

South Coast Arts



Strategic Plan
2024-28
(Interim)

Front Cover: Scribbly Gum (*Eucalyptus haemastoma*).
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South Coast Arts acknowledges the Dharawal and Dhurga-speaking First Nations peoples as custodians of flourishing creative and cultural expression embodying deep spiritual, ecological, historical, and social knowledges extending to 'time immemorial'.

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It is with great
pleasure that we
present the first
South Coast Arts
Strategic Plan
(2024-2028)

Welcome

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the first Strategic Plan for South Coast Arts, 2024 to 2028.

We are a newly established regional organisation with a reputation still to build. Covering Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven local government areas South Coast Arts started as a legal entity in 2022 and had its first operational year in 2023. Over the past two years, our focus has been on building a solid foundation from which to launch and grow.

This Strategic Plan has been informed by extensive community consultation and organisational analysis while also considering the broader arts and creative sector of NSW and Australia.

Our strategy focuses on building South Coast Arts relationships and networking capacity, supporting creative communities and industries and opportunities for inter-sectoral partnerships, First Nations arts and creative opportunities, and organisational growth and relevance.

We have a vision; where creativity connects South Coast communities, energises our places, tells our stories and sustains our people.

Our mission is to contribute to the vibrancy and diversity of South Coast culture and inspire community through shared and inclusive creative experiences, connection and belonging.

By respecting First Nations cultural foundations, grassroots participation, professional development and innovative practices we will celebrate and amplify the creative voices and identity of our region.

We acknowledge everyone in our South Coast Arts community - our artists, creatives, makers, collaborators, partners and community members.

We are excited about the journey ahead and where the next five years will take us.



Marla Guppy
Chair



Louise Croker
Executive Director

Hello.

We're
South
Coast
Arts

Introduction

**South Coast Arts Inc
creates connections, to
place creativity into the
heart of everything we
do on the South Coast.**

Our Artistic Vision is propelled by a desire for creativity to be seen, acknowledged and utilised in its capacity to build amazing communities. Placing creatives and makers where they can tell stories, share music, show beauty, provide experiences, build resilience, expand ideas, engage connection and facilitate well-being.

We offer opportunities for creatives to explore outside their comfort zone, collaborate through partnerships, and connect with their audiences. We work with those traditionally outside of the creative world and explore the capacity for creativity to enhance, expand, integrate and build on existing processes, infrastructure, approaches and ideas.

Operating on the Yuin, Dharawal, Jerrinja and Wodi Wodi country of Dharawal and Dhurga-speaking First Nations peoples. We are committed to ensuring First Nations creatives are heard and acknowledged in all that we do.

We also seek to develop an organisation that is open, welcoming and accessible to people with a disability, neurodiversity, members of the LGBTIQ community and people from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The South Coast Arts Board stewards our strategic vision and governs our organisation to enable us to achieve our strategic goals. Our guiding instruments are set out in our constitution and strategic plan.

Our Executive Director leads a creative and dynamic team of staff. Committed and passionate, we strive to elevate our creative community to the forefront of our region. Our collective vision is to see a South Coast where creativity connects communities, energises our places, tells our stories, and sustains our people.

South Coast Arts receives its core funding from Create NSW, amounting to \$217,000 per annum. This funding provides for the core functions of the organisation. In addition, each of the three councils within the South Coast Arts region make an annual contribution based on a per capita rate.

This funding is vital to the ongoing viability of South Coast Arts.

South Coast Arts is also exploring both additional project specific funding and diversified funding sources as a mechanism to ensure ongoing and sustainable viability and potential growth over time. These sources may include ticket sales, membership options, donor support and other earned income sources.

connect
community

energise
places

tell
stories

sustain
people

Our Vision

A South Coast where creativity connects communities energises our places, tells our stories and sustains our people.

Our Mission

To contribute to the vibrancy and diversity of South Coast culture and inspire community through shared and inclusive creative experiences, connection and belonging.

Our Values

First Nations First

Listening to First Nations creatives and incorporating cultural wisdom

Curiosity

Asking questions and listening to understand the experiences of others

Advocacy

Seeking opportunities to speak the truth of creative experience

Courage

Taking action and voicing support for creativity and the arts

Inclusivity

Prioritising connection, diversity, supportiveness, flexibility and mutual kindness

Regionality

Taking a big-picture view and focusing on regional impact

Collaboration

Working with our partners to magnify creative impact

Respect

For ourselves and others; embodied through listening, boundary setting and reciprocity

Strategic Goals

These goals will guide our work over the next 5 years towards our vision and enacting our mission.

Presented with no particular priority order, each goal holds its own intrinsic value, complementing each of the others. Together, they weave a tapestry that guides our path forward.

First Nations First

Listen to First Nations creatives and support the development of creative practices that are informed by cultural wisdom.

Connected & Informed Creative Community

Cultivate productive relationships that build a robust creative community and extend inclusive practices to individuals from diverse backgrounds*

* People with disabilities, neurodiversity, members of the LGBTIQ community, and people from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Regional Projects

Facilitate and support the development of projects of regional impact and projects that contribute to the overall creative cultural input throughout our region

Collaborative Planning

Support outcomes that contribute to the growth of our creative community and drive the development and advancement of our sector.

Building Creative Industry

Facilitate the ongoing development of our region's creative industries and empower creatives to actively participate within this industry.

Future Fit

Build a resilient and sustainable organisation that supports our creative and organisational goals and adapts to future challenges.

Artistic Rationale

We design, develop and implement services, programs and projects that support the creative life of our region.

As well as collaborating with creatives, we work alongside creative and non-arts organisations and Federal, State and Local Governments to optimise and grow our creative industries and community.

We work closely with our fellow regional arts development organisations across NSW

and with Regional Arts NSW to maximise the resources, wisdom and collective power of our creative network and provide coordinated, quality, State-wide and cross-regional initiatives to our communities.

We share the stories of our creative communities providing a voice to local, state and federal governments. Our creative practices are founded in social justice, equity, sustainability, diversity and powerful sharing.

Core Elements

Voice of Creatives

The voices of our creative community are central to our work, and ongoing consultation and collaboration are central to what we do. We strive to speak to the three tiers of government offering a voice for the creative arts of our region and, via the Regional Arts Development Organisation Network and Regional Arts NSW, a voice for regional creative arts of our State.

Truth Telling

Through building trusting relationships with the First Nations peoples of our region we seek to actively acknowledge and honestly address historical injustices through the creative arts. We will work to do this through transparency, empathy, and accountability, seeking to build trust and promote healing. We are willing to confront uncomfortable truths and encourage a shared acknowledgement of the complexities inherent in historical narratives and relationships.

Community of Creatives

We seek to challenge the definition of 'The Arts', working to expand thoughts and acceptance around the increasing scope of creative practice. We seek to foster a safe environment for all creatives, supporting career development, and thriving creative practices, across all areas of our sector.

Values-driven collaboration

Our partnerships are guided by our values and we embrace and promote safe environments for a diverse community of creatives, audiences, funding partners and collaborators of all forms; ensuring an atmosphere of inclusivity and respect.

These key elements form the foundation of South Coast Arts Artistic Rationale, allowing us to stand beside and within our creative communities and support their ongoing growth and development.

What we do

Offer a Voice

We are passionate about the creative community and industries of our region and want to share the message of value that creativity, creative communities and vibrant creative industries have for our region.

We strive to not only contribute to the richness and diversity of our creative community but celebrate and voice all that our region has to offer.

Support Creatives

We know that the power of our creative community is only deployed when our creatives feel supported and empowered to do what they do best. We are here to listen, guide, support, and nurture our creatives in ways that they need to prosper.

Professional Development

Our creative industry is an important piece of our regional economy and one that has the potential to grow. As creatives, it can be hard to operate from within a business environment that speaks a language and operates in a way that can feel contrary to how we operate and view the world. South Coast Arts provides a bridge between that world and ours, aiming to support skills development and understanding for the generation and growth of an informed and well-equipped creative industry.

Build Connections

We are dedicated to fostering a culture of engagement, communication, innovation and collaboration. This requires building connections between creatives, and between creatives and non-creative organisations. To do this we work hard to be informed about who exists within our region and build relationships that help inspire connection and collaboration. Our creative community needs opportunities to share, talk, create together, and inspire each other. Our work is to help ensure that those opportunities exist.

Facilitate Change

We are committed to collaborating with our creative communities and industries. We seek to join kindred organisations to work holistically to service the creative industries and community in our region. Through mutual partnership and strong relationships, we can help to inform and facilitate changes in how creatives are seen, valued and engaged within our region.

Create Opportunities

It is important for our creatives to have opportunities to create on our regional stage and beyond. South Coast Arts works with our partners and collaborators to facilitate opportunities and projects that allow for engagement by our various audiences. These may range from smaller place-based to larger regional projects.

Goal

First Nations First

Listen to First Nations creatives and support the development of creative practices that are informed by cultural wisdom.

Success looks like:

- Recognition of South Coast Arts as a culturally safe and informed organisation
- First Nation creatives participating in our projects and programs
- Robust relationships with First Nations community members

To achieve this, we will implement the following tactics:

Deep Listening

Listening to First Nations people with the intention to understand rather than simply respond. Responding from a place of understanding and knowledge in the development of programs and projects.

Build Relationships and Trust

Creating space and time for ongoing yarning and conversation with First Nations people of our region. Placing the development of relationships and trust before action.

Cultural Safety

Investing time and expertise into the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan and developing policies and procedures that support cultural safety.

Board Representation

Nurturing and supporting safe spaces for First Nation representation on the South Coast Arts Board and Advisory Panels.

Goal

Connected & Informed Creative Community

Cultivate interconnected, informed, and productive relationships that build a robust creative community and extend inclusive practices to individuals from diverse backgrounds: people with disabilities, neurodiversity, members of the LGBTIQ community, and people from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Success looks like:

- Creatives knowing where and how to seek information and resources that support them.
- Creatives having a sense of community and connection that supports them in their creative practice.
- Success stories of creative projects leading from partnerships and collaborations.

To achieve this, we will implement the following tactics:

Safe Spaces

Creating safe spaces, functions and activities where creatives feel able to network, connect and build relationships that support and expand their creative community. Establishing online spaces where creatives can engage in discussions, share resources, and seek advice.

Clear Communication

Facilitating effective communication channels that keep creatives informed about our creative sector, industry trends and professional opportunities.

Knowledge Sharing

Providing accessible resources that increase knowledge for safe and empowered creative engagement, creative practice and creative industries development.

Celebrating Success

Actively promoting, celebrating and sharing stories of success from our creative sector.

Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration

Encourage collaborations between visual artists, performers, writers, and other creative professionals that foster projects that blend multiple creative disciplines and showcase the diversity of talent within our region.

Learning Pathways

Working with local schools, TAFES, colleges, and universities to advocate for and support the provision of creative career paths.

Inclusion

Establishing and promoting a culture of respect and openness to build safe environments for all creatives. Ensuring that physical and digital spaces are accessible to individuals with different abilities, experiences and communities. Developing and communicating community engagement that promotes positive and respectful interactions.

Goal

Collaborative Planning

Support outcomes that contribute to the growth of our creative community and drive the development and advancement of our sector.

Success looks like:

- Places and spaces that facilitate the connection of creatives to each other and their audiences.
- Council Strategic Plans reflecting a commitment to cultural creative outcomes.
- Funding committed to creative projects within our region.
- Legislation that supports creative practice.

To achieve this, we will implement the following tactics:

Advocacy

Actively voicing the needs, challenges and opportunities for change that will support ongoing growth, development and support to our creative sector.

Regional Recognition

Promoting the achievements of creatives within our region and contributions to the development of our creative sector.

Strong Relationships

Actively work towards respectful and positive relationships with all three tiers of government and other external organisations, businesses, and partners.

Community Engagement

Support engagement and consultation with our creative sector to ensure inclusion in democratic decision-making processes and transparent communication about relevant policies and decisions of government.

Goal

Regional Projects

Facilitate and support the development of projects of regional impact and projects that contribute to creative cultural input throughout our region.

Success looks like:

- Initiation and completion of projects specifically designed to have a regional impact.
- Diversity in the types of projects undertaken to address various aspects of our creative culture.
- Demonstrated interest and involvement from diverse segments of the creative community and audiences.

To achieve this, we will implement the following tactics:

Proactive Partnerships

Establishing and growing partnerships with local government, creative and community organisations, and funding bodies to collaborate and secure resources, support, and permissions necessary for creative projects.

Responsible Resourcing

Allocating our resources, including budget, manpower, and materials, efficiently and in alignment with our prioritised strategies.

Collaborative Projects

Forming project advisory panels that represent diverse perspectives and creative disciplines within the community and ensuring decision-making reflects the richness of the local creative ecosystem.

Inclusion

Designing projects that cater to different age groups, demographics, and interests ensuring inclusivity by addressing a variety of creative and cultural expressions.

Cultural Ambassadors

Identifying and engaging with cultural ambassadors who may act as advocates for projects and leverage their networks to increase interest and involvement.

Active Accessibility

Offering a range of project formats, such as virtual events, physical exhibitions, and interactive installations to facilitate access by people with different preferences and abilities.

Goal

Building Creative Industry

Facilitate the ongoing development of our region's creative industries and empower creatives to actively participate within this industry.

Success looks like:

- Availability of opportunities for creative industry professional development.
- Increased visibility of our region's creative industries.
- Collaboration with government bodies to create an environment conducive to creative growth.
- Empowered and informed creative sector actively participating in industry development.

To achieve this, we will implement the following tactics:

Creative Industry Development

Organising professional development programs that educate creatives on creative industry trends, opportunities, and best practices and equip them with the knowledge needed for creative business industry growth.

Knowledge Sharing

Creating online access to courses and resources for creative professionals, ensuring flexibility for self-paced learning. Providing accessible resources that increase knowledge for safe and empowered creative engagement, creative practice and creative industries development.

Networking

Hosting networking events such as conferences and symposiums to connect creative professionals, fostering collaboration and skills exchange.

Income Generation

Collaborating in projects and funding initiatives that support the offering of financial support for innovative projects and creative concepts.

Advocacy

Advocating for policies that support the growth of creative industries and collaborating with industry peak bodies to present a unified voice to policymakers.

Participation

Seek representation on boards, committees and working groups that relate to creative industry development contributing insights and recommendations to shape policies.

Goal

Future Fit

Build a resilient and sustainable organisation that supports our creative and organisational goals and adapts to future challenges.

Success looks like:

- Demonstrated and consistent financial health, sustainable revenue streams, and prudent financial management.
- Successful recruitment and retention of skilled and motivated personnel.
- Positive relationships with key stakeholders, including partners, employees, and creative community.

To achieve this, we will implement the following tactics:

Financial Management

Exploring and developing diversified and sustainable revenue streams that support the ongoing health of South Coast Arts and ensuring robust financial planning and budgeting.

Grants and Funding

Actively seeking and applying for grants from local, state, and national funding bodies through the development of strong grant proposals that align with the South Coast Arts mission and goals.

Communication

Fostering open, transparent and respectful communication between Board Members, employees, funders and partners.

Strong Staffing

Investing in professional development programs and opportunities for employees to enhance skills and knowledge. Ensuring flexible work policies to accommodate diverse needs and preferences, including the provision for remote work, flexible schedules, and work-life balance.

Stakeholder Engagement

Regularly communicating with partners, employees, and the creative community to foster a sense of shared goals. Sponsoring or participating in local community events to increase visibility and build partnerships with other organisations to enhance relationships.

Effective Evaluation

Conducting evaluation surveys and assessments to understand levels of satisfaction and needs, using findings to tailor programs and initiatives that align with expectations.

Robust Board

Ensuring a well-resourced, culturally representative board where members are informed, heard and respected and able to provide capable governance and effectively guide the organisation.

Who we're here for

Creatives

Creatives of the Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven local government areas include, but are not limited to; musicians, performers, actors, painters, weavers and woodworkers, writers, poets, puppeteers, film-makers, scriptwriters, graphic designers, online game makers and digital artists... just to name a few.

Arts Workers & Planners

Our art administrators are the festival organisers, gallery owners, curators and event planners, the gaffers and recording studios—all those who support and assist the creatives and creative practices of our region.

Audiences

Our audiences are our participants in creative experiences, our communities, visitors and residents—those who are the consumers of our region's creative products.

Location

Our audience is based in regional NSW incorporating the local government areas of Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven, extending from Lake Illawarra in the north to Durras North in the south. We engage with our audience face-to-face and online, both one-on-one and in community.

Other Stakeholders

Funding bodies

Our primary funding bodies include Create NSW and Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven Councils. We seek to build strong relationships with funders at all levels of government and provide value for money and a strong return on investment.

Governing Body

The South Coast Arts Board stewards our strategic vision and governs our organisation to enable us to achieve our strategic goals. Our guiding instruments are set out in our constitution and strategic plan.

Team

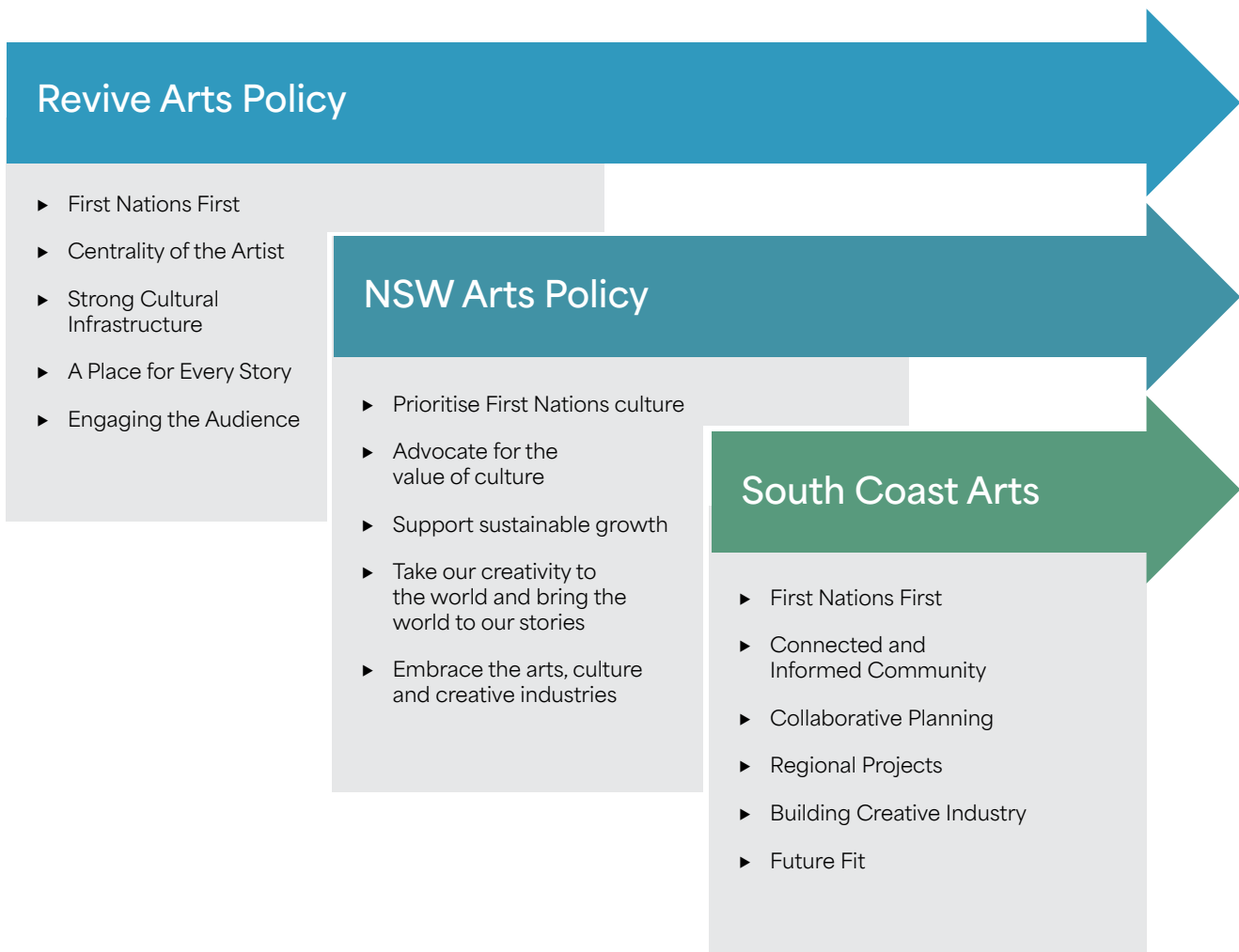
The South Coast Arts team works closely together to achieve our strategic vision and deliver on our overall plan. We are a close group of professionals with extensive experience, knowledge and expertise.

Partners

Our partners and collaborators are our strength. By combining resources, expertise and time to deliver quality projects and outcomes for our audiences. Our approach to partnership is based on ethical decision-making based on our values and reciprocal outcomes for all.

Policy Alignment

South Coast Arts is supported in its core funding across two tiers of government—State and Local and is providing direct alignment to key policies from National through to Local Government.



Australian Govt's Revive Arts Policy

The Australian Government's Revive Arts Policy offers a strategic initiative aimed at rejuvenating the nation's arts sector. Rooted in collaboration between government entities, arts organisations, and the community, the Revive Arts Policy represents an effort to navigate challenges and propel the Australian arts scene into a future marked by sustainability and global acclaim.

Revive offers five Policy Pillars:

- First Nations First
- Centrality of the Artist
- Strong Cultural Infrastructure
- A Place for Every Story
- Engaging the Audience

NSW Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy

The NSW Arts, Culture, and Creative Industries Policy is a comprehensive framework that underscores the vital role of the creative sector in enhancing the cultural fabric and economic vitality of New South Wales. The Policy not only recognises the intrinsic value of artistic expression but also envisions a future where creativity thrives, contributing significantly to the social, economic, and cultural prosperity of New South Wales.

The NSW Arts, Culture, and Creative Industries Policy offers five Policy Principles:

- Prioritise First Nations culture
- Advocate for the value of culture
- Support sustainable growth
- Take our creativity to the world and bring the world to our stories
- Embrace the arts, culture and creative industries

Local Government Strategic Planning

Local Government Community Strategic Plans are a pivotal document that outline the overarching vision, goals, and priorities for a specific local government area. By identifying key objectives these Plans act as a tool for shaping the future of a community, ensuring that local initiatives align with the collective vision and contribute to the long-term prosperity of the region.

Moreover, our local councils possess an array of supplementary planning documents that provide further detail into their overarching strategic plans. Some of these supplementary planning documents relating to the creative sector may include:

- Heritage Plan
- Development Control Plan (DCP)
- Youth Strategy
- Cultural or Creative Arts Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Tourism and Events Plan
- Disability Inclusion Plan

Governance & Management

South Coast Arts is a Not-for-Profit Association based on the South Coast of NSW, holding charity and DGR status (TBC).

We acknowledge the pivotal role that strong governance and efficient management play in realizing our strategic goals. This commitment is integral to securing the enduring success and sustainability of our organisation.

Our Team

Our staffing team is made up of a close group of professionals with extensive experience, knowledge and expertise. Led by our Executive Director, our team includes our Communications and Fundraising Officer, Bookkeeper and project staff. We work closely together to achieve our strategic vision and deliver on our overall plan.

Our Board

The South Coast Arts Board directs our strategic vision and oversees the organisation to achieve its goals. We place significant emphasis on maintaining a diverse and skilled board capable of effectively fulfilling its responsibilities.

South Coast Arts upholds best practice governance policies, encompassing a clear code of conduct, and a range of policies that guide our management and operation. Our guiding instrument is our constitution, established in 2022.

The Board convenes four times a year, with the Executive Board Team meeting monthly. Comprising of creative community representatives and one Councillor representative from each of our three councils, Board Members are selected through a nomination and selection process.

Our succession planning efforts centre on identifying individuals with the necessary expertise, experience, and alignment with our mission and values.

Sub-Committees and Advisory Panels

South Coast Arts utilises Board sub-committees for focused and specific work; including recruitment, financial management, and policy development. To enhance our operations and inclusive decision-making, we also establish Project Advisory Panels as needed to inform quality project implementation.

Organisational Culture

We believe that organisational culture is fundamental to the success of South Coast Arts. We aim to cultivate a culture that embraces open communication, respect, collaboration, creativity, and continuous improvement.

Reconciliation

Prioritising First Nation perspectives, the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan is integral to meeting our organisation's goal of First Nations First with integrity.

Reporting and Evaluation

To maintain transparency and accountability, we implement robust reporting and evaluation mechanisms. This includes an annual report, board reporting, KPI performance evaluation, and staffing performance reviews, along with feedback surveys to stakeholders.

Succession

Effective succession planning is vital to the ongoing success of South Coast Arts. Through proactive initiatives such as training, coaching, and professional development opportunities, we aim to cultivate capable leaders who can seamlessly assume key roles as needed.

Fueled by
creativity

