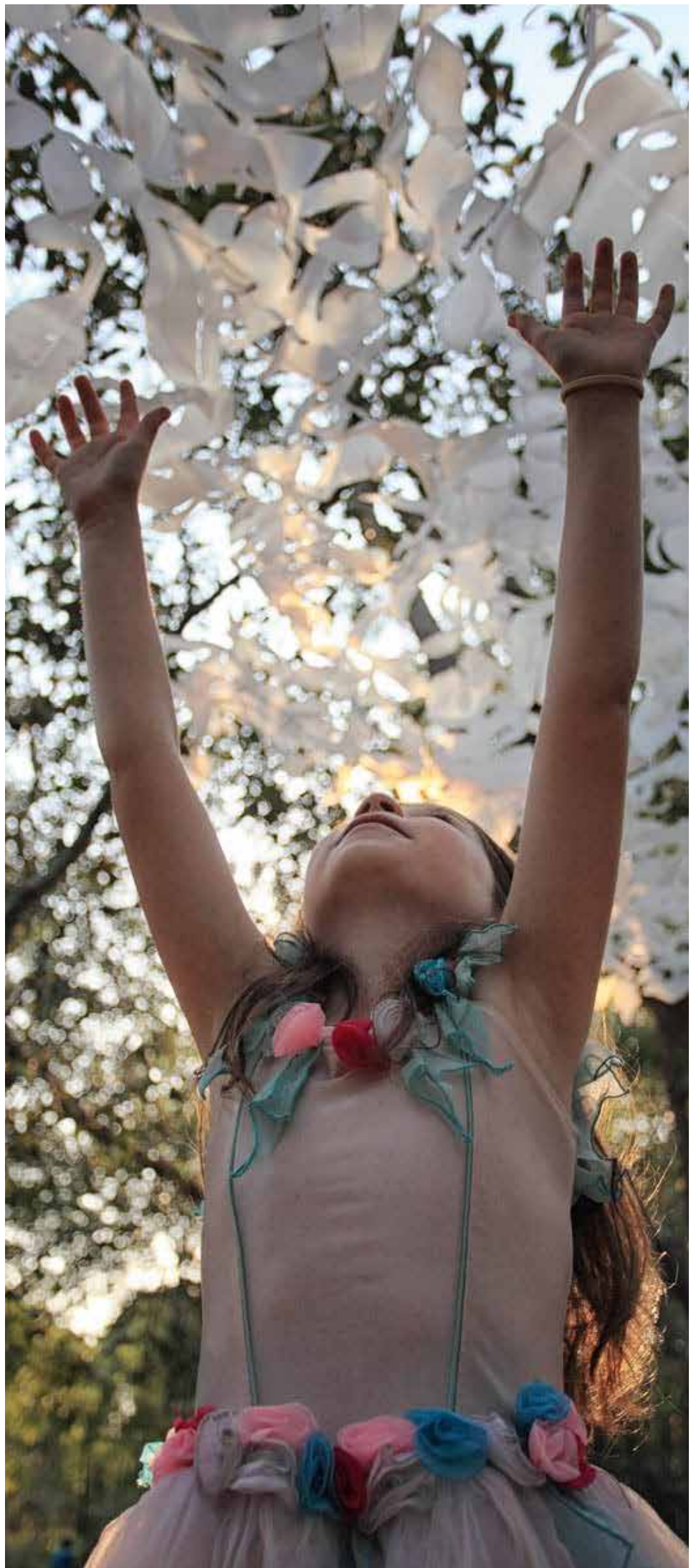


**NOOSA  
CULTURAL  
PLAN  
2019-2023**



Noosa Cultural Plan 2019-2023

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#### Disclaimer

This document has been developed by Noosa Council in consultation with the Noosa Cultural Plan Reference Group.

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- Members of the Cultural Plan Reference Group – Cr Frank Wilkie [chair], Alan (Fox) Rogers, Kerri Contini, Dr Sue Davis, Helena Gulash, Helen Ringrose, Shirley Page, Belinda Simonsen, Sandra Robertson and Tricia Bradford
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Noosa Council would like to respectfully acknowledge the Kabi Kabi/Gubbi Gubbi People, traditional custodians of the lands and waters that form the region we call Noosa. Council pays respect to elders: past, present and future, and welcomes the ongoing role that indigenous people play within the Noosa community.

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## Message from our Mayor

There has never been a human culture that did not engage in both visual art and musical creativity. Even our early hominid ancestors engaged in visual arts.

Cultural activities bring communities together to celebrate something that is wonderful about humanity: our ability to share our own intrinsic personal experience of life.

Plainly the creative arts are essential components of human endeavour. No other creature can share their imagination in the same way.

I say imagination because as well as being capable of being imaginative – that is to create something new out of our experiences – we each view the world differently.

We are each the product of our unique set of influences, and in order to make sense of the world, we must each interpret and assess the world in our own intrinsic way. Whilst there may be sizeable overlaps, your world view is never going to be identical to anyone else's world view.

And that is, arguably, one reason why we humans create art. Through the arts we get to experience other people's very intimate world views. That can be both humbling and liberating.

Few zealots or fundamentalists take an interest in the arts. Indeed, zealots are often opposed to the sort of pluralism and diversity that the arts encompass.

That's because art, by its very nature, challenges our personal perceptions of the world. Art is a constant reminder of our essential individual differences. As a result, the arts breed understanding as well as a tolerance of diversity.

Heritage is also a means by which we come to know ourselves better, to define who we are and how we got here.

This Noosa Cultural Plan will help ensure that both the arts and our communal history will continue to be positive forces, fostering individual wellbeing and building social cohesion.

Tony Wellington  
Noosa Mayor







## PURPOSE

*An annual action plan will be developed for Noosa Council each year to progress the goals and objectives of the Cultural Plan*

The Noosa Cultural Plan will harness and direct resources, energy and stakeholder support to achieve a flourishing future for arts, culture and heritage in the Noosa Shire. The Noosa Cultural Plan 2019 – 2023 is a key Council planning document aligning with, and supporting, Council’s Corporate Plan and our vision “Noosa Shire – Different by Nature”.

The Cultural Plan recognises the value of arts, culture and heritage to the Noosa community, and to Council itself. It aims to secure a healthy future for the cultural sector based on shared aspirations and priorities. It outlines a range of goals and actions across the coming five years to build on existing strengths, address essential gaps and take advantage of emerging opportunities. It also outlines the role of Council and stakeholders and the importance of partnership in the delivery of the Cultural Plan.

The Cultural Plan is part of a framework of Council strategies and plans which aim to achieve five major twenty-year goals:

- Our **environment** is protected, enhanced and valued by the community
- Our **community** is connected, safe and happy and able to meet their potential
- Our **economy** is diverse and resilient
- Noosa Shire is well managed and **sustainable**
- The Noosa Shire community is **proud** of its Council

Of particular note, the Cultural Plan supports the aims of Council’s planning scheme “The Noosa Plan”, the Noosa Shire Local Economic Plan and Noosa Design Principles. Importantly, it was a key recommendation of the Noosa Social Strategy (2016) and supports the objectives in its four focus areas:

- A cohesive and resilient community
- An active and healthy community
- An accessible, diverse and affordable community
- **A creative and informed community**

# WHAT IS CULTURE?

The term “Culture” has a wide range of meanings within government, industry and the community. Noosa’s Cultural Plan will consider culture broadly to encompass arts, culture and heritage as conveyed in Australia’s National Arts and Culture Accord (2013).

## The arts:

The arts include music, performing arts, literature and visual arts, in both their established and emerging art forms, and inter-arts activities. In addition to the individual and collective activities of practitioners, for vocational or recreational purposes, the arts include arts education, community arts, collections and performances which may be made available to the public in galleries, libraries, theatres, cultural venues, training institutions and increasingly on-line and broadcast.

## Creative industries:

A sector which harnesses a range of creative and business skills for commercial production and dissemination. Creative industries include film and television production, broadcasting, electronic games, architecture, design and fashion, publishing, media and advertising.

## Cultural heritage:

In parallel with the arts and creative industries there is a strong recognition of Australia’s diverse cultural heritage, and the work of museums, galleries and libraries and archives to preserve and provide access to the artefacts and intangible heritage of Australia’s culture. In particular, Australia’s heritage includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures which are amongst some of the oldest living cultures in the world.



*Arts, culture and heritage enrich lives through participation, experience, observance or appreciation. Their value is difficult to define but intrinsically felt and understood; they give a sense of heart and soul to our people and communities*

## The Importance of The Arts, Culture and Heritage

Vibrant and healthy communities require a co-operative blend of human, economic and environmental attributes. Integral to this are cultural and creative elements which add character, substance and meaning to a community, often defining what makes it unique.

For Noosa, a flourishing cultural sector has individual and collective benefits in social, economic and environmental terms. Arts, culture and heritage increase the positive liveability and quality of life within the region, both tangibly through architecture, civic design, venues, galleries, libraries, museums, art, performances, exhibitions, and intangibly through a myriad of qualitative facets including a shared sense of place, community and values.

At its heart, arts, culture and heritage help distinguish what is intrinsically “Noosa”.

*“The arts have the power to inspire, entertain and unite. They connect people with ideas, emotions and stories; and spark imagination, creativity and joy. The arts are intrinsically important and contribute to individual and collective wellbeing – they play an essential role in the daily lives of Australians.” (Connecting Australians: Results of the 2016 National Arts Participation Survey)*

By growing our arts and cultural sector and recognising our heritage Noosa will benefit from:

- A strong sense of identity and civic pride
- A strong commitment to shared values
- Improved individual and community wellbeing
- The freedom to express ideas and feelings and respectfully explore diverse viewpoints
- A greater willingness and ability to look after each other and our environment
- Increased participation in community activities
- A strong commitment to maintaining our unique and distinctive communities
- The genuine inclusion of people from varying backgrounds, beliefs and abilities
- The ability to solve problems creatively, perceive of a vision, innovate and adapt to change
- A strong sense of who we are and where we have come from





# GLOBAL CONTEXT

*In an increasingly interconnected world it is important to be cognisant of the issues impacting Noosa's arts, culture and heritage: from global, national and state influences*

From outside the Noosa region, a range of factors and trends have the potential to impact on the cultural sector locally- some present as challenges, others as opportunities and some can offer both.

## Policy and Funding

- Lack of current arts-specific policy at a federal or state level resulting in a need to align with other policies or develop stand-alone local policies
- Stagnation and reduction in government and corporate funding for the arts, particularly for individual artists or small initiatives, with funding focussed on economic outcomes such as major events
- Changing models of resourcing such as crowdfunding, cultural philanthropic funds and micro-loans
- Need to measure and demonstrate outcomes and value across differing facets (cultural, social and economic), which has been particularly difficult in areas like arts and heritage where data has been difficult to collect accurately and has often failed to tell a convincing story

## Participation

- People's increasing desire to engage with and participate in the arts but not necessarily through traditional means such as attending a gallery or joining a creative group
- Changing nature of volunteerism seeing an increase in short-term project or specific skill-based volunteerism
- Fragile viability of community organisations, particularly impacted by funding changes, and administrative complexity

## Technology

- Rapid development of technology changing approach to many facets of cultural sectors

- Persistent skills gap in people being able to fully utilise emerging tools
- Communities of interest engaging virtually where artists who feel isolated locally can engage with international artists in similar fields to share and learn

## Economy

- Changing nature of cultural tourism with "baby boomer" retirement sector looking to travel for niche cultural interests
- Growth of home based businesses, particularly in studio based cultural sector or digitally engaged arts practices
- Explosion in availability of cheap imported products competing with locally produced, original works of art and craft

## Community

- Ongoing concern over the lack of genuine recognition and inclusion of indigenous arts and heritage
- Increased priority on creation of precincts or urban renewal to develop or maintain distinct community identity
- The co-location of public infrastructure with like-minded facilities eg galleries/museums, galleries/libraries, or with commercial infrastructure to off-set costs such as retail, hospitality, accommodation
- People craving a sense of identity and belonging in an increasingly complex world
- Growing understanding of the important role creativity and arts practice can play in education, health and wellbeing





# THE LOCAL NOOSA CONTEXT

*Home to over 53,000 residents, Noosa Shire Council encompasses urban coastal communities, hinterland villages and rural localities set in and around the Noosa River catchment*

Noosa Shire is located 120km north of Brisbane in South East Queensland and covers an area of 871 km. It is widely known for its stunning environment, idyllic lifestyle and as an iconic tourist destination.

## Our heritage

Noosa's cultural heritage has rich roots with the Kabi Kabi/Gubbi Gubbi people being the original custodians of the land and waters. Although there was significant disruption and dislocation in the 19th and early 20th century, the resilience of the Kabi Kabi/Gubbi Gubbi people has ensured that their important connection to the Noosa place is ongoing today.

The early European settlement period saw a focus on timber and fishing as well as being a gateway to the Gympie goldfields. The natural beauty of the area was recognised early and Noosa became a regular tourist destination from the 1960s.

It was from the 1960s that the current Noosa Shire story began to emerge. Like many coastal communities, Noosa was facing choices about how it would develop. The 1980s and 1990s saw significant environmental battles where the Noosa community fought to retain Noosa Shire as a unique place – unfettered by rampant development. These environmental battles defined that period and successive Strategic Plans provided a town planning framework to ensure that Noosa would differentiate itself from other places. The concept of a population carrying capacity was introduced together with height limits on buildings and Noosa Council focused on the “Noosa look and feel” design of public spaces.

People in the arts, culture and heritage sector were closely aligned with and active in the environmental and social movements of the 1980s and 1990s. The unspoiled, natural environment was a magnet for artists, particularly visual artists and craft artisans, who could support themselves through the increasing tourism sector such as at the emerging Eumundi Markets.

The focus was both on protecting the natural environment and creating a special built environment for Noosa Shire. During the 1990s and 2000s, Noosa Council also focused on building community capacity. This included the development of major community infrastructure such as libraries, gallery, an aquatic centre and sporting facilities. During this period, key community arts and heritage organisations formed in the strong community environment, many of which have survived until today.

The 2008 amalgamation of Noosa Council with the former Maroochy and Caloundra local governments was a pivotal point in the shared community history of Noosa. The Noosa community were strongly opposed to the amalgamation and rallied to protect their Shire. Despite not winning the initial campaign in 2008, the Noosa community did not give up and continued the fight for what they believed in. This culminated in the Noosa Council being re-established on 1 January 2014.

The Noosa community is now re-defining itself, aiming to respect past heritage and community values while ensuring we are progressing towards a bright future that is uniquely our own.







# OUR LOCAL CULTURE



**404** people or **2%** of the Noosa working population identified as being employed in the broad range of cultural industries



**44%** of QLD people participate in a creative activity

**189** people considered themselves a visual or performing artist



**46,000** people visit the Gallery every year



Workers in the cultural sector have an average income of **\$785** per week

**82%** engage with music online



**73%** believe that arts make for a richer and more meaningful life

**31** community cultural facilities



**19** private galleries



**Over 22** live music venues



**72** Noosa cultural organisations





Noosa Shire in 2018 has a diverse cultural and creative sector, both professional and community oriented. Our arts, culture and heritage reflect the distinct identity of Noosa and there is a strong alignment between local community values and arts practice with the local environment frequently inspiring arts practice. Participation in cultural activities is high, particularly in visual arts and craft activities and attendance at local events and festivals.

While it is difficult to obtain accurate data on the number of people engaged in the local arts, culture and heritage sectors, research undertaken by the Australia Council combined with local data and anecdotal evidence suggests that our community engages highly in the arts through many avenues – as artist, audience, consumer or participant.

The local cultural sector fosters a rich creative community life. A broad range of stakeholders: individuals, government agencies, community and industry organisations, and commercial businesses actively pursue and deliver cultural facilities, program, events, services and products. Noosa people are collaborative and supportive and will readily work together to produce an activity or event.

Cultural events regularly feature on the annual calendar, most notably Noosa Alive (formerly Noosa Long Weekend), Cooroy Fusion, Booin Gari, Floating Land, Noosa Food and Wine Festival, Noosa International Film Festival, Peregrin Originals and Noosa Open Studios.

Education in the cultural sector is supported locally with state and private schools offering a varying range of cultural content and the local university campuses of University of the Sunshine Coast and Central Queensland University offering arts or creative industry related courses. Within the broader Sunshine Coast region accredited training is available through university, TAFE and private providers.

Council cultural services such as Libraries, Noosa Regional Gallery and Community Development provide a range of creative professional and skills development opportunities. Many local organisations, businesses and creative practitioners offer short-courses and workshops in a wide diversity of disciplines and mediums.

The arts sector is represented by several advocacy and networking groups, including Sunshine Coast Creative Alliance and Create Noosa while the Heritage sector is represented through Council's Heritage Reference Group. Cultural and community members are strong advocates for culture and actively participate in consultation regarding cultural matters.

In summary, the Noosa region is not starting from a zero base. It already has the existing elements of a strong arts, culture and heritage foundation from which to build upon to deliver a healthy cultural future.

# COUNCIL CULTURAL VENUES

*From the hinterland to the coast, Noosa is served by numerous Council, commercial and community cultural facilities. Noosa Council itself provides cultural services and resources through major cultural venues*

## Noosa Regional Gallery

Noosa Regional Gallery is one of the oldest public galleries in Queensland. While it served the community well in the 1990's – 2010 it has failed to keep up with exhibition, programming and visitor needs and expectations. It is now constrained as to the types of touring exhibitions that it can show, does not have any appropriate workshop or programming space and has severely limited storage space. Community consultation identified the need to develop a new gallery that could meet the needs of the community and act as a signature tourist attraction.

Opened in 1989

Open 40 hours/week across 6 days

400m2 with 86m of running wall space for hanging  
25 exhibitions per year across the three galleries  
46,000 visits per year, averaging 900 per week



## The J

The J is a multi-use venue that provides a theatre, commercial kitchen and bar, meeting rooms, educational facilities and hosts long-term partners the University of the Sunshine Coast and Noosa Community Radio. It is a major Noosa venue for live theatre, music, dance, film, conventions, dinners, civic events and award nights. No immediate need has been identified for major changes at The J with the preferred pathway forward recommending a gradual evolution to increase capacity, increase community benefit and reduce costs to Council.

Opened in 2006

Open 7 days per week depending on events

1250m2 with a seating capacity of 402 in theatre style  
140 performances per year, attracting 20,000 people  
377 events held by 40 community groups





## Noosa Heritage Library

The Noosa Heritage Library is housed within Noosaville Library and holds the local heritage and family history collections. Resources and services relate to the heritage of the Noosa area including print, newspapers, ephemeral material, oral histories and local content creation. A focal point of the collection is the Picture Noosa image collection in both print, negative and digital form. Both collections are a significant drawcard, bringing residents and visitors in to attend research sessions and conduct individual research. A 2016 service review identified the need for improved storage and display facilities for the Heritage Library which have occurred in 2018 as part of the Noosaville Library upgrade.

Open 52.5 hours/week across 7 days  
Holds 1,100 items in public access  
1,150 images available online through Picture Noosa



## Cooroy Library

The award-winning Cooroy Library embodies Noosa Council's sustainability goals in terms of environmental design and community cohesion. The 1248m<sup>2</sup> community hub includes traditional library space, community meeting rooms, retail shop, exhibition space and learning spaces. It is the focal point of the Mill Place Precinct and in close proximity to the Butter Factory Art Centre and a number of community groups. It's well-thought out design means that it has the space and flexibility to meet the changing needs of the community for the near future. In 2018 it evolved to include a contemporary Makerspace for digital technologies.

Opened in 2010  
46.5 opening hours/week (over 6 days/week)  
5,577 members  
179,000 loans per year, averaging 3,500 each week  
134,000 visits per year, averaging 2,600 per week  
Holds 26,300 items across all collection formats



## Noosaville Library

Noosaville Library is a much-loved community hub offering a wide range of library and community services.

At 1070m<sup>2</sup> it has a unique architectural design synonymous with a Noosa look and feel. Built prior to the public introduction of the internet, its design was functional for a collection focussed library however it struggled to meet contemporary community needs. A 2016 service review identified the need for a major refurbishment which was completed in November 2018.

Opened in 1993, Refurbished 2018  
52.5 opening hours/week (over 7 days/week)  
21,878 members  
325,000 loans per year, averaging 9,000 each week  
221,000 visits per year, averaging 4,330 per week



# COMMUNITY CULTURAL FACILITIES

Cooroy Butter Factory  
Arts Centre



Wallace House  
(Noosa Arts & Crafts Assoc)



Noosa-Cooroy  
Heritage Centre



Noosa Arts Theatre





Over 90 community and commercial facilities provide space for arts and cultural activities

Pomona Majestic Theatre



Noosa Museum



Pomona Railway Gallery



Parkyn Hut Information Centre





## Employment in Cultural Industries

Through the 2016 Census, 404 people or 2% of the Noosa working population identified as being employed in the broad range of cultural industries. This is a very small proportion compared to sectors such as tourism which employs 3,868 people or 19% of the working population and the health sector which employs 3,766 people or 18% of the working population. The census data however relies on self-reporting and records people's primary employment industry so therefore may not take into account the range of people who are employed in a creative industry but record their primary income from an alternate industry. Local evidence suggests the number of people employed in creative industries to be higher for example the 2017 Cultural Audit identified 189 people alone who considered themselves a visual or performing artist, compared to the 98 who identified as such in the Census.



This infographic outlines the number of people who identified as working in each sector of the creative industries in the 2016 Census.

# STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

*Noosa's cultural sector is in a generally healthy condition and exhibits numerous positive qualities*

## Existing Strengths

- Good quality Council facilities which are well maintained
- High levels of participation in creative and cultural activities
- Diverse cultural forms and practices in the local region
- Attraction of the Noosa region to artists and visitors
- Alignment between community values and the cultural sector
- Community pride and commitment to Noosa as a unique place
- Council commitment to planning and design principles
- Strong design sector particularly in the areas of architecture, graphic design and interior design
- Capability of the community to conceive of and deliver high quality cultural events and activities
- Thriving arts and heritage volunteer sector
- Direct funding through programs such as the Heritage Levy, RADF and Council grants

## Potential Opportunities:

- Broad consensus to improve focus on Kabi Kabi/Gubbi Gubbi culture
- High proportion of the Noosa community aged over 60 who have time, resources and desire to participate in creative activities
- Community importance placed on lifestyle which includes creative pursuits
- Lack of signature regional gallery in wider Sunshine Coast region
- Growing digital creative sector
- Increase in niche cultural tourist
- New funding avenues such as crowd funding and cultural funds
- Clustering of cultural facilities and businesses to form possible cultural precinct
- Capacity for the arts to explore and discuss local or topical issues
- High numbers of cultural professionals visiting Noosa
- Research linking participation in arts and cultural activities to improved health and wellbeing

## Regional Arts Service Network

In 2017 the Queensland Government announced a change in providing regional arts services through the Regional Arts Services Network (RASN).

Tenders were called to provide arts services in 8 Queensland regions.

Sunshine Coast Creative Alliance were awarded the contract and funding to provide RASN services for the region that Noosa is part of.

Noosa Council is working with the newly created RASN to determine what opportunity this presents to advance arts and culture locally.

# LOCAL CHALLENGES

While global trends and issues, both positive and negative, impact on arts, culture and heritage in Noosa there are additional local pressures in these sectors. Consultation with local community and cultural stakeholders identified a range of challenges and issues including:

- Economic pressures such as rising living costs, limited affordable housing and cheaper online and imported cultural products mean that it is difficult for local artists to make a living without alternate income streams
- While participation in the arts is strong there is limited evidence of a robust professional arts sector except for the architecture and other design fields
- Organisational sustainability is a critical issue with some organisations and event providers relying on one or two key individuals to keep going
- Some organisations report that there could be more collaboration in the sector and that they are competing with each other for resources, funding and audiences
- Many residents want to participate in cultural activities but find it difficult to locate an activity
- New residents and visitors, particularly those from metropolitan areas, often have high expectations in terms of venue and service delivery
- Noosa's geographic proximity places it on the fringe of the south-east Queensland region however this frequently excludes it from State or Federal Government regional funding and programs
- Organisations are finding it harder to maintain local cultural facilities to a high enough standard to attract audiences and visitors
- It can be hard for artists new to the area to make connections with their local sector
- Council's ability to resource and fund growth in the arts and cultural sectors

## Noosa TAFE Site

The Queensland Government opened a TAFE campus in Tewantin in 2006. The environmentally sensitive campus offered business and arts courses with a specialty in ceramics.

In 2014 the Queensland Government closed the campus and then in 2018 it indicated that it may sell the facility.

While Noosa Council is considering the feasibility of purchasing the TAFE site, to date no financially viable option for an arts/cultural use has been identified.





7/1/22



# YOUR SAY, YOUR PRIORITIES

*Through the consultation phases the community identified a diverse range of cultural topics and initiatives that they saw as priorities in the Noosa region*

“Arts and culture are important just for themselves. They don’t need to also have an economic outcome”

“Our kids need more access to creative activities outside schools”

“Recognition and inclusion of indigenous Kabi Kabi/ Gubbi Gubbi heritage and culture is long overdue. We can do much better”

“There are many very talented people in Noosa. We need to learn from each other”

“The current Noosa Gallery is outdated and too small. It is no longer up to the standard of other regional public galleries”

“The local arts scene could play a stronger role in tackling environmental issues and sparking community discussion and action”

“There isn’t much public or performing art in Noosa. If we had more of this it would look and feel more creative”

“Council grants are really important but it’s not just about money, we need other help as well”

“It’s hard to find affordable spaces for rehearsals or studios”

“I’m not sure whether I can run classes from my home studio and I’m a bit afraid to ask”

“Our Noosa communities must maintain their individual characters. Arts and culture plays an important role in this”

## The Heritage sector identified specific priorities and issues

- The Heritage Levy has been vital in progressing the preservation of local buildings and undertaking heritage projects which wouldn’t have happened otherwise.
- Noosa has a rich heritage even though it has limited remaining built heritage in comparison to other communities such as Gympie or Maryborough. This means it can be challenging to resources and attention to the sector.
- The Heritage sector needs to engage the community and visitors in modern and interesting ways.
- There is a need to capture and tell the unique story of Noosa and its people, before we lose significant local identities or historical materials.
- Council needs to improve the coordination and responsibility for heritage issues within the organisation.





# VISION

*Noosa Council's vision is "Noosa Shire – different by nature".  
Through diverse arts, culture and heritage Noosa will retain a unique character and be renowned for creative expression and participation*

## Principles

Noosa's residents are fierce advocates for shared community values and priorities- celebrating and preserving our natural environment, supporting responsible environmental and economic development, maintaining a cosmopolitan, village feel, engaging in a healthy, outdoor lifestyle, valuing knowledge and learning and maintaining connections between people. The arts and heritage sectors play a vital role in interpreting and reinforcing these values and the Cultural Plan will be underpinned by the following guiding principles:

- We believe that everyone can enjoy the benefits of a culturally rich community
- We encourage all forms of creativity and expression and all levels of participation and abilities
- We value quality, uniqueness and authenticity
- We respect the independence of our cultural sector
- We acknowledge and understand our history and will learn from it to inform our future
- We are optimistic about the potential of the future

## Aims

Through the delivery of the Cultural Plan and the programs and actions that will follow, Council aspires to achieve these overarching aims and objectives:

- Provide a diverse range of cultural venues, experiences and activities that reflect local needs and interests
- Support creative expression and participation in a variety of formats
- Enhance the unique creative character, liveability and aesthetic appeal of Noosa's villages and community places
- Increase the role that arts, culture and heritage play in regards to the environment, economy and community development
- Increase awareness and understanding of local cultural heritage
- Increase the skills and knowledge of people in the cultural sector in order for them to adapt to changes, improve sustainability and harness new opportunities
- Improve the recognition and reputation of Noosa as a cultural destination

## KEY THEMES

1. History and Heritage
2. Places and Spaces
3. People and Participation
4. Knowledge and Learning
5. Growing the Cultural Economy
6. The Digital Future Begins Now





# HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Noosa's unique and rich heritage will be known and valued by our community, helping to chart a responsible course for the future

## GOALS

- Our community will know our history and heritage and be proud to share it with new comers and new generations
- We will value the deep and ancient cultural heritage and traditions of the local indigenous people, particularly the Kabi Kabi/Gubbi Gubbi community
- We will understand and respect the diverse contributions made to our communities through successive generations
- Noosa's cultural heritage will be preserved for current and future generations in a diversity of forms. We will engage people in our history in interesting and stimulating ways
- History and heritage will continue to inform the character of our individual towns and localities and connect community to a shared identity

## ACTIONS

- Retain Heritage Levy and review levy amount periodically
- Develop and deliver initiatives which will broaden and increase audience reach and community access
- Extend spaces for provision of heritage product and activities into non-traditional spaces to increase awareness
- Increase the digitisation of heritage materials
- Effectively manage local heritage collections for their long-term preservation and access
- Work with stakeholders to increase the awareness and sharing of materials held in local and specialist collections as well as establish a register of local heritage items of significance
- Work with heritage organisations to ensure relevant heritage collection management plans and risk management strategies are in place
- Continue to expand and develop Heritage Trail network and increase promotion
- Support local heritage sector with training and advice in the preservation, management and accessibility of heritage resources
- Broaden the Heritage Reference Group to include experts outside of traditional local organisations
- Improve the networking and knowledge sharing amongst Noosa heritage organisations
- Embrace the use of emerging technologies to make heritage more accessible in contemporary ways
- Explore the potential of creating a Hinterland Heritage brand
- Increase the heritage sector's involvement with local schools, educators and families to raise young people's awareness of Noosa's history
- Ensure conservation management plans are in place to protect and maintain built heritage infrastructure and heritage sites



# PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS



## Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Council will work with the Kabi Kabi/Gubbi Gubbi first nation's people to increase the awareness and understanding of our local indigenous cultural heritage, both in terms of respect for past history and present cultural practices and people.

Council will support the local indigenous community in respectfully and sensitively sharing their knowledge and stories to residents and visitors. The inclusion of indigenous content in programs and services will be increased and improved.



## Heritage Coordination

Consultation with internal and external stakeholders has highlighted the lack of coordination and responsibility for Heritage within Council.

Consequently the part-time Heritage Librarian role has been converted to a full-time Heritage Coordinator. This role will review and improve the coordination of heritage matters within Council, provide expert heritage advice, act as a single point of contact for heritage matters and oversee Council's heritage activities.

## The Noosa Story

The story of Noosa's development and attachment to core community and environmental values is a unique one. Council will work with stakeholders to capture and document this contemporary heritage including the stories and histories of local people from the period from 1960 to de-amalgamation. The material will be used by stakeholders to develop engaging exhibitions, displays and content to tell the unique Noosa story.



# PLACES AND SPACES

Our sense of local identity and character will be enhanced through quality design and the inclusion of arts and heritage in our public places

- G**
- Our region will enjoy a diverse range of well-maintained creative, learning and heritage places to support the community's creative expression and participation and to encourage communities to share and connect with each other
- O**
- Our sense of cultural vibrancy will be increased by the inclusion of arts, culture and heritage in non-traditional places
- A**
- Our places and spaces will be made more interesting and locally distinct by maintaining a high standard of civic design and including cultural practice and works
- L**
- We will adhere to standards and practices which enhance the creative character, liveability and aesthetic appeal of individual areas
- S**
- Noosa's arts, heritage and environment sectors will continue to have a special connection; and the cultural sector will play an essential role in interpreting and preserving our unique ecosystems and biosphere status

- A**
- Invest in new facilities where gaps or opportunities exist and the need can be best met locally after maximising use of existing facilities
- C**
- Review and existing Council cultural venues and facilities to maximise use and respond to changing community needs and expectations
- T**
- Work with stakeholders to identify underutilised facilities and spaces with aim of maximising their potential and identify new spaces for the inclusion of creative content or production
- O**
- Complete the development of effective asset management plans for all Council owned cultural facilities
- N**
- Work with stakeholders to develop a publicly accessible creative spaces directory for studio, performing, rehearsing and learning spaces
- S**
- Improve and increase the creative design component in Council infrastructure projects
- Include cultural representatives in stakeholder consultation for projects involving master planning, placemaking and major developments
- Prioritise initiatives which enhance the community's understanding of the local environment, showcase artworks and artists that support environmental values and assist in improving ecological sustainability
- Include creative components in the delivery of Council projects aiming to change community behaviour
- Work with key stakeholders to develop a toolkit to assist cultural activity and event providers produce events with minimal negative impact on the environment
- Reinforce Noosa's identity through planning and projects with a priority on preserving the natural environment, maintaining the discrete village feel, embedding excellence in urban design and increasing the Shire's creative look and feel



# PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS



## Sense of Place

Council will review and improve its approach to placemaking to ensure its concepts and strategies are understood and implemented collectively across the organisation. It will work with stakeholders to achieve an integrated, place based approach which supports community cohesion, improves the aesthetic appeal and maintains a sense of local identity through measures including creative arts, built infrastructure, streetscaping and precinct development.

## Arts in Public Places

Council will undertake a review of Noosa's approach to art in public places with a view to improving residents and visitors sense of Noosa being a creative and culturally rich region. This will include an audit of existing permanent and temporary public art and practice, both visual and performing, the development of a public arts policy and action plan and working with stakeholders to increase the inclusion of visual and performing arts within council facilities and appropriate public places.



## Arts and the Environment

Floating Land will continue to be a signature event in the cultural calendar and will be reviewed to provide greater continuity and connection between iterations, increase external resourcing and increase the level of community input and ownership. In addition, stakeholders will consider new opportunities to reinvigorate the important symbiotic relationship between arts and the environment with the environment acting as inspiration for cultural works and cultural works assisting people to understand the impact of complex environmental issues and motivate them to act.

# PEOPLE AND PARTICIPATION

Individually and collectively, our community will experience the many benefits of a culturally rich and creatively engaged society

## GOALS

- Creative people of all types will be attracted to Noosa to live and to visit. They will find a strong network of like-minded people and their creative output will be valued and celebrated
- People will be inspired to create and express themselves freely in a diverse range of creative and cultural practices and activities which are responsive to contemporary lifestyles
- Everyone in Noosa will have the opportunity to be involved in the arts at varying levels – audience, artist, performer, creator, producer, educator, volunteer
- Individually and collectively, people will experience a wide range of benefits through their creative participation – from the sheer pleasure and pride in creating to the increased sense of identity and belonging and improved creative thinking and problem solving
- Council, community and business organisations will work together to deliver high quality events and activities which support the attributes and values of the Noosa community

## ACTIONS

- Provide appropriate support to local artists and organisations to produce creative content, undertake cultural projects and increase skills and knowledge
- Work with stakeholders to broaden and increase participation rates including reviewing underperforming activities to understand barriers and challenges and investigating contemporary community behaviour and expectations
- Support local communities and organisations in initiating and delivering local community cultural activities
- Prioritise support for organisations which respond to community needs and preferences
- Improve information sharing and marketing of creative and cultural activities to increase audience awareness and uptake
- Work with families, educators and carers to increase opportunities for young people to be exposed to and engaged in the arts
- Support emerging areas of creative practice to provide new avenues of participation
- Work with stakeholders to provide creative programs and activities which meet needs and expectations of older residents
- Encourage the use of creative activities in the improvement of health and wellbeing
- Use creative approaches in the delivery of Council projects and initiatives aiming to change community behaviour
- Review the delivery of the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) program with a view to increasing awareness, meeting needs and improving outcomes



# PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS



## Where Art Thou

Council’s cultural officers and teams will review their approach to the delivery of creative programs and activities with the aim of understanding community expectations, broadening audience appeal and increasing participation. The focus will be on increasing the delivery of activities outside of traditional cultural facilities to non-traditional places where people will feel more encouraged and comfortable in participating.

## Events and Festivals

Events and festivals will continue to be an important part of the Noosa calendar. Council will work with key stakeholders to balance the views and needs of the community and event organisers to overcome obstacles and take advantage of opportunities. The important role that local organisations and businesses play is valued and Council will assist with an appropriately supportive model. Consideration will be given to niche



## Celebrating Noosa Creatives

Council will work with stakeholders to understand how best to recognise the value of local arts practitioners.

The aim will be to increase the awareness of the talents and creative output of Noosa’s cultural sector both locally and outside the region.



# KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

Relationships and networks will be nurtured to share ideas and knowledge and problem solve collectively

G

- The future of the arts, cultural and heritage sectors in Noosa is a bright one. We value knowledge and learning in order to understand the lessons from the past and to learn the necessary skills to continuously adapt, grow and prosper

O

- Our creative individuals and organisations will have the support, skills and knowledge to be resilient, sustainable and able to embrace the changing world

A

- The cultural network will develop the essential skills to manage critical contemporary issues including changes to funding arrangements, organisational models and audience expectations. We will work with stakeholders to support the transition of emerging or semi-professional artists to professional status

L

- We value the role of creativity in the learning and community engagement process. We will use creativity in our everyday lives to learn, adapt, innovate and problem solve

S

- The cultural sector will play a key role in providing platforms for community discussion and debate on issues which will impact our community

A

- Review Council's support of artists and arts organisations to focus on initiatives that have longer term benefits and support them in being more self-reliant

C

- Work with stakeholders to increase the knowledge and understanding of changing funding opportunities such as crowdfunding, cultural philanthropic funds and micro-loans

T

- Explore the feasibility of a mentoring program to ensure that our professional artists are able to share their knowledge and skills with our emerging artists.

I

- Facilitate training to help organisations understand the changing nature of volunteerism and how to focus on attracting new types of volunteers

O

- Identify significant cultural organisations which are potentially "at-risk" of failure and focus efforts on increasing their sustainability

N

- Prioritise funding for groups which are actively taking steps to ensure ongoing sustainability

S

- Work with key stakeholders to facilitate opportunities for creative and cultural practitioners to share skills and knowledge and collaborate on projects

- Increase opportunities for master arts practitioners to deliver professional development to local practitioners

- Work with stakeholders to explore concept of locally delivered short-course professional development

- Provide appropriate support to local artists and organisations to produce creative content, undertake cultural projects and increase skills and knowledge

- Align funding programs with aims of cultural plan and other key corporate strategies

- Work with stakeholders to improve the use of creative activities to broaden learning approaches, explore topical issues and solve problems

# PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS



## Libraries

Council's Libraries will play a key role in providing access to information, resources and learning opportunities for individuals and organisations. They will continue to evolve to provide services and products which are relevant to changing community needs and expectations.



## Cultural Development

Cultural individuals and organisations require evolving knowledge, skills and support to ensure their ongoing success. Council will review its cultural development services to better meet the needs and priorities of stakeholders in the changing world and ensure that Council is providing effective support.



## Stakeholder Engagement

Council will review its approach to stakeholder engagement with the arts, culture and heritage sectors to improve relationships across the network and to ensure that there is a broad and accurate understanding of needs and issues. It will improve collaboration on projects and reduce unproductive competition.



# GROWING THE CULTURAL ECONOMY

Arts, culture and heritage  
will play an increasing role  
in the economic health of  
the local region

## GOALS

- Creative industries will increasingly provide more employment, keep dollars within the Shire and export products and services
- Cultural activities will help attract visitors, extend their stay and increase local spend. Visitors will be drawn to appreciate and experience local arts and culture including design, products, cultural heritage, cultural venues, and programs and events
- There will be an increasing focus on quality product development and delivery, preferencing unique or bespoke over mass-production or mass-market
- Home-based creative industries will be encouraged to improve individual economic outcomes, increase local creative output and reduce the need for travel to other locations
- Innovation and a creative approach will help fire the engine room of Noosa's economy

## ACTIONS

- Work with stakeholders to increase the brand potential of Noosa in a creative sense such as the development of creative nodes or precincts, supporting the clustering or co-location of creative businesses and activities and supporting the development of feature creative products
- Programs which have longer term benefits will be prioritised for investment of Council funding and support
- Highlight the creative and cultural opportunities in the hinterland to extend the tourism experience beyond the coastal strip
- Support initiatives which showcase local artists and improve access for local products to buyers
- Provide or facilitate professional development for artists to maximise access to new markets such as through digital platforms
- Support opportunities for local creatives to share knowledge, connect with each other and collaborate
- Council will assist in brokering partnerships to advance local cultural economic initiatives
- Work with key stakeholders to understand needs and interest of cultural tourism market and respond accordingly
- Work with key stakeholders to ensure that home based creative businesses are able to thrive within Council's planning and regulatory framework
- Facilitate effective strategic land use planning to support creative endeavours, cultural precincts and home-based businesses



# PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS



## Noosa Regional Gallery

The audit of cultural facilities and community and stakeholder consultation has identified the need to address deficiencies in the existing gallery and the desire for an expanded or upgraded gallery or cultural facility. Council will explore the feasibility of a new signature Regional Gallery which better reflects contemporary audience expectations, spearheads cultural momentum, exploits cultural tourism opportunities and improves participation outcomes.

## Marketing Noosa as a Cultural Destination

Noosa already offers a wide range of cultural activities which would be of potential interest to the tourism market however visitors remain largely unaware beyond major activities such as Eumundi Markets.

Council will collaborate with key stakeholders to develop a marketing and communication strategy to focus on the cultural attributes of Noosa.



## High Quality Artisan Products

The Noosa brand is seen as being unique, high quality and discerning. There is an opportunity to leverage this brand and reputation to better focus on the production of very high-quality artisan and craft products including bespoke manufacturing and activities which provide a personal, authentic response or experience. Council will work with stakeholders to explore this potential and develop a plan to increase production and market spend in this sector.

# THE DIGITAL FUTURE BEGINS NOW

Technology will drive new art-forms, provide platforms for the dissemination of cultural product and spring-board new careers

G

- The digital future is happening now and Noosa will be actively involved in the rapidly emerging creative digital sphere

O

- With its enviable lifestyle, location to key metropolitan bases and uptake of the digital realm, Noosa will incorporate more creative and knowledge industries which use technology to create and distribute content

A

- Traditional art-forms will be reinvented and will merge through their exploration of digital technology

L

- New career opportunities will emerge which take advantage of technological innovations and provide greater creative outlets than older work models

S

- The community, cultural and digital sectors will be positioned to take advantage of the digital transformation through access to resources, equipment and training

A

- Work with stakeholders to understand opportunities and barriers and advocate for the local infrastructure and resources required to support a thriving digital creative sector

C

- Provide opportunities for digital creatives to work together, share knowledge and content, experiment and produce collaborative content

T

- Support the development and provision of programs which increase creative digital skills and knowledge

I

- Include technology driven makerspaces in Council's libraries to provide accessible technology, resources and training to the community

O

N

S

- Provide opportunities for the community to engage with and use new technologies in a creative and fun way

- Ensure Council staff are skilled and able to support the community in adopting and exploiting new technologies

- Lead the way by being innovative and supportive of digital creative projects

- Work with stakeholders to provide opportunities to showcase emerging technologies to engage early adopters

- Work with stakeholders to support the migration of existing creative practitioners to the digital space

- Work with stakeholders to encourage and support our young people in adopting digital creative careers



# PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS



## Peregrin Digital Hub

Council has taken the plunge into the new digital working world through the construction of the Peregrin Digital Hub. This facility will make a strong contribution to the growth of the local digital sector in both economic and cultural terms. It will support digital cultural entrepreneurs through providing co-working space, incubation, networking and learning.

## Digital Cultural Content

Council will support the development and delivery of locally produced digital cultural content. It will recognise and showcase local efforts in this space and support access to new opportunities and markets. Council cultural projects will increasingly include digital components to showcase emerging technologies and provide avenues for local digital creatives.



## Finding Our Strengths

The digital creative sector is diverse and many regions are looking to take advantage of potential opportunities. Council will work with stakeholders to build creative digital skills and knowledge and build upon areas of local digital strengths to concentrate growth and development and harness prospects.



# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility for a thriving cultural sector lies with everyone from individuals to community organisations, industry sectors, commercial businesses and all levels of government. Principally the Cultural Plan is a Noosa Council corporate document, and as such, Council plays a key role in achieving the actions outlined within.

Primarily, Noosa Council's role is to:

- Cultivate an environment where arts, culture and heritage are valued and supported
- Engage and partner with our community and other key stakeholders to achieve the aims of the plan
- Advocate for the arts, culture and heritage
- Provide cultural facilities, services and activities appropriate for changing community needs and expectations
- Provide support and resources for the cultural sector
- Establish plans, policies and regulations which support the cultural sector
- Preference projects, initiatives and programs which support the values and priorities of the Noosa community

Council cannot achieve this ambitious agenda on it's own and consequently welcomes the support of other government agencies and the efforts of the broader arts, culture and heritage sectors in working collaboratively to implement the goals and initiatives outlined in the Cultural Plan.



# OUTCOMES

**The process to develop the Noosa Cultural Plan has highlighted the difficulty of evaluating the health or state of the cultural sector. Data is difficult to obtain, often deficient and frequently not relevant to a local level. Council will work with stakeholders to review how we measure the performance of the local cultural sector to provide more accurate, effective data.**

The Noosa Cultural Plan outlines a wide range of strategies and actions designed to grow and develop the arts, cultural and heritage sectors. Important to the long-term success of these strategies is their ongoing evaluation to measure their success or otherwise, and modify future actions accordingly.

Individual actions will have their own relevant measures of success however broadly the Cultural Plan aims to achieve:

- Increased use of cultural venues and facilities
- Increased number of new participants in cultural activities
- Increased number of cultural activities occurring in non-traditional spaces
- Increased participation by young people in creative activities outside of formal education
- Higher satisfaction levels within arts, culture and heritage sector
- Improved perception of Noosa as a cultural destination with visitors
- Improved sustainability of community organisations in arts, cultural and heritage sectors
- Increased growth of people employed in cultural and creative sectors
- Improved awareness of Indigenous cultural heritage





# METHODOLOGY

Noosa Council's strategic planning documents are developed following comprehensive stakeholder and community consultation and research.

A Cultural Plan Reference Group was established in 2017 to provide advice and guiding support for the development of the Cultural Plan. In addition, the Heritage Reference Group has provided advice regarding the heritage aspects of the Plan. Both Reference Groups were chaired by a Councillor and contained a mix of external stakeholders and key internal officers.

As a starting point for the planning process, Cathy Hunt of Positive Solutions was contracted to research and write a paper exploring some of the significant factors which should be considered in the development of a local Noosa cultural strategy.

The research phase of the planning process also included:

- An audit of existing and proposed arts, culture and heritage activities, facilities and organisations in Noosa Shire
- A literature review of the regional, state and national arts, culture and heritage sectors
- Examination of arts, culture and heritage trends and their implications for the Noosa region
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis of the local arts, culture and heritage sectors
- Identification of arts, cultural and heritage opportunities through events, services, partnerships and infrastructure

Broad community and stakeholder engagement was undertaken through:

- Community workshops
- Forums and focus groups
- Specific arts and cultural events such as Floating Land
- YourSayNoosa online portal and forum
- Targeted consultation with key internal and external stakeholders
- Social media
- Email consultation with registered people of interest

The drafting of the Cultural Plan was undertaken in-house by Council officers with expertise in cultural policy development.





IMAGE CREDITS	
Page number	Image details
Front cover	Treescape Reach, Floating Land 2017. Image: Raoul Slater
4,5	Butterfly (detail), Paper cutting, charcoal on paper. Greer Townsend, 2017 Image: Your Life Photography
6, 7	Jerry's Girls at Noosa Arts Theatre Image courtesy of the Noosa Arts Theatre
9	Tuvaluan Ceremony, dancer, Floating Land 2009. Image: Adam Sebastian West
11	Banksia sculptures Lucas Salton, Lanyana Way, Noosa Junction. Image: Your Life Photography
13	Barry Alsop, Noosa Alive 2018 Image: Eyes Wide Open
17	Pomona Railway Station Gallery Image: courtesy of Joa Darmansjah
18	Pendragon Shoes Image: courtesy of the artist
21	Control Burn - Teewah, Oil on canvas. Raelean Hall, 2016 Image: courtesy of the artist
23	Top: The Unknowns, Anywhere Theatre 2018. Image: Cynthia Lee Bottom: Blake Bowden, Noosa Alive 2018. Image: Rick Monk
25	Notion of an Ordinary Yarn. Anne Harris, 2016 Image: courtesy of Noosa Regional Gallery
29	Bunya, Sculpture. Glen Manning and Kathy Daly, 2010 Image: Noosa Council
29	Castaways, Floating Land 2017. Kris Martin and Simon McVerry Image: Raoul Slater
34, 35	Background: Travelling with Voss (detail), Oil on linen. Sam Vatovey
37	Middle image: Prosthetic Reality, SUTU, 2017 Image: Your Life Photography
39	Rain Song, Floating Land 2017. Projection. James Mueller, Brent Miller and Lyndon Davis Image: Brian Rogers
41	Feeding Supplicants to the Orbit, Oil, alkyd and synthetic varnish on aluminium composite panel. Ruben Pang, 2017 Image: Your Life Photography
43	RIPE Dance with Gail Hewton Image: Barry Alsop
Back cover	Skyline, Oil on canvas. Otto Schmidinger, 2016 Image courtesy of the artist



<b>GLOSSARY</b>	
<b>Term or abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Art	A creative process or product that deliberately arranges elements in a way that appeals to the senses or emotions. It may encompass a diverse range of human activities, creations and ways of expression.
Audience	People who attend, view, listen or appreciate creative products or content.
Built heritage	Buildings or structures and their environments valued by a community because of their historic, scientific, aesthetic, social or architectural significance to that community and which, because of their heritage significance, may appear on the Register of the National Estate, the register of the National Trust of Australia and/or state, territory or local government heritage registers or studies.
Community arts	Creative arts processes that occur in a community setting, often involving collaborations between professional artists and general community members.
Creative industries	Those industries which have their origin in an individual's creativity, skill and talent and which have the potential for positive economic return.
Cultural heritage	The legacy of physical (tangible) artefacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that is inherited from past generations, maintained in the present, and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. It presents evidence of past human activity and associations and includes places, objects, customs, traditions and artistic expression.
Culture	The identity and values that a community develops over time which defines them as a distinctive group and which are remembered, celebrated and preserved for future generations.
Emerging artist	An individual who has undertaken recognised study or has a history of creative practice and whose motivation is to work towards creative excellence and career development. Peer recognition may exist however a viable income is not yet derived from practice.
Makerspace	A community-operated work space with equipment and resources where people with common interests can meet, learn, share and collaborate.
Not for profit	An organisation recognised through State or Federal legislation as an organisation whose primary purpose is not to generate a profit for individual or shareholder's benefit.
Placemaking	Placemaking is the multi-faceted practice of collectively reinventing and designing public spaces in response to the needs and character of an individual community. Placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social aspects that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.
Professional artist	An individual who has undertaken recognised study and/or a strong history of creative practice. They are recognised by their peers in an artistic capacity, generate a viable income from their practice and operate in a business-like manner.
Public art	Site specific artwork, temporary or permanent, created in response to the place and community in which it resides.



