A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR HOBART CITY COUNCIL'S CULTURAL PROGRAMS

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CREATIVE HOBART is an aspirational strategy document focused on profound change to the positioning of the Hobart City Council’s role in the cultural and creative life of Hobart’s community.

Hobart has a well deserved reputation as a centre for quality cultural and creative products, activities and experiences. Its cultural festivals and events draw tourists from across Tasmania, interstate and internationally. Its strong traditions in craft and design are gaining increasing recognition nationally and internationally. Its professional artists are exhibiting and performing across the world and the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) and the recently refurbished Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) will increasingly bring an expanded art world to Hobart.

This strategy aims to reposition Hobart City Council as a key facilitator in Hobart’s growth as a truly creative city for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. The change in approach from providing a relatively limited range of visual arts activities to a broader focus on culture and creativity is supported by the knowledge gained during extensive consultation with the sector and community.

CREATIVE HOBART is based on a holistic vision that contemporary cultural policy needs to build on the recognition that the growth of the cultural and creative industries provide a real opportunity to strengthen community wellbeing, create a culturally rich sense of place and contribute to economic viability.

To contribute to the development of a vibrant and diverse city, CREATIVE HOBART seeks to support an expanded breadth of programs that: bring more cultural and creative activities out into the public realm; provide greater exposure to cultural activities; increase opportunities for the involvement of the community; provide an attractor for cultural tourism; and, above all, make Hobart a truly wonderful place to live, work and visit.
POLICY CONTEXT

In developing CREATIVE HOBART significant consideration has been given to how the strategy is informed by, and reinforces the way in which Council’s Hobart 2025 and Strategic Plan 2008 – 2013 position culture and creativity as important contributors to the future of Hobart.

Strategic Plan 2008 – 2013

The Strategic Plan is structured around a series of seven Future Direction statements with relevant outcomes, strategies and priority actions. While it can be demonstrated that there is a cultural component to all Future Directions, of most relevance to this document is Future Direction 7 (FD7), which states:

**FD7 – is dynamic, vibrant and culturally expressive.**

In 2025 Hobart will be a city that is a destination of choice and a place for business. Clever thinking and support for creativity will help build a strong economic foundation and entertainment, arts and cultural activities promote the distinctive character of the city. Lifestyle opportunities and strong communities will ensure a vibrancy and way of life that is Hobart.

Outcomes to be Achieved:

**FD7.1. A destination of choice and a place for business.**

**FD7.2. Clever thinking and support for creativity will help build a strong economic foundation.**

**FD7.3. Entertainment, arts and cultural activities promote the distinctive character of the city, and lifestyle opportunities and strong communities will ensure a vibrancy and way of life that is Hobart.**

Cultural activities, the arts and the creative industries have a role to play in all three of the above outcomes. A vibrant arts scene and a wide diversity of cultural activities such as festivals, theatre and concerts bring people to Hobart and the greater the range on offer the more likely people are to stay in the city and contribute to the viability of local businesses.

With the decline in manufacturing, the ‘creative industries’ have become recognised as an important contributor to employment and economic growth. Bringing more arts activities out into the public realm through activities such as public art, temporary exhibitions and impromptu performances in the streets, lanes and malls can make a significant contribution to the feel of a city. Spaces that are vibrant and exciting are safe and welcoming spaces.

Other relevant strategies and plans include:

- Public Art Strategy
- Cultural & Linguistic Diversity Strategy 2009 – 2012
- Youth Strategy 2009 – 2011
- Positive Ageing Strategy 2010 – 2013
- Economic Development Plan 2009 – 2014
- Hobart 2010 Public Spaces and Public Life [Gehl Architects]
- Inner City Action Plan 2011
Hobart is a city with a wonderful geographic location, in a unique bushland setting between the mountains and the sea, with an historic urban fabric and a reputation for quality lifestyles and rich cultural experiences. People and places are at the forefront of this strategy and therefore the focus is on investing in cultural activities and activating public places for local people; and as a consequence, providing the basis for the ‘authentic’ tourism experience and a growth in the economic viability of the city.

It is a recognised fact that cultural tourism is a growing phenomenon and potential contributor to the economic growth of cities around the world. Research has shown that there are an increasing number of tourists who make destination decisions based on seeking a distinctive and authentic cultural experience. For Hobart, an advantage of attracting cultural tourists is that they tend to stay longer and spend more than the average tourist.

Tourism Tasmania’s Arts Tourism Strategy 2012 states that:

Tasmania can expect steady growth in arts tourism and an increased recognition on the mainland of Tasmania as an artistic destination. And with 44 per cent of tourists over 55 years of age visiting arts attractions, there is also an opportunity to engage a younger demographic whose interests are not currently being met.

The success of MONA as a ‘must see’ cultural experience is likely to have a significant long term impact on the number of cultural tourism visitors to Hobart, and is even now the number two visitor destination in Tasmania behind Salamanca Market attracting 313,688 visitors in the 12 months from October 2011 to September 2012.

There is an important opportunity for Hobart to leverage off this visitation by developing and marketing quality art and cultural experiences and offerings that keep these visitors in Hobart for longer – in particular at those times of the year when interstate and overseas visitation is traditionally lower – delivering economic benefits that will flow to the broader local economy.

In our highly mobile and interconnected world, people and businesses make location choices based on factors such as lifestyle, environment and cultural life. Richard Florida, author of The Rise of the Creative Class, has through his research measured and demonstrated the interconnections between the creativity, openness and quality of life of a place and its ability to attract people and businesses that are involved in innovation and creativity.

This strategy therefore seeks to further develop the cultural and creative sectors’ contribution to Hobart’s quality of life – for the city’s residents and as a vibrant attractor for people seeking a special destination.
Clever thinking and support for creativity will help build a strong economic foundation.

Hobart has the foundations of a strong cultural and creative industry sector. It is home to many individual artists, craftspeople and designers, and has a rich network of sector organisations and creative industry businesses.

The creative industries in Australia are a growth area and have the potential to make an increasingly important contribution to the Hobart economy. The increased attention on the creative industries recognises the importance of creativity and innovation and the vast industry involved in the development, production, marketing and consumption of creative product. The creative industries are those industries that involve the production, distribution and consumption of material with a cultural or ‘expressive’ function. It is generally accepted that the creative industries include areas of activity and industry such as the traditional art forms, as well as activities such as music production and distribution, publishing, architecture, graphic design and the film and multimedia businesses.

In addition to the contribution of employment and products of the creative industries, there are significant economic benefits to be gained from cultural activities such as cultural festivals and events. This can be demonstrated by the economic impact study conducted by KPMG on the 2012 Festival of Voices. The festival attracted audiences of more than 10,000 people with more than 1,800 of those being from interstate, staying an average of 6.5 nights. It is calculated that the event delivered an economic impact of $8.2 million and the creation of the equivalent of 52 full time jobs in the Tasmanian economy.

When Tasmanian visitor expenditure is included, the festival was estimated to deliver a total spend of $5.3 million, with 90 per cent expended in the Hobart area. Overall the festival is estimated to have generated a 15 fold economic impact against expenditure. In addition, the festival employed 27 people and 85 independent contractors and artists.

Likewise, analysis of the 2011 Ten Days on the Island festival found that the event generated an additional value add of more than $24 million and provided the equivalent of 76 full time jobs.

The evidence above provides a compelling picture of the potential for cultural tourism to be a significant employer and contributor to Hobart’s economy. It also demonstrates the importance, at a time when other industries such as manufacturing and forestry may be in decline, of the Council investing in cultural and creative industry activities that will have a positive impact on the vitality and viability of Hobart and its people.
The Hobart City Council is committed to the notion of building strong and vibrant communities, as is demonstrated by the findings of the Gehl report ‘Hobart 2010 Public Spaces and Public Life – a city with people in mind’ and the Inner City Action Plan, which recognises the critical link between the quality of the built and business environments.

Make the public life more vibrant and the city more diverse by offering a wider range of activities and destinations for all user groups, especially at night. Intensify the work for inviting people to the city, not only to shop and work but also to have fun, and enjoy the city and fellow citizens. Help people to use the city in new and different ways.

This approach dovetails with ‘Priority Action 15 – City Activation’ of the Inner City Action Plan, adopted by the Council following community consultation on the Gehl report.

Urban theorists such as Charles Landry, author of the Creative City: a toolkit for urban innovators and the Art of City Making, have made compelling arguments that there is a direct link between the cultural vitality and economic viability of cities.

Most urban experiences are shallow, disappointing and increasingly homogenised. A creative city thus seeks to generate a rich deep experience, which is not pre-digested and over-branded, where citizens feel they can be makers, shapers and co-creators of their experience rather than merely consumers of the pre-given. This requires the city to be confident in its identity in order to develop cultural depth and sophistication as well as play off and be inspired by its history.

A premise in developing this strategy has been focused on generating a “rich deep experience” for people living in or visiting Hobart. It aims to bring together the “cultural depth and sophistication” and conditions that support the development of the cultural and creative industries.

Cultural and arts activities also have a vitally important role to play in developing community and individual wellbeing, community cohesion and lifelong learning. There is a growing body of evidence that participation in cultural activities and access to a range of arts opportunities can dramatically improve health outcomes and increase wellbeing. This strategy provides participation opportunities by increasing the range of intercultural and intergenerational cultural activities for the Hobart community.
CREATIVE HOBART aims to maximise Hobart’s sense of place, activating public spaces and Council facilities. The focus of these strategies and actions is to further develop the City of Hobart as a creative milieu with programs and activities that build the viability and vitality of the city. In this way the whole city can become a platform for cultural expression and creative participation through maximising the city’s unique range of urban and natural environments. In addition, strategies and actions are focused on bringing more cultural activities and creative people into central Hobart to contribute to the sense of place and vibrancy of the city.

In supporting the notion of the ‘creative milieu’, CREATIVE HOBART supports strategies that will: nurture creativity; invest in innovation; celebrate excellence and diversity; and connect creative people. Through these strategies Hobart will become an incubator of creativity, innovation and excellence, and the initiatives will highlight these qualities that further strengthen Hobart’s existing reputation for quality artwork, artisanship and cultural experiences.

Working with Hobart’s strength as a small and accessible place, the CREATIVE HOBART strategies focus on the city as a connector of people, information and knowledge. The goal is to reinforce the other objectives and position the city at the centre of cultural life.

Here the Council is ideally placed to become an important clearinghouse for information and host to a comprehensive guide of cultural activities across the municipal area. This will provide connections to both the not-for-profit sector and the for-profit organisations and businesses staging cultural activities.

HOBART WILL BE RECOGNISED AS A CREATIVE AND CULTURALLY ENGAGING ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS BOTH THOSE WHO WISH TO PRACTICE THEIR ART AND CREATIVE ENDEAVOURS AND THOSE WHO SEEK TO PARTICIPATE IN MEANINGFUL AND EXCITING CULTURAL ACTIVITIES.
CREATIVE HOBART MISSION STATEMENT

The Hobart City Council is central to developing the city as: an exciting platform for a wide diversity of cultural expression; an incubator of creativity and innovation; and a place where connections are made and knowledge is shared.

CORE ROLES

Central to CREATIVE HOBART is the shift over time from the Council as a provider of cultural programs and services to adopting a greater role as a facilitator and coordinator. The goal is to reposition resources and expand the range of program areas through support and partnerships across Council and the cultural and private sectors.

Facilitate/Coordinate

Increasingly the Council’s primary role will be as a facilitator and coordinator. As part of this new approach, the Council will actively support, nurture and guide the development of arts and creative industries in Hobart to maximise Council resources, and build partnerships with other governmental agencies and the private sector.

Promote/Advocate

The Council will deliver strategies that help to promote arts and cultural activities to ensure that they gain the exposure they require to succeed and contribute to community enrichment.

Invest/Support

The Council will continue to support and invest in cultural institutions and events that make a significant contribution to the city, and assist the Council to deliver on its vision for Hobart being a creative and culturally engaging environment.

Provide/Partner

The Council will, where gaps exist, provide services and programs, or develop partnerships to provide services and programs that fulfill an identified need in the community.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

CREATIVE HOBART has the city at its core, in recognition of the Council’s pivotal role in developing and supporting an environment in which the arts and creativity can flourish. The strategy positions the city as: the ‘stage’ upon which the cultural life of the community is played out; as a supportive environment that encourages creative people to achieve great things; and as a place of networking and information exchange.

The strategy is built around three outcome areas (next page).

OUTCOME AREA 1

The city as a platform for cultural expression and creative participation

The concept of a city as a platform arises from the knowledge that Hobart has an active arts and creative sector that could be made more visible throughout the municipal area. Here the Council is uniquely placed to facilitate programs that would engage artists and cultural workers in activating the city’s built and natural public spaces in order to provide expanded opportunities for meaningful community participation in cultural activities.

The ‘city as a platform’ objectives build on Council’s Strategic Plan 2008 – 2013 which states:

FD7.3 Entertainment, arts and cultural activities promote the distinctive character of the city, and lifestyle opportunities and strong communities will ensure a vibrancy and way of life that is Hobart.

OUTCOME AREA 2

The city as an incubator of creativity, innovation, excellence and diversity

The concept of the city as an incubator is based on the knowledge that the arts industry sectors have creativity and innovation as their raison d’être. The Council in its role as a facilitator can work with the sector and the community to foster a milieu in which this creativity can flourish. In addition to the contribution that cultural activity makes to community wellbeing and vitality, it can make an important contribution to city viability both directly through the sale and consumption of cultural product and indirectly through the multiplier effects that flow from events and activities.

The ‘city as an incubator’ objectives build on Council’s Strategic Plan 2008 – 2013 which states:

FD7.2 Promote economic growth through creative and innovative Businesses.

OUTCOME AREA 3

The city as a connector of people, information and knowledge

Cities are about people and the interactions between people. Developing shared understandings, exchanging opinions and sharing information form the very basis of our society. In this context, the Council is positioned to facilitate programs and activities that provide a welcoming and supportive environment in which to share ideas and dreams for the future.

The ‘city as a connector’ objectives build on Council’s Strategic Plan 2008 – 2013 which states:

FD3.2 Partnerships with governments, the private sector and local communities are achieving significant regional, city and community goals.

and

FD6.1.1 Create opportunities for the community to participate in shared experiences, where all community sectors can feel welcomed and valued.
THE CITY AS A PLATFORM

cultural expression & creative participation
OBJECTIVE 1.1
ENHANCING SENSE OF PLACE

This objective seeks to enhance the look and feel of Hobart’s natural and built public spaces through acknowledging and celebrating Hobart’s Indigenous and European heritage and expressing the diversity and creativity of its people.

Cultural expression in its many forms has an important role in building the city’s sense of place, expressing civic pride and engaging the community. Therefore the following strategies and actions are designed to maximise the Council’s role in delivering, partnering and supporting place-making activities such as heritage interpretation and the commissioning of contemporary public art, in its many forms, in order to enhance the city’s sense of place.

Strategy 1.1.1: expressing diversity
To acknowledge the need for Hobart’s public places to express the intergenerational and intercultural nature of Hobart’s people and develop cultural programs in response to this evolving diversity.

Strategy 1.1.2: expressing Aboriginal cultural identity
To acknowledge, celebrate and express the rich cultural heritage and living cultural life of Hobart’s Indigenous people in public places across the city.

Strategy 1.1.3: art in public places
To develop art programs in public places that build upon Hobart’s unique history, setting and sense of place through creative, innovative and high quality contemporary public art practice, including both permanent and temporary works.
OBJECTIVE 1.2
ACTIVATING PUBLIC SPACES

This objective focuses on public space as a stage upon which cultural activities can take place. Cultural activities do not have to take place in formal cultural facilities; events such as impromptu performances and art installations may take place in the streets, on the waterfront, in the parks or in bushland. Hobart can benefit greatly from activating public space, being made more vibrant through the bringing of the city’s cultural activity out into these places. Therefore, the following strategies are designed to work in partnership with the cultural sector and facilitate opportunities for increased activation of public space across the city.

Strategy 1.2.1: open space activation
To develop art programs and cultural events in public open spaces, especially in Hobart’s extensive bushland environments, that generate activity and a sense of connection and caring for the environment. Programs should be relevant to all sectors of the community.

Strategy 1.2.2: artwork platforms
To create vibrant public spaces through the installation of ‘platforms’ for the temporary exhibition of artworks. The ‘platforms’ will provide opportunities for a range of ephemeral, digital and text-based works by both established and young and emerging artists.
OBJECTIVE 1.3
ACTIVATING COUNCIL FACILITIES

This objective acknowledges that the Council is the custodian of a rich and diverse range of facilities that could be better utilised for cultural activities. In addition to the major civic buildings such as the Town Hall and the City Hall, there are community facilities such as Mathers and Criterion Houses and the Youth Arts and Recreation Centre which currently run arts and cultural activities. There are also a variety of other facilities that could be used creatively for culturally related activities. Therefore, the following strategies are designed to unlock the potential of the City’s civic and alternative facilities.

Strategy 1.3.1: civic venues
To encourage greater arts sector and broader community usage of the Council’s facilities such as the Town Hall, City Hall, Mawson Place, Waterside Pavilion, Mathers and Criterion Houses and Youth Arts and Recreation Centre for cultural activities.

Strategy 1.3.2: alternative venues
To encourage greater community usage of the Council’s facilities not normally associated with cultural activities.
THE CITY AS AN INCUBATOR

creativity, innovation, excellence & diversity
OBJECTIVE 2.1
NURTURING CREATIVITY

This objective recognises that the Council has an important opportunity to facilitate the development of a supportive environment in which creativity and innovation can flourish. Hobart has an ideal scale and potential for excellent connectivity between sectors, such as arts and business. Small cities such as Hobart are often home to highly creative people and new ideas, however it is often difficult for creative people to sustain their practice in the small marketplace. Therefore, the following strategy is designed to support arts practitioners and creative industry workers to develop the sustainability of the sector.

Strategy 2.1.1: creative industry development

To facilitate an industry development program that acknowledges the importance of the creative industries as a driver of innovation and creativity, and as a significant sector providing increased employment opportunities and contributing to Hobart’s economy.
OBJECTIVE 2.2
INVESTING IN INNOVATION

This objective focuses on innovation in the cultural sector and acknowledges that, as with other research and development areas, innovation needs investment support to reach its potential. The focus is not on the direct investment of venture capital but rather strategic investment of resources to encourage the exploration of ideas and development of innovative practices. Therefore, the following strategies are designed to develop initiatives that position ideas and innovation as central to Hobart’s future.

Strategy 2.2.1: cultural capacity building
To provide Council support through direct grants and the facilitation of programs that assist cultural organisations to build capacity and become more sustainable in order to make an ongoing contribution to Hobart’s vibrant cultural life.

Strategy 2.2.2: ideas incubator
To encourage the exploration of new understandings about Hobart, significant contemporary issues and innovation by local and visiting thinkers, through initiatives such as the proposed ‘Ideas Incubator’ residency program and partnering with the tertiary sector.

Strategy 2.2.3: funding support
Support to external organisations would be made provisional on the organisation agreeing to a partnership model with clear ‘public good’ assessment criteria against which the outcomes of the funding can be quantified. This would establish their contribution to delivering on the strategy and helping to build the vitality and viability of Hobart’s cultural sector.
OBJECTIVE 2.3
CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY

This objective builds upon Hobart’s well deserved reputation for excellence in design and arts. Hobart and Tasmania also have a strong ‘artisan’ tradition, particularly in craft and design practice. While many of these artisan products gain public exposure through markets and festivals, they are not necessarily widely supported through the city’s marketing and promotional material. Therefore, the following strategy is designed to facilitate activities that develop a greater awareness of Hobart’s creative strengths and artistic excellence.

Strategy 2.3.1: city showcases
To maximise opportunities that showcase the diversity, creativity and excellence of Hobart’s arts and creative industries.
THE CITY AS A CONNECTOR

people, knowledge & information
OBJECTIVE 3.1
CONNECTING CREATIVE PEOPLE

This objective is about strengthening existing networks and facilitating new connections within the cultural sector, within the region and beyond. While Hobart is generally a well-connected city, it cannot be assumed that the cultural sector has strong and effective communication and information-sharing networks. By its very nature, the sector is made up of major organisations and individual practitioners, both working somewhat in isolation and competition. Therefore, the following strategies are designed to facilitate new initiatives that can help to bring creative people together to share ideas, make connections and explore potential collaborations.

Strategy 3.1.1: creative industry connections
To implement initiatives and actions that assist the development and growth of the creative industries as an important employer and significant contributor to the Hobart economy.

Strategy 3.1.2: cultural sector connections
To facilitate and create practical opportunities to build the professional networks that assist the development and growth of the cultural sector as a major contributor to Hobart’s vitality and community wellbeing.
OBJECTIVE 3.2
GATHERING & DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE

This objective focuses on improving the availability and accuracy of information about what Hobart has to offer from the cultural and arts perspective. If residents and visitors to the city are to fully appreciate the scope and quality of the arts and cultural activities available, they require accurate and up-to-date information that is readily accessible online and in print. Therefore, the following strategy is designed to improve the quality of knowledge about Hobart’s cultural life.

Strategy 3.2.1: knowledge hub
To position Hobart City Council as a central knowledge hub for information on cultural organisations, creative industry businesses, cultural events and activities in the city.
OBJECTIVE 3.3
BROKERING CONNECTIONS

This objective positions the Council as a ‘cultural broker’ that takes advantage of, and leverages, the Council’s central role within the city to identify opportunities, ‘join the dots’ and smooth the way so that activities can happen. As with any large organisation, from an external perspective, access to the Council’s capacity in terms of opportunities, programs and venues may be somewhat fragmented and difficult to navigate. There is an opportunity to better harness the Council’s significant capacities to assist those individuals, small community groups and even large organisations wishing to conduct a cultural event in Hobart. Therefore, the following strategies are designed to facilitate, simplify and smooth the way for cultural organisations seeking Council approvals and support for their activities.

Strategy 3.3.1: internal connections
To position Council as a cultural broker that provides support to individuals and organisations seeking to access and use the Council’s facilities or spaces.

Strategy 3.3.2: external connections
To facilitate more effective external organisational partnerships and information sharing in order to expand and improve the Council’s capacity to more efficiently and effectively assist the community to undertake cultural activities in the city.
GOVERNANCE STRATEGIES

To support CREATIVE HOBART, the Council will establish an appropriate supporting governance structure.

This will firstly involve the establishment of a Cultural Programs Special Committee to champion and provide strategic guidance to, and oversight of, the implementation of CREATIVE HOBART.

The Council will also host an Annual Cultural Forum which will involve individual arts practitioners and representatives from organisations and groups across the cultural sector and the general community. The forum will provide a platform for a wide-ranging discussion around the needs of the sector in Hobart. It will also provide the opportunity for cross-sector communication, information sharing and to provide feedback and input into the Council’s ongoing implementation of CREATIVE HOBART.

The Council will retain its current Public Art Special Committee in recognition of its important continuing role in support of Council’s public art program. The membership of this committee will include individuals with experience beyond the visual arts as necessary.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The following diagram sets out the proposed governance structure with the new Cultural Programs Special Committee and the Annual Cultural Forum.

COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

CULTURAL PROGRAMS SPECIAL COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP: Aldermen (based on the current membership of the Council’s Arts Advisory Special Committee) and relevant Council officers

ROLE: To provide strategic guidance and oversight of the implementation of CREATIVE HOBART.

ANNUAL CULTURAL FORUM

CHAIR: Chair of Cultural Programs Special Committee

ATTENDANCE: Representatives from the cultural sector and the wider community

ROLE: To provide the opportunity for cross-sector communication, information sharing, and to provide feedback and input into the Council’s ongoing implementation of CREATIVE HOBART

CULTURAL PROGRAMS FUNCTION

PUBLIC ART SPECIAL COMMITTEE

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: Representatives from the visual arts sector, relevant Council officers and individuals with experience beyond the visual arts as necessary

ROLE: To review and make recommendations to the Council regarding public art proposals and concepts
IN THE WAKE OF YOUR COURAGE I SWIM