

# YARRA ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE – YAARTS - MINUTES

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Wednesday 21 September 2022  
6.00-7.30pm  
TEAMS online

## 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.*

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### 1. Introduction

- Present: (Chair) Mayor Cr Sophie Wade, Simon Bedford, Angela Conquet, Miranda Hill, Siu Chan (Business Unit Manager, Arts, Culture and Venues), Grace Longato (Visual Arts Officer)
- Apologies: Clare Leporati, Cr Gabrielle de Vietri, Arika Waulu, Joel Stern, Brona Keenan (Coordinator Arts & Culture)

### 2. Minutes

- Minutes adopted (9 June 2022). Confirmed by all members present.

### 3. Welcome

- Siu Chan acknowledged and welcomed two new members to the panel (Arika Waulu and Joel Stern) and informed the YAARTS panel of Harriet Mantel's new position on the RTC panel.

### 4. Arts and Culture Grant program review

- Siu Chan read through/provided an explanation on the latest draft report of the Yarra Arts and Culture Grants review, conducted and written by consultant Dr Katya Johanson.
- Siu Chan explained the need for the proposed new scheme to be streamlined and transparent (clarity of language) and that the program outcomes aligned with priorities from the Arts and Culture Strategy and the Council Plan.
- A summary of the review included:
  - **Introduction / Background and Existing Grant Scheme Table:**
    - 2022-2026 Arts and Culture Strategy identified the need to adapt Yarra's arts and culture grant schemes to make them equitable (streamline and transparent). Feedback for the Strategy pointed to an increase in artists attracted to Yarra and the Collingwood precinct, unmet demand for small grants, lack of funding opportunities to develop new work and for an increase in environmental sustainability in creative practices/projects.
    - Current levels of government funding for the Arts have fluctuated over the years, at times not keeping up with current population/demand. Local Government contributes a greater proportion of total arts and culture expenditure and funds a wide range of arts and cultural activity.

- Covid-19 has exacerbated the precarious livelihoods of artists, changing the kinds of activities for which artists seek support.
- Yarra's current Arts and Culture Grants scheme consists of 7 different grant types, (2 rolling, 3 annual and 2 multiyear grants)
- The current grants scheme distributed \$724,000 in funding (2022-2023)
- The Arts and Culture Grants review process consisted of community consultation through a survey on *Your Say Yarra*, feedback from targeted people/organisations who have applied for grants (successful/unsuccessful applicants) and people/organisations that may have had barriers to the scheme. Yarra's funding program was also benchmarked against those by selected/surrounding municipal Councils.
- **Recommendations / Proposed New Scheme Table:**
  - Current grant scheme to be consolidated into five grant types (**Rolling:** RTC, SPG; **Bi-annual:** Arts and Culture Grants; **Multiyear:** Two-year Arts and Culture Grants, Major Festivals Grants; **NEW:** Sustainability Grant and **NEW:** Fellowship Grant)
  - Two new grants (Fellowships and Sustainability)
  - Funding pool (gradual) increase by 3% over three years and (gradual) decrease in Bi-Annual Arts and Culture Grants by 3%
  - Annual grants offered twice in a year
  - The grant process (name change/application process) simplified and clarified (transparent and streamlined).
- **Rationale for changes Table / funding priorities and outcomes:**
  - **Rolling: RTC (5K ceiling)** 25K total, **SPG (2K ceiling)** 75K total: funding raised due to demand and funding 'ceiling' too low.
  - **Bi-annual: Arts and Culture Grants: 10K individual ceiling / 20K ORG ceiling** 270K total. Consolidate previous streams, bi-annual, max funding 'ceiling' introduced, yet decrease in total value overall (to accommodate Rolling and NEW funding streams).
  - **Multiyear: Two-year A&C Grants (30K ceiling)** \$270K total, **Major Festivals Grants (35K ceiling)** 105K total: Consolidate previous streams and provide new name to provide better guidance to applicants.
  - **NEW Sustainability Grant: (1K ceiling)** \$20K total. Consistent with Council's aim to reduce waste, protect environment. Acknowledge environmental/financial sustainability.
  - **NEW Fellowship Grant: (10K ceiling)** \$20K in total. Development-focused rather than outcome-focused. Acknowledge artists' work.
  - Grant funding decisions will be guided by the Council Plan and Arts and Culture Strategy and stated in guidelines and assessment briefings.
  - Five program outcomes of the scheme aligned with the five Arts and Culture Strategy priorities (below):
  - **Funding programs and outcomes:**
    - Increased visibility and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
    - Public spaces activated with cultural and creative initiatives
    - Opportunities for creative practitioners to gain economic benefit or professional development
    - Opportunities for audiences, including the city's residents, workers and visitors, to engage with creativity, self-expression, learning and cultural participation
    - Increased visibility and understanding of the history and its stories through creative projects
  - **Arts and Culture Strategy funding priorities:**

- Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture are at the heart of Yarra.
  - Artists are essential to a thriving Yarra.
  - Our arts and culture shape Yarra's places and spaces.
  - We celebrate and support our creative and diverse community.
  - Our arts contribute to an ecologically sustainable future.
- **Implementation:**
    - Council's Community Grant Program has recently been audited. Recommendations from the audit (such as document framework/process to align with Council priorities) to be implemented/adopted early 2023. As Yarra's Arts and Culture Grants Program sits within this, the recommendations from the Arts and Culture Grants review will commence soon after.

### **Panel discussion**

- All members were pleased with the review and in support of the recommendations: "*Strong and well-thought through*", especially the inclusion of two new streams (Fellowship and Sustainability) and the consolidation of the initial seven streams into five.
- Question regarding 3% increase/decrease. 3% is mid-point between current CPI. Decrease from Annual Grants to fund in demand Rolling: RTC/SPG and NEW: Fellowship and Sustainability Grants.
- Question/comment regarding Priority No. 5 (*Our arts contribute to an ecologically sustainable future*) not in expected Program Outcomes. Noted for inclusion by Siu Chan.
- Correction in/under **Recommendations**: Yarra's current Arts and Culture grants scheme consists of **Seven** (not eight) different grant streams. Noted for editing by Siu Chan.
- Comment regarding the priorities and objectives be used as a basis for a question/s in the application process for applicants to address how their project aligns with project outcome/s.
- Members in support of seeing individual artists and organisations funded separately in the Bi-annual Arts and Culture Grants as individuals disadvantaged when competing with organisations.
- Current annual festivals in/under the Major Festival Grant may come up for review. Is Council able to sustain these/road test more? Major Festivals need to align with priorities and be more sustainable.

**ACTION:** panel members to review the latest draft and provide more feedback at the next YAARTS meeting scheduled for November.

## **5. Update on working groups**

### **Visual Arts Panel (VAP)**

- Upcoming VAP meeting (September) was postponed due to no quorum. Rescheduled for late October.
- Siu Chan and Visual Arts Officer Grace Longato provided a summary of the last VAP meeting held on 12 May 2022.
- Artworks donated to the Collection through donors Dr Jonathon and Nada Hartley, and through Claire Mitchell, are currently being submitted through the Federal Government's Cultural Gift Program
- Cook Memorial report, detailing the history of the memorial, was discussed at the VAP meeting in May and members supported the deaccessioning of the memorial. The proposal was to be taken to the Yana Ngargna group for discussion and opinion, however this has been delayed due to group members temporarily on leave.
- Final recommendation for *Fallen Fruit* (banana sculpture) by Adam Stone to be discussed/finalised with members at the VAP meeting in Oct.
- Light discussion around the current yellow plant pot located on Rose Street (in lieu of the sculpture *Fallen Fruit*) and of the recent Interflora marketing intervention.

### **Room to Create (RTC)**

- RTC panel members to convene for EOI interviews on Tuesday 27 September to select new tenant (month by month) for pop up space in Fitzroy. Space offered by Piccolo Developers.
- RTC program review is still in progress with Sandbox consultancy.

### **6. Arts and Culture Grants Assessment**

- Members discussed upcoming applications. Some members found applicants needed support with balancing budgets.

**ACTION:** Seek Michael Van Vliet's advice to refine this part of the application in the system/Smarty Grants.

- Written comments in addition to scoring encouraged and welcomed from members to provide feedback for applicants.
- Confirmation of Annual Grants Assessment meeting: Wednesday 5 October, Wurundjeri Room, Collingwood Town Hall. Start time to be scheduled later in the afternoon to accommodate time difference with Angela Conquet who will be OS. Brona Keenan to confirm when back from annual leave.

### **7. No other items**

### **8. End of year celebration/last meeting, NOV, 6pm. Location TBC**

Meeting ended: 7:35pm