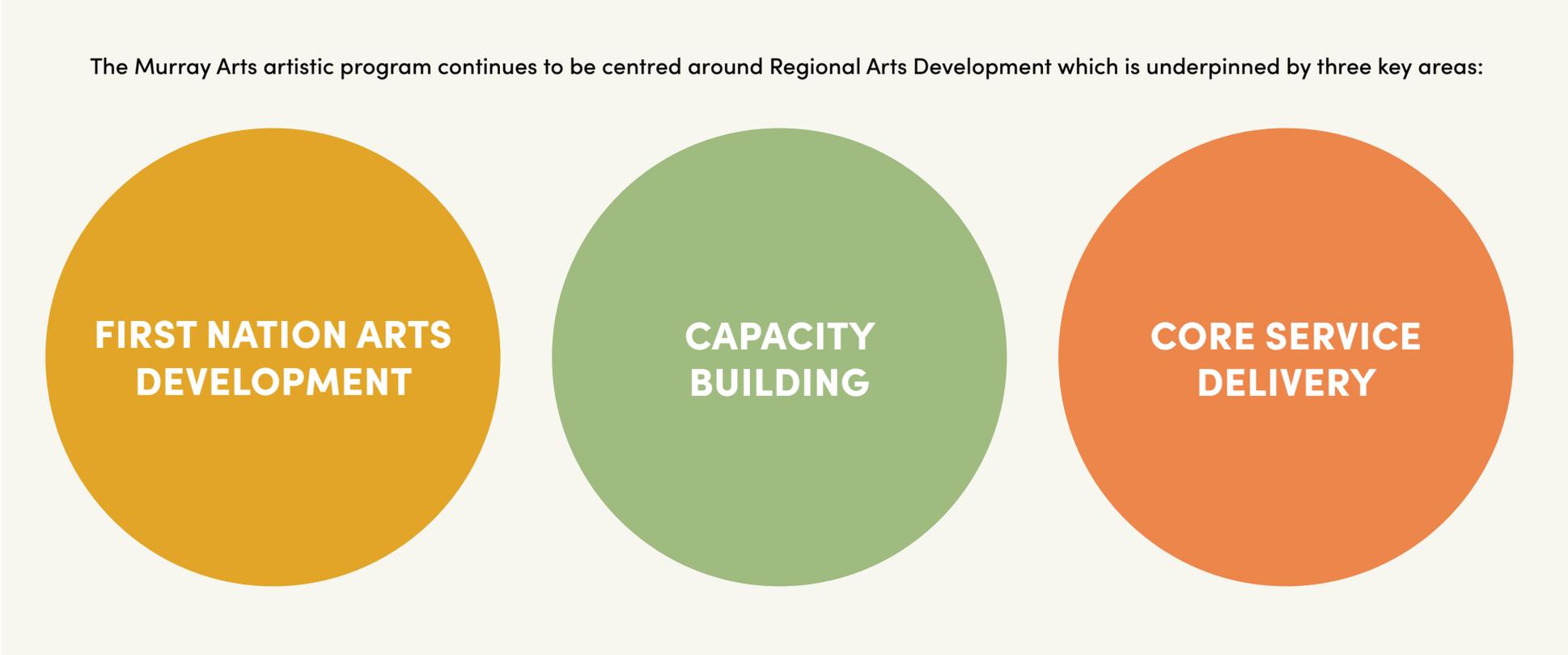
Image: Murray Arts Board Members: Richard Hull (Chair), Diane Shephard (Deputy Chair), David Gordon, Tahni Froudust (Outgoing Chair), David Thurley (Treasurer), Rachael Gadd, Donna Caffrey and Michael Moran. AGM May 2021.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In recent years Murray Arts has delivered a vast volume of extra projects and programs, resulting in increased expectations from our stakeholders and creative community. As a small organisation with limited capacity, our resources were stretched beyond what is sustainable. Moving forward, Murray Arts will be stepping back

from project delivery unless the project is clearly aligned with our aims, objectives, and allows for adequate support staff to be engaged to deliver and manage these projects. Over the coming four years, we aim to find a balance between the expectations of our stakeholders and what is a realistic workload for a sustainable organisation.

The Murray Arts artistic program continues to be centred around Regional Arts Development which is underpinned by three key areas:



**FIRST NATION ARTS
DEVELOPMENT**

**CAPACITY
BUILDING**

**CORE SERVICE
DELIVERY**

FOCUS AREA: FIRST NATION ARTS DEVELOPMENT

A major focus for Murray Arts is First Nation Arts Development; we have an established Aboriginal Artist Network (AAN) which supports artists in each stage of their artistic journey, from emerging to established, as well as forging connections through art to our greater community. Murray Arts is humbled to have gained the reputation as the go to organisation for all enquires relating to local Aboriginal Arts Development.

Key areas of focus for First Nation Arts Development are:

Advice & Advocacy maintain high levels of support to the established Local Aboriginal Artist Network. Advocate for all artists to be paid appropriately. Encourage respectful acknowledgments of artist's work. Assist and advise artists with their business needs such as insurance, invoicing, and contract development/negotiation.

Respond to enquiries which fall under the First Nations Arts Development area, this can include sourcing artists, connecting organisations with Elders for Welcomes to Country, helping to develop Expressions of Interest, project management and general advice.



Image: Dr. Treadhna Hamm (Yorta Yorta) delivering a Kinder Kulture workshop in 2017.

Kinder Kulture @ Home is our highly sought-after program that sees local First Nation artists delivering workshops to local pre-schools and early learning centres. Started in 2015, the program aims to share stories about First Nation culture in various creative, fun and interactive ways. The workshops are developed to give children a better understanding of First Nation culture and to educate and celebrate Aboriginal Arts and Culture. During the COVID era we have adapted this program to include a free Kinder Kulture @ Home series which is available on the Murray Arts YouTube Channel. Inursion workshops are delivered using a user pay model.



Image: Burraja Gallery Pop-Up, Crm Olive & Swift streets, Albury, NSW 2021.

Burraja Gallery was established as the only dedicated local First Nations Art gallery in the border region. We advocate for all First Nation artists who live, work or connect locally, and provide an opportunity for dialogue and connection between the wider community and our First Nation community.

Burraja Gallery was first established in 2016, as Murray Arts identified that there was no consistent or dedicated space within our footprint that was showcasing and supporting local First Nation visual artists. The gallery was originally situated in the shopfront of the former Murray Arts Office at Gateway Village. In 2018, funding from the Create NSW Creative Koori program, meant we were able to welcome inaugural Burraja Gallery curator Bethany Thornber (Wiradjuri) to the team and

an annual exhibition program was established (note the Burraja Gallery Curator position is still reliant on external funding).

In 2021, Murray Arts opened the Burraja Gallery pop-up in central Albury for 12 months, funded in part by the Create NSW Arts Restart stimulus. The high-profile location attracted new audiences in the wider community and has achieved a higher level of sales for the participating artists. Additional income has been generated with venue hire, workshops, and exhibitions. The CBD location is unable to continue due to the significant cost of rent and management, which is not able to be covered without considerable donations or funding, and opportunities are being investigated for the next evolution of Burraja Gallery.

Where to next for Burraja Gallery...

In May 2021, Murray Arts engaged a consultant to identify the steps needed to build a business model for the gallery. This scoping project aimed to build a picture of the Burraja Gallery journey from different perspectives and involved individual conversations with team members, artists and individuals who had a deep knowledge of Burraja Gallery. The resulting report *Developing a Sustainable Business Model for Burraja Gallery* summarises and synthesises comments and ideas gathered via nine individual conversations focused on Burraja Gallery, and presents a proposed road map of implementation. A follow up meeting was held for the wider community of artists and others in October 2021, and planning for the future of the gallery is ongoing.



‘Thanks burraja gallery for supporting local artists’

Tamara Murray
(Yorta Yorta, Barkindji)
Local Aboriginal Artist
2-9-21

*Image: Tamara Murray (Barkindji,
Yorta Yorta) UNLOCKED recipient 2020.*

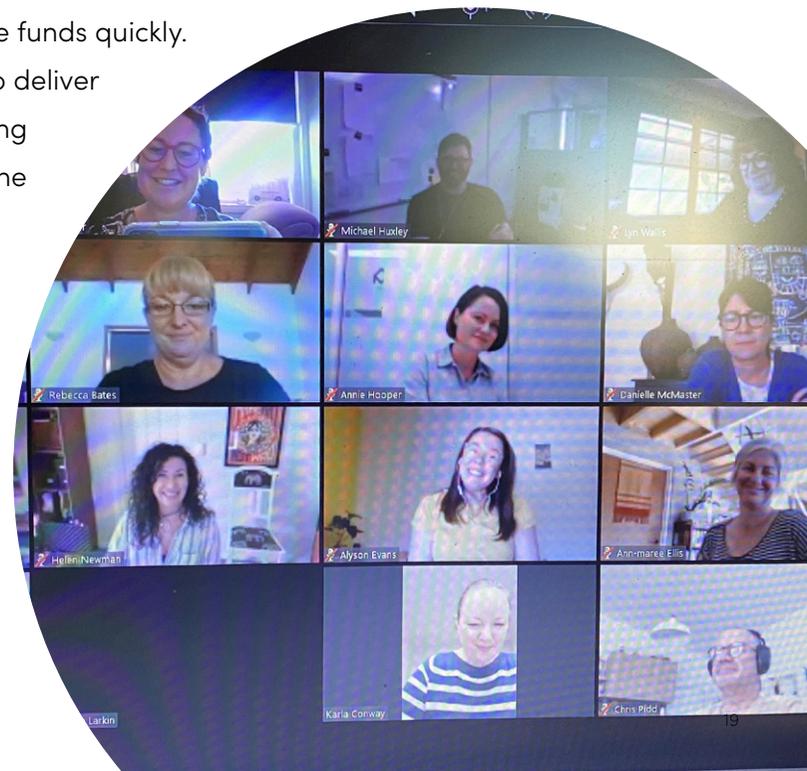
FOCUS AREA: CAPACITY BUILDING

Murray Arts provides the Creative Industry community with prospects to strengthen skills and enhance abilities by offering a diverse program of professional development opportunities. Our main focus areas for Capacity Building are:

Cultural Round Table Network was formed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic having an immediate and disastrous impact on the entire arts sector. The group was brought together by Murray Arts and others to help connect creatives in the local area during an uncertain time. The Cultural Roundtable includes individuals, representatives from local and state government, galleries, venues and collectives from across all genres. The Cultural Round Table Network meets fortnightly or monthly (depending on need) via ZOOM and is essentially a safe and supportive space to share information, vent, ask for help, network and collaborate. So many amazing initiatives, collaborations and partnerships were achieved thanks to The Cultural Round Table, including the UNLOCKED micro funding program and Galah Bar on Air. Murray Arts is perfectly placed to continue its leadership of the creative community, supporting the adaptation to new ways of working and participating in the arts. The positive impacts of the networks created from the Cultural Roundtable meetings was unprecedented and will continue to thrive with authentic engagement at a grass roots level.

UNLOCKED is a micro-funding program designed to acknowledge, support and encourage independent creative industry practitioners who live, work and connect with the Murray Arts footprint during the COVID-era. UNLOCKED has been an outstanding success and a demonstration of the important role of RADOs and their impact on the communities and creative people they serve. The program was an initiative of the Cultural Round Table Network, funded by donations from other local organisations and from Murray Arts income that was redirected to our community from COVID related stimulus. The model is effective as it does not require onerous reporting or application details and Murray Arts is able to deliver the funds quickly. We intend to continue to deliver UNLOCKED micro funding rounds when we have the funds to do so.

Image: The Inaugural Cultural Round Table ZOOM meeting March 2020.



GreenHouse National Artist Residency is an initiative of HotHouse Theatre and is open to performing artists from across Australia. The residential program invites creative risk takers to experiment, explore innovative interdisciplinary collaborations and strengthen the creative capacity of artists to develop exceptional new Australian stories for the stage. Each residency includes a requirement of the artist to deliver a community workshop or engagement offering, and Murray Arts in partnership with HotHouse Theatre and AlburyCity deliver the workshop program. Murray Arts will continue to contribute financially to the GreenHouse National Artist Residency annually (formerly known as the A Month in the Country program).

SMART ARTS is an annual professional development program delivered in conjunction with Wodonga Council for creatives and the greater community. Each year we develop a series of professional development workshops to meet the unique needs of our creative community. This program is funded by Wodonga Council on top of their annual contribution to the Murray Arts program.

School Drama™ A revolutionary partnership between Sydney Theatre Company, Murray Arts and HotHouse Theatre has seen the School Drama™ Classic Program delivered to teachers in our footprint, right in the heart of their classrooms since 2015. School Drama™ is a professional

learning program with a difference for Primary School Teachers focused on English & Literacy. Our local Teaching Artists embark on a unique co-mentoring partnership with a teacher, for seven weeks, in their classrooms, in person and or digitally. Murray Arts assist with the annual School Drama™ taster workshop for prospective teachers and or for those wanting a refresher, promoting the program via our networks and assisting our local teaching artist team as required.



Creatives Database: The Murray Arts stakeholders and community have identified that there is a need for statistics and data around just how many creatives we have within our footprint. We have been working on plans for an online database, which encompasses everyone who works within the Creative Industries in the Murray Arts footprint.

There have been so many operational factors to consider, including keeping the data current, fees for involvement, privacy and copyright and ensuring the database is helpful and easy to use. With all that in mind the digital infrastructure has been built, and the database will be integrated into our existing website and launched in early 2022. We know that the data we are able to gather will not only be helpful for us but also our local, state, and federal government partners, and every other arts organisation in our footprint. It will help us all to be able to guide our services and programs and will help to link up with new audiences.

Image: Social Media For Creatives workshop by OGA, part of the Smart Arts 2020 professional development series, March 2020.

**‘We need Murray
Arts more than
ever! Thanks for
what you do’**

Rachel McNamara
via Insta DM
23-03-20



*Image: School Drama Beechworth
Primary School, June 2017, artist
Rachel McNamara - image credit
Manifeasto Photography.*

FOCUS AREA: CORE BUSINESS

Murray Arts' key role in the community is to support creatives, groups, organisations, and local government to develop arts and culture in their communities. This role takes on many forms, including brainstorming out opportunities, auspicing funding and providing targeted support and guidance. In addition, Murray Arts offers expert advice to local, state, and federal government bodies, providing a valuable link between government and the community.

The following is what Murray Arts consider to be our core services that are fundamental to our strategic goals, underpinned by Regional Arts Development and the community we serve. These services take on many and varied forms including:

Communication is at the very core of what Murray Arts delivers. Our role is to stay abreast of, gather and disseminate local news, funding opportunities, professional development offerings, stories, jobs and events. We maintain and grow our extensive networks via:

- ▶ monthly newsletters and direct mail to the Murray Arts Newsletter subscriber base
- ▶ social media platforms

'We have had tremendous feedback about the warmth and ease of which Sandra and Nat bounce off each other, from Local councillors to our regular listeners'

From Gaye Pattison ABC GM
About our weekly Limelight segment
with Sandra Moon

- ▶ weekly ABC Goulburn Murray radio segment
- ▶ regular ZOOM networking events via The Cultural Round Table and the UNLOCKED Alumni.

With an extensive newsletter subscriber base as well as an active social media following, Murray Arts' communications is targeted, effective and well-respected.

Assistance and advice: We are called upon daily to aid with brainstorming out opportunities, identify funding sources, connect creatives with likeminded partners and generally ensure that our creative community is working collaboratively. The team's diverse backgrounds and years of experience equip us to respond to the various enquiries we receive promptly and effectively.

Strategic partnerships underpin everything we do; everything we deliver we do so in partnership with others. We are big believers in not reinventing the wheel and the sharing of resources. We collaborate and have relationships with:

- ▶ 6 local government partners.
- ▶ local First Nation organisations Mungabareena, Woomera, AWHS and Burraja Cultural Centre.
- ▶ creative institutions HotHouse Theatre, Flying Fruit Fly Circus, ABC Goulburn Murray, Murray Art Museum Albury (MAMA), Albury LibraryMuseum, The Cube and Hyphen Wodonga.
- ▶ external creative institutions South East Aboriginal Arts Market, Create NSW, Regional Arts NSW, Regional Arts Victoria, Sydney Theatre Company and the 13 other RADO's in the NSW network.
- ▶ non-creative organisations such as North East Water, GHD, DELWP, Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd and the North East CMA.
- ▶ early learning & preschools, primary & secondary schools, Wodonga & Albury TAFE and Latrobe and Charles Sturt universities.
- ▶ creative private businesses and community groups that help to form our greater cultural community.

Image: Curator Bethany Thorber (Wiradjuri), burraja gallery stall - South East Aboriginal Arts Market, Carraige Works, Sydney 2019.



Auspicing of wages and grant funds is an area of growth for Murray Arts. We have a long-standing partnership with GIGs Wodonga who has one paid staff member, and we manage their fortnightly payroll. We have also engaged project staff for collaborations with AlburyCity and again were able to nimbly integrate them into our payroll (something that can be a challenge for local government especially when it comes to short term projects). Grant opportunities are often open to individuals and un-incorporated groups but require an auspicing body. We have a concise Auspicing policy, set of guidelines and standard contract which outlines each parties' roles and responsibilities. Auspicing is also an income earner for Murray Arts as we charge 5% to 10% fee of the total grant monies, dependent on the expected workload of the auspiced project.

Representation on funding panels, local, state and federal. Our team is frequently called upon to sit on assessment and selection panels for grants, exhibitions and competitions across the region and nationally.

Administering funding rounds, including the Country Arts Support Program (CASP) & UNLOCKED. Murray Arts is not a funding body, but we do administrate two funding rounds. CASP was previously delivered by Regional Arts NSW in partnership with Create NSW and the greater NSW RADO network and is presently shifting to a model which will see each of the 14 RADOs establish their regions guidelines, assessment process and take a greater role in the administration/delivery of the program. The UNLOCKED micro funding program is managed entirely by Murray Arts.

Professional development and advocacy, is a major focus, as outlined in Capacity Building. We work with our creative community to identify and deliver targeted professional development opportunities. Many of these workshops are delivered free of charge, subsidised with external funding. Advocacy includes advice on appropriate rates of pay for artists, project management guidance, and raising awareness of the challenges faced by those in the creative industries in our region, and the economic and cultural contributions they bring.

Grant writing support, if we had a dollar for every time we were approached by individuals, groups and organisations looking for money, we would have a very nice little income stream. So much of what we do is helping others brainstorm out opportunities.

Murray Arts staff share their expertise and offer pragmatic support for attracting funding. A lot of the time we are able to link enquiries up with alternate models to traditional funding, to make their ideas a reality. We read over applications, help to formulate clear budgets, draft up letters of support and assist with managing deadlines.

Organisational Reporting. The level of reporting and administration required of Murray Arts as a medium Not-For-Profit Incorporated association is immense and this workload continues to increase every year. Ensuring that we are meeting the governance and legal requirements of our organisation is a big job and one that is often unseen.

The ongoing need to meet these essential reporting deadlines, Murray Arts intends to step back from delivering major projects and focus on the core business of Regional Arts Development.



‘You and the Murray Arts team do such brilliant work for the creative community. Honestly, it’s incredibly impressive’

Annie Hooper
Cultural Projects Coordinator
Wodonga council 03-04-20

CONCISE KPI'S

GOAL	MEASUREMENT	TARGET 2022	TARGET 2023	TARGET 2024
PRIORITY AREA - SERVICES: GREAT ARTS AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES ARE AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE				
Mandatory funding program goal: maintain strategies for growing and engaging new and diverse audiences	Number of attendees / participants / users that access the services of the RADO	2,500	2000	2000
	Number of programs and projects that target these priority areas:			
	No.of projects targeting regional NSW	50	50	50
	No. of projects targeting CaLD	10	10	10
	No. of projects targeting W. Syd	0	0	0
	No. of projects targeting ATSI	20	20	20
	No of projects targeting young people	20	20	20
	No. of projects targeting people with disability	20	20	20
	Number of attendees / participants / users at programs and projects that target these priority areas:			
	No. of people targeted from regional NSW	1,500	1,500	1,500
	No. of people targeted from CaLD	300	300	300
	No. of people targeted from W. Syd	0	0	0
	No. of projects targeting ATSI	1,000	1,000	1,000
	No of projects targeting young people	600	600	600
No. of projects targeting people with disability	300			
Council support: Support councils to work across a variety of responsibilities, assisting them in areas including tourism, economic development, cultural planning and cultural infrastructure	Number of council projects or developments supported by attending meetings or planning committees, contributing funds, contributing staff time, providing advice.	200	200	200
Professional development: Deliver professional development opportunities	Number of RADO initiated professional development programs delivered	20	20	20
	Number of attendances at RADO-initiated Professional Development programs	200	200	200

GOAL	MEASUREMENT	TARGET 2022	TARGET 2023	TARGET 2024
PRIORITY AREA - REACH: NSW ARTS ORGANISATIONS ARE CONSIDERED VITAL SECTOR LEADERS				
Mandatory funding program goal: be recognised as a leader within the arts and cultural sector	Number of programs/events/activities (services delivered - EXCLUDES professional development programs)	10	10	10
	Number of programs delivered digitally	4	4	4
	Number of programs delivered face to face	6	6	6
	% of attendees/participants/users reporting satisfaction with the services provided	70%	70%	70%
PRIORITY AREA - REACH: NSW ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS ADOPT BEST PRACTICE IN GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY				
Mandatory funding program goal: Demonstrate good governance and financial management	% of reserves	20%	20%	20%
	No. of board members representing ATSI, CaLD, Disability or Young People	minimum of 2	minimum of 2	minimum of 2
Mandatory funding program goal: demonstrate capacity to engage in strategic partnerships and secure revenue from diverse sustainable sources	% turnover non-federal, state or local government	15%	15%	15%
PRIORITY AREA: PARTNERSHIPS (AS ABOVE: NSW ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS ADOPT BEST PRACTICE IN GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY)				
Develop partnerships with other organisations, businesses and government departments to develop arts and cultural activity in the region	Number of attendees / participants / users at programs and projects that target these priority areas:			
	Organisations	4	4	4
	Business	1	1	1
	Government (other than Create NSW)	3	3	3
	Financial value of partnerships (indicate cash or in-kind) from:			
	Organisations	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
	Business	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
	Government (other than Create NSW)	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POSITION

INTERNAL CONTEXT

STAFFING

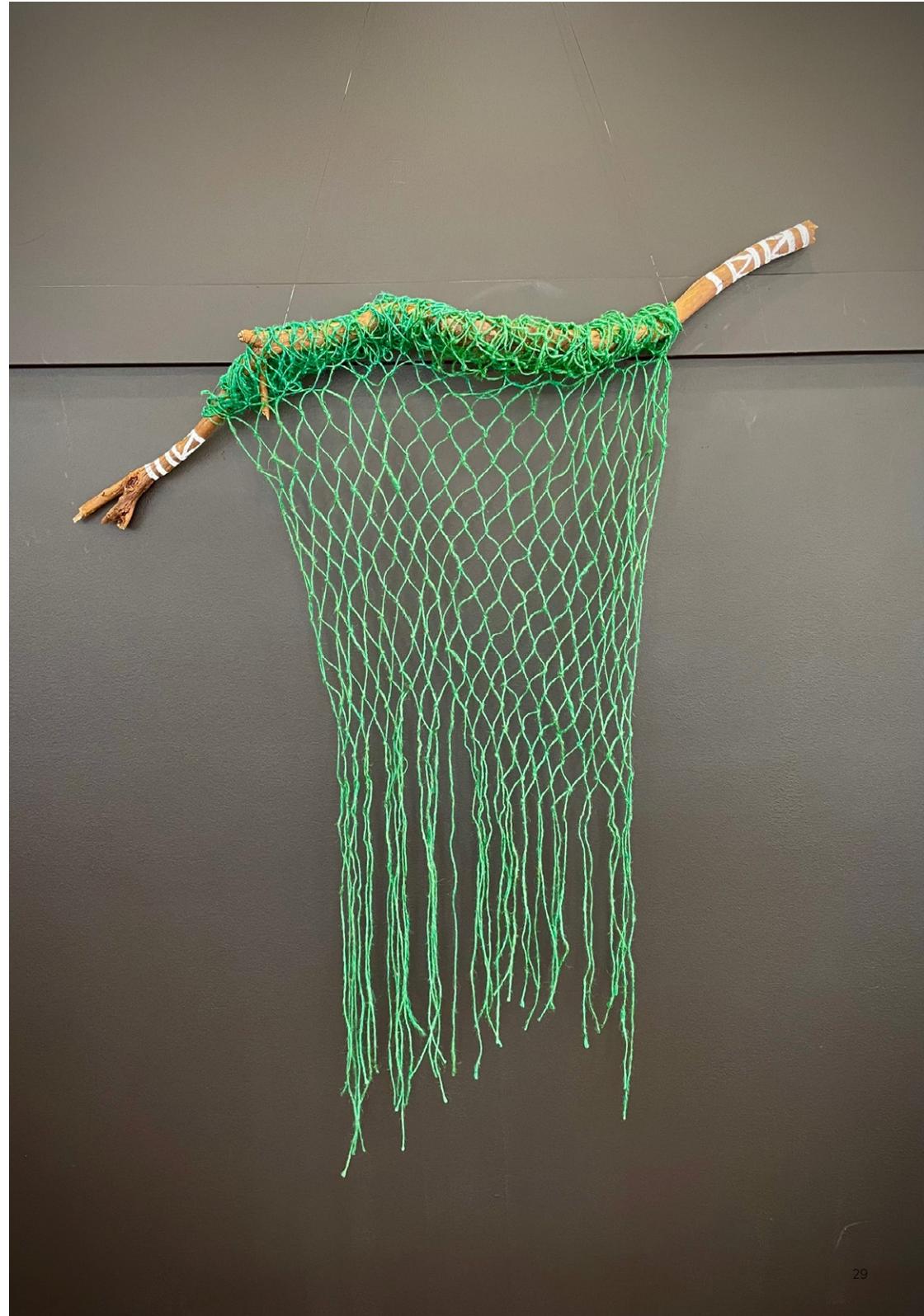
Since the development of the last strategic plan (2016–2018) Murray Arts has experienced a 100% turn-over of staff.

Despite this, the organisation enjoys a strong profile and relationship with its stakeholders, primarily driven by skilled and well-respected staff who have worked hard to establish relationships within the creative community. The current FTE of 2.8 staff is a 0.2 increase from previous years, the slight increase has been made possible due to letting go our physical office space and shifting to a COVID-era working from home model.

Murray Arts has been operating outside the capacity, of its core operational funding with regard to staffing levels. In October 2020, Executive Director Alyce Fisher took 12 months parental leave after the birth of her first child and Susan Reid stepped in as the interim Executive Director. The temporary changing of the guard reiterated the unmanageable workload expected of the Executive Director and prompted the organisation to look to alternate approaches to spreading the load and reducing output expectations.

The organisation is trialling a model with a part-time Executive Director and part-time Business Manager. The position of Aboriginal Arts Officer is funded via core-income, in alignment with Murray Art's ongoing commitment to First Nation arts development. The Burraja Gallery Curator position is reliant on external funding and presently this funding is secured until August 2022.

Image: BELOW: Burraja Gallery, Curator Glennys Briggs (Taungwurrung, Yorta Yorta and Wiradjuri) being interviewed by Prime7 News for the North East Water Aboriginal Art Prize 2021. LEFT: 'The One That Got Away' by Valda Murray (Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta, Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Coroporation TO) 2021.



EXTERNAL CONTEXT

FOOTPRINT

Situated along both sides of the Murray River and encompassing the twin cities of Albury and Wodonga, Murray Arts stretches its reach over 20,889 square kilometres - from Corryong to Chiltern in Victoria, through Holbrook to Mulwala in NSW. We service a population of approximately 140,719. Our footprint encompasses and borders the Indigenous nations of Dhuduroha, Yaithmathang, Banpgarang, Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta and Wavaroo. The region has a rich First Nations history and the artists in our community and the artworks they create today, are representative of a range of Nations and arts practices, due to the area being a resettlement community for many individuals and families.

The region boasts a strong professional arts and cultural practice and a high proportion of resident creatives. There is a strong performance culture thanks to the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, HotHouse Theatre and Projection Dance operating from this region, as well as an abundance of amateur performing arts societies and dance & drama schools for young people.

Image: Marcela Scheuner and Kelsey Shepherd, UNLOCKED recipients 2020.



Regular events, festivals and opportunities to engage in arts and culture include:

- ▶ The Man from Snowy River Festival in Corryong
- ▶ The Yackandandah Folk Festival
- ▶ Day on the Green at Wahgunyah
- ▶ Write Around the Murray hosted by AlburyCity
- ▶ Borderville hosted by the Flying Fruit Fly Circus

The COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings put a halt to many festivals and events in 2020 & 2021, however it is hoped many will return and continue to grow. The much-anticipated Upstream Festival, an initiative of the Albury-Wodonga 'Two Cities, One Community Policy' launched in March 2020, adapted to COVID-era programming for 2021 and then despite its original commitment to a 3-year minimum model, it dissolved thanks to the added pressures of the COVID-era. In comparison, some festivals, such as Write Around the Murray, adapted very well to a fully digital format to accommodate evolving COVID restraints.

The historical significance of the region has provided us with a large number of museums & collections, many of which are volunteer run. Our region hosts three cinemas, Regent Cinema in Albury, Upper Murray Pizza and Cinema in Corryong and Yara Golf Cinema in Mulwala and boasts a handful of independent filmmakers. An incredible number of creatives in the region identify as photographers and graphic designers, and help to form a very strong visual arts sector lead by the redevelopment of Albury Regional Art Gallery, now Murray Art Museum Albury (MAMA), and the recently launched Hyphen Wodonga, alongside a number of private and public galleries around the region. Music is championed by many local organisations, including Murray Conservatorium, Murray River Fine Music, MusiKids, Border Music Camp and Atomic Music who all provide access to musical tuition and live performance.

Infrastructure and professional arts organisations (including Murray Arts) are largely based around the regional centres of Albury Wodonga. Outside the major towns are many smaller communities who have little or no infrastructure and or limited arts activity in their towns. This disparity provides an interesting challenge for Murray Arts to deliver services to communities with highly varied needs, priorities and ensuring that those who live in our outlying villages, do not always have to come into Albury Wodonga to access high quality creative experiences.

An additional challenge to the organisation is the ongoing traversing of the border, which is also representative of the overall identity of the community. While the cross-border situation may be a strength in terms of infrastructure, it does have its challenges with two sets of priorities from key state funding bodies. These challenges have been perfectly demonstrated and exacerbated by the COVID-era and our region being cut in half thanks to debilitating Border closures.

Albury Wodonga's median age is 38 years old, which is extremely low for a regional centre. This is thanks to the high proportion of young families, our location on a major highway between Sydney and Melbourne, public transport links, the diverse opportunities for employment, our region not being reliant on agriculture and the main industries being healthcare and social assistance, manufacturing, construction, retail trade, accommodation and food services, public administration, education, and training.



This also equates to a population who are well educated, cultured, hungry for activities, experiences and in general things to do, with family friendly programming being a major focus. Murray Arts aims to ensure that the region's main presenters find a balance between bringing in touring external artists and supporting our local professional creatives to be programmed into their annual offerings.

The instability and reliance on the funding sector remains a threat that we are all too used to navigating. The devastating 2019-2020 bushfires and the COVID-era, has hit the creative industries in an unprecedented way, but has also brought with it many new opportunities for different styles of stimulus and funding. We are

Image: Vanessa Keenan, UNLOCKED recipient 2020.

aware that in a few years time, we will likely be in a challenging financial position when the bushfire funds and COVID cash, dries up and we are all left to traverse what a post pandemic world will look like for the creative industries.

Organisations such as Murray Arts have had to pivot quickly in order to best serve their communities in meaningful ways and also really looking at ways to diversify income opportunities for all. The enormously successful and ever evolving UNLOCKED micro-grant program, is an example of the out of the box thinking that is required during such times. The ongoing challenge for Murray Arts, as for most creative organisations is how to manage stagnate funding with increased expectations from community and stakeholders?

It is worth noting that since the last strategic plan there has been numerous elections across all levels of government. The current incumbents, as of November 2021, include:

- ▶ Sussan Ley (Liberal) Member for Farrer (Federal)
- ▶ Justin Clancy (Liberal), Member for Albury (State)
- ▶ Helen Haines (Independent), Member for Indi (Federal)
- ▶ Bill Tilley (Liberal), Member for Benambra (State)

SWOT

STRENGTHS

Reputation
Aboriginal Arts Development
Opportunity to access 2 x state funding
Local government funding
Burraja Gallery
880 subscribers to our newsletter

WEAKNESSES

Aboriginal Arts Officer funding
Organisation is beyond capacity
Lack of understanding of Murray Arts role
Limited revenue opportunities
Engaging young people in strategic planning
FTE – 2.6 potentially reducing to 2.0

OPPORTUNITIES

Memberships
Regional Arts Victoria re-engagement
Creative Victoria annual funding
Gateway Master plan – Burraja Gallery
Getting involved in strategic planning processes with Councils e.g. Albury 2050
Do less for and enable more
Monetizing
Volunteer program

THREATS

Burraja Gallery funding including Curator's role
Staff Turnover
Burnout
Political environment
Local government elections (2020)
Victorian Local Government Act changes
– participatory budgeting and more transparency/accountability

MARKET

We are passionate about communicating the fantastic work of the diverse creatives who call our region home and our own role in supporting that work. As the local Regional Arts Development Organisation, so much of what we achieve goes unseen and we acknowledge that we also need to share success stories, which will help enhance our programs and increase our reach.

MARKET SEGMENT	OUR MESSAGE TO THEM
Creatives/artists/enablers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are here We value the role you play We will support you playing that role We value the contribution you make Be our advocates to mutual advantage We encourage you to be proactive We're the assistance not the solution
Local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are here We are making the community a better place We use arts and culture to deliver value to you You can participate Let's work together We are you're one stop shop for all enquires to do with local Regional Arts Development
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are here We're excellent value for money & provide superb ROI Arts & Culture are essential for healthy communities We are more than just the arts. We progress health, community, and education outcomes Use our expertise to further your goals and portfolios We are innovative and proactive We are stable and experienced We know how to connect with communities We are nimble and excellent at problem solving
Strategic Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are here We have expertise which can help you We are collaborators We enhance your reach We share your values We are connectors

MARKET	SEGMENT	HOW WE HELP THEM
Local Community	Arts audiences Participants Interested consumers Young people Families Seniors	Participation in arts and cultural activities across the region. Connection with the work of artists in their local area. New experiences. Introducing new ways to engage with each other.
Artists / Creative Industry Practitioners	Professional artists of all genres First Nations artists and craftspeople Emerging artists Business owners Hobbyists Visiting artists	Professional Development Capacity building Sharing of information / promotion of work and events Employment opportunities Advice - varied Networking opportunities Grant and funding assistance Referrals / brokering advice
Other Arts Organisations	Festivals HotHouse and Flying Fruit Fly Circus Galleries Museums Libraries Community Organisations	Regional Networking Sharing of resources Collaborative opportunities Joint marketing / cross marketing
Government	Local State (NSW and Vic) Federal	Regional connections / contacts Service delivery Funding leverage Arts Program delivery Cultural Policy and planning Shared resources

COMPETITORS

WHO	FOR WHAT	OUR POINT OF DIFFERENCE
Other small to medium arts organisations.	Competing for funding donations, support and audience.	<p>We are the only organisation, locally who works across all of the Creative Industries.</p> <p>Excellent track record of delivery.</p> <p>Specific regionality.</p> <p>The ability to communicate using our established channels to a broad section of the market.</p>
Other Local Government funded groups/organisations.	Funding, need and relevance	<p>We are small, nimble and do not have political affiliations.</p> <p>We are not confined by LGA borders.</p> <p>We have specific goals and aims, which aid council staff and plans.</p> <p>We impact on liveability.</p>
Sports and other community-based organisations.	Competing on a local level for funding, donations, media coverage and support.	<p>We are experts in arts.</p> <p>We are flexible and can adapt to new audiences.</p> <p>The arts can offer whole of life participation options and be inclusive to all.</p> <p>We have lasting impact.</p> <p>We complement other community groups.</p> <p>We provide balance.</p>

OPERATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT MATRIX 2022

RISK AREA	RISK	CONSEQUENCE	EXISTING CONTROL	LIKELIHOOD	CONSEQUENCE	RISK LEVEL	MITIGATION	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Human	Work related car accident	Staff death/injured Render vehicle unusable	Fully maintained lease vehicle kept in good working order. Workers compensation. Driver Safety Policy exists within WH&S policy.	2	4	8	Existing controls adequate.	Executive Director
Human	High staff turnover	Costs of recruitment. Negative public perception. Loss of productivity.	Performance reviews. Budget for pay increases. Professional development opportunities. Annual Planning session.	2	2	4	Existing controls adequate.	Executive Director & Board
Human	Staff sickness/inability to perform duties.	Funding programs missed. General business not completed.	Regular Staff meetings/debriefs. Deadlines and workplans shared. Extensions requested when required	2	3	6	Existing controls adequate.	All Staff

CONT. →

Human	Event or exhibition is identified as a high risk of spreading COVID.	Shut down. Staff and customers at risk of contracting COVID.	Comply with State Government guidelines and recommendations for COVID Safe operation. Staff are equipped to work from home.	3	4	12	Continue to comply with Government guidelines and safety recommendations.	All Staff and Board
Human	Cultural insensitivity towards staff, stakeholders, projects & outcomes.	Audience feeling unwelcome or excluded. Stakeholders offended. Staff feel offended, threatened and unsafe.	All staff are supported with all matters to do with cultural sensitivity. Staff supported to ask people to leave or call the police.	3	3	9	Ongoing patience and support for staff. Avoid situations where staff are working alone. Acknowledge the heightened impact for our team who identify as Aboriginal.	All Staff and Board
Financial	Withdrawal of funding from major council.	Operations would be severely compromised.	Agreements in place with Albury/COW Annual reporting Regular meetings with staff Consultation to ensure key stakeholder input into Murray Arts plans	2	3	6	MOUs to be developed with Indigo Shire, Towong Shire, Federation Council and Greater Hume Council.	Executive Director & Board

CONT. →

Financial	Theft/property damage	Loss of IT equipment. Loss of artwork, stock and or fittings in Burrinja Gallery	Insurance maintained. Keep up to date Burrinja Gallery stock inventory. Ensure assets and items that are used off-site are documented. Working from Home agreements are accurate and updated.	2	2	4	Review Insurance policies annually. Renew and update asset register and Working from Home agreements.	All staff & Board
Technology	System Crash/IT Data loss	Murray Arts files lost	Murray Arts Uses a cloud-based data sharing services Office 365 & Xero and has an external hard drive back-up which is kept off-site.	1	1	2	External hard-drive to be maintained and stored by Straight Up IT	Executive Director
Technology	IT related Cyber Threats. Hacking of Website, social media channels and or emails.	Fraud is committed against Murray Arts. Emails are hacked and correspondence with stakeholders forged. The Website is tampered with or taken down.	Passwords updated quarterly. Maintain malware software on all devices. Company passwords excel spreadsheet is password encrypted. All EFT payments require two Signatories.	3	3	9	Existing controls adequate	Executive Director with support from external IT services
Financial	Change in Government-withdrawal of funding.	Operations would cease	Triennial funding agreement with Create NSW. All reporting completed on time	2	5	7	Existing controls adequate	Executive Director

CONT. →

Legal	Murray Arts sued over Auspiced project	Significant financial implications	Auspice policy Agreement template and guidelines	2	4	6	Ensure signed agreement for all Auspiced projects	Executive Director
Reputational	Bad coverage in Media	Reputational Damage	Maintain positive media relations	3	3	6	Keep up with the shifts in local media	Comm-unications Officer
Reputational	Social Media hacking and or trolling	Image being affected. Time taken to administrate, delete and filter social media feeds	All staff have access to all social media accounts and monitor replies, messages, comments & tags as a team.	3	3	6	Staff need to stay abreast of shifts in social media and conduct safe social media practices	All staff
Management	Quorum not met for Board meetings	Decisions not getting made. Not meeting governance requirements	Set dates for meetings at AGM	2	3	5	Existing controls adequate	Chairperson Executive Director

		CONSEQUENCE				
		INSIGNIFICANT 1	MINOR 2	MODERATE 3	MAJOR 4	CATASTROPHIC 5
LIKELIHOOD	SCORE OUT OF 5 FOR EACH SECTION MULTIPLY SCORES FOR RATING	No impact	Less impact to staff or organisation. No long term disruption.	Some disruption to operations or impact on staff	Major reduction in ability for org to deliver services	Death or injury. Org closes.
	ALMOST CERTAIN 5	5	10	15	20	25
	LIKELY 4	4	8	12	16	20
	POSSIBLE 3	3	6	9	12	15
	UNLIKELY 2	2	4	6	8	10
	RARE 1	1	2	3	4	5

CHALLENGES AND RISKS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS AND LEVELS OF SERVICE

With a sizable footprint, six local government areas and cross border conditions, Murray Arts encounters a number of challenges when delivering core business. The biggest is perhaps the need for balance between the LGAs and ensuring that the smaller areas receive the same level of service as the larger ones. It is important to note that some of these smaller regions do not have any council staff representing arts and culture and as such Murray Arts is the only arts representation within the community.

THE BIG QUESTIONS

WHAT DOES ART & CULTURE LOOK LIKE IN 2025 – 2030?

The answer to this question would have been vastly different if it was asked at the start of 2020. COVID-19 has had a profound impact on the creative industries, prompting permanent changes to the way art is created and delivered to audiences.

What we know is that the industry is:

- ▶ **FLEXIBLE.** Many have 'pivoted' quickly to online programming, up-skilling staff and purchasing specialised equipment to create a new service offering.
- ▶ **RESILIENT.** Despite over 75% of the industry having lost their jobs due to the casual and contract nature of the industry many practitioners are still creating, applying for funding and up-skilling through the multitude of online courses.
- ▶ **RESPONSIVE** (but not reactionary). The industry has been quick to 'fill in the gaps' with content, training opportunities and funding programs. This was initially in response to the pandemic crisis, but we have seen this settle as a thorough and ongoing response to what continues to unfold for our communities.

SUSTAINABILITY

- ▶ Despite having healthy financial reserves, it must be noted that Murray Arts has not received adequate increases in funding to match CPI or other increases in recent years.
- ▶ Staffing remains a challenge. After a period of stability, the organisation underwent a high staff turnover. This included positive changes such as the development of the curatorial position for Burraja Gallery, made possible through grant funding from Create NSW and it also includes the reality of majority of staff losses being to local government, education and other local arts organisations who are able to pay higher salaries and or offer more hours.
- ▶ Additional challenges related to the small size of the team, the volume of services and projects our organisation delivers, and expectations from within the community and across the six LGAs that the organisation serves remain.

FINANCIALS

Murray Arts is a service organisation that receives our core income from Create NSW in partnership with the 6 LGAs which form our footprint. This core income brings with it agreements and expectations to deliver majority of our services free of charge, for our greater creative community and stakeholders, resulting in limited opportunities for earned income.

The pressure to secure further external funding in order to deliver extra services and or projects is high. It means that staff time can easily be consumed by writing, delivering and acquitting grants from numerous sources. It is the aim of the organisation to focus on the delivery of the core service of Regional Arts Development as outlined in this Strategic Plan and be less reliant on sourcing extra external funds. In recent years we have seen a big increase in the number of groups, organisations and individuals who have required our auspicing services. Auspicing is the one service for which we have always charged a fee, 5 – 10% of the total grant money. We forecast that auspicing services will continue to be in demand in the coming years and it will be a small but growing source of external income.

We have seen a shift in the community's willingness to pay for workshops and experiences, for example, the popular Connect + Weave workshops have been delivered on a purely user pay agreement, as has the Kinder Kulture incursion program. A small annual fee will be charged to be part of the planned Creatives Database. When approached to manage extra projects/events, we will need to charge project management fees. Finding the balance between what services are delivered free of charge and what services will incur fees is our mission over the coming 4 years, helping to diversify our income and increase awareness of the value of the service we deliver.

The NSW RADO network received a 20% increase in core funds, from Create NSW in 2020, which was the networks first increase since 2013, this was quickly absorbed into operational budgets. Moving forward Create NSW has committed another 20% increase in core-funds to align with this strategic plan, bringing their annual core-funding to \$200,000 for each RADO in the NSW network. This increase will allow Murray Arts breathing room, the ability to offer more competitive salaries and bring on support staff as required. In 2020 there was a shift in sources of income, and COVID-19 has had a massive impact on this. Despite the pandemic, Murray Arts remains in a strong financial position, with a reserves ratio of 44%, well above the recommended 10-20%.

Image: Connect + Weave workshop, part of the Upstream Festival March 2020.





Image: Tallangatta Street Revitalisation project location scoping March 2020.

To demonstrate typical funding sources, in 2019 Murray Arts was funded in the following way:

- ▶ Core funding from Create NSW and Local Government partners – 62%
- ▶ Grant funds – 13%
- ▶ Auspiced funds – 3%
- ▶ Other income, which includes burraja gallery sales – 22%
- ▶ Our total revenue for 2019 was \$363,190

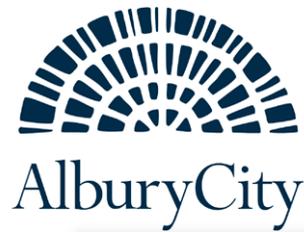
In comparison 2020 Murray Arts income was:

- ▶ Core funding from Create NSW and Local Government partners – 50%
- ▶ JobKeeper and COVID-19 Stimulus – 28%
- ▶ Grant funds – 6%
- ▶ Auspiced funds – 11%
- ▶ Other income, which includes, donations for UNLOCKED, workshop income, interest earned and burraja gallery sales – 5%
- ▶ Our total revenue for 2020 was \$456,389

FINANCIAL CORE FUNDING FORECAST 2022-2024

INCOME	2022	2023	2024
Create NSW	\$200,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$200,000.00
Local Government	\$89,516.80	\$91,100.92	\$92,722.92
Other Funding	\$43,950.24	\$17,000.00	\$17,000.00
Other Income	\$14,000.00	\$14,000.00	\$14,000.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$347,467.04	\$322,100.92	\$323,722.92
EXPENDITURE	2022	2023	2024
Administration	\$27,081.80	\$27,081.80	\$27,081.80
Governance	\$2,600.00	\$2,600.00	\$2,600.00
Marketing & Promotion	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
Staff Travel & Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$19,930.68	\$19,830.68	\$19,330.68
Communications	\$7,643.60	\$7,373.60	\$7,373.60
Wages, on costs and professional development, WFH	\$251,102.61	\$228,891.12	\$230,882.22
Artist fees & expenses related to projects & auspiced activities	\$32,000.00	\$29,000.00	\$29,000.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$346,858.69	\$321,277.20	\$322,768.30
NET PROFIT	\$608.23	\$823.72	\$954.62

CORE FUNDING



APPENDICES OF NOTE FOR THIS STRATEGIC PLAN INCLUDE:

- ▶ Murray Arts Strategic Planning Survey 2019
- ▶ Strategic Planning Workshop Summary by Vanessa Keenan 2019
- ▶ Border Northeast Cultural Round Table - Independent artist survey results – June 2020
- ▶ UNLOCKED 2020/21 reports and testimonials
- ▶ Murray Arts Annual Reports 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020
- ▶ Murray Arts Financial Audits 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020
- ▶ Burraja Gallery – Exploring a future business model (July 2021) – report by consultant Mary Anne Scully



MURRAY ARTS

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Image credits: Brendon Kennedy (Ngiyampaa) and Phil Murray (Yorta Yorta) burraja gallery 2019. ArtWork Residency 2021 - Manifeasto Photography. Erin Davis-Hartwig and Alston Lloyd, Old Ston Hall, UNLOCKED recipients 2020.