



Central  
Coast  
Council

CULTURAL  
2020  
2025  
PLAN



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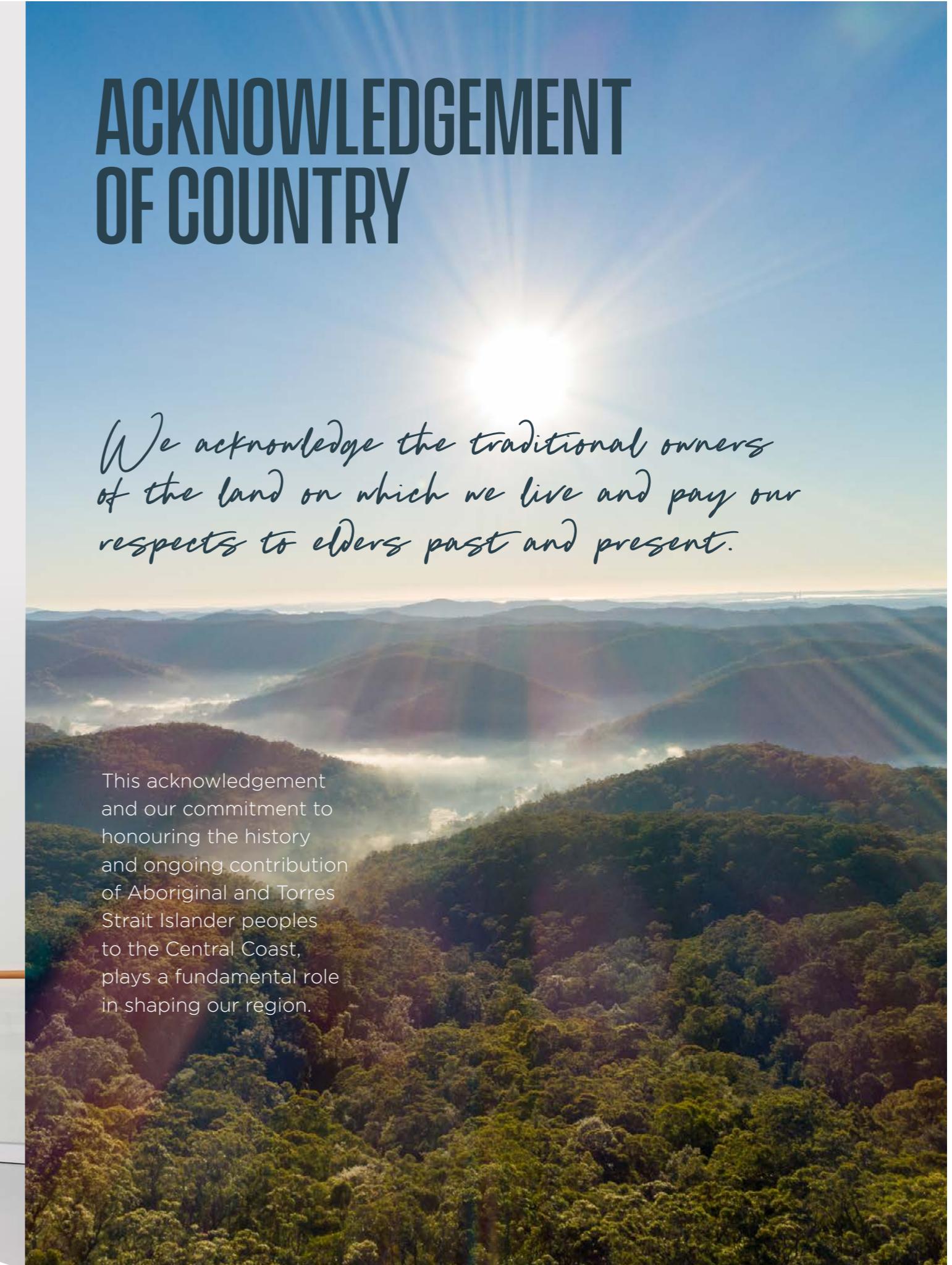
NAISDA  
performers in  
rehearsal

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

*We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we live and pay our respects to elders past and present.*

This acknowledgement and our commitment to honouring the history and ongoing contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the Central Coast, plays a fundamental role in shaping our region.



*"The benefits of culture reach far further than its intrinsic value of enriching our lives creatively and emotionally. Culture builds strong and cohesive communities, making them safer, healthier and happier, and helping them forge identities. It drives innovation across our economy."*

THE HON. DON HARWIN MLC,  
CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN  
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# MAYOR'S MESSAGE



MAYOR LISA MATTHEWS

## OUR CULTURAL LIFE

You spoke, we listened. From the responses gathered during extensive consultation for the One Central Coast Community Strategic Plan (2018-2028) through to recent stakeholder workshops, you told us how important arts and culture are to Central Coast life.

Building on everything we already love, this Cultural Plan provides a clear path forward for our whole region. As a five year commitment it is a framework to realise the future we desire and fulfill the creative and cultural potential of One Central Coast.

Our vision is strong: we will foster vibrant and inclusive creative communities, showcasing our diverse stories through cultural events and activations. We will ensure that opportunities abound for our emerging and established talent, and draw inspiration from our stunning landscapes. We will also acknowledge and value the voices, culture and living heritage of the traditional custodians upon whose land we stand.

The Central Coast will embrace its identity as a thriving hub for creativity.

In delivering this, our future is bright: we will attract new talent and economic development opportunities to our region, empower our emerging artists to shine both nationally and internationally with dedicated pathways, and ensure that our community connectedness and spirit of self-expression remain at the heart of Central Coast life.



# OUR CULTURAL PLAN

**THE CENTRAL COAST CULTURAL PLAN 2020-25 IS OUR REGION'S CULTURAL VISION AND ASPIRATIONS ESTABLISHED THROUGH THE CONSULTATIONS OF ONE CENTRAL COAST COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-28 AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ARTS AND CULTURAL SECTOR.**



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This Cultural Plan is to be achieved via a renewed level of partnership, alignment and innovation, with Council playing a leadership role.

As a five year framework, the Central Coast Cultural Plan will position our region's arts and culture as a key strength to our community and economic development and destination ambitions, meeting the challenges of the present and the future.

#### THE CULTURAL PLAN CATERSTO:

- the vast majority of the community who value arts and culture in their lives, where active participation is considered essential to their sense of self and wellbeing.
- the local presence of professional arts and creative industries that are integral to the region's greater identity, as well as to community and economic development.

The Cultural Plan translates into opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to learn, create and be heard, participating in, and contributing to, the cultural life of the Central Coast in the process.

It involves support and strategic investment in our creative and cultural practitioners to network, collaborate, grow and lead in order to fulfill their potential regionally and beyond, contributing to our diverse and inclusive cultural identity.

It includes the ongoing development and accessibility of specialised spaces and places across the region to host the creation and showcasing of rich artistic offerings and the telling of the stories of our past and present.

This plan is committed to supporting our arts and cultural offerings to be accessible and visible within and beyond the region. It is equally committed to realising the economic potential of our arts and culture, positioning the Central Coast to have a greater part of growing State and national creative industry economies.

#### THE FRAMEWORK CONSISTS OF



BUILDING A VISIBLE  
CREATIVE IDENTITY



GROWING OUR  
CREATIVE SECTOR



EMBRACING OUR  
CULTURAL LIFE



ENLIVENING CULTURAL  
SPACES AND PLACES

## COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP) 2018-28

**COUNCIL'S TEN YEAR CSP WAS DEVELOPED IN CONSULTATION WITH RESIDENTS ACROSS THE CENTRAL COAST IN 2018 AND INCLUDES KEY ARTS AND CULTURAL OBJECTIVES WITHIN THE FOLLOWING THEME AREAS:**

#### OUR COMMUNITY IS OUR STRENGTH:

- Work within our communities to connect people, build capacity and create local solutions and initiatives
- Celebrate and continue to create opportunities for inclusion where all people feel welcome and participate in community life

#### CREATIVITY, CONNECTION AND LOCAL IDENTITY:

- Support reconciliation through the celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
- Promote and provide more sporting, community and cultural events and festivals, day and night, throughout the year
- Foster creative and performing arts through theatres, galleries and creative spaces, by integrating art and performance into public life
- Activate spaces and places to complement activity around town centres, foreshores, lakes and green spaces for families, community and visitors.

#### A GROWING AND COMPETITIVE REGION:

- Revitalise Gosford City Centre, Gosford Waterfront and town centres as key destinations and attractors for businesses, local residents, visitors and tourists
- Facilitate economic development to increase local employment opportunities and provide a range of jobs for all residents
- Promote and grow tourism that celebrates the natural and cultural assets of the Central Coast in a way that is accessible, sustainable and eco-friendly

#### A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE:

- Foster innovation and partnerships to develop local entrepreneurs and support start-ups

# VALUING ARTS AND CULTURE

## THE VALUE OF ARTS AND CULTURE TO SOCIETY IS VAST AND ALL ENCOMPASSING.

As well as its intrinsic value to our sense of self, engagement with arts and culture has a significant impact on our society's economy, health and wellbeing, social cohesion and education.

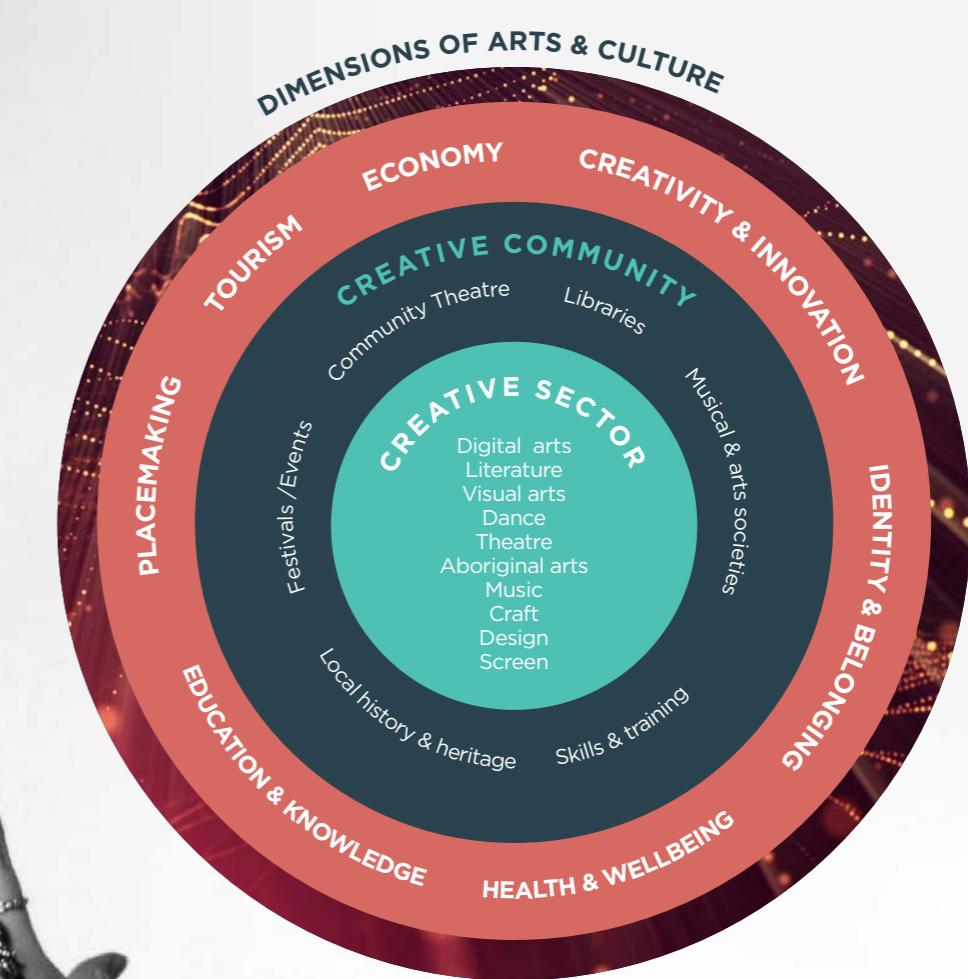
*'There is both an intuitive and measurable connection between a sense of holistic wellbeing and participation in cultural activity'* Create NSW Culture, Value and Place 2018 Report (Part 1)

Throughout this document culture is referred to broadly as an expression of customs, traditions, heritage and social character, expressed through a diversity of arts and cultural practices.

Culture is considered across the whole spectrum: from specific art forms through to events and heritage interpretation, as well as Aboriginal cultural beliefs and practices which underpin connection to place. Culture is also about diversity of expression, such as that fostered by our residents who live with a disability, our multicultural, LGBTQIA+ and deaf communities, among many others.

*"A thriving Arts and Culture sector is essential for the health and well-being of any community....The Arts teach us to know ourselves and reveal to us things about life we may feel but are unable to articulate."*

**JOHN BELL, A.O., OBE**



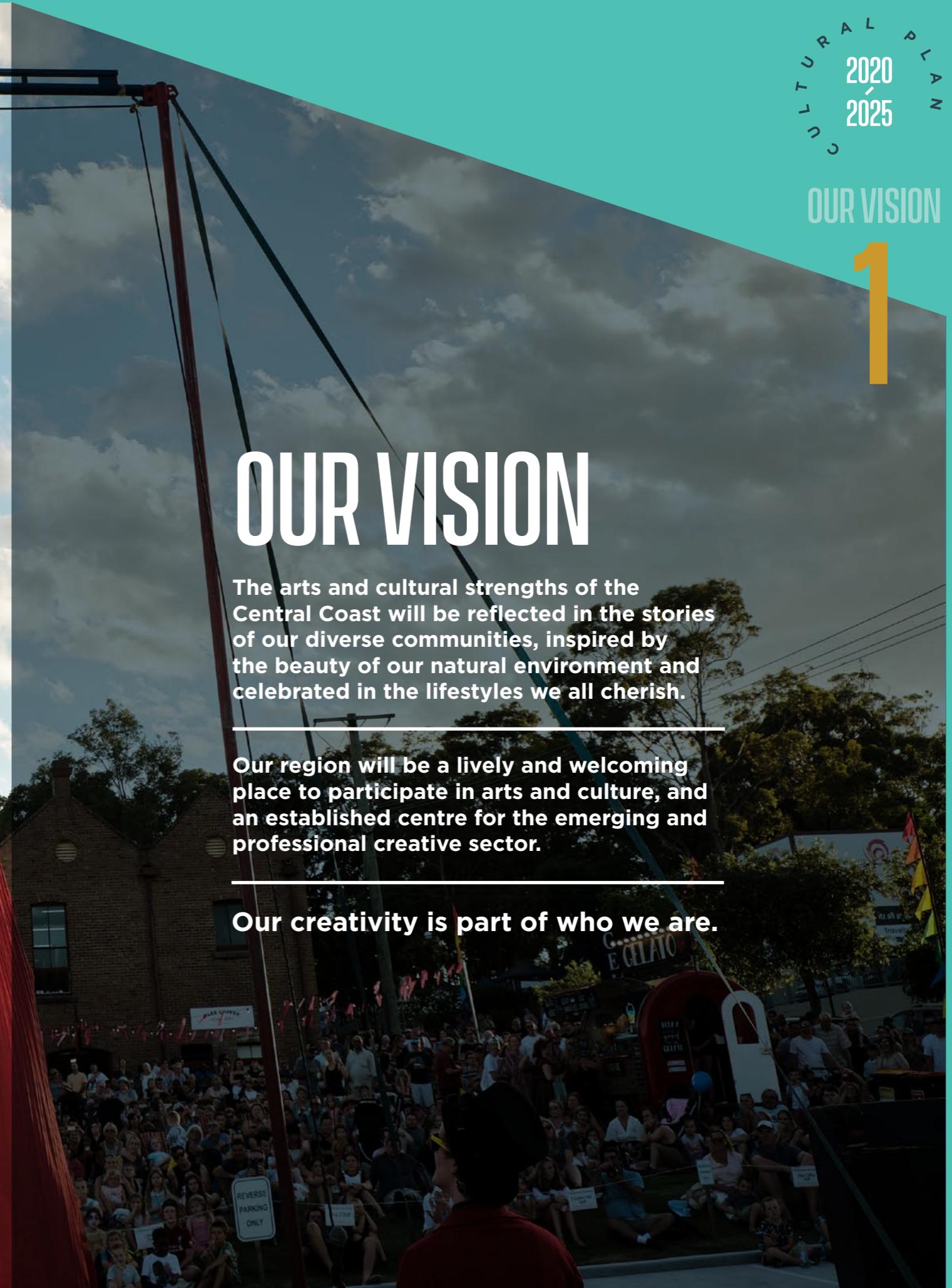
Culture expressed through creativity has an undeniable ability to enhance the personal development of people of all ages as well as reinforce community cohesion and drive pride in the Central Coast as a place for residents and visitors.

Looking towards the future, creative industries have the capacity to contribute to the resilience and a diversification of the Central Coast's economy. Locally based creative businesses and enterprises invest back into the area by contributing to place activation, tourism and employment.

The NSW arts, screen and cultural sectors outputs were valued in 2016-17 at \$18.3 billion, almost half of the total Australian financial value in these sectors. The Central Coast is well positioned to play a greater role in this growing creative economy.

The diagram here draws upon many accepted models that illustrate this breadth of arts and cultural practice in both the community and professional sectors. It is particularly useful for the Central Coast because it captures the conditions and character of our creative sector and community.

Love Lanes Festival,  
Wyong 2019



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OUR VISION

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# OUR VISION

The arts and cultural strengths of the Central Coast will be reflected in the stories of our diverse communities, inspired by the beauty of our natural environment and celebrated in the lifestyles we all cherish.

Our region will be a lively and welcoming place to participate in arts and culture, and an established centre for the emerging and professional creative sector.

Our creativity is part of who we are.

*"Art is an essential part of life, it makes you think and look around you. Through belonging and sharing, art provides the whole sense of where we live and how lucky we are to live here."*

MARGARET HARDY  
FOUNDER, MULTI ARTS CONFEDERATION AND CENTRAL COAST ARTS ADVOCATE



# WHAT OUR CREATIVE COMMUNITY AND CREATIVE SECTOR TOLD US

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## ENGAGEMENT

# WHAT OUR CREATIVE COMMUNITY AND CREATIVE SECTOR TOLD US

**IN DEVELOPING THIS CULTURAL PLAN, IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO CONSULT WITH OUR COMMUNITY AS WELL AS WITH ARTS AND CULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS.**

### WE LISTENED TO THEIR NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS FOR ARTS AND CULTURAL LIFE ON THE CENTRAL COAST.

We also reflected upon past successes, aiming to limit change in areas the community has voiced strong ongoing support for, and drive change where it is needed the most.

Overall, our process of gathering and analysing information included:



#### MEETING

with more than 150 arts and cultural stakeholders over 12 dedicated workshops, including five sector-led sessions



#### LISTENING

to the Aboriginal community in a dedicated session



#### ANALYSING

detailed arts and cultural data from recent Community Strategic Plan (CSP) consultations



#### GATHERING

ideas and practical suggestions from a broad cross-section of Council teams



*"It is our musicians, songwriters and producers who help us answer the question 'what is the sound of the Central Coast?'"*

**ROD MCCORMACK.  
RECORDING ARTIST AND PRODUCER**

# SUMMARY OF KEY CONSULTATION RESPONSES

## STRENGTHS:

- Our lifestyle: it's why established artists stay here, and why more want to move here
- Our inspiring natural environment
- Richness of Aboriginal heritage and culture
- Our people: their talent, experience and diversity; our Aboriginal community, youth and seniors
- Our venues and spaces: The Art House, Mt Penang Parklands, Laycock Street Community Theatre, Central Coast Stadium, Gosford Regional Gallery and Edogawa Gardens
- The professional expertise and skillsets are all here to build bigger things (festivals, events, films)
- Premier training organisations like NAISDA

## CHALLENGES:

- Low online visibility of arts and creativity across the region
- Lack of confidence perceived in the Central Coast's cultural identity and capacity, including an underestimation of local audience appetites
- Lack of accessible and affordable venues and pathways for new programming
- Lack of 'destination package' associated with drawing tourists for the arts, including limited night time economy, premium accommodation options and dining precincts
- Gaining a clear understanding of Council's role and commitment to arts and cultural growth, with renewed opportunities for consulting with the community
- Limited stepping stones within the region for emerging creative talent
- Lack of connectedness within the creative sector

## OPPORTUNITIES:

- Build a strong creative identity for the Central Coast where we own our potential and connect with our people and audiences, supported by online visibility
- Hunger for creative content and diverse experiences from audiences – particularly festivals and film
- Influx of new residents and visitors bringing their skills and passions for creativity with them
- Commitment to showcasing local arts content of merit
- Leverage the proximity of Sydney and Newcastle to our advantage with external partnerships
- Mentoring emerging talent
- Professional networking and cross-arts collaboration

## ENGAGEMENT

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# OUR CULTURAL ASPIRATIONS

THE REGION'S ARTS AND CULTURAL SECTOR ASPIRATIONS WERE IDENTIFIED.



## THE CENTRAL COAST WILL:

Be recognized as a centre of creativity and grow industry and tourism opportunities	Understand and value the richness of local Aboriginal arts, culture and heritage surrounding us	Foster music, performance and the arts to drive wellbeing and life development
Be renowned as a home for songwriting and music (Gosford as the 'Nashville of Australia')	Have an annual key music festival, in addition to an emerging/fringe festival or programming	Provide cultural venues with a target or requirement for local arts of merit
Offer programs and support to enable risk taking by producers and artists by underwriting new work	Collaborate with a body of independent players to drive information, promotion and programming of festivals	Be known for the commitment of its artists
Have a culture of mentoring and supporting younger artists with potential by its established and working artists	Harness its artists' commitment to collaboration, problem-solving, civic improvement and local identity	Visibly incorporate public art and performance into its shared spaces
Enable its artists to drive interpretation, understanding and engagement with our natural environment and waterways	Ensure creativity, community capital and reuse culture underpin arts, events and engagement	Employ the skills of its artists and cultural practitioners in the creation of trails, public art and creative places that engage the community and visitors in experiencing the full complexity of the region's history and contemporary life

*"Artists are the instigators for change and awareness. Through art and culture we see diversity, we are moved by it, we are inspired to make change."*

**STUART SMITH**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, OPTIONS  
THEATRE COMPANY



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## OUR STRENGTHS

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CENTRAL COAST ARTS AND CULTURE:

## A SNAPSHOT OF STRENGTHS



*"The buzz of the arts on the Central Coast is bubbling more and more and it's so exciting to see varied artists sharing their brilliant talents, cultural history and skills with the community."*

JOSH HORNER  
CHOREOGRAPHER  
AND DANCER

**THE FOLLOWING CREATIVE STRENGTHS LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR THE CULTURAL PLAN'S THEMES AND OBJECTIVES AND PROVIDE GUIDANCE IN SHAPING OUR IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS.**



## 01 COUNCIL'S CURRENT INVESTMENT

- Facilities such as The Art House Wyong, Laycock Street and Peninsula Community Theatres, Gosford Regional Gallery, The Entrance Gallery and Studios, Central Coast Stadium, its libraries, its network of community spaces and heritage assets such as Alison Homestead
- \$1.7M annual sponsorship and grants programs which offer support for regionally based independent social and creative enterprise, place activation, events, heritage, community development and infrastructure
- An annual calendar of 26 events valued at \$1.2M a year such as Live Well and the Love Lanes, Winter and Blues, Harvest and the Lakes Festivals
- Arts and cultural projects and programs including the Creative Art Central, The Hub Erina youth arts program, Central Coast Heritage Festival and Trail, Maliga Aboriginal program, an annual program of regionally developed and touring exhibitions and productions, and, high profile competitions such as the Gosford Art Prize
- Place marketing and destination branding such as #thisisthecentralcoast



## 02 RICH ABORIGINAL ARTS AND CULTURE

The Central Coast is rich in Aboriginal culture and community with the North and Central Coast having NSW's fastest growing Aboriginal population. Over 7000 registered Aboriginal sites are located on the Central Coast. The region has an established Aboriginal network of leading organisations and is home to Australia's premier Aboriginal training dance college. Community elders actively sustain and strengthen cultural life and Connection to Country into the future through leadership and guidance.



## 03 A GROWING CREATIVE SECTOR

The professional creative sector or creative industries are increasingly important to the Central Coast's economy. The number of people working in the creative industries on the Central Coast, the number of registered businesses in the sector and their value add to the economy is on a par with the whole of state average and rising at a faster rate than for the state as a whole. There are significant and growing commercial creative sectors such as music, screen and dance.



## 04 A CRITICAL MASS OF ARTISTS

The Central Coast is already home to many established and prominent artists, and as the professional creative sector grows and becomes more visible there are an increasing number of artist run initiatives focused on music, fine arts, screen, dance, writing and digital arts. Artists owned businesses and locally programmed venues play a role in driving enterprise based cultural development and town centre revitalisation.



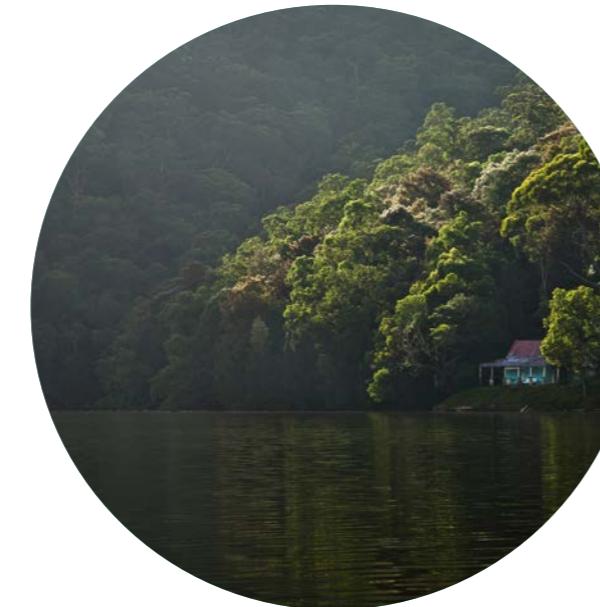
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# THESE ARE OUR STRENGTHS



## 05 A CREATIVE COMMUNITY

The region has a vibrant creative community that has historically encouraged community participation in arts and culture and advocated for arts and cultural facilities and programs. Active involvement in a wide range of drama, musical theatre, dance, music, history, visual arts and crafts societies and groups, as well as the rich expressions of our multicultural and other diverse communities, have been an important foundation of the region's civic and cultural life over many generations.



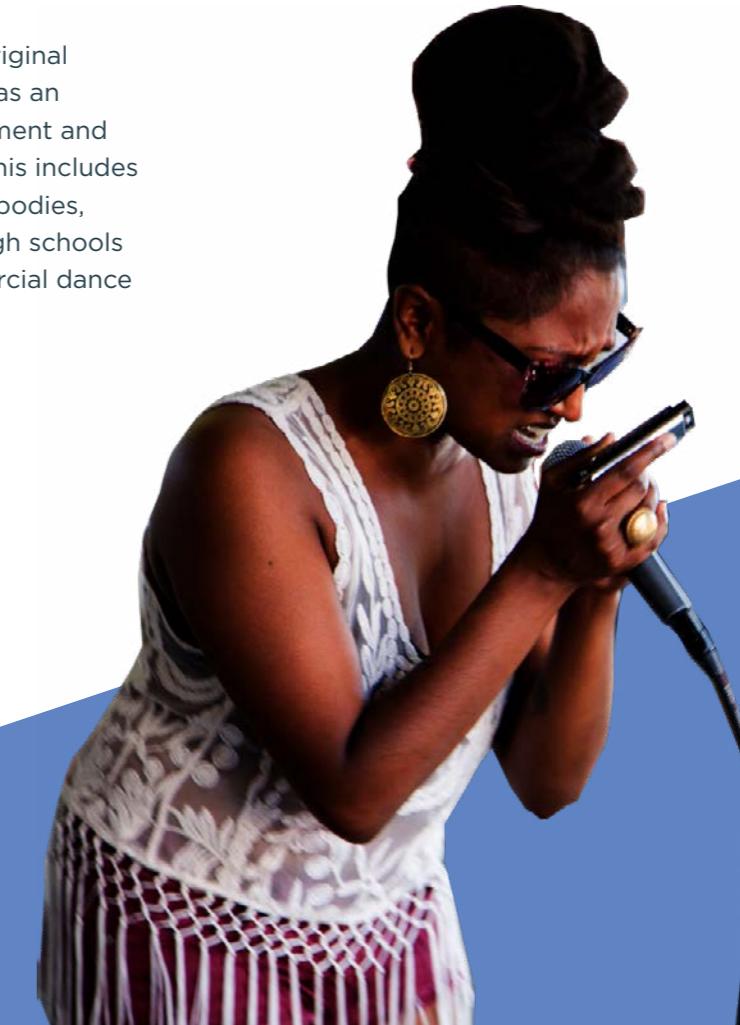
## 06 THE POWER OF PLACE

The Central Coast's natural beauty and the inspiration offered by its diverse landscapes already makes it a tourism destination. Cultural tourism contributes to that visitor experience. Along with its Aboriginal culture and heritage the Coast boasts a World Heritage listed site in the Old Great North Road, significant local heritage registered sites and site-specific cultural events that attract visitation.



## 07 YOUTH ARTS AND EDUCATION

Along with Australia's premier Aboriginal dance training college, the region has an extensive network of skills development and arts education for young people. This includes youth service providers, youth arts bodies, tertiary institutions, arts focused high schools and both not-for-profit and commercial dance and music schools and academies.





*Little Murri Warrior (Wyong Creek)  
Hayley Spindler 2017*

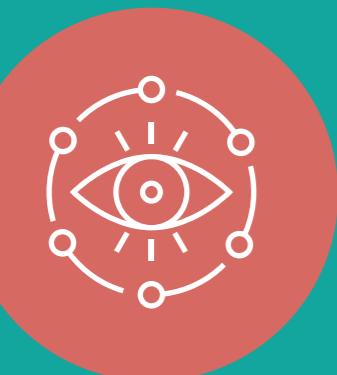
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STRATEGIC GOALS

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# THE FUTURE: — WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

# OUR VISION: THEMES AND OBJECTIVES



## BUILDING A VISIBLE CREATIVE IDENTITY

We will recognise and leverage our region's distinct cultural identity, raising its profile as a centre of creative excellence and harnessing its unique offerings. We will also seek new opportunities to promote the richness of Aboriginal arts and culture at our fingertips, and showcase our diverse offerings through high quality festivals and partnerships. In establishing dedicated communication platforms, we will be more responsive to the needs of growing audiences and ensure that the Central Coast is known as a creative destination with a rich heritage and opportunities accessible to visitors and locals alike. Our reputation will speak for itself.

- Arts and culture is embedded in the identity and experience of the region
- The region is recognised as a centre for creative excellence
- A central platform for information and sharing



## GROWING OUR CREATIVE SECTOR

We will realise the untapped potential of the creative industries on our doorstep, ensuring that the Central Coast is ready for sector growth. From music through to screen and performing arts, the visions of our professionals will be championed, benefiting our region and beyond. In planning for this, we will invest in professional development pathways and arts education, and support key opportunities for our creative industries. We will be renowned as a place where arts and culture is robust, imaginative and entrepreneurial.

- The vision of our artists and creative industries are championed to succeed
- Connections are supported to realise opportunity and industry development
- Pathways for professional growth



## EMBRACING OUR CULTURAL LIFE

Our people are our greatest asset, and sharing our stories in new and creative ways is vital to belonging and wellbeing. We acknowledge our community's desire for a deepened understanding of the region's Aboriginal culture and heritage, and will support dedicated programming in realising this. By strengthening cultural networks, community arts, local history and heritage projects, everyone will have the opportunity to contribute to meaningful and diverse conversations. We will highlight our cultural life to growing audiences through tailored place-based events and activations. Everyone is welcome here.

- The stories of all who live here are welcomed and shared
- Aboriginal people's voices are heard and they lead custodianship of their culture
- Engaging in arts and cultural experiences is vital to our community's wellbeing



## ENLIVENING CULTURAL SPACES AND PLACES

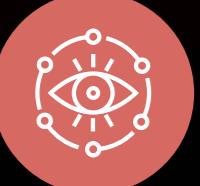
Inspired by our diverse community, unique natural environment and connection to places of meaning, we will showcase our passion for arts and culture through a dedicated network of venues and imaginative activations of public spaces. We will welcome new ideas from the community and creative sector alike, ensuring that we are looking to the future to meet the needs and aspirations of the Central Coast's growing population. Creativity will be visible: it will surround us.

- Our strong connection to places inspires creative expression
- Imagination drives activation of our shared spaces
- A dedicated network of accessible arts and cultural facilities to support our changing needs

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

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## BUILDING A VISIBLE CREATIVE IDENTITY

THEME	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION AREAS
 <p><b>BUILDING A VISIBLE CREATIVE IDENTITY</b></p> 	<p>→ ARTS AND CULTURE IS EMBEDDED IN THE IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCE OF THE REGION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebrate expression of our distinct and enviable cultural identity that is inspired by our lifestyle, diversity and natural environment</li> <li>Provide a platform for regional arts and culture to be at the forefront of civic celebrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate arts programming for key civic and cultural events, such as New Years Eve and major sporting events</li> <li>Showcase and grow the region's diverse cultural and creative activities online, incorporating a community and cultural events calendar</li> <li>Support new expressions of belonging, stories and connection to local places through the arts with community grants</li> <li>Create new opportunities for public art and activations to grow the visibility of creativity within our region</li> <li>Prioritise inclusiveness and accessibility in all creative and cultural programming</li> </ul>	<p><b>WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved perception of the Central Coast Region as an arts and cultural destination</li> <li>Growth in cultural tourism and positive visitor experiences</li> <li>Increase in the number and quality of signature events and festivals that celebrate our lifestyle and natural environment</li> <li>Central online location for arts, cultural and community events</li> <li>Greater profile and recognition of our local artists</li> <li>Greater appreciation and celebration of our cultural diversity</li> <li>National and international cultural exchange and collaborative programming with Edogawa, Nitra and Walgett via the Sister Cities programs</li> </ul>
	<p>→ THE REGION IS RECOGNISED AS A CENTRE FOR CREATIVE EXCELLENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Profile the Central Coast as an inspirational opportunity to the arts and cultural sector beyond the region</li> <li>Ensure the Central Coast is renowned for its rich Aboriginal Arts and culture through enhanced strategic partnerships and alignment with leading organisations</li> <li>Harness the potential of our creative industries to raise the region's profile through high quality festivals, programs and partnerships</li> <li>Provide a central role for arts and culture in driving Central Coast's tourism destination offerings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish the reputation of the Central Coast as a premiere creative destination through tourism and partnership projects including the Sister Cities program.</li> <li>Ensure shared vision and alignment between Council cultural venues, including a shared vision for excellence in programming and enhanced community engagement</li> <li>Build partnerships with key regional arts and cultural operators and the local creative sector to develop new flagship arts festivals and forums (such as music, songwriting and literary events), including guest programmers</li> <li>Align with key regional Aboriginal arts and representative bodies in cultural programming, including NAISDA, Darkinjung Land Council and Barang Alliance</li> <li>Support new and innovative heritage activations in conjunction with community stakeholders</li> <li>Expand the role and quantity of arts and cultural programming within existing Council events</li> </ul>	
	<p>→ A CENTRAL PLATFORM FOR INFORMATION AND SHARING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show leadership by listening, communicating and brokering connections</li> <li>Provide a regional arts information hub accessible to the creative sector and the community</li> <li>Establish direct communication with our audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showcase our region's creativity identity with a centralised website especially for youth, seniors, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ and CALD communities</li> <li>Provide communication and promotional avenues for community arts groups and the creative sector with audiences</li> <li>Enhance practitioner, stakeholder and venue contact networks</li> </ul>	

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

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## GROWING OUR CREATIVE SECTOR

THEME	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION AREAS
 <b>GROWING OUR CREATIVE SECTOR</b>	→ <b>THE VISION OF OUR ARTISTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ARE CHAMPIONED TO SUCCEED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support opportunities for artist run initiatives to develop, showcase and promote</li> <li>Support artists to test, develop and realise new work</li> <li>Support the creative industries to network and collaborate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase opportunity, access to spaces and funding for creative enterprise</li> <li>Provide support for emerging and established artists to develop new work via commissions, residencies and partnerships</li> <li>Offer dedicated pathways to support artists of culturally diverse backgrounds or who identify as Indigenous</li> <li>Provide support for practitioners in film, music and performing arts to co-produce new work</li> <li>Establish targets for development and showcasing of new, local performing arts of merit</li> </ul>
	→ <b>CONNECTIONS ARE SUPPORTED TO REALISE OPPORTUNITY AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate local professional connections to drive the growth of screen, music, literature and performing arts</li> <li>Ensure creative industry best practice is central to all opportunities</li> <li>Link and partner with out-of-region markets and audiences</li> <li>Integrate models of creative enterprise for practitioners through funding, connections and learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure creative industry growth is incorporated into Central Coast economic development priorities</li> <li>Deliver to best practice and industry standards within Council arts and cultural programs and services</li> <li>Provide support for specialists in film, music, performing and contemporary arts to take steps to network, represent and grow their specific sectors</li> <li>Build partnerships with programs and markets outside the region for connection, exchange and the opportunity to grow our reputation and economic potential</li> <li>Support new partnerships and cross-arts collaborations and philanthropic support to drive future creative industry growth and innovation, and to respond to changing industry need</li> </ul>
	→ <b>PATHWAYS FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in local talent by providing opportunities to learn and develop, perform and showcase original work</li> <li>Ensure emerging and young artists have pathways realised through mentoring and leadership of established practitioners</li> <li>Build professional skills and capacity of all levels of the creative sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritize opportunities across Council venues for programming local original arts of merit by emerging and young artists</li> <li>Provide incentives for established practitioners and organizations to mentor emerging and younger artists</li> <li>Support professional development programs for arts, cultural and history groups and practitioners</li> </ul>

## WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Increase in the number of people employed in creative industries
- Improved pathways for young people and emerging artists to pursue arts education and creative careers within the region
- Increase in professional development opportunities for creative practitioners
- Increase in quality contemporary events, works, programs and products
- Successful creative enterprises supporting the local economy and driving employment
- Increased philanthropy support for regional arts and culture is encouraged and achieved via existing avenues such as the Gosford Foundation Trust.

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

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## EMBRACING OUR CULTURAL LIFE

THEME	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION AREAS
 <p><b>EMBRACING OUR CULTURAL LIFE</b></p> 	<p>→ <b>THE STORIES OF ALL WHO LIVE HERE ARE WELCOMED AND SHARED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret and profile the diverse heritage and multicultural narratives of the region</li> <li>• Enhance a deepened understanding of Aboriginal culture and heritage for the community</li> <li>• Create opportunities for artists and community collaboration in the telling of local stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret and profile the diverse heritage and multicultural narratives of the region</li> <li>• Enhance a deepened understanding of Aboriginal culture and heritage for the community</li> <li>• Create opportunities for artists and community collaboration in the telling of local stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide access to professional support and foster opportunities to collaborate for cultural, history and heritage specialists, and for community groups in the delivery and interpretation of local stories</li> <li>✓ Support Aboriginal leaders, artists and community to share their culture via research, events, programs, venues and markets</li> <li>✓ Ensure post-settlement heritage properties are operated as living heritage museums and are welcoming places for locals and visitors</li> <li>✓ Foster opportunities to invite and interpret new stories from the community in conjunction with artists, libraries, family history, literature and oral history programs.</li> <li>✓ Ensure that the stories of our past and present are accessible to the public in a variety of ways, including online, and that new contributions are welcomed</li> </ul>
	<p>→ <b>ABORIGINAL PEOPLE'S VOICES ARE HEARD AND THEY LEAD CUSTODIANSHIP OF THEIR CULTURE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an agreed way forward between Council and Community Leaders</li> <li>• Ensure Aboriginal Leaders have the central role in Council's Indigenous programs</li> <li>• Indigenous culture and contemporary arts practices are supported by dedicated programming and positions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Establish arts and cultural priorities and protocols between Council and key Aboriginal organizations</li> <li>✓ Establish a communications process in agreement with Elders and key Aboriginal arts leaders to inform Council's Aboriginal cultural projects within this region</li> <li>✓ Support the local growth potential of Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Tourism with dedicated roles such as Aboriginal Creative Producer and Curator</li> </ul>
	<p>→ <b>ENGAGING IN ARTS AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES IS VITAL TO OUR COMMUNITY'S WELLBEING</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showcase our creativity and cultural life within communities, and encourage others to join us</li> <li>• Enrich our communities through strengthened cultural networks, community arts, local history and heritage</li> <li>• Provide diverse programming and new experiences to growing audiences</li> <li>• Foster growth of place-based events in partnership with community, business and the arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Foster a greater understanding of arts participation, inclusion and wellbeing to drive broader community partnerships and creative programming - especially for children, youth, seniors, people with disabilities and CALD communities</li> <li>✓ Ensure all residents and visitors have opportunities to participate in creativity</li> <li>✓ Prioritise public and educational programming as a central part of our cultural venues and museums, supported by dedicated professional positions and stronger linkages between venues</li> <li>✓ Develop and promote diverse and niche programming for existing and new audiences</li> <li>✓ Prioritise support for place-based activations driven by business, community and arts partnerships</li> </ul>

## WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Increase in the number of opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to actively engage in arts and cultural activities
- Improved awareness and understanding of our local Aboriginal culture
- Greater promotion, protection and conservation of our cultural heritage
- Growth in new audiences and diverse programming
- Improved wellbeing from greater connection with creativity

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

CULTURAL PLAN  
2020  
2025

## ENLIVENING CULTURAL SPACES AND PLACES

THEME	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION AREAS
 <p><b>ENLIVENING CULTURAL SPACES AND PLACES</b></p>	<p>→ <b>OUR STRONG CONNECTION TO PLACES INSPIRES CREATIVE EXPRESSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster creative activations and events throughout the region that showcase the diverse communities and natural environments of the Central Coast</li> <li>Ensure arts and cultural festivals and events encompass regional creativity and meaning of places</li> <li>Share the diverse historical narratives of our urban centres, towns and villages via innovative interpretive practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance existing and new place-based arts activities or festivals with professional arts roles and innovative programming</li> <li>Integrate the commissioning of new work and arts residencies within site-specific events, place-based programs and cultural venues to interpret diverse local stories of place</li> <li>Support the integration of temporary and permanent arts trails within events programming, arts festivals, heritage interpretation, and environmental awareness</li> </ul>	
	<p>→ <b>IMAGINATION DRIVES ACTIVATION OF OUR SHARED SPACES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activate public spaces with arts, performance and creative programming</li> <li>Increase in outdoor programming, including in non-traditional spaces to make creative activity more street-visible</li> <li>Drive imaginative site specific collaborations via public art</li> <li>Enable the creative sector to play an active role in the establishment of a vibrant night time economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable growth of music and the arts in city and town centre planning, with a streamlined approach to procedures and urban design</li> <li>Provide clear guidelines and a framework for public art implementation by government, business and the community</li> <li>Ensure placemaking projects are delivered in partnership with the community, driven by public imagination and supported by professional creatives and collaborators</li> <li>Ensure dedicated communication channels for inviting ideas from the community about interpretation of our shared spaces</li> <li>Develop collaborations and partnerships ahead of a night time economy strategy, with a central role for regional creativity</li> <li>Promote imaginative use of the Central Coast Stadium and other non-traditional venues and spaces for creative programming</li> </ul>	
	<p>→ <b>A DEDICATED NETWORK OF ACCESSIBLE ARTS AND CULTURAL FACILITIES TO SUPPORT OUR CHANGING NEEDS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and optimise places and spaces for artists to connect, create, collaborate and show</li> <li>Integrate creative precincts and hubs into our centres</li> <li>Increase the quality, volume and diversity of creative arts programming in cultural facilities</li> <li>Explore the potential for new catalyst facilities to meet future needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop cultural infrastructure within key urban and precincts including a new Regional Library and arts space in Gosford and a Cultural Hub in Wyong</li> <li>Operate arts and cultural infrastructure across the region as a coordinated and cross programmed network, with broad accessibility and alignment of vision</li> <li>Broaden opportunities for support, development and presentation of new locally authored work and innovative touring work within cultural venues and facilities</li> <li>Align creative hubs and arts precincts with leisure, community, learning and local business to engage community and visitors</li> <li>Ensure the Gosford Regional Gallery and the Libraries networks are positioned as a centres of cultural excellence, keepers of the region's stories and key educational bodies</li> </ul>	

## WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Culture-led revitalisation of our spaces and places, both day and night
- Improved access to quality arts and cultural facilities
- Public art that enhances our enjoyment of shared places and spaces
- Greater sense of civic pride in our region
- A strategic plan for all of Council's owned arts infrastructure

*The quality, volume and diversity of creative arts programming in cultural facilities will be increased in response to the region's evolving culture and audiences*



# WHAT IS COUNCIL'S ROLE IN DELIVERING THIS PLAN?

**CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL HAS A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN DELIVERING THIS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK TO THE REGION, VIA PARTNERSHIPS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND ADVOCACY.**

In addition to providing strategic arts and cultural programs and services, Council plays a primary role in driving smarter connections and broader conversations with a renewed focus.

**IN DELIVERING THIS CULTURAL PLAN, COUNCIL WILL UNDERTAKE ITS ROLE IN THREE PRIMARY WAYS:**

## LISTEN AND ADVOCATE

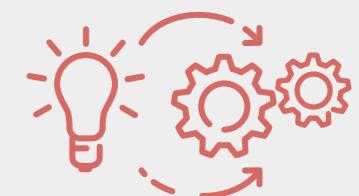
- Initiating partnerships and alignments
- Advocacy for funding, investment and policy support at state and federal level
- Engaging, reporting and measuring

## INVEST AND PROMOTE

- Council programs and services providing strategic support, resources and activities to enhance the capacity and nurture the growth of the region's culture
- Council arts and cultural infrastructure, including museums, libraries theatres, art galleries, studios, outdoor venues and open spaces, designed and managed to equip and enable the achievement of regional cultural objectives

## PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

- Council plays a fundamental role in providing the development framework for the public domain, cultural precincts, new infrastructure, events and activities via its role in strategic planning and development approvals



## IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

This Plan will be delivered over 5 years and reported annually via a Report Card showing Council's actions within the Themes and Objectives. From Council this includes a commitment to ongoing engagement with the arts and cultural sector and annual reporting on achievements.

Cultural measures will be used to monitor and report on the Plan's implementation.

A review of the Cultural Plan will be undertaken with the arts and culture sector and community in five years.



# APPENDIX A

# 2019 SNAPSHOT OUR CULTURAL ASSETS INCLUDE:

CULTURAL PLAN  
2020-2025

## ABORIGINAL SITES

include over 7,000 registered sites on the Central Coast. Such sites have special cultural, social and historic significance to the Aboriginal community and to Australia's history and heritage. The diverse array of archaeological evidence includes extensive groups of rock art and attests to the long occupation of the region by Aboriginal people and the complex indigenous society with cultural connections to land that continues today.

## ARTISTS COLLECTIVES

are artists-run not-for-profit creative enterprises which reactivate spaces and form collaborations to achieve creative sustainability. Examples include the Makers Studio in East Gosford and The Art Studios at Bay Galleries in Ettalong who operate studios and display spaces for print making, drawing, painting and sculpture.

## ABORIGINAL CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS AND ALIGNED NETWORKS

These include, but are not limited to, the Barang Regional Alliance of Aboriginal organisations committed to forging strong connections and relationships within the community with a membership including Bara Barang Corporation, Gudjagang

Ngara li-dhi Aboriginal Corporation, Mingaletta Aboriginal Corporation, NAISDA Dance College and Yerin Aboriginal Health Services Inc, and, the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council whose core activities focus on community participation and wellbeing, culture, heritage and environment, business and economic.

**CENTRAL COAST CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC** is one of the largest music conservatoriums in Australia. A community based, non-tertiary institution and member of The Association of NSW Regional Conservatoriums, the Conservatorium provides qualified instruction, in-schools music program, graded ensembles, musicianship classes and an annual concert program for local and visiting audiences.

## CENTRAL COAST HUNTER INSTITUTE OF TAFE

provides arts education via campuses in Gosford, Ourimbah and Wyong including Advanced Diplomas and attainments in visual arts, music, ceramics and writing.

- This provides students and emerging artists with education from experienced practitioners, as well as gaining industry standard training and learning in their specialised field.

## A COMMERCIAL GALLERY SECTOR

consisting of a wide range of fine art, photographic and craft gallery businesses located across Central Coast serving both the local and tourist market. These galleries promote and present the work of regional, national and international artists.

## THE CONVICT TRAIL/ GREAT NORTHERN ROAD

is a UNESCO listed nationally significant heritage site. Consisting of a 240 km road built by convict labour between 1826 and 1836 the road was built to provide an overland route between Sydney and the Hunter Valley. Considered one of the major engineering feats of Australia's convict era, the road stretches along Windsor Road from Baulkham Hills, through Castle Hill and Dural, Wiseman's Ferry and to Wollombi with majority of its engineered structures still intact today. The Convict Trail is a significant part of the region's story and is currently used for many purposes including recreational activities, events and heritage tourism.

**A CREATIVE COMMUNITY** of volunteer run groups, societies and companies who have delivered productions and activities for local audiences for over sixty years, providing an avenue for

local artists and technicians to develop and practice, and, who have been pivotal in resourcing and establishing much of the regional cultural infrastructure that is still in use today. These include Wyong District Historical and Museum Society, Multi-Arts Confederation, Central Coast Drama Group, Brisbane Water Historical Society, Wyong Musical Theatre Company, Central Dance Company, the Central Coast Water Colour Society, Central Coast Arts Society, Central Coast Potters, Toukley and Districts Art Society, Tuggerah Lakes Show Band and Symphony Central Coast.

## A GROWING NUMBER OF CREATIVE PRECINCTS

consisting of co-located artist-run businesses, creative merchants and leisure and hospitality businesses. These small precincts have formed in town centres across the region and provide a concentrated market for creative wares and a destination for residents and visitors seeking inspired experiences. These currently include Long Jetty, Ettalong, Donnison Street Gosford, Terrigal and Avoca.

An impressive range of **CULTURAL EVENTS AND MARKETS** that aim to enrich the lives of residents and visitors and encompass a passion for arts, music, food,

sport, nature and our outdoor lifestyle. These include the Five Lands Walk, The Italian Festival, Love Lanes Festival, Ecoburbia, The Oyster Festival, Woytopia Sustainability Festival, Avoca, Umina and The Entrance Markets and music festivals.

## A THRIVING DANCE SECTOR

that consists of not-for-profit and commercial academies, companies and groups that support the region's significant pursuit of all forms of dance. Serving performers and choreographers of all ages and stages of development, the dance sector involves players ranging from small after-school groups through to large scale vocational full-time accredited course providers attracting students from across Australia.

## KEY EVENTS SITES

located across the region which accommodate regular large scale open air events, markets and performances. These include **MEMORIAL PARK**, **THE ENTRANCE** an open park area with performance stage and including Vera's Water Garden public artwork; **GOSFORD STADIUM** with capacity for 20,059 people is used for international acts; **THE GOSFORD SHOWGROUND** used for sporting, community, recreational and cultural meets, activities and events; **HEAZLETT PARK FORESHORE, AVOCAS** and

**UMINA PARK** which host regular markets.

**A SCREEN AND FILM SECTOR** which involves a wide range of practitioners working collaboratively and independently on community, education and commercial programs and projects. With established organisations such as Central Coast On Screen and a diverse range of skills and vocational experiences, the region's screen and film practitioners express a shared desire to fulfil the potential of a networked and supported Central Coast based sector.

**GOSFORD REGIONAL GALLERY** is the leading public gallery for the region and a key destination for visual arts audiences. A centre of excellence, the gallery provides a broad ranging program of touring and locally curated exhibitions, manages the Council art collection, hosts the Gosford Art Prize and oversees **THE ENTRANCE GALLERY AND STUDIOS** and **THE FEDERATION GALLERY, TOUKLEY**. Located on the shores of Caroline Bay, the Gosford Regional Gallery encompasses **EDOGAWA COMMEMORATIVE GARDEN** and accompanying community studios and exhibition spaces.

2020  
2025

## OUR CULTURAL ASSETS

### INDEPENDENT PERFORMING ARTS COMPANIES

are recently established organisations driven by industry trained emerging and established producers, performers, composers, writers, directors, choreographers and technicians producing existing and new work. Providing contemporary experiences for existing and new audiences and gaining increased links to festivals and producers outside of the region, such companies include Coast Opera Australia, Endless Night Theatre Company, Primal Dance Company and Naughty Noodle Fun Haus.

A sector of **INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS** operating on a freelance basis and specialising in a range of practices including studio work, design, site specific public art, multi-disciplinary collaborations, environmental awareness, performance work and as educators.

### LAYCOCK STREET COMMUNITY THEATRE

is the region's principle long running performing arts venue. Established by the community in partnership with Council in 1988, Laycock Street Community Theatre consists of a 392 seat proscenium arch auditorium with a fly-tower and

the Don Craig Room studio. It hosts a broad range of the region's dance, music, drama, musical theatre and school performances and presents touring productions to local and visiting audiences. It is the main venue for the Gosford Musical Society, has been the avenue for several generations of performing artists to gain training and experience and currently presents the Youth In Performing Arts (YIPA) program annually.

### MT PENANG GARDENS, EVENT PARK & PARKLANDS

is a 156 hectare site located in Kariong which operates as a hub of co-located precincts fostering collaboration and innovative thinking between tenants and site hirers. The Parklands currently supports retail, commerce, education, entertainment, recreational pursuits, Aboriginal and European heritage and residential activities and events. The site is also includes an events precinct and business and education hub and is the home of NAISDA and the Wondabyne Sculptures, developed from Australia's first International Sculpture Symposium held on the Central Coast in 1987.

### MUSICIAN-RUN SPACES

consist of development and performance spaces

operated by collectives of artists, producers and community members to deliver a diversity of music for the region. Examples include the Rhythm Hut and The Lounge Room (Musicians Making a Difference) in Gosford who operate as drivers for the networking and collaboration of local musicians, writers and spoken word artists. These spaces also enable community participation in music and the presentation of diverse quality performers from within and beyond the Central Coast.

**NAISDA DANCE COLLEGE** is Australia's premier Indigenous training college which has trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers from across Australia since 1976, with graduates contributing to contemporary performing arts via companies such as Bangarra Dance Theatre and Descendance. Located within the Mount Penang Parklands, NAISDA, and its graduates, also collaborate with Central Coast artists and communities and present shows at local venues. NAISDA has announced Naya Wa Yugali, its vision to become a Cultural Learning Centre for International Indigenous Creative Study, which has potential to provide a significant positive impact on Central Coast cultural life.

### PENINSULA THEATRE

is a long running community theatre space located in southern suburb of Woy Woy. Consisting of a 123 seat raked auditorium the theatre has hosted community based productions along with programs of new work suited to the intimate venue space. The Peninsula Theatre has been operated by Woy Woy Little Theatre after it was established in 1961 with the support of renowned comic Spike Milligan.

### POST-COLONIAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE

consisting of heritage structures, museums, services and activities coordinated by a range of community organisations and Council. A number of museums are housed in purpose built or heritage buildings with displays and activities telling the stories of the sites and communities including Alison Homestead, Henry Kendall Cottage, Norah Head Lighthouse, The Entrance Long Jetty RSL Military Museum and Dharug and Lower Hawkesbury Historical Society. Other activities and events include a range of heritage walks and trails across the region as well as the annual Central Coast and Wyong Heritage Festivals and The Girrakool Blues Festival. Family history groups in Gosford and Wyong assist the community in researching personal histories and a large part of the region's historical information and items are archived and accessed via Central Coast Council Library Services.

### PROFESSIONAL MUSIC SECTOR

that includes recording studios, producers, performers, songwriters and educators engaged in national popular music. The Central Coast is the

base for a number of studios that produce for national and international acts, is home to the biannual Australian Songwriters Conference, commercial music schools and is a centre for many different forms of music. The region has produced many performers who have gained national recognition and hosts an increasing number of regular locally produced music festivals including the Patonga Blues Festival, and The Entrance Winter Blues and Jazz Festival.

### SYMPHONY CENTRAL COAST

is the region's full size symphony orchestra which provides an annual musical program of orchestral and choral masterworks. The sixth largest symphony orchestra in Australia, Symphony Central Coast was developed from local community orchestras in 1999 and has been a key avenue for local classical musicians of merit to develop and practice their craft amongst peers.

### THE ART HOUSE

is the most recent addition to Central Coast's arts facilities. Located in the regional centre of Wyong, The Art House consists of a 500 seat proscenium arch auditorium with full fly-tower and 120 seat black box studio. It provides a diverse annual program of local and touring community and professional productions, co-productions of new work with local companies, hosts education and community projects and has been instrumental in serving a growing number of first time theatre goers. Together with Laycock Street Community Theatre, The Art House ensures the region has the capacity to support the full demand for local performing arts presentations throughout the year.

**YOUTH ARTS** comprises programs, venues and activities across the region supporting the creative expression and artistic development of young people in all art forms. Programs provide the avenue for established artists to mentor and guide young and emerging artist and for young people to collaborate in the development and presentation of their own creative acts and works. A wide range of youth and community services provide such programs with key arts-focussed operations including Regional Youth Support Services (RYSS) Arts Warehouse, The Hub Youth Entertainment Venue Erina, Kincumber Neighbourhood Centre, Oasis Youth Centre and Jopuka Productions



Lionel Richie Concert, Gosford Stadium 2018.  
Photography: David Ross

*"We have the creatives and the capacity to become the leading music and arts hub of Australia by working together to make it happen."*

**DOMINIC BROOK**  
**MUSICIANS MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

## APPENDIX B

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### RELATED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

Central Coast Council's Cultural Plan extends the cultural aspirations and objectives of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and is aligned with the following plans and policies:

- Town Centre Management Strategy
- Tourism Destination Strategy
- Local Heritage Strategies

### WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

- The Central Coast Council Cultural Plan Working Group
  - Kim Walker
  - Rod McCormack
  - Patrick Brennan
  - Anne-Marie Heath
  - Chris King
  - Tim Braham
  - Jason Van Genderen
- Arts and cultural stakeholders who participated in one or more workshops and meetings at:
  - Central Coast Council
  - Gosford Regional Gallery
  - The Hub Erina
  - The Art House Wyong
  - Other community spaces
- Create NSW

This plan was developed by the Community Partnerships Unit in collaboration with the team from City People: Kim Spinks and Dr Michael Cohen

Cultural Plan document design by Dream Town Projects

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*Textile piece from Central Coast Handweavers,  
Spinners and Textile Arts Guild, East Gosford.*



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