

2.3 MONASH ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGY 2025

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the draft Monash Arts and Culture Strategy 2025 for public exhibition during September 2022.

INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview on the development of the draft Monash Arts and Culture Strategy 2025 (the Strategy). The Strategy identifies a whole of City vision that supports growth, recovery and celebration of creative and cultural industries, organisations and individuals, to continue to sustain and inspire the Monash community. The Strategy provides a focus with clear actions to activate new and innovative projects that are evidence based, and support community and commercial enterprises to flourish.

BACKGROUND

The formation of the Monash Arts and Culture Strategy 2025 benefits Council by raising awareness of, and understanding in, creative practice and thinking. Understanding culture and connections to place will encourage officers to connect closer to community, and create a greater efficiency and impact with projects, programs and events.

The Strategy supports the development and recovery of Creative Industries. Creative Industries incorporate practitioners, artists, specialists, community organisations and businesses that deliver or contribute to creative and cultural sector within the City of Monash, including performers, screen producers, visual artists, publishers, game producers, architects, musicians, cultural educators, designers and more.

Creative industries are an evolving mix of sectors spanning arts and culture, screen and design. They cover disciplines as diverse as game development and graphic design, fashion and filmmaking, media and music, comedy and craft; and include activities that are both commercially driven and community-based, experimental and export-intense.¹

Creative and cultural sectors have been severely impacted by the pandemic with the cancellation of events, performances, creative practice and classes within public spaces. Issues arising from the pandemic for Victoria's creative industries include loss of jobs and pathways, industry and business

¹ Victorian Government, Live in Melbourne – Creative Industries.
<https://liveinmelbourne.vic.gov.au/connect/victorian-industries/creative-industries>

instability, loss of potential partners and sponsorship, disproportionate impacts for culturally and linguistically diverse people, women and young people, and loss of public confidence to attend events or connect in community. The Strategy supports a whole of Council focus for events, public and education programs delivery.

In June 2020, the Australia Council identified that within the Federal electorates of Hotham and Chisolm, there were 3250 businesses within the cultural and creative industries. In 2016 within the same electorates, 8,293 people were employed across creative industries. This accounts for 6% (Chisholm) and 4.9% (Hotham) of the workforce, compared to 4.2% of the national workforce.² It is acknowledged that half of all artists apply their creative skills outside of the art and culture sector, and that creative and critical thinking will lead the workforces of the future. We are also aware that a large number of volunteers contribute to the development, delivery and growth of the creative industries within the City.

In the 2021 Monash Health and Wellbeing survey, of the 375 survey respondents 81% reported that arts and culture in community life to improve mental health was very important. Within the 10 top health and wellbeing priorities selected by the 375 survey respondents, accessing the local library's programs and services was 42% and attending community activities, events and festivals was 42%.³ There is a clear need for the support and development of creative industries within the City.

To progress development of the draft Monash Arts and Culture Strategy 2025, Officers completed extensive research to gain a clear understanding on the needs of creative industries within the City of Monash. Development of the Strategy has included:

- Comprehensive internal and external consultation and engagement
- Documentation Review
- Cultural Mapping

DISCUSSION

The draft Monash Arts & Culture Strategy 2025 identifies a focus for Council to support the recovery of creative industries within the City. By listening to our community the following vision, pillars and priorities were identified:

Vision:

To be a City that celebrates and champions for creative industries. We will ensure that arts, culture and heritage continue to inspire, enrich, and

² Australia Council 2021, Hotham and Chisholm Federal Electorate Profile.
<https://australiacouncil.gov.au/advocacy-and-research/electorate-profiles/>

³ City of Monash 2021, Monash Health and Wellbeing Survey (unpublished).

connect our community by embracing what makes us truly unique. We will realise this through partnerships, facilitating opportunities and co-creating with community and industry partners.

Principles:

Celebrate Diversity

Be Inspiring

Be for Everyone

Reflect our Community

Build Connections

Pillars:**▪ CREATIVE PRACTITIONERS AND CAREERS**

Creating opportunities to present and participate in creative activity and build creative careers.

▪ INDUSTRY GROWTH AND RESILIENCE

Building resilient creative businesses and a thriving local creative ecosystem and economy.

▪ AUDIENCES AND MARKETS

Expanding our impact by increasing visibility, getting more people involved in creative activities and driving visitation.

▪ DIVERSITY AND WELLBEING

Leveraging creative activity to enhance community cohesion and wellbeing.

▪ CREATIVE SPACES AND PLACES

Creative utilisation of existing and new spaces to support local creatives and community access.

The Strategy identifies priorities to open opportunities for partnerships, research and data driven programming across Council.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Corporate policies relevant to the Arts and Culture Strategy include, and are not limited to the Gender Equity Framework, Safe Events Framework, Public Art Policy, Libraries Action Plan and Collections Policy, MGA Collections Policy and Strategic Plan, Playground and Playspace Strategy 2020, Council Halls procedures, and more.

The strategic objectives and actions as listed within the draft Arts and Culture Strategy will assist in evidence-based programming to be delivered within current operating budgets. Additional funding where required has been identified within the Strategy, and the Arts and Libraries team will focus on grants and sponsor opportunities to complete this work. This be subject to Council's budget process.

CONSULTATION

Community engagement for the development of the draft Strategy has included consultation via Shape Monash and through external stakeholder workshops and 1:1 Stakeholder Consultations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The strategic objectives and actions as listed within the draft Arts and Culture Strategy are aspirational and will assist in evidence-based programming. Much of the Strategy can be delivered within current operating budgets. Additional funding where required will be subject to Council's budget process or through external funding opportunities.

GENDER EQUITY ASSESSMENT

Because this Strategy is considered to have a direct and significant impact on the Monash community, a gender impact assessment has been undertaken as part of this work.

Recommendations from the assessment include:

1. That the Strategy continue to focus on representing a diverse range of cultures and experiences in the community.
2. Include within the Strategy the ongoing support of female emerging artists and representation of females in lead positions.
3. Continue to provide awareness of cultural diversity and how gender inequality may be compounded by disadvantage or discrimination.
4. Creative spaces should cater for all genders including accessible toilets and breastfeeding facilities.

These recommendations will be incorporated into the final Strategy document.

CONCLUSION

The Strategy provides direction for Council in the support, development and celebration of its creative and cultural industries, organisations and individuals, to continue to sustain and inspire the Monash community.

Officers seek support to present the draft Monash Arts and Culture Strategy 2025 for public exhibition in September to provide an opportunity for further review by and feedback from our community.

ATTACHMENT

Draft Monash Arts and Culture Strategy 2025 – Print Version