

YARRA ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE – YAARTS - MINUTES

Thursday 9 June 2022
6.00-8.00pm
Collingwood Town Hall, 140 Hoddle Street

Statement of Recognition of Wurundjeri Land

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra. We pay our respects to Elders from all nations and to their Elders past, present and future.

1. Introduction

- Present: Cr Gabrielle de Vietri, Simon Bedford, Eyal Chipkiewicz, Angela Conquet, Miranda Hill (late 6:20), Siu Chan, Brona Keenan, Dr Katya Johanson, Arika Waulu
- Apologies: Claire Leporati, Cr Sophie Wade

2. Minutes

- Minutes adopted

3. Arts and Culture Grant program review

- An action from the 2022-2026 Arts and Culture Strategy identifies the need to adapt Yarra's arts and cultural grants schemes to make them equitable and improve the resilience of arts practice.
- There will be open community consultation on the review through a survey on Your Say Yarra and an effort to target people/organisations who have applied for grants (successful/unsuccessful) and people/organisations that may have had barriers.
- Dr Katya Johanson provided in progress information around the desktop review currently being undertaken.
- Local government provided 25% of public cultural funding in Australia in 2019/20, which is an increase of 13% since 2007/08.
- Over that period, Federal Government funding fell by 17% from 45.7% to 37.9%, while State and Territory funding also increased by 15% to 38%.
- It is hard to compare against other Council grant streams as council's manage their Arts and Culture portfolios differently and offer a diversity of grants programs.
- A greater proportion of Yarra's budget goes to grants than that of comparable councils but this observation should be looked at in context.
- Some council's offer support to projects through other budgets that Yarra supports through grants programs. Eg Port Phillip invest \$1.9million in the St Kilda Festival which is outside their grants program.
- Yarra's grants are distributed through more streams than other councils.
- Small Project Grants are smaller than similar responsive grants offered by other councils.

Panel discussion

- COVID has impacted the grants programs over last two years – stimulus funding has provided more opportunities and some projects have been supported through this funding rather than applying through Annual funding.
- Precincts like Collingwood Yards and Abbotsford Convent brings up a particular issue of artists/organisations competing with site generated funding applications

Katya left 7:00

- Discussion about needing to provide more complete context when comparing council's grants programs eg of Port Phillip \$1.9mill spend for one festival which is more than the whole Yarra Arts and Culture budget.
- Try to present from an asset perspective – recognise all the support for the sector eg RTC studios
- Question of what would help creatives to apply for grants?
- Support for artists not well developed in their practice – sometimes they can't articulate what they want.
- Accessibility – able to talk about projects in person.
- Option to put in a video and shared doc (written element)
- Inviting people of colour to apply we need to have people at the table who represent the community – principal of determination – not sure if possible for our assessment but striving toward panel diversity.
- Video application might reinforce privilege – eg editing, good scripting and skills/resources to provide high quality.
- But this could be countered by providing guidelines for video – eg needs to be one take, time limit, respond to specific questions. There would still need to be a written section for administration.
- Eg given of a video process: questions provided: Why this/why now/why here with 2 min intro (10min all up) – one shot, no editing.
- People able to provide bullet point answers to questions
- Simplify questions for multi-year funding – difficult for individual applicants and disadvantaged when competing with organisations
- Point put forward that written is more anonymised then if a video provided – something would need to consider. But writing styles can also provide opportunity for bias.
- Suggestion (SC) that Arts and Culture could trial a pitch night from operational funding. There would still be process before the pitch to shortlist applicants before pitch.
- Should we decentralise - not just writing?
- Question about what support is offered for accessibility and translating from grants team
- Question - should we give out the way we do?
- SB – less streams better, but from the back end address issues eg individuals vs organisation through different application forms
- Valuable to still have option to fund individuals through multi year funding, but feel this is currently set up to favour orgs.
- Multi year funding for individuals could be opportunity to keep practice going, like a stipend.
- Want to see day to day money for individuals – funding equivalent of a residency.
- You don't become an artist without practicing – money to practice without an outcome as an option. But not exclude applications that have project outcomes
- Keep what we have and improve the process for applying, make more streamlined, but can tailor stream a little different to individuals – support a practice and encourage artists to stay in Yarra.
- Dilemma that occurs – orgs applying for a small component of a large project against orgs applying for Yarra grant as the key support, without which the project would not happen. Artist trying to do tiny work against large org against major project which just has section of project that relates to Yarra.
- Need to be careful to not punish mid size organisations through this process.
- Applications could be tiered – smaller amounts simpler forms/larger orgs, more info required than individuals
- Ask applicants to self identify how they fit with the five arts strategy priorities

- Question about assessing Aboriginal applications with Aboriginal panel. Previously have taken applications to Aboriginal Partnerships unit to provide feedback for assessments. Aboriginal community is in demand but council looking to build panel.

ACTION: report back to panel info on what support is offered for accessibility and translating from grants team

4. Climate Action workshops

- A three-part workshop series for artists who want to increase their cultural impact on the climate crisis. Converse with other artists, hear from guest speakers and be inspired to create change.
- EOI to be launched shortly for participants.
- Saturday 6 August, 1-4pm, Thursday 18 August, 6-9pm, Saturday 3 September, 1-4pm

ACTION: send workshop info out to panel to share with networks when available

5. Update on working groups

Visual Arts Panel

- 45 artworks donated to the Collection through regular donors Dr Jonathon and Nada Hartley.
- Works include paintings, small sculptures, prints, works on paper. The works are valued at \$93,000 and build on different areas of the Collection including artworks from Fitzroy's recognised ROAR Studios.
- Cook Memorial report, detailing the history of the memorial, was discussed by VAP Panel and Panel supported the deaccessioning of the memorial.
- The Panel want the proposal taken to the Yana Ngargna group for discussion and opinion.

RTC working group update

- RTC – Collingwood Yards Studio programmed being scoped to continue beyond current cycle.
- Gurner development in Wellington Street has provided Council with a new arts and crafts space through permit process. Council proposing an arts org will manage the space at peppercorn rent but also provide opportunity for Council to show a number of exhibitions in the space.

6. Live Music on the Road Again/Rapid Activation/Rapid Implementation Project

- \$1 mill received through this rapid funding. Range of outcomes incl: Deborah Cheetham 'River Sings', A Night with Uncle Jack Charles, RockWiz NAIDOC week special, dinner conversations.
- Funding secured purchase of four projectors – have been used for projection works at Garden State Festival and will be engaged for other opportunities including Christmas.

ACTION: timeline for application assessments and grants meeting

ACTION: grants open now – send msg to panels about grants stream

ACTION: send panel Leaps and Bounds information

7. No other items

8. Next meeting 4 August

Meeting ended: 8:05pm