



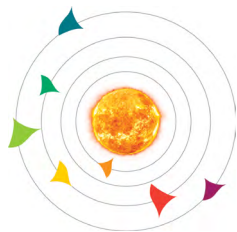
Strategic Plan
2025 - 2028



Issy Capo & Band in action as part of the 100% Home Grown Artist of the Month program. Delivered in partnership with Highland FM, Old Binda Road Recording Studios & Southern Highland News

100%
Home-Grown

Cover image: Community participants take part in the Diwali Mela lantern parade in Queanbeyan. STA conduct lantern making workshops as part of the annual Queanbeyan Diwali Mela Festival. Delivered in partnership with festival organisers QPRC



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The collaboration between STA & Highland FM has created a powerful platform to showcase local talent, celebrate creativity & amplify the voices of regional artists. By working together, we have fostered closer connections between the community & the arts, creating a positive & lasting impact on our region.

Adam Stokeld, Station Manager Highland FM 107.1



Executive Summary

Since its creation in 1996, Southern Tablelands Arts (STA) has been an integral part of the arts, culture & creative ecosystem of regional NSW. Through a diverse program of ongoing & accessible projects & services, STA help create livable regional communities, economic income & genuine opportunities for creatives & audience growth. We support, educate & advocate for the arts across the STA Region.

STA work across seven local government areas of NSW, six regional areas & Wollondilly which has been recently reclassified into Greater Western Sydney. This uniquely positions STA to deliver strong outcomes for the artists, makers & community we serve.

From one-on-one support for young & emerging artists, through to partnerships in major community festivals, we offer a rich & varied range of services & support that's allowed us to be a valued mentor, educator, advisor & connector within the arts community.

STA work with our seven contributing Councils, cultural organisations, & individual creatives. These receive tailored, personalised & specialist support & advice from our team. We have demonstrated our success for growing local creatives & audiences through destination tourism projects like CreativeSouth.com.au & PAINT THE TOWN Street Art project & we strengthened the cultural & creative outcomes of First Nations People through the *Mob in Focus* professional support platform.

We work with creative professional through virtual touch points like our webinars, online directories, website & social media channels.

What we do best is collaborate, educate & connect people. Ensuring everyone across the STA region has an opportunity to create &/or participate in art & cultural activities.

We are proud of the magnitude of projects & outcomes that our small & dedicated team achieve year in, year out.

STA look to the future with excitement & a commitment to continue delivering projects & services that nurture & grow the arts, culture & creative industries within our region.

Wollondilly Shire Council is exceptionally proud of its long-standing rapport with STA as the region's peak arts organisation developed over many years. STA has supported Council in the planning, execution & evaluation of many arts based projects & contributed to the development of arts & cultural policy, undertaken community engagement & have supported cultural competence with local Aboriginal Elders & community members. STA have initiated & provided professional support opportunities aimed at building the skills of local artists, artisans, musicians, performers & interested stakeholders over many years in response to identified needs. STA contributed to the planning of the Wollondilly Cultural Precinct, provided expert comment on the Wollondilly Performing Arts Centre & assisted artists to provide commentary on these key infrastructure projects.

Over the years STA have provided an enormous variety of support in delivering Council's major events including: Illuminate Festival of Art and Light, & Waste to Art projects.

Rob Moran, Acting Manager Community Services Wollondilly Shire Council



Eddie Mowat from Hilltops running a STA kids Street Art holiday workshop in Queanbeyan

Working with STA has given me so many opportunities to make art. I feel really lucky to work with & be supported by them.

Eddie Mowat Hilltops Artist.



**PAINT THE TOWN Creative Director Joe Quilter & Anthony Nee
at their mural Tahmoor Horse.**

Find it at the Cnr of Larkin St & Crawford Ln, Tahmoor

Purpose

STA's core purpose is to be an effective link between Councils, artists, arts workers, creative enterprises & communities, supporting the development of arts & culture across the STA region.

STA creates & supports a thriving arts, culture & creative industries through connection, collaboration & specialist advice.

Mission

At STA we work to maintain & enhance our reputation as the region's most recognised & highly valued arts organisation known for its support & development of thriving creative communities, contributing to the liveability & wellbeing of our region.

STA are uniquely situated to connect our region into Western Sydney . STA are a valued point of contact for organisations & individuals wanting to be a part of the arts, culture & creative ecosystem of regional NSW & Greater Western Sydney.

Operating Principles

- Southern Tablelands Arts is committed to the following operating principles in all its activities:
- Strong collaborative partnerships within & across sectors to deliver arts & cultural development.
- Support & celebrate First Nations creatives & protection of culture & language.
- The right of people living in & visiting our region to participate in, & contribute to, arts & culture.
- Professional arts & cultural practise.
- The development of audience by creating & being involved in regional arts & culture across every contributing council community.
- Organisational accountability & responsibility for balancing environmental & social sustainability with sound financial governance.
- Recognition of the economic importance of promoting a healthy creative sector.

Working with Southern Tablelands Arts on the PAINT THE TOWN project has helped me as an artist to deepen my practice & broaden my scope of work in significant ways. STA is central to fostering a flourishing arts culture across the tablelands. The support STA provides me & the other artists in our region is critical to managing a project as large as PTT. PTT would have been impossible without their help. STA's support of PTT helped take it from a preliminary idea to a holistic approach to art & community engagement that benefited many people & still does.

Joseph Quilter, BA (Hons) Fine Art & Philosophy, MA (Professional Ethics), MA (Research), PhD (Candidate). Nominee Australian Mental Health Awards 2024. Recipient of the Southern Tablelands Arts President's Award for Creative Merit.

The STA Region

STA work across a creative & diverse region, comprising seven contributing local councils. Six regional Councils, Goulburn Mulwaree, Hilltops, Queanbeyan Palerang, Upper Lachlan, Wingecarribee & Yass Valley. Wollondilly is on the edges of Greater Western Sydney. Our region is home to globally & nationally established artists & creative professionals, grassroots amateur community groups & everything in between. The arts play an intrinsic role in the liveability of our region & makes a considerable contribution to the wellbeing of our communities.

STA aim to walk lightly on country, acknowledging the rich & diverse First Nations cultures of the region where we work, live & create. There are many language groups who live & meet across the region where STA operates. Main groups include Wiradjuri Country coming in from the west, across the north is Gundungurra & Tharawal Country, the south is Ngunnawal Country, & the east is Yuin Country.

Our region is home to approximately 9% of the regional NSW population with a geographical area of 32,055km². Across the region around 13% of our population are born overseas & more than 3.3% are Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Around 4,500 people across our communities hold creative arts qualifications, & more than 3,200 work in the arts & recreation services sector. Many more volunteer & provide art & cultural activities. There are hundreds of practitioners who support their creative activities with other paid work.



I'm very grateful to the team at STA for supporting what I do & being there when I need them. They are marvelous.

Carl Valerius, Sculptor Hilltops

What We Do

STA is a complex not for profit business with multiple layers that reflect the needs of our communities & partners. We use our knowledge, expertise & resources to connect, support creative communities & to develop strategic partnerships within our region.

Our creative communities are diverse, encompassing visual & performing arts, history, heritage, indigenous arts, language & culture, literature, digital & new media. Activities we support range from those of contributing Councils, individual practitioners, larger arts organisations, festivals, community groups, creative enterprises, schools & accessible creative service groups.

We deliver valuable services to:

- Local Councils: working across a variety of council responsibilities to support & amplify their work in tourism, economic development, community, cultural & strategic planning & cultural infrastructure.
- Communities: building capacity for communities to develop their own projects to generate social connectedness & wellbeing.
- Arts & cultural organisations: creating partnerships to build capacity, sustainability & extend expertise skill sets.
- Individual creatives: helping them to achieve their artistic & business goals, while building business sustainability.

Here are some of the products & services we deliver to grow creatives & audiences in our communities:

- Expertise, advice & support for cultural planning, policy, projects & programs
- Individual & organisational capacity building through mentoring, skills training, professional development & resource toolkits.
- Project & program partnerships, development, management & support
- Networking, referrals & connections.
- Promotion of creatives, events, exhibitions & workshops.
- Funding identification, advice, letters of support, auspicing services, & application review.
- Management of the Country Arts Support Program (CASP).
- Advocacy for the social, cultural & economic value of the arts, culture & creative industries
- Online resources for creatives & audience including Creative South, STA Creative Directory, Mob in Focus, Paint the Town, Stories from the Studio & social media.
- Regularly contribute to arts & cultural content for local media, print, online & radio.

We enjoy the opportunity to partner with Southern Tablelands Arts to develop & deliver creative outcomes for our community. Whether it's working to deliver PAINT THE TOWN across our towns & villages to transform bare walls into vibrant spaces that celebrate local identity & community or being hands on delivering creative workshops at our events & professional development for artists or discussing strategic opportunities & advocacy to further the Arts, we are on the ground together making the arts part of everyday life for Goulburn Mulwaree.

Sarah Ruberto, Business Manager Marketing, Events & Culture at Goulburn Mulwaree Council & STA Delegate



STA Box Gallery exhibition *The Gift of Despair* by Corinne Dany

Exhibiting with STA has been a lovely experience enabling me to reach a new audience to show my art & create a piece especially for the unique space of the Box Gallery.

Corinne Dany Southern Highlands Artist
& Director of Corinne Dany Studios



Context

Our region is characterised by emerging, developing & unfolding arts, heritage community organisations. Many are yet to connect to the professional arts sector including STA, funding bodies such as Create NSW & professional support networks. In a sector already facing funding difficulties, our current climate continues to be challenging. STA has worked to provide focused support to our communities through increased online activities, mentoring & financial support. Over the coming years, STA anticipates a significant increase in community expectations for access to arts & cultural activities & events across the STA Region. We also expect larger numbers of practitioners seeking increased support. STA has an important role to advocate for the importance of the Creative Sector & the contribution it makes to our communities.

Financial Sustainability

STA is committed to ensuring financial viability to achieve our aims & objectives. The STA Board & Executive Officer ensure adequate control systems are in place for accountability with;

- Regular reporting supported by professional bookkeeper.
- Annual external audit process.
- Regular project management & budgeting.
- Regular financial reports tabled to the STA Board.
- Annual budgets
- Ongoing engagement of a professional bookkeeper & accountant.

Strategic Management

Updates on implementation of the strategic plan are considered by the Board quarterly, & summarised in our annual report. Progress on strategic activities are also presented by STA at Regional Advisory Panel meetings.

STA is like our best friend, supporting us in all our endeavours, listening to all our woes, celebrating all our successes, sharing all our activities both big & small, helping us achieve our goals, there are not enough words to express our gratitude for our association with STA.

I am continually grateful & inspired by the unwavering support STA provides. Their dedication to fostering arts & culture in regional communities has been instrumental in enabling us to achieve our goals big or small & in helping expand our network with other art groups.

For YSA Inc the greatest example of STA's invaluable support is their involvement in Hilltops Off the Beaten Track arts & cultural trail, that highlights the incredible creative talent across the Hilltops & our region. STA has helped amplified our visibility & fostered a working partnership for the arts within the scope of their reach.

Beyond events, STA has consistently offered us professional development opportunities, funding guidance, & most importantly promotional assistance. Their commitment to collaboration & advocacy ensures that we remain vibrant & accessible

Heather Ruhle, Young Society of Artists (YSA), Hilltops



Our Key People & Relationships

The STA Team of dedicated Arts Professional are;

Rose Marin, Executive Director

Lives in QPRC. Artist, letter writer, educator & gardener.

Erin Olafson, Projects & Communications Officer

Lives in Goulburn Mulwaree. Artist & knitter.

Cecilia McKenzie, Aboriginal Arts Officer

Lives in QPRC. Proud Wiradjuri woman, singer & community worker.

Kate McKay, Administration & Communications Officer

Lives in Upper Lachlan. Ceramic Artist & gardener.

Marie-Nicole Meunier, Strategic Support & Funding Officer

Lives in Yass Valley. Artisan & Designer.

The STA Board of exceptional community volunteers are;

Lousie Wakefield, President

Lives in Goulburn Mulwaree. Strategy & leadership guru. Keen theatre goer & writer

Mark Bradbury, Vice President

Lives in Goulburn Mulwaree. Lawyer & community leader

Joanne McCauley, Treasurer

Lives in Goulburn Mulwaree. Financial wizard, business owner & tradie blogger

Cecilia McKenzie, Secretary & Public Off.

Lives in QPRC. Proud Wiradjuri woman, singer & community worker.

Rob Moran Lives in Wingecarribee Shire & works with Wollondilly Council. Community hero with skills in education & access.

Cath Brennan Lives in Wingecarribee. Arts professional with a background in local government & community work

Robyn Sykes Lives in Yass Valley. Performance Poet & Farmer.

Garth Prentice Lives in Goulburn Mulwaree. Musician & Teacher.

Patrick Nellestein Lives in Wollondilly. Musician & CEO of River Road Creative Academy.

Mandy McDonald Lives in Upper Lachlan. Artist & community leader



The partnership with Southern Tablelands Arts is invaluable to Wingecarribee Council, as it helps to foster vibrant creative initiatives such as the Box Gallery & enhance community engagement in arts & culture.

Kathryn Baget-Juleff

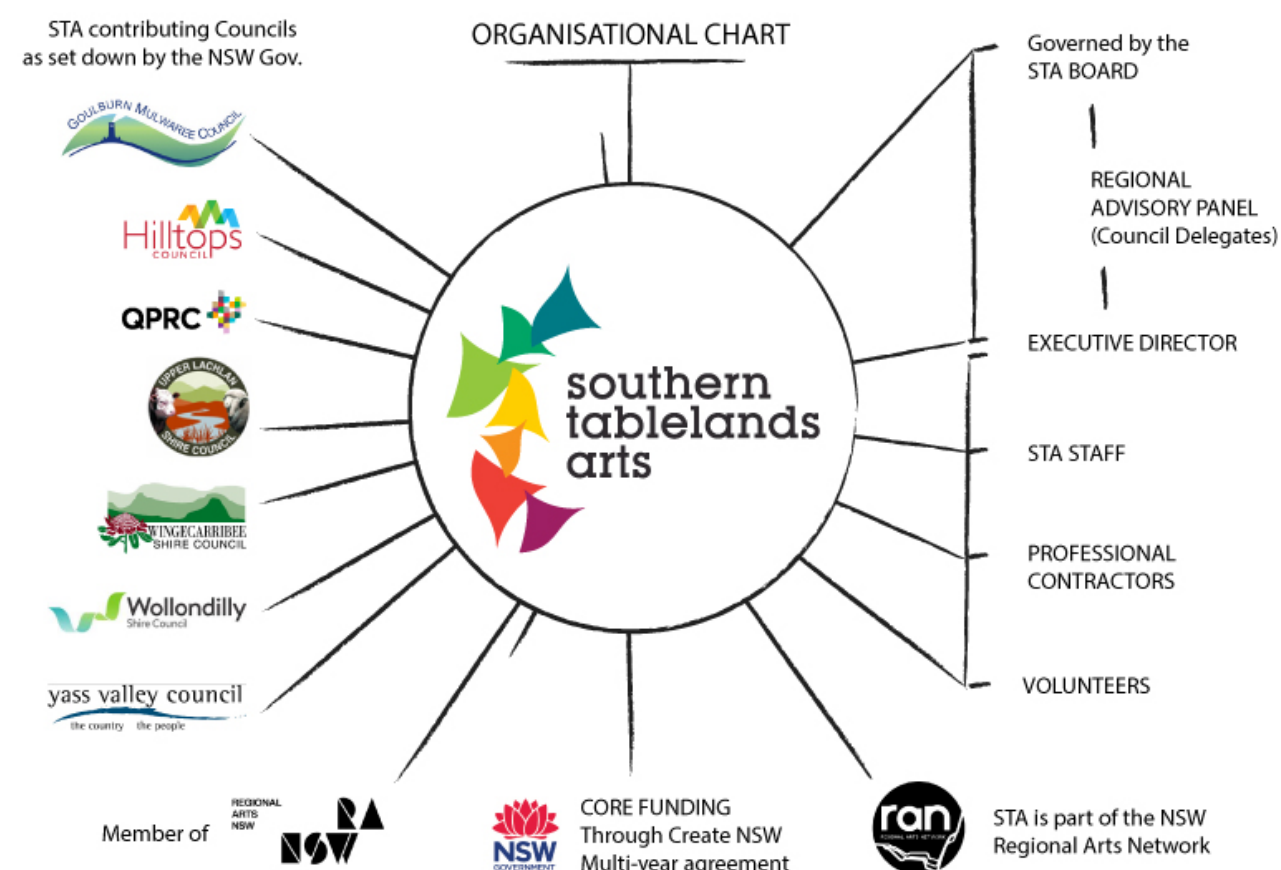
Manager Community Life & Libraries Wingecarribee Shire council



Delegate members of the STA Regional Advisory Panel together with STA Staff & Board participate in a Cultural Development program, *Walking on Country* with senior Wiradjuri Knowledge holder & inaugural STA Elder in Residence Aunty Enid Clake.

Regional Advisory Panel

STA connects directly to our contributing Councils through the Regional Advisory Panel comprised of one senior staff member & one elected Councilor from each LGA. The panel meet twice annually, to share achievement, challenges and exchange information. The Regional Advisory Panel promotes understanding of STA's work across LGAs & builds important operational relationships across LGA boundaries.



STA are one of 15 Regional Arts Development Organisations that form the Regional Arts Network (RAN) across Regional NSW.

The network shares resources & expertise.

We work collaboratively to achieve outcome across the state.

The RAN is comprised of dedicated Arts Professionals & adds tremendous capacity to each member organisation



Stakeholders

In fulfilling our purpose, STA engages with a wide range of stakeholders including

- Create NSW
- Contributing Councils Goulburn Mulwaree, Hilltops, Queanbeyan–Palerang, Upper Lachlan, Wingecarribee, Wollondilly & Yass Valley
- Regional Advisory Panel
- Creatives, cultural & arts workers & service/experience providers
- STA Members
- Our regional communities
- Regional Arts Network of 15 Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs) Network
- Regional Arts NSW (RANSW)
- First Nations Elders & community leaders
- Galleries & museums
- Goulburn Performing Arts Centre, Queanbeyan Performing Arts Centre & Wollondilly Performing Arts Centre
- Hume Conservatorium of Music & Young Regional Conservatorium
- Community arts organisations
- Community theatre groups, performances spaces & venues
- Cultural festivals, organisers & committees
- Creative enterprises
- Preschools, primary schools, high schools & educators
- Sponsors, volunteers & the business community

Resources

- STA Professional Team. Made up of dedicated arts professionals. We have a staffing equivalent to 3 full time positions. At present this comprises of two full time permanent staff & three part time staff. These are supported by a mix of casual & contractual positions as needed. Our staffing mix provides specialist skill sets & the agility we need throughout the year.
- Dedicated Board of ten members with a mix of long-term experience & fresh expertise.
- Strong Governance & financial management with healthy reserves
- Regional Advisory Panel of 14 Council Delegates
- Recurrent funding from Create NSW
- Country Arts Support Program (CASP) funding
- Local Government support & funding
- Project funding through successful grant submissions
- Community support & donations
- Extensive network

Partnerships & Collaborations

- Funding partners: Create NSW
- Seven contributing Councils
- The Regional Arts Network
- Regional Arts NSW
- ARAA - The Aboriginal Regional Arts Alliance
- Creative South collaborators: South Coast Arts & South East Arts
- Highlands FM Community Radio
- Braidwood FM Community Radio
- Old Binda Road Recording Studio
- Southern Highlands News
- Mobile Office venues (rotates annually)

Strategic Service Program Directions

We offer valuable products & services that make a significant contribution to our region. By supporting, educating & advocating for the arts, we help create livable regional communities, economic income & genuine opportunities for creatives & audience growth.

Our focus for 2025-2028 is to refine & expand STA's core products & services so we can continue to nurture & support the growth of the arts, culture & creative industries

STA Expertise

The STA Team Is a resource to our communities & members. STA live & work in the regions, we deeply understand the challenges & enormous benefits of having a creative career in Regional NSW. Our staff serve on numerous advisory groups, cultural committees, funding panels & large-scale project teams. STA staff & Board are regular ambassadors at Council & Community functions & undertake judging duties. We are a critical connection point for business, government & community originations to achieve outcomes in our region.

STA staff contribute to the following;

- Veolia Mulwaree Trust Creative Arts Scholarships Panel
- Goulburn Base Hospital Arts & Heritage Committee
- Yass Valley Public Art Reference Group
- Hilltops Off the Beaten Track Committee
- QPRC Arts Committee
- Southern Highlands Community of Practice Committee

STA facilitates the following networking groups;

- Dress Circle Community Theatre Collegiate Network
- Goulburn Arts Music & Performers Mixers

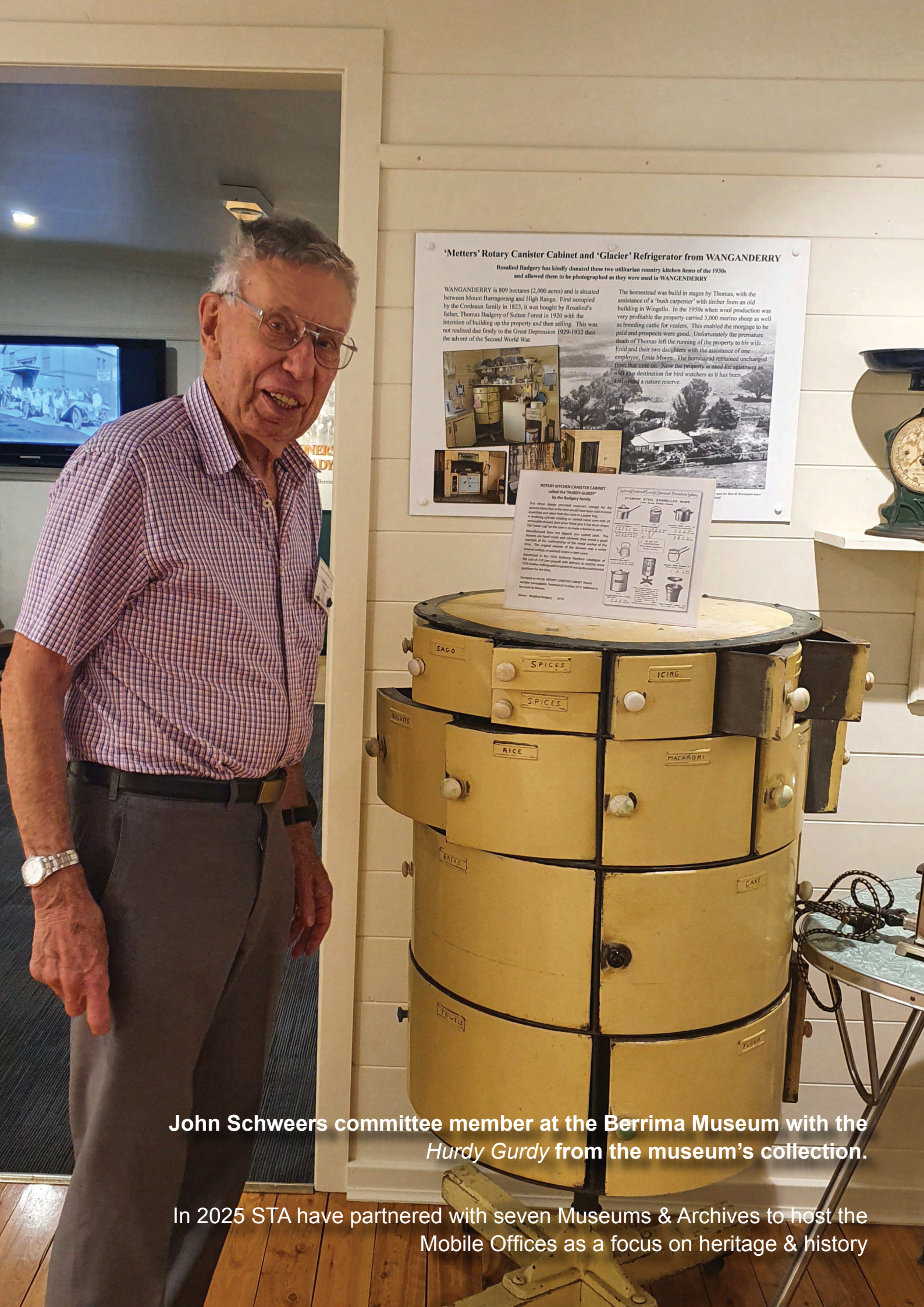


Members of the Goulburn Base Hospital Arts & Heritage Committee at the unveiling of a major commission by Muruwari & Ngemba Artist Monica Bridge (second from R) in the hospital foyer. The work represents an interpretation of the Goulburn-Mulwaree area including the mountains, hills, & rivers.



Pam Luke, Southern Highlands Artist, is one of more than 400 local creatives represented at the STA Creative Directory.

Pam is known for her vibrant contemporary Aboriginal art that reflects her Daruk heritage & deep connections with the local Aboriginal community.



John Schweers committee member at the Berrima Museum with the Hurdy Gurdy from the museum's collection.

In 2025 STA have partnered with seven Museums & Archives to host the Mobile Offices as a focus on heritage & history

The STA Mobile Office

STA offer regular face to face appointments at our Mobile Offices every month (Feb-Nov) in each of our seven local government areas. The Mobile Office program connects to a partner venue which rotates annually. Up to five 30 min appointment are available at each Mobile Office which equates to 350 available appointments annually. The STA Mobile Office is a strategic alignment with key stakeholders & can be aligned into meetings & events. STA Mobile Offices deliver improved connections, professional development, reach & relationships.

The STA Website & Promotional Platforms

Annually the STA website has over 50,000 visitors. The site has hundreds of curated pages, resources & stories. We manage a dedicated What's On page, news page, funding listing & information about our many programs & services.

To further keep our members & audiences informed we compile a fortnightly e-newsletter & have a loyal following over Instagram & facebook.

STA uses its networks & platforms to amplify the promotions our members & communities & raise awareness of the many achievements of our creative sector.

STA Creative Directory

With over 400 listings the STA Creative Directory is our region's most exhaustive platform for local creative makers, producers & organisations. The Creative Directly is a one stop shop to find gifts, art & treasure made by local creatives. All STA members can benefit from a free STA Creative Directory listing. The Directory is promoted through regular campaigns such as the #ThankAnArtist regular promotions, #GiftsThatGive in the lead up to Summer & a weekly featured artists over STA social networks.

CreativeSouth.com.au

Creative South is a cultural tourism website that STA manage in partnership with South Coast Arts & South East Arts. Creative South includes more than 500 cultural destinations across 15 local government areas of Regional NSW between Sydney & the ACT. Creative South works through an interactive map that lists museums, galleries, festivals, music venues, public art, artists' studio & creative markets.

The partnership is working towards a dedicated professional creative position shared across the three organisations to take Creative South to the next level of content richness & market awareness. This role aims to enhance the visibility & accessibility of cultural arts experiences, fostering regional collaboration & driving tourism growth.

What can I write that could ever express the thanks for the support & constant open ear. This work (the pop-Up project) would never have happened without STA. Thanks for what you do for our region.

Erin Adams , Southern Highlands Producer of the Pop-Up Project



Stories from the Studio

Every Friday STA publish a dedicated story featuring a local creative or cultural organisation. The resulting story becomes a permanent page on the STA website with supporting posts over STA social networks. Features are timed strategically to include a call to action to maximise engagement. Since the first Stories from the Studio feature in early 2020, STA have grown the program into a rich platform detailing hundreds of creatives. Stories from the Studio is much more than a promotional platform with a dedicated audience who look forward to their weekly 'story', it forms the basis for genuine engagement & connection between STA & our Creative Sector.

PAINT THE TOWN Street Art Tour

STA have created an online cultural tourism portal that features street art from across the STA Region. The tour is an evolution from the PAINT THE TOWN Street Art Festival project, a multi-year, multi festival program that created over 50 murals with an investment of over half a million dollars achieved by STA between 22-24. Over the coming period STA plan to grow the tour into an exhaustive listing of major street art murals with artists details & locations. The PAINT THE TOWN Street Art tour is set to become a significant cultural tourism resource for locals & visitors alike.

CASP (Country Arts Support Program)

An annual devolved funding program managed for Create NSW by STA. CASP is a critical local funding source has supported hundreds of community arts projects & creative professionals across the STA region & thousands of creative projects across regional NSW. STA aim to provide through CASP at least seven annual grants of \$3k to support the work of local artists & cultural organisation.

Professional Development

STA offer a range of professional development workshops & programs designed to support artists & creatives at every career stage. Opportunities are woven throughout project delivery & discrete bespoke learning packages. We work with sector wide providers & government agencies to provide access to a myriad of existing systems & STA programs. STA facilitate multiple free PD workshops each year for our members.

100% Home Grown Artist of the Month

A platform dedicated to giving a voice to the rich diversity of contemporary local musicians & songwriters. Comprises a monthly featured musical act & a quarterly gig at Bowral Bowling Club. Delivered in partnership with Highland FM, Old Binda Road Recording Studios & Southern Highland News.

Stan Korytnyj Southern Highlands Artist & Stories from the Studio featured Creative

STA are there when I need them, in ways that help elevate my art. Having a dedicated Stories from the Studio profile has been great. I get lots of comments from people who have seen it & it's great to be a part of such a rich platform of artists.

Stan Korytnyj Southern Highlands Artist



Hamish Ta-mé within the *InTransit* exhibition of local portraits commissioned by STA for the opening of Connect@Gunning Station

STA provide a long & sustained creative relationship that built both the artists & their broader network in creative & professional development. Making connections, providing commissions & provoking creative responses. Region NSW is entering into a period of intense growth, STA & the entire Regional Art network have never been more important

Hamish Ta-mé Image maker & Southern Highlands Artist



Connect@Gunning Station, Arts & Cultural hub

STA manage & operate the internal spaces a Gunning Train Station with a program of exhibitions, heritage displays, events, workshops, community meetings. STA acknowledges the strong relationship with Transport for NSW to operate Connect@Gunning Station for our local creative communities & as a cultural tourism destination.

TAHE & Sydney Trains are proud of the recent restoration of Gunning's historic railway station, & are delighted that it has been brought back to life with STA's active & vibrant cultural programming. The long association between TAHE, Sydney Trains & STA is now providing new social & cultural value in Gunning.



Andrew Killingsworth, Community Assets Manager Commercial & Property, Transport Asset Holding Entity (TAHE) NSW

STA Kids

Our dedicated online portal to support families & creative kids. It features online activities that can be enjoyed online anytime, often with materials & resources already available at home. STA develop content with professional facilitators & artists. The STA kids program for youth & families also includes regular creative workshops for families delivered by professional Artists & STA staff across the STA region.

Collaborating with Southern Tablelands Arts has been a transformative experience for our school holiday programs. Their expertise & creative vision brought unique & enriching activities. The partnership not only expanded the scope of our program but also highlighted the value of arts & creativity in fostering community engagement. Southern Tablelands Arts make these activities possible with their talented facilitators & seamless organisation, ensuring every child had a memorable & inspiring experience. This collaboration has significantly enhanced the service we provide, offering opportunities that spark joy & encourage artistic expression. We look forward to continuing this partnership to bring even more exciting initiatives to our community.

Robyn Zwar, Community & Grants Officer, Yass Valley Council

STA Screen

Our screen program includes an annual series of Arthouse films curated by Creative Director Gary Vehtic. The films are screened at partner venues. Commencing from 2025 our partner venues for screenings are the new Wollondilly Performing Arts Centre in Picton, The Q Performing Arts Centre in Queanbeyan & the Southern Cross Cinema in Young.





Peer 2 Peer Mentoring Program

Connects Artists into mentor pairs & creates a larger professional network through a supported system of reciprocal mentoring sessions & networking events. To date 28 creative professional have benefited from Peer to Peer Mentoring. STA plans to develop the program into a multiple layered system of engagement with online resources & a biennial connection retreat following the first highly successful retreat in Galong in 2024.

Illuminate Wollondilly

STA are delivery partners with Wollondilly Council to achieve the annual Illuminate Wollondilly Festival of Arts & Light. STA conducts lantern making workshops for the community & at local schools in the lead up to the festival & host the lantern parade which winds through Picton Botanic gardens as part of the official opening ceremony. Illuminate Wollondilly has been a critical partnership to develop STA lantern expertise. STA now regularly deliver lanterns workshops & lantern parades at events in multiple towns across the STA region.

Waste to Art

The STA Waste to Art project is a major ongoing program that demonstrates our commitment to the environment & waste reduction. Waste to Art provides regular workshops, creative activities at events & online creative experiences through our STA kids activity portal.

The centrepiece is the annual Wollondilly Waste to Art Prize – our Region's Flagship Waste to Art event which STA delivers in partnership with Wollondilly Shire Council. This includes community & school workshops that STA deliver in Wollondilly & other LGAs to create a truly region wide art prize with environmental sustainability at its centre.



I have worked with STA on projects based in Waste to Art. Over several years with their help, I have been able develop my skills & information & share them with diverse groups of people. Through these Waste to Art opportunities, I have received feedback & recognition that has led to further opportunities. In each case, there has been a willingness to engage & thus become a part of the solution.

Al Phemister Artist Yass Valley

Lily Cummins, Southern Highlands Artist & Peer to Peer Mentor pictured with mentor partner Artist Ben Quilty who also lives in the Highlands.

The Peer to Peer Mentorship got me to focus on how to make a living from being an artist. How to connect to collectors & the arts market. Having Ben as my mentor helped me find the place where I can make the work that makes my heart sing & that people will also buy. It provided a lot of connection into Ben's network of Arts sector professionals. Without my long-term relationship of trust with STA the whole thing would not have been possible.



STA Artist in Residence & Artist Bursary

The STA AiR program is an ongoing commitment to offer residences for Artists to be inspired by the STA Region at a partner host venue for two weeks. Open to all Creative Sector professionals who live within the STA Region. Since the program commenced in 2022 STA have achieved eight paid professional residencies at eight inspiring venue. The Artist Bursary program provides free entry to local grassroots festivals to inspire creative making.



Being an STA Artist in Residence at Robert's Shark Tank was a transformative experience for my artistic practice. It provided a unique opportunity for new creative directions & connection to the local arts community. Ang Hart, Hilltops Artist

STA Presents

STA works with community groups & individuals to present a range of events. The STA Presents program provides support with promotion & critical insurance. It is the ultimate expression of our 'with not for' philosophy.



Without STA support there was no way to present our work within our community, now have an annual exhibition. We are very grateful. Ingrida Spole Wollondilly Creative Group

STA Box Galleries

STA manage & operate micro exhibitions at partner venues across the STA region.

Exhibitions tour across the five locations in seasonally rotating display periods.

Complimented with an online presence & artist talk. STA Box Galleries are located at:

- Wollondilly Shire Council Foyer in Picton
- Yass Valley Library in Yass
- Young Town Hall Foyer in Hilltops
- The Q Performing Art Centre Foyer in Queanbeyan
- Bowral Library Foyer in Wingecaribee

Auspicing

STA offers an auspicing service within our region. We have auspiced millions of dollars for unincorporated groups & organisations. This has included major capital works projects & small grass roots community projects providing professional financial management & reports for acquittals.

Secure Additional Funding for our Region

STA are a lightning rod to attract funding into our region. Our most recent audited financial report highlights how successful we are at this with over \$430,000 in additional project funding & income generated by STA in 2023. We further support a far larger amount to enter our local economies by providing letters of support & expertise to improve the chances for dozens of local funding submissions.



QPRC Diwali Mela Festival

STA are foundational partners with Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council to achieve the annual Diwali Mela festival each Spring. STA draw on our lantern making & community arts expertise to deliver lantern making workshops & lantern parade as part of the festival.

The initial & ongoing success of the QBN Diwali Mela Lantern Festival is down to one thing, partnerships. QPRC's partnership with STA for the lantern component of the festival is critical to the inclusive nature of the event & is fast turning into a highlight for the whole community. QPRC could not deliver such a dynamic, inclusive festival without partnerships such as the one with STA. Tracey Lamont Coordinator, Place Management, QPRC



RAN Statewide Strategic Program

With support from Create NSW STA will contribute annually to a collaborative statewide strategic program managed by the Regional Arts Network. This ambitious strategic program builds on the prior success of previous delivered statewide projects:

- *Regional Futures: Artists In Volatile Landscapes* - professionally developed 28 regional Artists through connection, exhibition & symposium opportunities.
- Horizons Youth Career Launchpad - Supported 75 Regional Young people to discover pathways in creative industries through mentoring & connection.
- The *Cultural Tourism in Regional NSW* report was the result of serious on-the-ground contributions from all RADOs & will form the template for cultural tourism planning in the years to come.

Independent artists & small companies based in regional NSW face unique issues when trying to develop a sustainable long term professional artistic career. Having a peak body in Southern Tablelands Arts working so closely with our communities & artists makes all the difference. STA help bring artists & communities together in collaborative activities. They support each of us in our particular artistic & business journey, & add value to the work of individual artists & the companies they run. Dianna Nixon, Managing Director Music Theatre Projects Ltd & Peer to Peer Mentor



First Nations Arts & Culture

STA works to promote & support First Nations artists, cultural organisations & communities. We connect to Aboriginal creatives, colleagues & communities to share, create, live & work. The dedicated online First Nations portal at the STA website is a place of stories, opportunities, resources & programs gathered from across the country. STA work with a professional Aboriginal Arts Officer to engage with Community & deliver First Nations programs & support services. Over this strategic period STA plan to apply for federal funding to offer an identified position with greater hours. Non-Aboriginal STA team members are committed allies of Aboriginal creatives, communities, colleagues & friends. STA weaves opportunities for Aboriginal creatives into every aspect of our work. STA respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the land, sky & waters where we live & their continuing cultural, spiritual customs & practices.

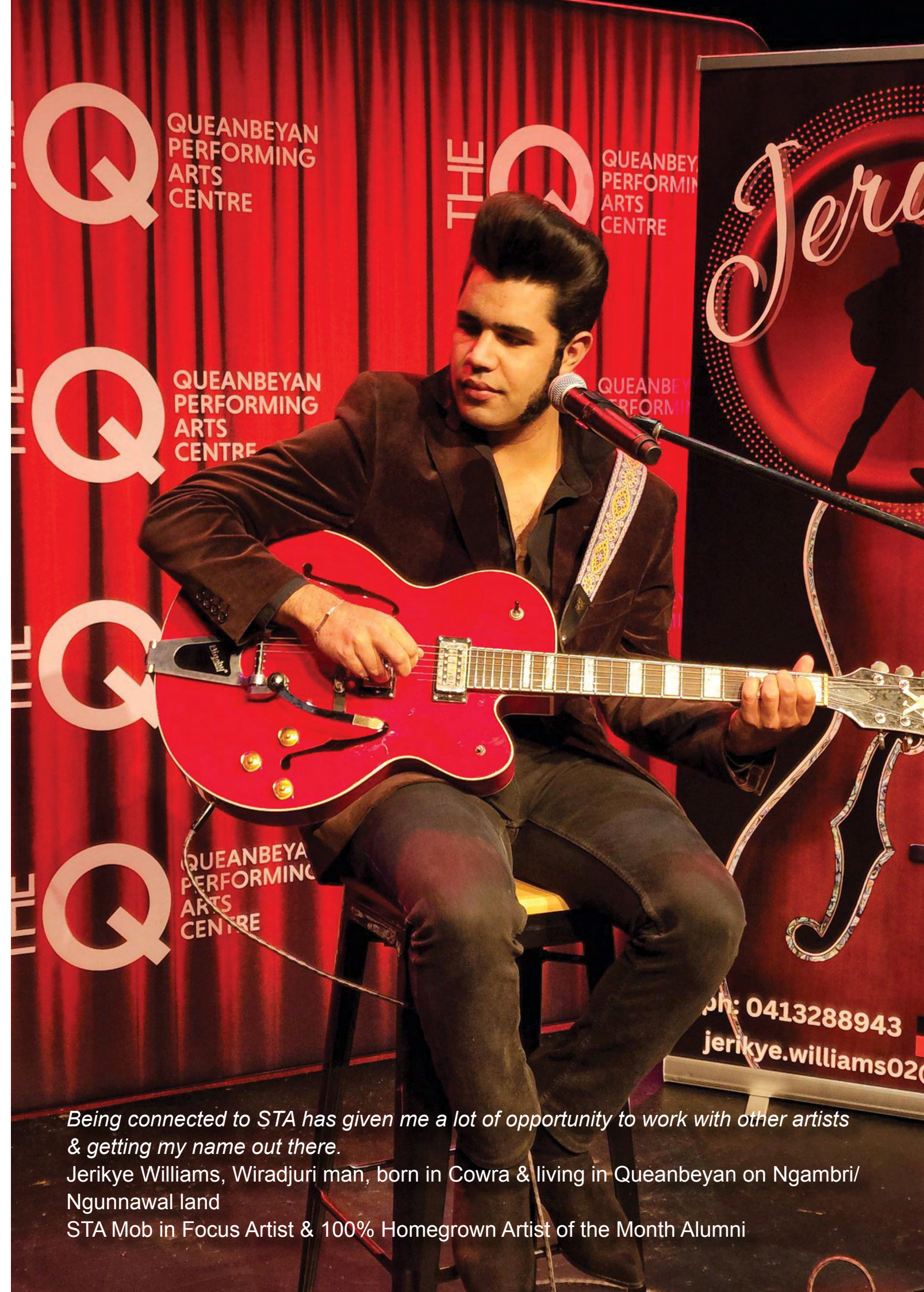


The opportunities & more importantly the support provided by & through STA have increased my confidence in my abilities, along with developing new skills & new connections. This has helped me to create a better vision for my journey & values as an artist & developed my business practice. Thank you STA for always providing a variety of choices, programs & options & for supporting artists to be the best they can be.

Jodie Munday - Cr8ive Art, Goulburn Mulwaree Artist

STA will build on the proven success of dedicated programs such as;

- **Mob in Focus: Time to Exhale** – a professional support platform for Aboriginal creatives. STA supported 17 creatives to create work inspired by recent times & events.
- **Aboriginal Community Support Networks Directory** - A well used online & printable resource of links & information to connect with support organisations, service providers & community groups for Aboriginal People. Delivered in partnership with Community Circles Australia & Wingecarribee Shire Council. STA plans to expand the document to cover each of our Council areas.
- **Elder in Residence** program of direct engagement with local Elders. This is an ambassadorial & cultural governance role that supports us to achieve informed activities & outcomes in the First Nations space.
- **Dedicated First Nations online portal.** A comprehensive online resource to further promote & support First Nations artists, cultural organisations & communities within our region.
- **STA Commissioning program.**
- **Community engagement & Professional Development opportunities.**
- **Dedicated Aboriginal Arts Officer position.**



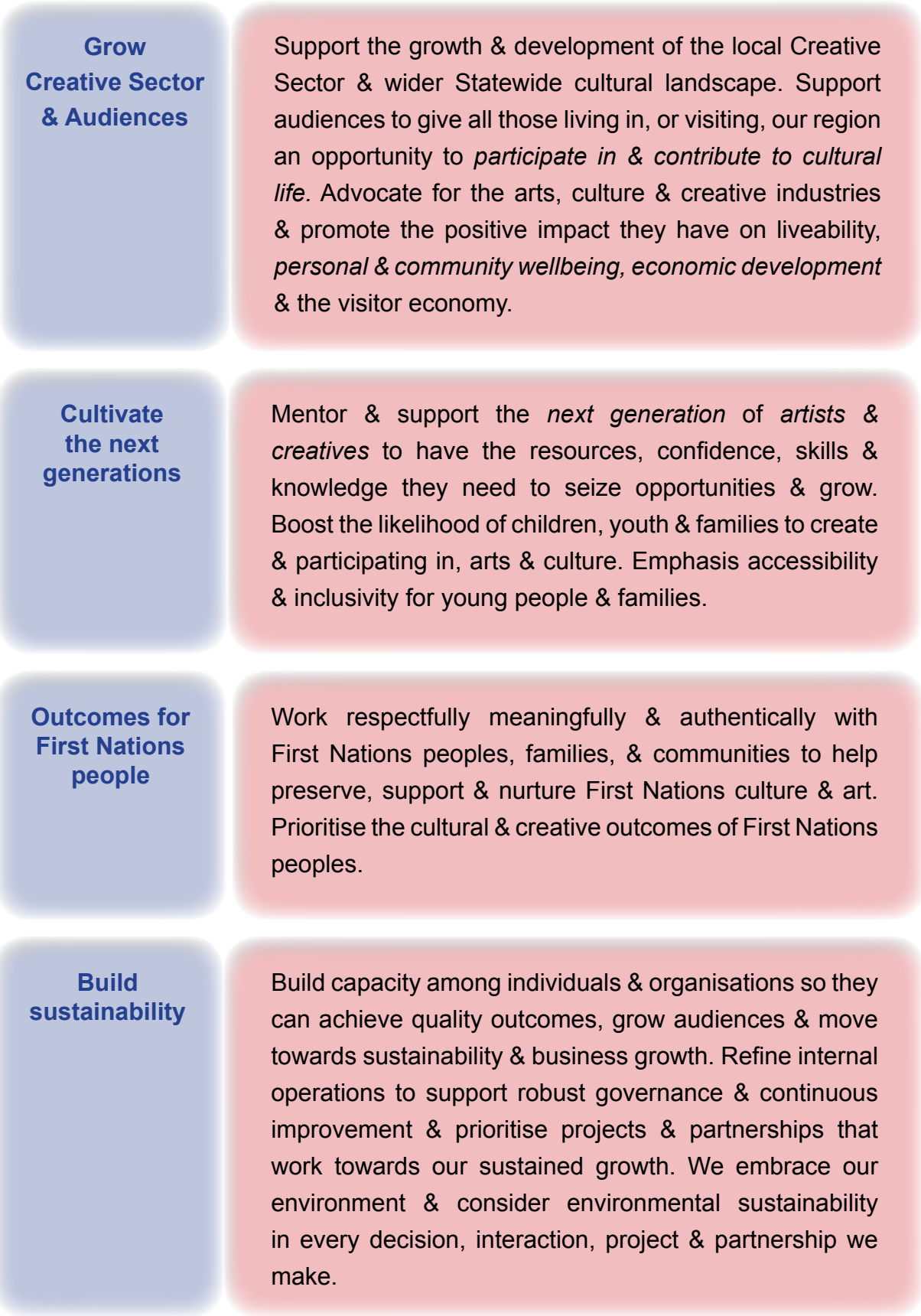
Being connected to STA has given me a lot of opportunity to work with other artists & getting my name out there.

Jerikye Williams, Wiradjuri man, born in Cowra & living in Queanbeyan on Ngambri/ Ngunnawal land

STA Mob in Focus Artist & 100% Homegrown Artist of the Month Alumni

Strategic Pillars

Four strategic pillars form the basis of this plan. Each has accompanying strategies & measurements for achieving our objectives.

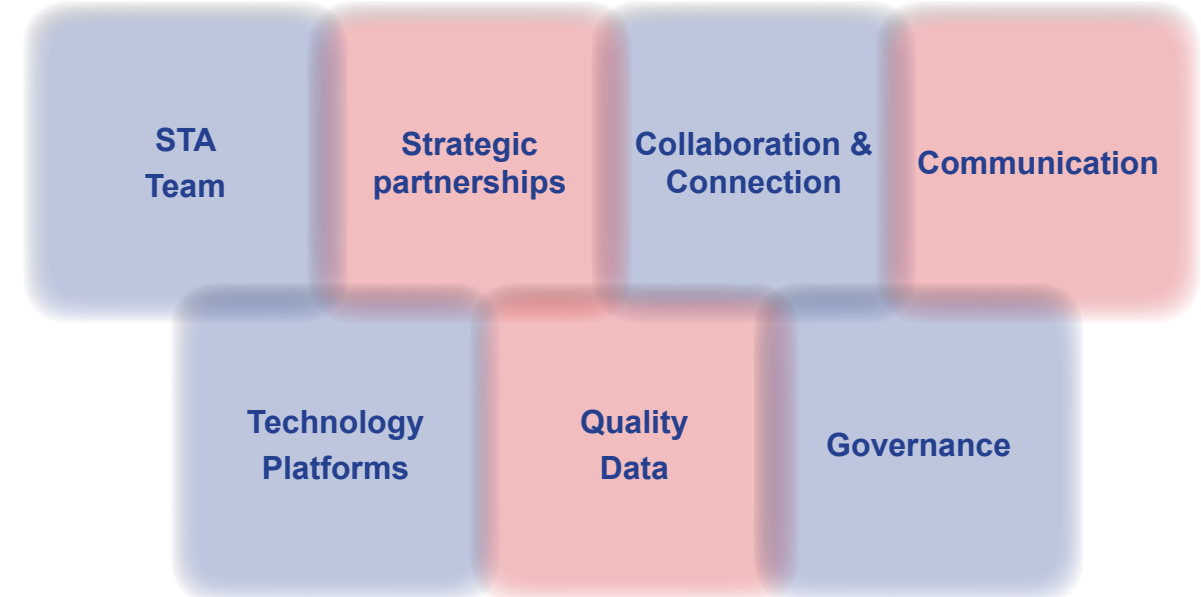


Focus areas for 2025-2028



Underpinning enablers

Seven enablers underpin these strategic pillars, & each is fundamental for achieving our objectives & strategies.



Strategy at a glance

1 Grow Creatives & Audiences Objective Support the growth & development of creatives & audiences in our region	1. Support & promote arts & cultural development 2. Expand & promote the Creative South website 3. Develop & launch Paint the Town website 4. Identify & develop 'underutilised spaces'	5. Pursue new strategic partnerships 6. Advocate for the arts, culture & creative industries 7. Seek participation in major infrastructure projects 8. Collaborate & contribute to the RAN.
2 Cultivate the next generations Objective Mentor & support the 'next generation' of 'artists & creatives'. Boost children & youth creating, & participating in, arts & culture.	1. Provide youth-specific workshops, online resources & meetings 2. Develop engaging programs & content for children & youth 3. Translate existing in-person workshops to online format 4. Grow the STA's Kids online presence	5. Strengthen links with schools & not-for-profit organisations 6. Deliver youth-specific programming in conjunction with RAN 7. Ongoing support for Horizons Creative Industries participants 8. Support youth applications for the CASP.
3 Outcomes for First Nations people Objective Prioritise the cultural & creative outcomes of First Nations peoples.	1. Deliver Initiatives & projects tailored for First Nations creatives 2. Continue the Elder in Residence program 3. Enhance STA's First Nations webpage 4. Strengthen relationships & consult	5. Duplicate the Wingecarribee Aboriginal Communities Support Networks online resource 6. Increase participation in the First Nations Creative Directory 7. Support First Nations applications for CASP 8. Commission Aboriginal artists to produce STA content
4 Build sustainability Objective 1 Build capacity of individuals & organisations so they can move towards sustainability & growth.	1. Provide tailored & personalised mentoring & advice 2. Deliver professional development & industry awareness programs & resources	3. Build digital competency & online programming 4. Grow STA's library of resources for business operations & growth
Objective 2 Support robust governance & continuous improvement & prioritise projects & partnerships that work towards our sustained growth.	1. Maintain robust governance practices, financial management & business operations 2. Secure revenue from diverse sustainable sources 3. Review financial contribution & service models for Councils 4. Provide professional development for staff & board	5. Review risk management profile 6. Develop & implement fundraising policy 7. Demonstrate & promote our knowledge, expertise & services. 8. Collaborate with other RAN members to build capacity & share skills & knowledge.
Objective 3 Build environmental sustainability into every decision, interaction, project & partnership we make.	1. Embed environmental focus in every activity & project 2. Expand STA Waste to Art project 3. Grow our online environmental resources	4. Influence behavioural change within our creative community 5. Develop an Environmental Sustainability Policy 6. Minimise the environmental impact of STA & supported activities

1 Grow creatives & audiences

The growth of creatives & audiences has always been at the heart of what we do. We know that a thriving arts, culture & creative ecosystem is vital to individual & community wellbeing & is a significant source of income for our communities. Put simply, the creation & participation in arts & culture make us happier & healthier, & it's good for the economic health of our region too.

In this plan we outline specific strategies we'll take to grow the arts & creative sector. We will continue to work closely with creatives, Councils, government, organisations & communities to build the capacity of individual artists & organisations to support a strong & sustainability arts & cultural community.

We'll do this by being a connector, facilitator & educator, & through core products & services like Creative South, the STA Creative Directory, workshops, meetings & tailored one-on-one advice.

A key focus will be working with Councils to help meet their NSW Government cultural & creative KPIs. Specifically, we can support them to address community challenges & problems where art & cultural can serve as a cost-effective & efficient solution. We'll also continue to use our connections, network & knowledge to amplify Council budgets & secure additional funding for events & activities that contribute to liveability & local economic income.

Our focus projects for 2025-2028 include the enhancement & growth of Creative South, Paint the Town & our Creative Directories, all of which support our core objective to grow creatives & audiences.

Objective	Strategies
Support the growth & development of creatives & audiences in our region	1. Support the delivery of projects, programs & initiatives that contribute to the growth of creatives & engage new & diverse audiences. 2. Be the trusted & centralised hub for advice, information, resources & knowledge for growth, collaboration & connections within the region's arts, culture & creative industries. 3. Work collaboratively with Councils, Destination NSW & our communities to help 'grow the Southern NSW visitor economy' through 'authentic' arts & cultural 'products & services' 4. Work collaboratively with Councils & communities to deliver projects & programs that contribute to personal & community wellbeing, & economic development. 5. Foster relationships with key stakeholders & pursue new strategic partnerships. 6. Enhance, grow, maintain & promote the Creative South website 7. Grow participation in the STA Creative Directory 8. Develop & launch website to capture, & build on, the success of STA's public art murals & street art project, Paint the Town 9. Replicate the success of the Connect @ Gunning Station project to identify & develop 'underutilised spaces' for art & cultural purposes. 10. Identify opportunities to contribute our expertise to major NSW Government infrastructure projects. 11. Continue to support NSW Regional & Western Sydney artists through the Country Arts Support Program. 12. Continue STA's marketing & communication activities to: a. Build audience & promote arts & cultural projects, programs, creatives, organisations, resources & facilities b. Attract new clients & stakeholders to STA c. Nurture & grow our existing clients & stakeholders. 13. Advocate for the social, cultural & economic value of the arts, culture & creative industries 14. Collaborate & contribute to the RADO Network to deliver cross-regional projects, leverage online programs & to share knowledge & resources

Cultivate the Next Generations

STA has long demonstrated its ability to grow creatives and audiences within regional NSW and parts of Western Sydney. In fact, everything we do has that one objective in mind. We also know that sustained growth in our sector is only possible if we prioritise and nurture the next generation of artists, creatives and audiences.

For young artists and creatives, we want to make sure they have the resources, confidence, skills and knowledge they need to seize opportunities and grow. We offer guidance on professional practice, collaborations, marketing, business operations, and lots more. Whether a young artist is only starting out, or they are further along their journey, we can give young artists support and advice tailored specifically to their unique needs and challenges. We do this through one-on-one meetings, workshops, online resources and other youth-specific programs.

Our priority focus for young people is also about increasing the likelihood of children and youth creating, and participating in, arts and culture. And while doing so, keep accessibility and inclusivity front of mind so that all young people have this opportunity. We know that young children who participate in cultural and creative activities are much more likely to do well academically, socially, and later in life. Music and arts can also boost creativity and helps develop critical skills for the future like problem solving. Most importantly, arts and music can be a genuine source of joy for children – young and old! It creates communities, builds friendships and fosters a sense of belonging and confidence among children and youth.

Supporting growth in the next generation of artists, creatives and audiences is a priority focus for STA and we look forward to working together with governments, Councils, schools, communities and artist to help young people have full access to a world filled with art and culture.

Objective Mentor & support the 'next generation' of 'artists and creatives' so they can seize opportunities and grow. Boost the likelihood of children and youth creating, and participating in, arts and culture.	Strategies 1.Deliver professional development & industry awareness for young people through workshops, online resources and bespoke meetings 2.Work with Councils, creatives, communities & organisations to develop unique & engaging programs, projects and content for young creatives and audiences. 3.Translate existing in-person workshops to online format, & work with councils, schools, & community groups to develop new & bespoke content. 4.Grow activities & content on the STA's Connected Kids webpage 5.Build stronger links with the region's schools & not-for-profit organisations that deliver children & youth programs. 6. Continue work with the RADO Network to deliver youth-specific programming. 7. Once the Horizons Creative Industries program ends, continue to offer our support to the program's six young participants from our region. 8. Actively seek & support youth applications for the Country Arts Support Program.
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Outcomes for First Nations People

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is the oldest continuing living culture in the world. Stretching back for more than 65,000 years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture has been shared from Elders to future generations. Every Australian benefits from this rich and ancient culture. STA commit to working respectfully and 'meaningfully' with First Nations peoples, families, and communities to help share, support and nurture First Nations culture and art.

In consultation with aboriginal community members, elders, organisations and aboriginal board and staff members, we will continue to promote and support First Nations peoples to achieve creative and cultural outcomes in our region. We'll do this through online and in-person engagement, and projects tailored specifically for First Nations creatives. Most importantly, we promise to learn slowly, listen often, and respect the sovereignty of First Nations people.

STA will work to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations, using our sphere of influence to feature First Nations culture, enhance employment and opportunities to creatively express and practice culture.

'Empowering First Nations artists and creatives' is a priority focus for our organisation in 2025-2028.

Objective Prioritise the cultural & creative outcomes of First Nations peoples. Strategies	Strategies 1. Deliver bespoke online and in-person engagement & projects tailored specifically for First Nations creatives, in consultation aboriginal community members, elders, organisations and aboriginal board & staff members. 2. Enhance STA's First Nations webpage & increase participation in the First Nations Creative Directory 3. Continue the Elder in Residence program of direct engagement with local Elders. 4. Commitment to continue to work with aboriginal creative professionals to produce projects and programs. 5. Duplicate the Wingecarribee Aboriginal Communities Support Networks online resource for other communities in the STA region. 6. Develop a strategic partnership with artsACT to give all Ngunnawal artists the opportunity to feature in the First Nations Creative Directory. 7. Identify & include First Nations content for our Stories from the Studio project 8. Actively seek & support First Nations applications for the Country Arts Support Program 9. Continue to strengthen our relationship with ARAA (Aboriginal Regional Arts Alliance) 10. Continue our commitment to commission Aboriginal artists to produce content for STA
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Build Sustainability

Building sustainability has three facets for us – sustainability of the creatives & communities we serve, sustainability of our environment, & sustainability of our not-for-profit organisation. This strategic plan shows how we'll continue to build capacity among individuals & organisations so they can move towards their own sustainability & business growth. We want to make sure that creatives have the mentoring, support & tools they need to build 'sustainable & meaningful careers' in regional NSW & Western Sydney. We work with creatives who live in our region, & those seeking to relocate. Our focus remains on duplicating the success we've had helping Councils & organisations start, build & grow art & cultural activities that become ongoing, viable & self-sustaining events or programs.

Underlying every decision we make, must be a focus on our own business sustainability too. We will continue to build & prioritise projects & partnerships that work towards our sustained growth. Underpinning this is a commitment to robust governance practices, financial management & business operations that ensure our long-term viability. At the core of our sustainability is a proven ability to adapt & be agile when needed due to external & unforeseen factors.

STA is well known within our region for being a leader in environmental sustainability. We are proud of the genuine contribution we've made in our community towards minimising the environmental impact of art & cultural events & programs. We will continue to place environmental sustainability at the heart of every decision, interaction, project & partnership we make.

Objective 1 Build capacity of individuals & organisations to move towards sustainability & growth.	1. Provide tailored, personalised & specialist one-on-one mentoring virtually & at our mobile office locations 2. Deliver professional development & industry awareness through workshops, webinars, online resources & bespoke meetings 3. Deliver initiatives that build digital competency & online programming 4. Build our library of resources that support business sustainability & growth
Objective 2 Refine internal operations to support robust governance & continuous improvement & prioritise projects & partnerships that work towards our sustained growth.	1. Maintain robust governance practices, financial management & business operations that support legal compliance, continuous improvement, innovation & growth. 2. Identify & secure revenue from diverse sustainable sources 3. Identify, build & nurture strategic partnerships 4. Develop & implement a fundraising policy 5. Review & adapt (if needed) financial contribution & service models for Councils 6. Identify & deliver professional development opportunities for our staff, board & subcommittees 7. Monitor staffing bi-annually to assess resourcing & skills requirements. 8. Review risk management profile annually & adapt risk reduction strategies if needed 9. Use an integrated communication approach to demonstrate & promote our knowledge, expertise & services. 10. Collaborate with other RAN members to build capacity & share skills & knowledge.
Objective 3 Build environmental sustainability into every decision, interaction, project & partnership we make. 1. Continue to incorporate an environmental focus in every STA activity & project.	2. Use meetings, workshops, webinars & online resources to influence behavioural change within our creative community towards their own environmental impact & sustainability. 3. Use the STA Waste to Art project to: a. demonstrate our commitment to the environment & waste reduction b. Build capacity among creatives & organisations towards their own sustainability. 4. Expand the annual Waste to Art exhibition & competition 5. Expand the number of environmental resources available on our websites for creatives & organisations 6. Develop an Environmental Sustainability Policy 7. Focus on & reduction in environmental impact of STA activities & supported activities within the community

Risk Management Plan

Key business risks that the organisation must monitor or manage from the risk management plan.

Risk	Consequence	Risk Rating	Risk Mitigation & Management Measures
Loss of Crete NSW core funding	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet reporting & contractual requirements Maintain quality of programs & services that contribute to the NSW Government's strategic objectives Board advocacy
Loss of Council contributions	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Advisory Panel & communications Participate in Council strategic activities Support Council led arts & cultural activities Advocacy
Failure to attract external funding	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of professional services Involvement in cross regional activities & programs
Loss of staff resources	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Succession planning Develop resources Capacity building Loss of key board experience
Loss of key Board experience	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review & update skills-based board requirements Succession planning Networking & advocacy
WHS related risk	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WHS policies & procedures Mobile Office policy

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTH

Excellent reputation
Board expertise & knowledge
Regional Advisory Panel
Professional management
ED expertise & experience
Flexible staffing mix
Supportive organisation culture
Strong financial management
Adequate reserve
Rich online presence
Excellent website visitation
Respectable social media numbers
Sophisticated online business systems
Unique organisation in the region
Relationship with Create NSW
Membership of RAN
Membership of RANSW
Support of Contributing Councils
Wealth of creative talent & expertise
CASP
Richness of cultural landscape
Embedded role in ongoing regional
Festivals e.g. Illuminate Wollondilly

WEAKNESSES

Governance: Board recruitment, induction & succession.
Risk management needs review, improvement & embedding into work processes
Unlikely significant increases to Council funding amounts due to financial climate
Tight Budget
Council ability to leverage STA membership
Profile: strong where known; still widely unknown
Few & small revenue streams
Financial position needs continual improvement
Short staffed
Ability to offer wages that attract experienced staff
No business plan
Policy bank needs review
Lack of written procedures
Overly reliant on ED work & skills
Uncatalogued archive
Capacity to fulfill community need

OPPORTUNITIES

Board skills audit
Board governance training
Build staff resources in part-time, contract & outsourced positions
Raising profile & clarifying purpose
Improve/build relationships with all stakeholders
Capacity building with arts community
Leverage Council strategic plans
Develop a Business Plan
Develop entrepreneurial focus on new revenue streams
Strategic relationships with other arts & heritage orgs
Strategic relationships with other sectors such as tourism
Secure
Increase public profile of local Creative Sector
Continue to maintain & build Creative South
Build relationship with CRJO

THREATS

Loss of Council funding
Loss of Create NSW funding
Changes by/to government support
Decrease in government support through policy & budget changes
Hyper competitive funding landscape
Loss of CASP funding
Cost of living crisis
Economic downturn
Staff & Board fatigue / attrition
Major loss of corporate knowledge
Climate change
Accommodation cost in STA Region
Website capacity
Cyber security
Appropriate PD for ED & PCO
Difficulty in identifying & developing new revenue streams
Over reliance on ED expertise

Strategic Alignment with NSW Government Priorities

In the development of this strategic plan, we have considered & aligned our strategic pillars & priority projects with the strategic priorities of the Arts & Cultural Funding Program (ACFP) & NSW Creative Communities.

	ACFP					NSW Govt		
Pillar	First Nations stories & communities	Western Sydney & Regional NSW	Next generation of creatives & audiences	Broad & inclusive communities & content	Access-ibility & equity	People	Infra-structure	Audiences
Grow creatives & audiences	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Cultivate the next generation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Out-comes for First Nations people	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Build sustain-ability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

	ACFP					NSW Govt		
Project	First Nations stories & communities	Western Syd-ney & Regional NSW	Next generation of creatives & audiences	Broad & inclusive communities & content	Access-ibility & equity	People	Infrastruc-ture	Audiences
Creative South	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓
STA Creative Direc-tory	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
PAINT THE TOWN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Waste to Art	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

southerntablelandsarts.com.au
[@southerntablelandsarts](https://www.instagram.com/southerntablelandsarts)
hello@southerntablelandsarts.com.au



Working with STA has given me an opportunity to showcase my work to a public audience for the first time & on a big scale. It has built my confidence & reputation as an artist & has resulted in significant professional opportunities. Through STA I have been connected to platforms to thrive & connect to my culture as a professional Artist.
Jess Plumb, Proud Gumbaynggirr Artist living in Upper Lachlan