

Newcastle City Council

Cultural Strategy

2016 – 2019



Newcastle City Council acknowledges the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, and that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession.

Council reiterates its commitment to addressing disadvantages and attaining justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community.

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LORD MAYOR'S FOREWORD

Newcastle is a vibrant city infused with culture. From our leading cultural institutions to the many arts organisations and creative businesses, there is much to be excited about.

Newcastle City Council both values and celebrates our cultural life. Through culture and the creative arts, we tell our city's story, share our history and understand our shared identity.

Events, festivals, markets, exhibitions and performances are all part of our cultural fabric and contribute to our wellbeing as well as the city's social and economic vibrancy. Council's cultural facilities play a significant role in leading this activity, including Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle Museum, Civic Theatre, Newcastle Region Library, City Hall and Fort Scratchley.

The Cultural Strategy 2016-2019 addresses Council's role and participation with the community in supporting and developing a thriving creative culture.

It prioritises our actions and resources and in doing so assists our local arts communities in their planning processes.

The opportunity to participate in cultural activity, as audience or creator, is very special. I look forward to seeing this strategy brought to life to make a positive impact throughout our community.



Councillor Nuatali Nemes
LORD MAYOR OF NEWCASTLE



INTERIM CEO'S FOREWORD

A dynamic, vibrant culture and thriving creative arts scene are contributors to the economic success of many cities. From local dance schools through to major touring events, arts and culture generates business and opportunity for Newcastle.

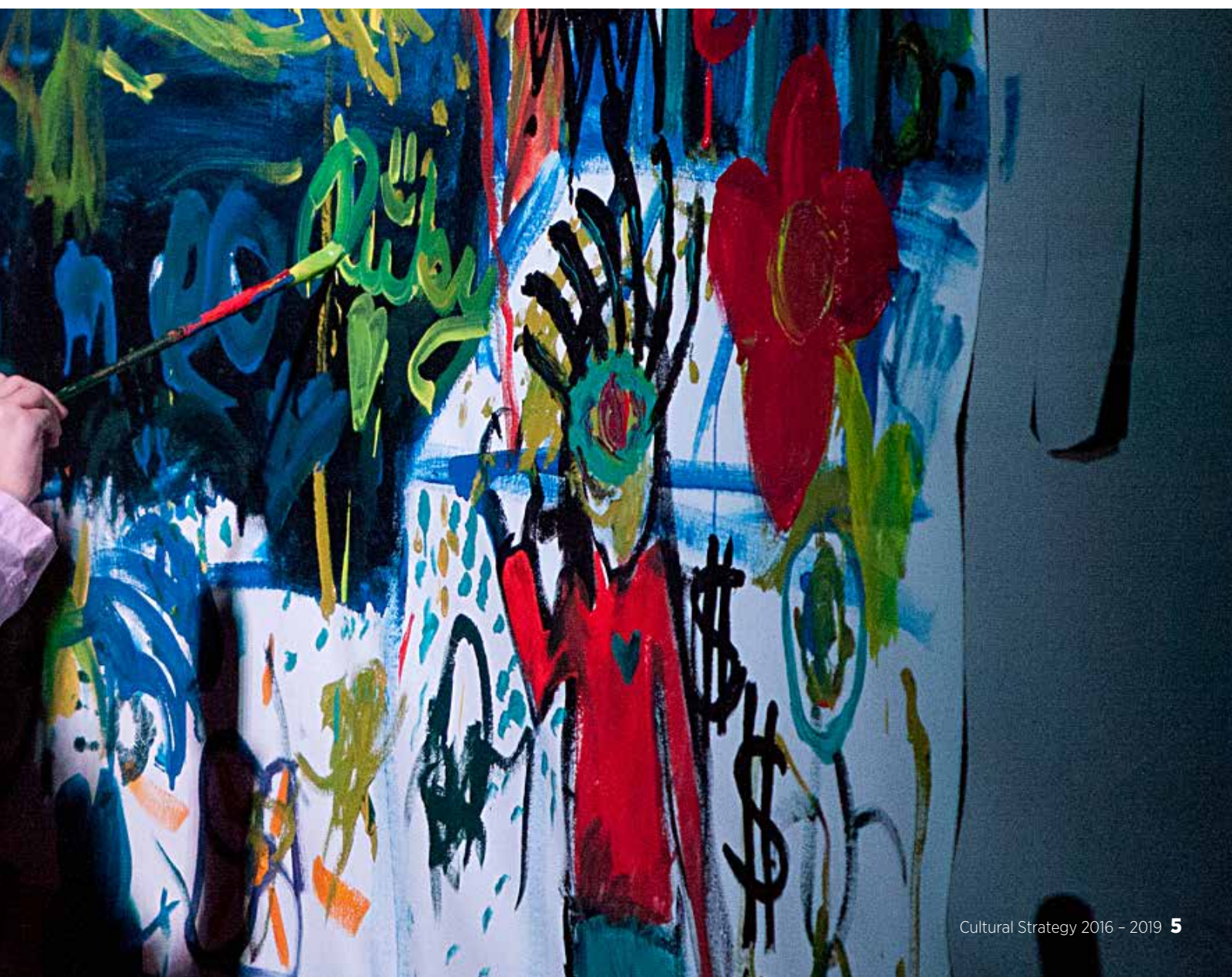
The Cultural Strategy 2016-2019 not only provides a platform for us to articulate priorities but is also a document from which we can more ambitiously plan for the future.

Through consultation in the development of this strategy, the community told us they look to Newcastle City Council to provide a vision for culture in which they can participate. This strategy provides that long-term vision, it is not a 'one off' but part of a continuum in good planning both by and for the city. We will implement it within the context of our four-year delivery program and commitment to financial sustainability, with strategic investment in the growth of Newcastle's cultural and creative economy.

I share with you the enjoyment of experiencing the cultural life that Newcastle has to offer. This strategy presents Council's commitment to growing the city's cultural profile and enhancing opportunities for residents and visitors to experience and participate in its exciting cultural future.



Frank Cordingley
**INTERIM CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER**





BACKGROUND

Newcastle is home to artists, galleries, museums, theatres, creative enterprises, arts organisations, cultural education providers, cultural collections and a community that embraces cultural expression.

The Cultural Strategy (2016-2019) is a four year framework detailing the priorities for Council's investment in arts and culture in Newcastle. While a living document, it serves as a planning tool defining the key priorities and actions that collectively provide a strategic direction and define Council's role in culture and positions it to meet the cultural needs of the city in a targeted and strategic manner.

This Strategy expands on the cultural components of the integrated *Newcastle 2030: Community Strategic Plan* and outlines Council's cultural actions that will contribute to delivering the overall vision for Newcastle 2030.

The Cultural Strategy:

- guides the strategic development of culture in Newcastle
- directs Council's resource investment in cultural projects, programs and services and for 2016-2019
- makes transparent Council's strategic direction to enable public and private partnership in strengthening and growing Newcastle's cultural vibrancy
- supports Council to fulfil its role as a cultural leader, managing the city's major cultural institutions and participating in the city's cultural life
- is intended to be actioned within the context of Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

Newcastle 2030: Community Strategic Plan (CSP) focuses on seven strategic directions, of which four directly look to culture to deliver outcomes. The Cultural Strategy connects the aspirations of the cultural institutions and services of Council within the overarching context of the CSP and its cultural, community and capacity building objectives.

Vibrant and Activated Public Places

- Public places that provide for diverse activity and strengthen our social connections
- Culture, heritage and place are valued, shared and celebrated
- Safe and activated places that are used by people day and night

Caring and Inclusive Community

- Active and healthy communities with physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing
- A creative, culturally rich and vibrant community

Liveable and Distinctive Built Environment

- A built environment that maintains and enhances our sense of identity

Smart and Innovative City

- A culture that supports and encourages innovation and creativity at all levels
- A thriving community that attracts people to live, work, invest and visit

The Cultural Strategy sits alongside a suite of intersecting planning documents that are connected by the CSP and guide Council services in specific focus areas. These documents include:

- Access and Inclusion Strategy (pending)
- Newcastle Destination Management Plan 2013
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2015
- Newcastle Economic Development Strategy 2015 (pending)
- Heritage Strategy 2013-2017
- Social Strategy 2016-2020 (pending)
- Night time Economy: Newcastle After Dark 2016-2020 (pending)
- Multicultural Strategy 2016-2020 (pending)

The importance of partnering with our community, engaging with our audiences, embracing diversity and ideas and supporting our artists and practitioners, are fundamental to contributing to the overall vision for Newcastle being a smart, liveable and sustainable city. In setting a cultural strategy, Newcastle is working towards making culture intrinsic to the city and valued for its contribution to people's wellbeing, the city's identity and its economic, educational and tourism values.

NEWCASTLE'S CULTURE

"The culture of the city is about the people."

Bob Cook

President, Newcastle Industrial Heritage Association



Our culture informs our way of life. It is the means by which a society offers meaning and expresses its collective identity. Culture is informed by our history and our environment and reflects our behaviours, beliefs and values. By telling our stories, we make sense of the place in which we live.

Newcastle has an energetic culture informed by its remarkable and diverse natural environment, its rich Aboriginal heritage, its convict history and industrial foundations.

The Awabakal and Worimi peoples are acknowledged as the traditional custodians of the land and waters of Newcastle. Aboriginal people lived a very rich and vibrant existence in and around Muloobinba (Newcastle) and Coquun (the Hunter River) before white settlement. Marine life and bush tucker ensured food was abundant. Ceremonies and feasting were times for meeting new people, sharing resources and trading implements with inland clans. Shell middens at Meekarlba (Honeysuckle) and a tool making site at Pillapay Kullaitaran (Glenrock Lagoon) are remnants of those gatherings.¹

Newcastle's natural landscape features known sacred sites including Whibayganba (Nobbys Headland). The dreaming tells of a notorious kangaroo that jumped from Tahlbihn Point, now known as Fort Scratchley, to the safety of Whibayganba. The kangaroo remains hidden in the island, occasionally thumping its tail and making the land tremble, explaining the region's earthquake activity.

Coal was an important part of the local Aboriginal economy and culture for thousands of years before the establishment of Newcastle as a penal settlement in 1804 and Australia's first privately-owned coal mine in 1828. The city is largely defined by its rich industrial history that is showcased today through its iconic architecture such as the warehouses, railway workshops, tram sheds and historic homes built for the city's industrialists. From its convict beginnings, revealed through the colonial artist Joseph Lycett, the city has continuously used culture as a platform for expression.

Today, Lonely Planet promotes Newcastle as 'punching well above its weight. Superb surf beaches, historical architecture and a sun-drenched climate are only part of the city's charm. There is fine dining, hip bars, quirky boutiques, and a diverse arts scene.' The city is evolving from its industrial past and moving to celebrate its beaches, lifestyle, sporting life, working harbour and history.²

Council owns and manages the city's key cultural institutions: Newcastle Region Library, Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle Museum, Civic Theatre and Playhouse. It is also the custodian of the city's iconic collections of arts, artefacts and archives, many of which hold the stories of the city's history. They represent specialised interests and passions and contribute to knowledge, research and a wider cultural conversation which is integral to the city's arts and cultural vibrancy. Beyond the built infrastructure

and collections, the institutions are enlivened by events, public programs, exhibitions, performances and functions. More importantly they perform a role in fostering and sustaining a vibrant and healthy community, contributing to knowledge and life-long learning and stimulating creativity and innovation.

The city's educational facilities are prominent and include strong research capabilities. The Hunter School of the Performing Arts is the only wholly selective public performing arts school in NSW and the Wollotuka Institute is the Australian leader in Indigenous education. The art schools of the Hunter TAFE and the University of Newcastle have a long history of seeding prominent artists. The University is rapidly growing a platform for education and research in the creative industries which complements the city's growing cohort of innovators. Co-working spaces such as The Production Hub and INNX are rising to the need to connect and incubate creative entrepreneurs, while Renew Newcastle has long supported the vital need for space by artists and practitioners.

It is noted the city's small to medium not-for-profit arts sector, typically the industry's innovators and the backbone of artist development, has suffered a sustained lack of funding. Still, this group, including Tantrum Youth Arts, Octapod, Hunter Writers Centre and Newcastle Youth Orchestra, provide a valuable contribution to sustaining the city's culture. This is increasingly complemented by The Lock-Up which is now focussed on contemporary and experimental practice.

History and heritage are vital contributors to the cultural conversation of who we are as a society. It is not possible to see change and identity without knowing where we have come from. There is a vibrant community of 47 volunteer initiated museums, keeping places and galleries within Newcastle and the Hunter supported by membership organisations such as Museums Australia Hunter Chapter and Heritage Hunter. Fort Scratchley is a heritage site of national significance maintained by Council however interpreted by an enthusiastic volunteer force. The highlight of the three local National Trust properties, Miss Porters' House, is a remarkable example of ordinary Newcastle life in the early 20th century, while The Maritime Centre's diverse collection reflects the importance of maritime history to the cultural life of Newcastle.

The reputation for the city's culture outside of Newcastle is very strong. The roll call of artists connected to the city and who continue to have a cultural footprint are as diverse as William Dobell, John Olsen, Margaret Olley, John Bell, Marion Halligan, Jonathan Biggins, Nick Enright, Roy Slaven, Sandman, Nigel Milsom, Tap Dogs, Silverchair and The Castanet Club. Whether it is the laid-back lifestyle, the extraordinary natural environment, the pub culture or the openness of Newcastle audiences, Newcastle has a dynamic cultural identity with significant community aspirations.

THE CONTEXT

The wider Newcastle metropolitan area is the largest regional centre in NSW and the second largest non-capital urban centre in Australia. Newcastle itself is recognised as the service and administrative centre for the Hunter region.



In **2011** Newcastle had a population of **148,531** people, compared to **541,950** people in the Hunter region, of which the breakdown of **males** to **females** was **49.2%** to **50.8%**.³

Around half of Newcastle's jobs are filled by people living outside of the Newcastle local government area.

The forecast for Newcastle's population in **2026** is **169,205** people.⁵



14.8% of Newcastle's population is youth aged **15-24** years, **2.6%** is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and **12.4%** are multicultural or born overseas.³

The median age of the population is **37** years.³

The three largest ancestries in Newcastle are Australian, English and Irish. During the period **2006 - May 2015** a total of **5,939** people migrated to Newcastle from overseas of which the migration streams included Skilled **51.2%**, Family **37%** and Humanitarian **11.7%**.⁵

2,609,000 day visitors and **75,300** international visitors. The visitor economy comprises **35%** visiting friends and relatives, **24%** business, **22%** leisure, **10%** events.⁶



79% of people living in Newcastle feel somewhat or strongly welcome and connected within the local community.⁷

62% of respondents said they volunteered in some capacity and **19%** volunteered for cultural and art related activities.⁷ Newcastle people attend cultural events and activity more than the national average.⁸



In **2011**, **30.8%** of people were attending an educational institution of which **31.8%**, a significantly high proportion, were engaged in tertiary education.³

Newcastle is now an evolving post-industrial city and this is reflected in changing employment patterns. While Newcastle has an industry base with specialisations in heavy engineering, defence and aerospace, education and health are the largest employers. It also has significant knowledge industries and is the regional hub for government and business services.



The tourism sector is growing. At **2012** year end, Newcastle received **962,000** domestic overnight visitors.⁶

National statistics indicate:

89% of Australians agree the arts are an important part of education

48% of Australians are creating art themselves

90% agree that Indigenous arts are an important part of Australian culture

85% of Australians believe the arts make for a richer and more meaningful life.⁸



91% actively participated in some form of cultural activity including using a library, reading, online gaming and social sites, visual arts, cultural events, collecting, craftwork, live performances, writing and performing arts.⁷



95% attend cultural events⁷ or venues in Newcastle which is higher than the national average of **86%**.⁸

In the May 2015 *Interim Report on The Creative Industries in Newcastle* McIntyre, Balnaves, Kerrigan, Williams and King comment, 'the creative industries in the Newcastle LGA are active and complex... It has a dedicated visual and performing arts sector, a vibrant popular music scene, world class writers and journalists, a well established media, nationally recognised fashion houses, a strong advertising and design culture and internationally competitive architectural firms. Allen Consulting in their report to the University of Newcastle (2013) also indicated, contrary to claims otherwise, that all facets of the creative industries are represented in the Newcastle and Hunter... Many of these sectors are mature and established in the city while others are emergent.'

The Report continues, 'Innovative activity occurs in Newcastle via a creative system in action... This ecosystem includes not only the individuals themselves, but

also the broader society and the culture they exist in, which includes the policy and business context, social networks and support agencies, training organisations that disseminate the necessary domain knowledge, the patronage supplied by funding opportunities, the availability of necessary technologies and the challenges and opportunities they each present.'

'The creative Industries, individuals and groups in Newcastle are not simply, if at all, outposts of Sydney or other organisations but are often intimately tied together as local friends and business people who are connected nationally and internationally. They are all capable, to greater or lesser degree, of drawing on these national or international resources when necessary and many emerging players use local collaborative spaces designed to encourage collaboration and innovation.'⁹

"The character of Newcastle is changing. The city is really becoming Australia's creative capital. My experience of the city is lots of people with great energy and great ideas. I'm excited about the future of Newcastle, by people who are progressive and creative and forging a way forward that is new."

Gavin Banks
Creative Director, Good Eye Deer Productions

**WHY IS COUNCIL
IN THE BUSINESS
OF CULTURE?**

Council is custodian of major architectural assets of the city including the Civic Theatre, City Hall, the railway workshops housing Newcastle Museum, Fort Scratchley and Shepherds Hill Cottage, in addition to significant parkland and reserves such as King Edward Park, Civic Park and Blackbutt Reserve.

Council is also custodian of major collections of works of art, objects and artefacts. Newcastle Art Gallery holds

a collection of over 6,150 works of art and is arguably the finest in regional Australia. The collection presents a comprehensive overview of Australian art from colonial times to the present day including three of only four oil paintings in existence by convict artist Joseph Lycett. Newcastle Museum holds a broad collection of over 11,000 objects that help tell the diverse stories of Newcastle from fossils to industrial machinery like the BHP ladle, to nationally significant objects from sporting greats, the comprehensive collection of the Royal Newcastle Hospital, the St Augustine's pipe organ and The Buck steam engine. The Local Studies Library of Newcastle Region Library has the largest Local Studies collection in NSW outside the State Library and contains historical and contemporary materials encompassing all aspects of life in the Hunter region. The Library is the archival repository for the records of Newcastle City Council and also holds



"The role of Council is not to be 'big brother' but rather to open up and dismantle road blocks to allow things to happen. Cross-disciplinary engagement – art engaging with music, science, engineering – so we encourage and open things up to all cultures."

Frank Millward
**Head of Creative Arts,
University of Newcastle**

other significant collections from public institutions, private companies and individuals. As custodians of such nationally and culturally significant holdings, Council's role includes preserving these collections and providing access to them both in Newcastle and beyond through loans programs with other galleries, libraries and museums nationally.

Council's responsibilities for culture have evolved over time. In establishing a focussed strategy for developing culture in Newcastle it is important to articulate the core responsibilities of Council and its reasons for its commitment which are to:

- help sustain a vibrant and healthy community through expression and engagement in culture
- contribute to improving educational outcomes and life-long learning

- stimulate creativity and capture its economic value in new industries and jobs
- protect and reflect our identity
- develop tourism

Our responsibility to our community is to represent its diversity and reflect and protect its identity. Our responsibility to our diverse audiences is to ensure they see quality programming that connects them locally and nationally. We have a responsibility to our creators, creative entrepreneurs and cultural facilitators to ensure they have the best opportunity to live and practice in Newcastle while being connected to their national and international sector. And our responsibility is to our city and its current and future economic sustainability for which culture performs a vital role.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION

A series of 11 individual and six group consultations were held during March – May 2015 with audiences, artists and creative practitioners, historians, academics and key stakeholders. Overall, just over 250 people actively participated in the development of this strategy of which 80% were drawn from our community. These consultations had the strategic intent of informing the priority areas for culture in Newcastle.

Overwhelmingly the consultations highlighted the depth to which the people of Newcastle are committed to the city and want to see increased expression of the city's identity and history through storytelling, programming and events.

There is strong awareness of the collections held by Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle Region Library and Newcastle Museum and the community wants greater access to these collections, in particular the Newcastle Art Gallery collection. The call from stakeholders and audience of the Newcastle Art Gallery for a redevelopment to expand the existing gallery remains strong.

While there is an expectation that programming will be brought into the city from other places, Newcastle residents strongly desire to see national and international exhibitions and performances presented in their city. However, the sense is that the value placed on locally produced programming is less than that placed on in-bound programming. Our community wants to see locally produced works and believes this programming contributes to building Newcastle's identity as well as our artists and creative practitioners being respected and supported beyond Newcastle.

The lack of sustainability for the small to medium arts and cultural sector of Newcastle is of concern to the local arts industry and there is urgency in the call for increased support and linkages with Council. This support is seen as directly linked to developing our artists and creative practitioners and enabling their sustainability. A lack of rehearsal space and a contemporary performance space was specifically identified as impacting on the performing arts sector.

There is a call for increased engagement with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and for the city to look forward with our first peoples to build positive and strong cultural relationships and tell the stories of our city.

Newcastle embraces the outdoors and a consistent theme was a desire to see more event programming and more outdoor experiences in celebration of the city including enhancing space through public art. The need for more, or less, festival programming was

a reoccurring theme. When unpacked, there is a view that there are a lot of disparate arts events presented in Newcastle and there is potential value in bringing them together with some meaning and vision.

The consultations identified that there is a relatively low awareness of what's being presented across the city by both Council managed and independent institutions and organisations. In addition there is a lack of awareness of existing Council services to the sector. This indicates a need for increased and integrated promotion and audience engagement strategies.

Digital media is identified as offering opportunities for presentation and promotional platforms, and a gateway to the city's future.

Recognised is the need to create opportunities for young people to better participate in and present cultural work. This is central to growing and diversifying our audiences and will require a greater diversity of programming forms. Digital platforms play a role in engaging this audience.

There is a call for increased cultural leadership from Council, including quality programming, partnerships and advocacy. Connectivity between both Council managed and independent organisations and institutions, in relation to programming, promotion and resource sharing, was seen as being vital. Specifically, most people believed that increased connection between Council managed institutions was of benefit to Newcastle.

It is believed that streamlining and simplifying Council's communications systems and processes will benefit the cultural industries in Newcastle. The message is that there is a willingness to contribute and invest in the culture of the city in all its forms but roadblocks need to be removed and it needs to be easier to collaborate with Council.

Overwhelmingly the people of Newcastle love their city and want to see it rise to meet its cultural potential.

From the consultations, Council's priorities for the next four years have been identified.

1. Increase focus on Newcastle's identity and stories
2. Increase access to Newcastle Art Gallery collection
3. Increase collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
4. Increase engagement with young people (16-30 years)
5. Increase use of digital platforms
6. Increase collaboration with local artists and practitioners

"Open the doors and let people see behind the scenes, this will help the community to feel proud of its collections."

Catherine Croll
Artist Facilitator



"Shining a spotlight on local talent should be a priority."

Rosemarie Milsom

Director, Newcastle Writers Festival



A 10 YEAR VISION FOR CULTURE IN NEWCASTLE

Culture is an intrinsic part of Newcastle, valued for its contribution to people's life-long learning and wellbeing, as well as the city's identity and economy. Our Council's institutions are dynamic, responsive and evolving through programming, partnership and leadership. What can be achieved locally, working collaboratively, is significant. Our audiences embrace risk. Our building and collection assets are being preserved through knowledge, display and investment. Artists and practitioners want to live and practice in Newcastle. Newcastle is a cultural destination.

The city wants to make a positive impact on its culture that results in:

- Newcastle audiences being a respected partner in our culture, owning and celebrating cultural expression that captivates and enriches them
- Newcastle audiences seeing great works that are relevant, distinctive, stimulate the imagination and reflect our stories and the diversity and complexity of contemporary life
- Newcastle being a vibrant society that embraces dynamic social and cultural conversation and values diversity and new ideas
- Newcastle continuing its history of seeding and supporting artists and practitioners that influence creative practice, benefit the community and contribute to innovation and new ideas and benefits creative business activity.*

These cultural impacts and the strategies and actions to achieve them serve as a vital component to strengthening Newcastle's cultural foundation and are necessary to meeting our 10 year vision.

*The impact statements have been informed by research undertaken by the Australia Council for the Arts.¹⁰

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

CULTURAL IMPACT

Newcastle audiences are a respected partner in our culture, owning and celebrating cultural expression that captivates and enriches them.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	2016	2017	2018	2019
1 Embrace digital platforms to broaden audiences for culture	1.1 Establish a digital strategy with a view to broadening and deepening audience engagement	Establish strategy and prioritise digital platforms including Newcastle Art Gallery website	✓	✓	✓
	1.2 Include a cultural project in the suite of Smart City Initiative pilot projects	Identify and initiate project	✓	✓	✓
2 Increase connection between Council's cultural institutions for the benefit of moving and building audiences	2.1 Present one collaborative cross-institution project per year commencing 2017	N/A	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 Leverage Creative City newsletter to create an enhanced promotional platform for what's on in Newcastle and stimulate audience engagement and response	✓	✓	✓	✓
3 Diversify public programs to support the development of new audiences and new programming experiences	3.1 Commencing 2017 create a program of enhanced audience experiences promoted to stimulate and engage new markets	Research and trial ideas in preparation for program launch for 2017	✓	✓	✓
4 Maintain the existing valued audience for cultural institutions	4.1 Engage with benefactors and major stakeholders through special events	✓	✓	✓	✓
5 Increase focus on young people (16-30)	5.1 Actively invest in programming and communications targeted to young people	✓	✓	✓	✓

CULTURAL IMPACT

Newcastle deserves to see great works that are relevant, distinctive, stimulate the imagination and reflect our stories and the diversity and complexity of contemporary life.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	2016	2017	2018	2019
6 Expose local stories, both historic and contemporary, through cultural programming and build Newcastle's cultural identity	6.1 Establish local stories and cultural identity, including Aboriginal identity, as a criteria for the selection of cultural programming across Council	✓	✓	✓	✓
7 Grow the city's identity via its collections of art and artefacts, local history and architecture	7.1 Establish a digital strategy to expand the audience reach for the city's cultural collections or cultural assets and enable and complement cross-council initiatives	Establish strategy and prioritise digital platforms including Newcastle Art Gallery website	✓	✓	✓
	7.2 Allocate public programming resources to increase access to the city's cultural collections beyond public display, and reveal the city's history to local and in-bound audiences	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7.3 Leverage the city's cultural assets to generate educational programming	Prepare a targeted suite of educational programs based on Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle Museum and Newcastle Region Library Local Studies collections	✓	✓	✓
8 Enhance Newcastle's public space through public art	8.1 Re-establish a public art program based on Council endorsed policy	Establish a program of works including maintenance and lighting of existing works as well as establish a framework for stimulating new works	✓	✓	✓
9 Ensure Newcastle audiences have access to a diverse range of exhibitions and works of high quality	9.1 Maintain a balance of programming targeted to a breadth of audience demographics including works of new and emerging thinking, forms and technology	✓	✓	✓	✓
10 Partner with Newcastle's small to medium not-for-profit arts and cultural organisations in growing arts and culture in the city	10.1 Establish up to five programming partnerships of three year terms with key programming deliverables for the city	Design program and establish a policy for programming partnerships to be identified through an EOI process and managed across three years with annual deliverables	Commence three year programming partnerships	✓	✓
11 Redevelop Newcastle Art Gallery to enable the breadth of exhibition, learning and community potential of a contemporary Gallery with a collection of the size and scope of Newcastle Art Gallery	11.1 Re-establish planning for the expansion of Newcastle Art Gallery	Establish plan and funding model. Action to be determined by feasibility study			

CULTURAL IMPACT

Newcastle is a vibrant society that embraces dynamic social and cultural conversation and values diversity and new ideas.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	2016	2017	2018	2019
12 Increase engagement with local Aboriginal community in consultation with Council's Guraki Committee	12.1 Establish reference group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to advise on cultural programming development	Engage advisor to lead conversations with community on the design of the model for the Reference Group and its implementation	Implement Reference Group	✓	✓
	12.2 Increase programming of works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	✓	✓	✓	✓
	12.3 Establish a permanent display with Newcastle Museum telling local Aboriginal history			✓	✓
	12.4 Investigate the establishment of an Indigenous garden or trail as a cultural site embracing community, learning and reconciliation	Secure necessary partnerships and explore sites Action to be determined by business plan			
13 Build cultural tourism by presenting events that celebrate the city and contribute to its identity	13.1 Expose local stories through cultural programming and build Newcastle's cultural identity	✓	✓	✓	✓
	13.2 Increase Council sponsorship investment in cultural events	Review criteria for sponsorship in relation to cultural events and identify strategies to support their success	✓	✓	✓
	13.3 Target 2020 to present a major community cultural event to celebrate the city	Produce a project plan identifying partnerships, development and presentation funds	✓	✓	✓
	13.4 Re-establish planning for the expansion of Newcastle Art Gallery	Establish plan and funding model. Action to be determined by feasibility study			
14 Increase outdoor programming and programming in non-traditional spaces	14.1 Produce a how-to guide to support the community to access public space and present outdoor events	✓	✓	✓	✓
	14.2 Re-establish a public art program based on Council endorsed policy	Establish a program of works including maintenance and lighting to highlight existing works as well establishing framework for commissioning new works	✓	✓	✓
	14.3 Consider contemporary models for a library and information social space	Action to be determined by business plan			
15 Advocate to Urban Growth for the inclusion of an arts space in their development plans for the city.	15.1 Explore opportunity for a contemporary arts space to be included in city revitalisation plans addressing need for housing for small to medium sector, rehearsal space and presentation of contemporary work.	Initiate discussion. Action to be determined by potential interest			

CULTURAL IMPACT

Newcastle continues its history of seeding and supporting artists and practitioners that influence creative practice, benefit the community and contribute to innovation and new ideas and benefits creative business activity.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	2016	2017	2018	2019
16 Increase support for, and engagement with, local artists, innovative thinkers, academic creatives and cultural practitioners	16.1 Support development of artists and practitioners through mentoring and professional placements	Establish a Newcastle Art Gallery Youth Reference Group comprising of tertiary students and emerging artists focussing on both practice and audience development	Establish a formal program of mentoring and professional practice across cultural institutions	✓	✓
	16.2 Increase opportunities for local artists and practitioners to present work	✓	✓	✓	✓
	16.3 Employ local artists and practitioners as speakers, curators and workshop facilitators	✓	✓	✓	✓
	16.4 Establish program for tertiary students in cultural disciplines and professional practitioners, to view ticketed programming at reduced prices	Design program and present for approval as part of 2016/17 Fees and Charges for commencement July 2016	✓	✓	✓
17 Streamline and make consistent access to support and resources	17.1 Improve Council's communications with the local cultural industry and ensure it is consistent and timely to ensure access to opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓
	17.2 Review access and use of community halls and public space for arts and culture to determine whether there is greater potential to support cultural practitioners and creative entrepreneurs	Undertake review			
	17.3 Map the frequency and diversity of use of community venues for cultural activities to measure the value delivered to community	Undertake review			
	17.4 Take a leadership role in facilitating sharing of resources	Design methodology for identifying and promoting resources available across the city to support cultural practitioners	Implement resource sharing program	✓	✓

THANK YOU

On behalf of Council I wish to thank all of the people who contributed to preparing this document. The ideas, issues and knowledge shared with Council have formed the basis for actions to be implemented over the next four years. I wish to acknowledge the passion of the Newcastle cultural community and am grateful for the time that was taken to meet and actively talk about the city and its cultural life.

The Cultural Strategy is a 'whole of organisation' document for Council. The insights from over 50 staff have been considered alongside the consultations. The forming of this strategy and the successful delivery of its actions are only possible through productive collaboration between Council and the wider community.

We look forward to delivering on this strategy and working with you over the coming four years.

Liz Burcham
Cultural Director

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PHOTO CREDITS

Cover Installation shot of the exhibition *Contemporary - Indigenous works from the collection*, 18 May - 11 August 2013

Gulumbu YUNUPINGU

Garak, the Universe 2007

natural pigments on three hollow logs

Gift of the Newcastle Region Art Gallery Foundation and the Newcastle Gallery Society (2008)

Newcastle Art Gallery collection

Djulwarak DAWIDI

Wagalag sisters myth: the childbirth (circa 1960) (detail)

ochres on eucalyptus bark

Gift of Dr Stuart Scougall (1963)

Newcastle Art Gallery collection

P2 *Awabakal* presented at Fletcher Park by Tantrum Youth Arts as part of *Stories in Our Steps*

Photo credit: Claire Albrecht (2015)

P6 Newcastle Region Library lit as part of *Art Sounds*

Photo credit: Photolook Newcastle (2010)

P8 Sudanese Women's Choir perform outside The Lock-Up
Photo credit: Photolook Newcastle (2010)

P11 *The Skywhale* is tethered in Civic Park to celebrate the launch of the exhibition *LIKE US: Patricia Piccinini* at Newcastle Art Gallery (2014)

P12 Visitors enjoy a tour of Newcastle Museum's permanent exhibition, *A Newcastle Story*
Photo credit: James Horan (2015)

P15 *Beyond* produced by Circa
Photo credit: Andy Phillipson (2013)

P16 Photo credit: Photolook Newcastle (2010)

P18 Memorial Walk
Photo credit: Photolook Newcastle (2015)

P22 Fort Scratchley Historical Society firing the guns at Fort Scratchley
Photo credit: James Horan (2015)



