

Central Coast Council

Arts and Culture Strategy 2023-2025

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VISION

'We are a vibrant, thriving community that continues to draw inspiration and opportunities from its natural beauty, land and people and connected by a powerful sense of belong.'

(Central Coast Council Strategic Plan 2014 – 2024)

PURPOSE

This Strategy provides a pathway for the Central Coast to maximise its unique cultural opportunities and enable the Council to act consciously and with greater purpose in the development of arts and culture by:

- 1 Expressing the essential role of cultural vitality in the Central Coast Strategic Vision.
- 2 Asserting the Council's commitment to the development of arts and culture as a means of creating a dynamic, healthy and sustainable society.
- 3 Making explicit the relationship between delivering cultural outcomes and the Central Coast Vision.
- 4 Articulating the cultural strengths of the Central Coast.
- 5 Inspiring and motivating community members and organisations to build on these strengths in order to increase the resilience, well-being, economic and cultural vitality of the community.

OBJECTIVES

Art and culture play an essential role in the development of a vibrant and sustainable society. The growing awareness of this at all levels of government has resulted in an international move to position Culture, alongside Social, Economic and Environmental policy domains for city and local governments.

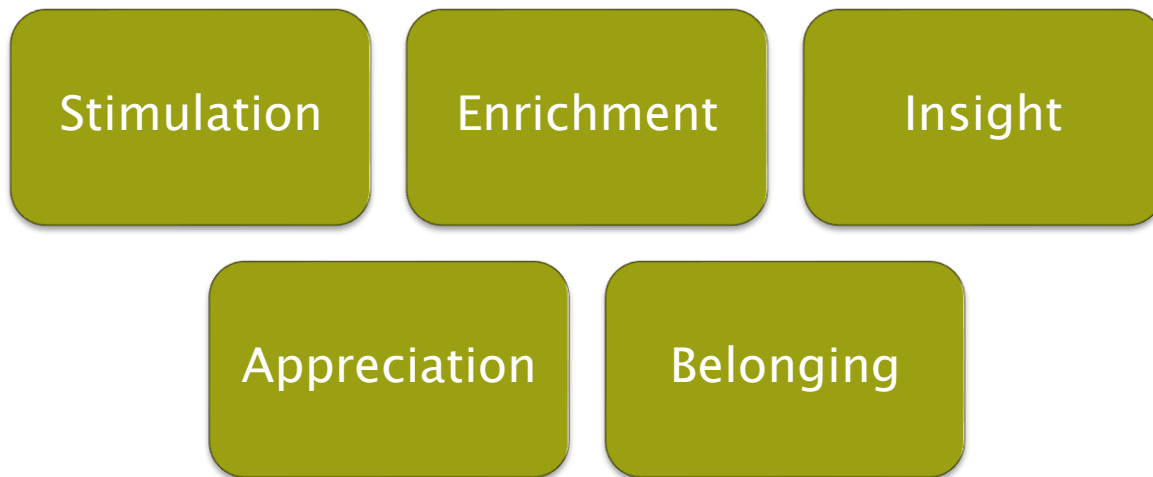
In Australia this movement is led by the Cultural Development Network who have developed a number of tools for cultural planning in local government including:

- 1 Cultural Planning Framework
- 2 Schema for Cultural Outcomes

Using the Cultural Development Network framework:

- 1 Provides language for discussion of cultural activity and its outcomes which will improve communications between Council and its state and federal counterparts.
- 2 Will improve Council's engagement with the cultural community by using the language of cultural outcomes in key policy documents and grant-making initiatives.
- 3 Aligns with growing requirements at all levels of government to express the results of investment in terms of outcomes (impact on the community) not just on outputs (what was done with the investment).

Using the Cultural Development Network Schema for Cultural Outcomes, the objectives for this strategy are:



Further definition and application of these objectives in the Central Coast context will be part of Step 2: Define Actions and Processes (2023/24) and Step 3: Implement and Monitor (2024/25 and ongoing) of the Strategy Implementation process.

CONTEXT

The value of Arts and Culture is already deeply embedded in the Central Coast community and reflected in the Central Coast Strategic Plan 2014–2024 across all Strategic Directions:

- 1 The Shape of Place
- 2 A Connected Central Coast
- 3 Community Capacity and Creativity
- 4 The Environment and Sustainable Infrastructure
- 5 Council Sustainability and Governance

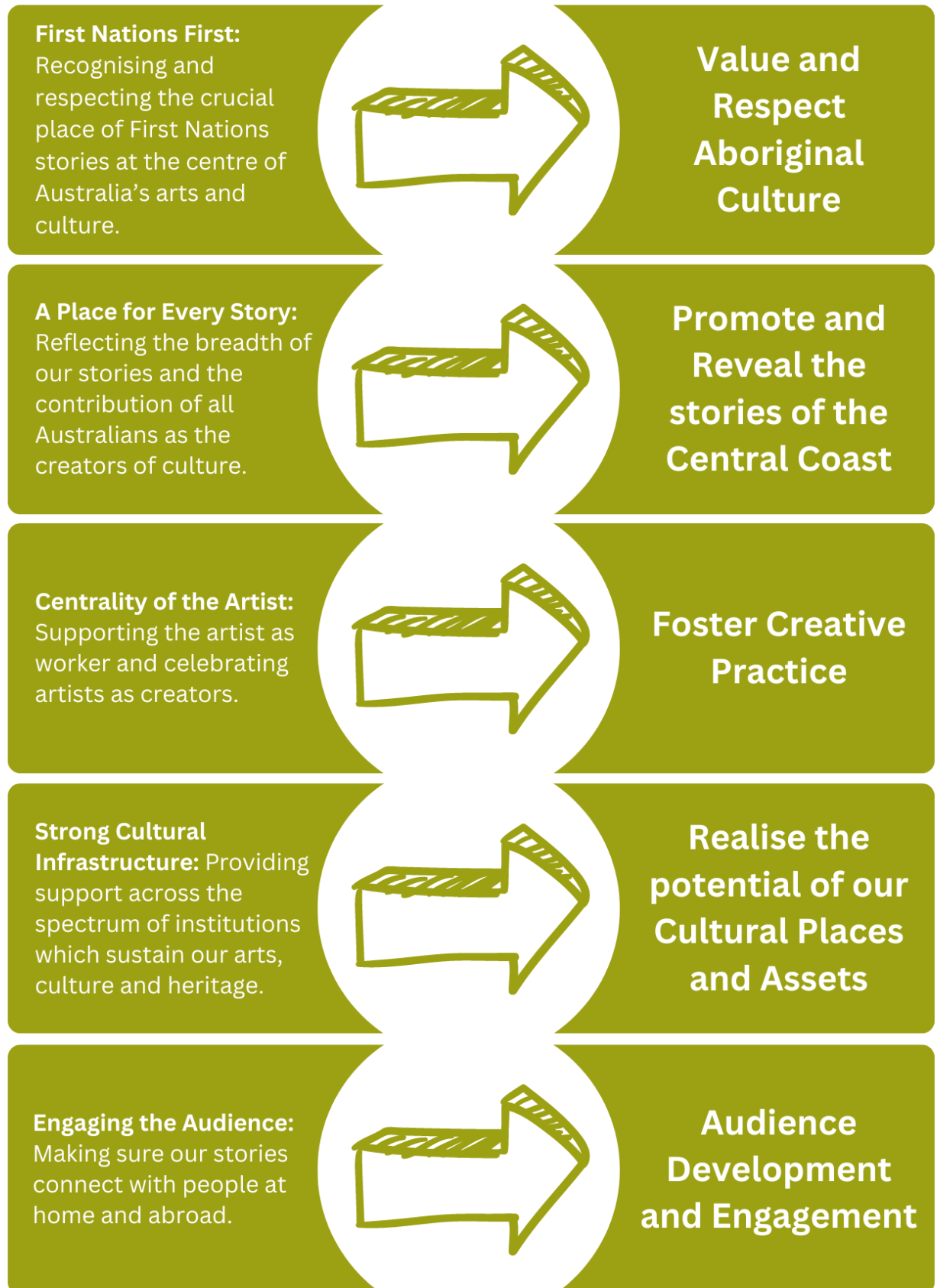
As a result, there has been significant investment in arts and culture in recent years, including the establishment of an Arts and Culture team at the Council in 2021 and the development of Hive as a new cultural precinct for the municipality, opening in November 2021.

The development of a new Arts and Culture strategy acknowledges the significant increase in capacity and opportunity that this investment has created, and that we are now entering an exciting and dynamic phase of growth. It has been designed to provide a pathway for the Council to sense and respond purposefully to the evolving cultural landscape, in order to understand our strengths and weaknesses, and to maximise the opportunities that it presents.

At a National level, the development of this strategy has coincided with the release of the Australian Government’s landmark National Cultural Policy—*Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*, on 30 January 2023. *Revive* is a 5-year plan to renew and revive Australia's arts, entertainment and cultural sector, with the aim to “deliver new momentum so that Australia's creative workers, organisations and audiences continue to thrive and grow, and so that our arts, culture and heritage are re-positioned as central to Australia's future.” The National Cultural Policy is structured around five interconnected pillars which have been used to provide five clear strategic directions for the Council:

Australian National Cultural Policy

Central Coast Arts and Culture Strategy



STANDARDS (INCLUDING RELEVANT LEGISLATION)

- 'National Cultural Policy – *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*', 30 Jan, 2023
- John Hawkes, *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's Essential Role in Public Planning*
- Central Coast Council Reconciliation Action Plan, December 2021
- Central Coast Collection Policy
- Central Coast Public Art Policy
- Central Coast Events Brand Strategy
- Central Coast Events Strategy
- Central Coast Volunteer Policy

DEFINITIONS AND EXEMPTIONS

Culture is everything from artistic expression to the shared ideas, values and/or customs of a group of people.

'Culture springs, first and foremost from human interaction ... making culture is a daily public event – not just in schools, in the media, in the 'culture houses' but also in the streets, shops, trains and café; Culture is not a pile of artefacts – it is us; the living breathing sum of us.' - John Hawkes – *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's essential Role in Public Planning*.

Art is an expression of culture e.g. everything from finger painting to the Mona Lisa. It helps us to appreciate the world through experiences outside the mundane, through enjoyment and entertainment, beauty and awe, joy and wonder. It helps us to understand the world through education and inspiration.

Artists are story keepers and story tellers. They capture time and help us understand who we are, how we became who we are and who we could become. They are change instigators who energise and articulate important social conversations and reforms.

Placemaking is a multifaceted approach to planning, design and management of public spaces which aims to create places that promote people's health, happiness and wellbeing. Placemaking focuses on the physical, cultural and social identities of a place. Pursuing the vision of this Arts and Culture strategy will enhance the Council's role in ongoing activation and management of place.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**1 Value and Respect Aboriginal Culture**

As outlined in the Central Coast Reconciliation Action Plan. Recognising:

- 1 The Aboriginal community as key stakeholders in the Arts and Cultural expression of Central Coast community.
- 2 That this is a long-term relationship-based process.
- 3 That as a Council and a community we are early on in this journey.

Goals:

- a) Establish a formal partnership with our regional aboriginal corporation, Six Rivers.
- b) Through this partnership identify appropriate Central Coast and Tasmanian Aboriginal community representatives to engage in Arts and Cultural consultation.

2 Promote and Reveal the Stories of the Central Coast Community

Stories from here, for here.

Knowing the particular stories of the places in which we live and the people we live with heightens our sense of belonging and deepens our appreciation of and empathy for others.

The stories of a place, good and bad, are what makes it unique and special. Understanding and providing opportunities for the telling of these stories will enrich the lives of the people who live here.

Stories can also attract and retain visitors with a desire to know more about what makes this place special.

Goals:

- a) Seek opportunities to communicate the richness of our history and culture to residents and visitors and to tell old stories in new ways.
- b) Provide opportunities for the diverse communities of our municipality to tell their stories and share their culture.

3 Foster Creative Practice and Connection

The Central Coast is home to many creative individuals and organisations. Creative practice is an essential element of a culturally vibrant society. The Council is a multi-faceted organisation with a commitment to support an environment which fosters creativity and collaboration.

Goals:

- a) Promote Council's existing infrastructure to support the ongoing development of creative practice.
- b) Foster and participate in creative networks by facilitating connections between organisations and individuals.

4 Realise the Potential of our Cultural Places and Assets

Our cultural places provide the physical context for a vibrant and welcoming community. The Council is committed to providing equitable access, appropriate resourcing and communicating their value and role. Our cultural places include public space, including bushland, managed parklands and the built environment – and in particular facilities such as Hive, the Ulverstone Civic Centre and the Wharf Precinct. Our cultural assets - such as the Central Coast Cultural Collections - help us to understand our past and use this knowledge to build a better future. Appropriately housing and providing equitable access to these collections will make a significant contribution to the cultural vitality of the community.

Goals:

- a) Establish an Arts and Culture Advisory Committee.
- b) Continue to develop Hive as the cultural precinct for the Central Coast municipality.
- c) Prioritise accessibility and inclusivity in all cultural assets, projects and programs.

5 Audience Development and Engagement

Making sure the stories of the Central Coast are seen and heard by connecting with our community and visitors to the Central Coast.

All members of the Central Coast community regardless of literacy, age, education or ability, have the opportunity to access and participate in arts and culture.

Goals:

- a) Facilitate and extend partnerships between arts and cultural organisations, practitioners and the wider community.
- b) Be a conduit for the dissemination of arts and cultural information and news in the region.

FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION

