

20-Year State Infrastructure Strategy Country Arts SA Submission

Country Arts SA's vision for the future of the arts industries in this state is for South Australia to be a culturally inspired state leading the nation in the arts, culture and creative industries, where:

- Our arts, culture and creative industries are recognised as a leading contributor to the strength and growth of our economy and our communities, shaping our identity, employment, tourism, education, health and wellbeing and community cohesion
- We are inspired and led by our First Nations people and culture
- The arts, culture and creative industries are fully valued, nurtured and exploited by all areas and levels of Government, business and the wider community
- Our arts, culture and creative industries are reflective of the broad diversity of our communities
- Opportunities to experience, practice, participate in, and benefit from the arts, culture and creative industries are available to all South Australians no matter where they live and/or work or their socioeconomic status
- Our unique existing strengths are the spring board for our culturally inspired future
- Increased opportunities are provided for sharing the diverse stories of regional South Australia through the creation of new work and a broader range of engagement opportunities for regional artists and audiences.

We believe South Australia already has a strong arts and cultural ecology underpinned by world class artists, organisations and institutions that has been built on strong Government support and a preparedness of all players to work together in a spirit of cooperation, partnership and collaboration.

Throughout this submission we have identified areas for further development and investment which will build on the strength of South Australia's existing arts and cultural ecology and ensure that all South Australians can benefit and prosper from the arts, culture and creative industries.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR COUNTRY ARTS SA

1. INFRASTRUCTURE THAT IS FIT FOR PURPOSE

- Having a planned and cost effective approach to the ongoing renewal of South Australia's regional arts centres, ensuring they continue to meet the needs of regional audiences, artists, hirers and other users, comply with current building standards, ensure the safety of patrons and staff and maximise arts experiences for all. Country Arts SA believes that an annual Capital Expenditure budget in the order of between \$3million to \$4million is urgently required to address the critical building issues and commence a program of rejuvenating the regional arts centres.
- A rolling program of co-investment into transforming Country Arts SA's four aging regional arts centres: Middleback Arts Centre, Whyalla; Northern Festival Centre, Port Pirie; Chaffey Theatre, Renmark; and Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre, Mount Gambier that will see each centre redeveloped within the next 10 to 20 years starting with the Middleback Arts Centre in 2020-21. [A short 90 second video of the Middleback Arts Centre master plan can be viewed here](#)
- Such transformations will be consistent with master plans currently being developed in consultation with the relevant communities and will incorporate flexible spaces for art making and presentation, for artists to build their craft and share new work, for communities to

celebrate and tell their stories and will include black box spaces, galleries, digital spaces, civic spaces and outdoor spaces for art, expression and play. The total estimated cost for full transformations of these arts centres is estimated at \$15 to \$22 million each.

- A seeding fund for capital grants to Local Government owned galleries, halls and other arts infrastructure to encourage all regional communities to have access to fit for purpose arts facilities.
- Investment in broadband and digital technology in regional areas (or provide access to existing Government owned infrastructure) to provide access to global arts opportunities and for regionally created work to be exported around the world.

2. BUILDING CAPACITY AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE ARTS:

- A Regional Arts Plan will acknowledge and respond to the uniqueness of our regions, the opportunities and challenges they each face and the potential to provide visitors with more arts and cultural offerings to experience while travelling through regional South Australia.

3. AUDIENCE AND ACCESS:

South Australia's unique geography and diversity provides additional challenges for developing audiences and providing access to arts and cultural activities and opportunities. We recognise more needs to be done to support engagement for all South Australians, especially those in the regions. We support:

- The investment of new matched capital, programming and partnership funding programs to regional Local Councils that seek to increase participation in arts, cultural and creative endeavours and address the inequity of opportunity as a result of distance and isolation experienced by most regional and culturally diverse communities.
- Creating more regional employment opportunities (both at our state owned arts centres and in communities) to develop local artists, identify and address local needs, and act as catalysts for high quality art experiences and long-term, sustainable outcomes for regional communities.
- Programs that improve cultural literacy that would better equip artists and communities to attract greater box office income and corporate, philanthropic and local Council participation, support and investment in their arts and cultural endeavours.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Every day at Country Arts SA we witness the power of the arts to transform lives, and as such we believe all South Australians deserve a life rich in arts and culture.

Country Arts SA exists to address the imbalance of opportunity regional South Australians have to access the arts and we work tirelessly to create opportunities for artists at every level to flourish and produce great art and provide regional South Australians the best possible arts experiences.

In 2017/18 we engaged with 581,091 people, employed 1,101 artists and arts workers and provided 2,602 events for locals and visitors to enjoy.

Whilst we are an integral part of the overall arts and cultural ecology in South Australia, having partnered with many, if not all Adelaide based arts companies and countless Adelaide based artists, our focus remains on regional South Australia. It should be noted however that practically all of the regional investment priorities we have outlined will have direct and indirect benefits for Adelaide based artists, arts companies and audiences.