



Gladstone Regional Council

Policy

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| Topic | ARTS AND CULTURAL POLICY |
| Policy Number | P-2.03.01 |
| Directorate | CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY |
| Statutory Authority | LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2009 |
| Date of Adoption | Proposed to be adopted 17 April 2012 |
| Resolution Number | |
| Amendments | This policy has not been amended |

POLICY DETAIL:

INTRODUCTION

The Gladstone Regional Council's Community Plan provides a 20-year vision for the region. The vision in the Community Plan is:

"The Gladstone region will be recognised, nationally and internationally, as the 'region of choice' for achieving the best integration of community wellbeing, environmental protection, industry and commerce. We will be renowned for balance: a friendly and vibrant place in which to work and live."

Providing arts and cultural facilities, programs and activities that allow the communities of the region to express their identity and provide opportunities for life balance are an essential component in delivering on this vision.

This Arts and Cultural Policy delivers on the following core topics within the Community Plan:

- 'Growth and diversity of the economic base', 'Development of local industry & business' and 'Innovation, social enterprise and creative industries' – by strategically supporting creative industry development
- 'Attraction of Investment' – by offering a diverse range of cultural activities important to the lifestyle of potential residents
- 'Access to facilities, services and programs' – by offering a range of affordable, relevant and engaging venues and programs
- 'Education, employment and training' – offering a range of skill building programs for the creative industries
- 'Valuing history, culture and creativity' – through facilities and projects such as heritage trails

- ‘Social cohesion and inclusion’ and ‘Addressing disadvantage’ – by offering a range of programs and projects targeting demographics to participate in community
- ‘Families & Children’ and ‘Health and wellbeing’ – by offering programs that offer a work/life balance
- ‘Urban development’ – by contributing to place-making through public art
- ‘Community engagement’ – through venues, projects, programs and the review/evaluation processes of this policy
- ‘Collaboration & Partnerships’ – by advocating networking within the arts sector and cross-sector partnerships
- ‘Communication’ – by advocating a range of communication modes to increase efficiencies within and promotion of the arts in the region
- ‘Regional and Local’ – by thinking regionally but acknowledging local identity and sense of place through creative projects

Council currently supports a range of arts and cultural activities across the region including:

- Staffing of community services and cultural facilities
- Facilities and venues such as the Entertainment Centre, Libraries, Gladstone Regional Art Gallery and Museum, meeting rooms and outdoor spaces
- Support for festivals and events such as SUNfest, the Harbour Festival, 1770 Festival, Multicultural Festival and more
- Land leases to community organisations for their facilities
- Community funding to a range of arts organisations
- Financial commitment to the Regional Arts Development Fund in partnership with Arts Queensland

As in many regional communities, the arts sector is afloat due to the hard work of dedicated volunteers and community drivers. There is a wealth of creative spirit in the Gladstone Region with many artists and organisations across all artforms. Local government amalgamation has opened the door to regional collaboration and there is desire for this. The sector now requires leadership and coordination with a means to communicate effectively to really demonstrate its vibrancy.

The State Government document *artbeat: Regional Arts and Culture Strategy 2010-2014* acknowledges its goals for regional arts capacity through building stronger communities, participation, arts and cultural practice, skills, knowledge and networks and creative spaces and places.¹ The Sector Plan for Queensland states its goals as great arts and culture; engaged audiences and culturally active communities; strong and diverse creative economy; creative spaces and places; and commitment to ongoing learning.² This policy reflects similar goals specifically for the Gladstone Region.

VISION

The Gladstone Region values the arts as an integral part of the culture and well being of the whole community. It brings us together and embraces the core values of diversity, inclusiveness, creativity and balance.

¹ *artbeat: Regional Arts and Culture Strategy 2010-2014*, Queensland Government, p. 21

² *Queensland Arts & Cultural Sector Plan 2010-2013*, Queensland Government, pp. 14-15

KEY POLICY AREAS

1. Cultural Diversity

GOAL – We acknowledge and celebrate our cultural diversity

Objectives:

- Review and document the scope of cultural diversity in the region and how this is currently represented and expressed through the arts
- Identify opportunities to enhance the inclusion and promotion of the cultural diversity of the region in current community events, festivals and arts programs
- Identify and support new opportunities that express and celebrate the cultural diversity of the region
- Explore and develop opportunities for cultural exchange through the Sister City program

2. Creative Spaces and Places

GOAL – Express a sense of place and both regional and local identity through creative activities

Objectives:

- Progress the development of a Public Art Policy ensuring that it connects with the Cultural Policy and Community Plan
- Survey public spaces and develop a strategy that enables the production of public art that reflects a sense of space and identity
- Promote the inclusion of a range of arts activities in local events and festivals

GOAL – We have accessible, affordable and appropriate indoor and outdoor spaces and places for engaging with and appreciation of arts practice, presentation and performance

Objectives:

- Review current arts/cultural infrastructure in the region and how it is used
- Undertake a cultural/arts infrastructure needs analysis across the region for current and future use
- Optimise the use of current spaces and places and identify new/alternative spaces and places that could be used for arts/cultural activities
- Investigate the use of existing heritage buildings for arts/cultural activities
- Develop a cultural/arts infrastructure plan that addresses current and future needs of the region including short, medium and long term goals
- Develop a policy and guidelines for an annual Artist in Residence Program
- Continue to support the programs and infrastructure of Council's existing cultural facilities including libraries, entertainment complexes and the gallery/museum.

3. Communication, Coordination and Collaboration

GOAL – We have effective cross-sector and cross-region communication and work together collaboratively

Objectives:

- Review current cross-sector and cross-region on-line and off-line communication practices in the region and optimise awareness, involvement and use by the cultural/arts sector and enhance resources and practices where needed and appropriate
- Collectively lobby established commercial media for a greater share of voice for the arts
- Ensure the availability and accessibility of an up-to-date arts and cultural network directory and events calendar within available resources
- Encourage and facilitate networking opportunities and establish an annual networking event to promote awareness, communication and collaboration amongst arts sector of the region
- Actively seek and support opportunities for cross-sector and cross region collaboration
- Appoint a cultural representative to the Council's Community Reference Group and Community Plan Coordination Group

4. Participation and Engagement

GOAL – We have opportunities for all members of the community to participate and actively engage in activities, according to their interests, abilities and aspirations

Objectives:

- Provide ready online and off-line access to up to date information about cultural/arts activities and associated clubs and associations
- Widely promote existing opportunities for participation in arts and cultural activities
- Research and document cultural/arts needs and interests not currently catered for in the region
- Actively promote opportunities for participation in arts and cultural activities through the Council's Welcome Program and other Council communications methods
- Research, identify and support opportunities for all sectors of the community to engage with and express themselves through arts/cultural activities including young people, senior citizens, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people experiencing disabilities and culturally and linguistically diverse communities et al
- Support and promote the appreciation and practice of arts and culture in schools
- Target cross-demographic activities within communities including projects which bring older and younger people together

5. History and Heritage

GOAL – We have a strong sense of our heritage and actively protect and conserve our history and unique identity

Objectives:

- Support and promote the ongoing development of the 'Our Priceless Past' program
- Develop and support projects that enable the preservation and promotion of our history and heritage and the collection and sharing of our stories
- Continue to provide adequate support and resources to sustain and develop the activities of the Regional Gallery and Museum
- Actively promote the need to conserve and preserve historical buildings and landmarks
- Establish and promote a Heritage Trail for the use of visitors and residents

6. Human and Financial Resources

GOAL – The arts are well resourced financially and supported by Council, business and a skilled, enthusiastic group of workers and volunteers

Objectives:

- Encourage the employment of local artists within events and festivals
- Identify the training and skills development needs of artists, artworkers and arts clubs and associations
- Develop and support creative training and skills development programs for artists
- Support volunteers in the heritage field to build skills in areas of museum practice
- Develop and support arts business training and skills development programs for artists, artworkers and arts groups and organisations
- Actively seek arts partnerships with the government, business and corporate sectors
- Promote the availability and value of membership of and volunteering for arts and cultural groups and organisations
- Identify and promote the availability of arts and cultural funding opportunities
- Maintain and develop the RADF program

7. Implementation, Evaluation and Review

GOAL – The Arts and Cultural Policy is implemented through the Gladstone Region Cultural Plan and both documents evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis to assure its effectiveness and relevance.

Objectives:

- Form an Arts and Cultural Reference and Advisory Group (ACRAG) to advocate for the policy, inform the development and implementation of a Cultural Plan, as well as perform an annual evaluation and review
- Develop a Gladstone Region Cultural Plan to strategically implement this policy
- Assure a balance of representation on the ACRAG from Council, the arts sector and broader community

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STUART RANDLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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