



Arts, Culture, and Creative Strategy

2024–34



Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya nidja Walyalup, wadjak boodja wer nyidiyang boodja. (Hello, this Freo Wadjak country and white fella country).

Ngalak kaadatj ngalang wadjak moort wiring keniny, kawininy, kakarookiny wer warangkiny. (We acknowledge our Wadjak families spirits celebrating, laughing, dancing and singing).

The City of Fremantle acknowledges the Whadjuk people as the Traditional Owners of the Walyalup | Fremantle area and we recognise their cultural and heritage beliefs are still important today.

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A letter to *artists and creatives*

Dear artists and creatives,

Thank you for making Walyalup | Fremantle the special place it is today.

You show us what's possible. Your sense of wonder, curiosity, conviction, talent and commitment to create and present, expands our sense of what it is to be human. Your work brings insight and joy to our most profound experiences. Your work changes lives and saves lives.

You connect us to people, places, the past, the present and the future. You connect us with ourselves. Your work helps us feel our hopes, fears, and passions and to uncover those in others. You inspire curiosity, especially in our children and young people, giving them the tools to grow their imaginations and their resilience.

We dance because of you, we sing because of you, we read your books, watch your TV shows and movies, wear your fabrics and fashion, use the things you design and make, play your video games. Your design brings deep pleasure and inspiration to our everyday life.

You boost our economy with the originality you bring to this city and all the intangible ways that you make this a place where people want to gather, celebrate, and live. What you contribute is central to our very being, our identity.

You are vital.

The pandemic showed us how determined you are, weathering cancelled performances and tours that were rescheduled again and again, or that just didn't happen at all. While we binged on your stories in myriad creative forms, you moved online, you helped raise money for people in distress and helped us to create, connect in new ways and make sense of the very uncertain world we were experiencing.

We know that being an artist and creative can be difficult. Along with the often-limited financial return, your work can be political, propelling change, bringing with it significant responsibility and complexity.

You explore the local and global threats that fill us with existential angst—climate change, impacts of colonisation, war and human upheavals that signal huge systems challenges and changes. You explore what is deeply unjust and unfair and you remind us of what's good and sublime in our world. You sustain our hope.

All cities change and as we evolve, this strategy and the steps we take to implement it, will help to protect the inherent culture of Walyalup | Fremantle, foster the creativity of this place, and ensure your artistic, cultural, and creative practices can thrive here.

Thank you.

Love, City of Fremantle



Executive Summary

Walyalup | Fremantle is a creative city that is inspiring, diverse and dares to be different. This Arts, Culture and Creative Strategy represents a paradigm shift for the city as we own our place as a major cultural hub nationally.

Over the next ten years, we will nurture creativity and connection in this special place. Our commitment to advancing reconciliation and truth-telling deepens with a 'First Nations First' approach that informs all our work. Our programs continue to be inspired by our unique identity and are to be accessible to all members of the community. A diverse and resilient arts and culture community will grow through capacity-building programs and programming for audiences of all levels of interest and knowledge. We will collaborate with partners on an annual calendar of homegrown and independent events while improving current, and advocating for new cultural infrastructure.

Our actions are future focused as we respect, understand, and look after Walyalup | Fremantle for current and future generations, for the next generation of artists and creatives.



Introduction

We are situated in Walyalup | Fremantle on Whadjuk Nyoongar Boodjar—a place celebrated for its culture and creativity—a gathering place for ceremonies, significant cultural practices and trading that dates back tens of thousands of years.

Today Fremantle enjoys a reputation as a uniquely creative community. It is a place where visitors discover a wide range of hidden treasures and can share in the laid-back atmosphere that most residents prize. There are generations of artists, cultural and creative workers who have contributed to this enviable culture. These people are our truth-tellers, storytellers and change makers.

Artists' sense of wonder, curiosity, talent, and commitment expands our sense of what it is to be human. They show us what's possible. Their creativity brings insight and joy to our most simple and profound experiences. They transform our daily experience of being in this place. Through this strategy the City of Fremantle honours this, and the creative spirit that imbues this community.

In communities across the globe, now more than ever, there is a call for people to connect and gain a better understanding of each other and the world that surrounds them. That need is also recognised in Fremantle and this strategy contributes to addressing community understanding and connection. Arts, culture, and creativity enables this to happen through the stories shared in our galleries, museums, theatres, and also in our libraries, cafés, community and sporting centres, our backyards, on shorelines, in parks, and up and down our streets.

The critical role of artists, cultural and creative workers in connecting community is essential to achieving our [draft Strategic Community Plan's](#) vision for the future.



Our Vision for Fremantle

A liveable city that is vibrant, socially connected and desirable.

A thriving city with a prosperous and innovative economy.

A creative city that is inspiring, diverse and dares to be different.

A resilient city that plans for the future and is empowered to take action.

An inclusive city that welcomes, celebrates and cares for all people, cultures and abilities.



Purpose

This strategy is the City of Fremantle's ten-year commitment to empowering arts, culture, and creativity in Fremantle.

It provides high level direction to guide the city in its scope, approach and operational decisions, ensuring we maximise the decades of past creativity and investment and build on that into the future. This strategy is accompanied by a five-year action plan.

The City of Fremantle acknowledges that culture is an organic expression of the community and is therefore beyond the control of any institution such as local government. However, the values, practices, and procedures of local government can influence local cultural development in a profound way and this strategy ensures that the city is thoughtful and clear in its role.

This strategy articulates how we may partner effectively with many other contributors to Fremantle's cultural development. If we can achieve a coordinated approach and a real sense of partnering, we can provide a much stronger foundation for Fremantle's creative future.

What we mean by arts, culture, and creativity

In this strategy, we favour a broad definition of arts, culture and creativity, encouraging people to think of these activities as part of their everyday lives.

This includes going to the movies, a festival, musical performances, or gigs, visiting art exhibitions, museums, a memorial or using the library. There is also all of our home-based activities like watching TV, playing computer games, reading books, and listening to music.

Then there's the ways we make art ourselves—sewing, writing, singing, designing, or building something. All these activities sit alongside our enjoyment of the work of artists who spend their lives perfecting their craft.

Similarly, the strategy aims to champion, invest in and support people who work right across the arts, cultural and creative industries. That includes workers in museums and libraries, those practicing in the visual arts, literature, music, performing arts and community-engaged artmaking. It also means those working in creative industries such as designer fashion, architecture, urban design, and screen-based activity such as film, tv and gaming.

People from all these disciplines have and are making important contributions to Fremantle's creative community energy. While these varied practices may require very different skill sets and methods of production, arts, culture, and creativity are at the heart of them all.

Policy context

Fremantle's Arts, Culture and Creative Strategy is not a document in isolation. It sits alongside an interlocking set of internal strategies and plans and builds on previous policies for arts and culture at the city. It is also cognisant of the broader strategic context at a state, national, and international level.

As the tier of government closest to the community we are committed to a whole-of-government approach and to exploring shared priorities, partnerships, and collaborations. The Australian Government's National Cultural Policy—[Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place](#), and State Government's [10 year vision for Culture and Arts in Western Australia](#) has informed the development of this strategy.

Here's a snapshot of research that informed our thinking in developing the Arts, Culture and Creative Strategy.

94% of the WA public consider it important for children to access arts and cultural activities as part of their education¹

81% of the WA public say that the arts make them feel good²

76% of the WA public rate arts and culture as valuable for the community³

70% of the WA public rate arts and culture as valuable to the identity of WA⁴

43% of visitors to Australia in 2017 were more likely to engage with arts and culture, than to visit wineries (13%), casinos (12%) or attend organised sporting events (6%)⁵

14th largest employer in the WA economy is the creative industries, which contributed an estimated \$3.3 billion in Industry Value Add (IVA) in 2018–19⁶

\$115.8 billion was contributed to the Australian economy by the cultural and creative economy (6.0% of GDP) in 2018–19 and employed more than **850,000** people in 2016 (8.1% of the total workforce)⁷

4 in 10 WA audiences are participating in the arts online with virtual opportunities vital for accessibility⁸

Fremantle has the longest running **street arts festival in Australia**, which is the largest of its kind in Australasia.

Fremantle Arts Centre turned 50 in 2023 and is the longest running art centre in Australia, in 2021 it engaged with 300,000 members of community.

\$3+ million is the estimated value of the City of Fremantle Art Collection which turned 65 years old in 2023.

Leading the country in the number of independent film productions is WA, and Fremantle is home to the highest concentration of documentary and factual television production houses and key filmmakers in WA.

Fremantle Library since reopening in 2021 has had 249,546 visitors and an increase in visits of 120%. The Fremantle Library was established as WA's first free lending library in 1949.

Several heritage-listed buildings have long been prioritised as cultural amenities for artists, creatives, and the community in Fremantle, including Fremantle Art Centre, The Moores Buildings, Old Fremantle Boys School (DADAA), Victoria Hall, J-Shed, Mrs Trivetts Lane cottages, Captain Lane cottages and Kidogo ArtHouse.

26% of all government arts and cultural expenditure nationally comes from Local Governments, and in a visual arts context provide 48% of all government funding for public galleries in Australia.⁹

\$70 million annually is spent in Fremantle by tourists, with 81% interested in experiencing Aboriginal tourism (experiences and activities) if it were easily accessible¹⁰

^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8} Western Australian Cultural Infrastructure Framework 2030+, DLGSC

⁷ Kate Fielding and Jodie-Lee Trembath, Australia's cultural and creative economy: A 21st century guide, Produced by A New Approach (ANA)

⁹ National Association of Visual Arts Local Government Toolkit

¹⁰ Tourism Research Australia Tourism WA VEER survey 2018–19

Our role

All of this information impacts on how we think about our role. In fact, the city fulfills many different roles in Fremantle's creative life, each requiring different relationships with artists, the community and myriad partners and stakeholders. In any given year we present, produce, commission, incubate, protect, host, facilitate, advocate, partner, and invest to keep creativity thriving in Fremantle.

Acknowledging Fremantle's significance in the nation's broader arts, cultural and creative industries is an important context for the Arts, Cultural and Creative Strategy. It informs our role, particularly in relation to:

When and how we lead: We know that we are one part of an interconnected community and agree with feedback from the consultation that the key to evolving as a creative city is to nurture a ground-up, community-led approach in Fremantle. This has been a hallmark of our past engagement, and we will build on it into the future. When we provide leadership in arts, culture, and creative activities, it is informed by our ongoing relationship with the community.

Inclusiveness: We welcome and support everyone to participate in artistic, cultural, and creative offerings in Fremantle. This informs choices we make about our programming and where we place our resources.

Regional centre: We understand that the programming directly undertaken by the city attracts people well beyond Fremantle. Fremantle Arts Centre, our annual festivals and events, our activities with Nyoongar Elders and community, are all important to artists, creatives, and audiences across Western Australia and beyond. This programming also attracts significant external investment and is all part of us being a destination city.

Cultural hub: Similarly, artists, creatives, organisations and businesses in Fremantle have a remit that extends beyond this geographical area. Artists and creatives are attracted from elsewhere to employment opportunities here, while many living in Fremantle contribute to state, national and global creative economies. Innovative artistic, cultural and creative practice occurs here by specialists setting high benchmarks and inspiration amongst the national industries.



*“Artists consider
Fremantle their cultural
home—they don’t have to
live here to belong here”
—Community member,
2023*

Our Arts and Culture programs

The city's programs focus on revealing stories of this place and this country. We encourage work that explores our differences as well as all that connects us to each other. We strive to empower individuals to share their stories and we value lived experience informing our programs.

The city is a major employer of artists, arts workers, and creatives because it has remained committed to producing work in-house.

This provides creative ground for experimentation and artistic growth, connections, and collaborations from which Fremantle benefits both culturally and economically. Importantly, it ensures our festivals, events and arts and culture outcomes truly align with our community and its values, which allows us to share the stories of this place, and provide authentic and unique experiences for everyone who takes part.

Why we invest in arts, culture, and creativity

The city knows that arts, culture and creativity unite our community, improve our lives and ignite our economy. It's what Fremantle is known for and we are proud of it. Individually and collectively, artists and creatives lead change for the common good.

Our cultural ecology at a glance

It's magical what happens in Fremantle where boundaries blur and artists and creatives collaborate. This is a place where an architect and visual artist, musician and web developer, or dancer and filmmaker might share studios, artworks and services, or jam together, critique and challenge each other, as well as support and advocate fiercely for each other and this place.

Fremantle has a legacy of extraordinary buildings and places and has long been a place of experimentation and innovation in deep dialogue with its past. For arts, culture, and creative industries this legacy is both an inspiration and a facilitator as places of work, practice and engagement. Our identity as a diverse community that respects its past while being forward-looking and adaptive to new ideas is visible in our built environment. This is part of a global pattern of port cities as powerful generators of culture, where international influences and local customs constantly mingle to create new forms of expression and ideas.

- Arts, culture and creativity proudly happens on the street, in parks, laneways, shorelines, verandas and backyards, as well as in our buildings.
- Freo's artists and creatives are renowned across the nation and the world. Think of Joan Campbell, Bon Scott, Richard Walley, Sharyn Egan, Poppy Lissiman, Stella Donnelly, Tame Impala, John Butler, Tim Winton, Elizabeth Jolley, Craig Silvey, Shaun Tan, Prospero Productions... (and so many more)
- Local institutions for music include Clancy's, Mojo's, Freo. Social and Metropolis.
- The Buffalo Club and The Navy Club still kick, hosting some of the most epic music nights and exhibitions ever, including Hidden Treasures and FotoFreo.
- A wealth of music promoters, recording studios, record labels and television production houses, gaming, and key filmmakers create here, and who all make an impact nationally and internationally—Envelope Audio, VAM Media, Voyant AR, Rada Studios, Sundown Studios, Pen Cap Chew Studios, Elemental Sound, Jarrah Records, Mill Records—and so many more!
- Arts and cultural organisations of deep greatness that call this place home: DADAA, The Literature Centre, Fremantle Press, Circus WA, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, Fremantle Theatre Company, Sensorium Theatre, and Encounter Theatre.
- Entrepreneurial independent creative businesses include PaperBird, New Edition, Kate & Abel, Case Frames, West End Workers Studio, Kidogo Arthouse and many more, with Spacemarket matching spaces with artists and creatives with great care.
- Artsource has managed artist studios in Old Customs House for 37 years, providing one of the many beating hearts of this ecology.
- Fremantle Biennale celebrates the distinctiveness of this place in breathtaking and innovative ways, and Sculpture at Bathers gather us in Manjaree | Bathers Beach to marvel at the talent of Western Australian sculptors.
- Organisations, businesses, and collectives of the past whose legacy lives on: Kulcha, Deckchair, The Aardvark, Fly by Night, Birrukmarri Gallery, Film & Television Institute, Snooker Boys, Desperate Measures, Praxis, Artemis, Nexus, The Beach, Smart Casual, Success Gallery and The Newport Hotel ... (and so many more).
- Community gardens igniting creativity including Valley Orchard, Nannine Common, North Fremantle Social Farm, Hilton Harvest Community Garden, Florence Park, Annie Street and many more.
- Architects and designers drawn to the aesthetic and values of Fremantle help shape this special place with their distinctive and considered ideas, with Design Freo encouraging the discourse of contemporary design and raising the profile of these innovative sectors.
- The Round House, Maritime Museum, Fremantle Markets and Fremantle Prison have been helping to share the stories of Fremantle for decades and are highlights for tourists.



- Fashion and textiles represented by Morrison, Megan Salmon, Hickey Hardware, 33 Poets, Madame Bukeshla and The Anjelms Project amongst many, many others.
- Long time running galleries include Japingka Aboriginal Art, Greg James Sculpture Studio, Jenny Dawson Ceramics, Earlywork Gallery, Artitja Fine Art Gallery, David Giles Gallery, Glen Cowan Studio and Elizabeth Maverick's Red Umbrella Glass Gallery.
- New on the scene and making big and bold positive impact is community radio presenter Freocast, and artist-run initiatives Current Gallery and Cheap Tongue, with Perth Centre for Photography joining their south of the river friends in Freo.
- PS Art Space and the Naval Store supporting ambitious multi-disciplinary experiences and providing vital studio space, support and connection for artists and creatives to manifest ideas.
- Celebrated events and festivals new and old include Wardarnji, Blessing of the Fleet, Falls Festival, One Day, with creative community events happening every weekend.
- Public art including street art at the Woolstores and WestGate Mall, iconic murals produced by Australian Centre for Concrete Art (AC4CA), and many sculptures including Joan Campbell's *Inland* and *Coastal Plain*, Tony Jones' *Southern Crossing*, Amanda Bell *From Our Lip, Mouths, Throats and Belly* and *Rainbow* by Marcus Canning.
- Distinct precincts and clusters across town such as Fremantle Industrial Arts Precinct including Fibonacci Centre, Blazing Swan and Stackwood, with creatives also working in industrial spaces in O'Connor, and many spaces throughout the West End and South Fremantle.
- Community-led innovation by Sustainable Housing For Artists & Creatives Co-operative (SHAC) who created affordable housing and studio space for artists in White Gum Valley 10 years ago.
- Education facilities such John Curtin College of the Arts, Fremantle College, The Studio School, Lance Holt, Notre Dame University, and many more are nurturing the next generation of artists and creatives.
- The City of Fremantle's own arts and culture programs and cultural services delivered through the Walyalup Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Fremantle Library, History Centre, Fremantle Arts Centre, Moores Building Art Space, annual and one-off events, Art Collections, Grants investment, Manjaree | Bathers Beach Arts Precinct, Fremantle International Street Arts Festival, Heritage Festival, Fremantle Festival—10 Nights in Port, Hidden Treasures, and much more.



¹¹ Davies, C et al (2016) The art of being mentally healthy: a study to quantify the relationship between recreational arts engagement and mental well-being in the general population. BMC Public Health 16 (15)

¹² Christina Davies—Good Arts Good Mental Health: Evidence-based Community Art Engagement

¹³ 2021 POW Data, ABS, 2021

¹⁴ Pracy's Creative Economy Study Southern Corridor, 2024



In addition to this lived experience as a city, there is ample research locally and globally that unpacks the social and economic impact of arts, culture, and creativity.

Social impact: Arts, culture and creativity provides vital social connection, deepens our sense of belonging and enhances shared understanding. Engaging in two hours of arts per week is linked to good mental health and wellbeing reducing stress, anxiety and depression.¹¹ Engaging in the arts can be as simple as listening to music, reading a book, drawing, or any type of creative process. You don't need to be good at arts, for art to be good for you.¹²

Economic impact: Fremantle's arts, cultural and creative industries contribute significantly to the local, state and national economy. Creativity spearheads innovation which is the primary driver of economic growth in a knowledge-based economy. Investing in Fremantle's creative economy directly supports our ability to navigate the opportunities and challenges ahead. The jobs of the future include artists and creatives skillsets especially as creative and problem-solving-orientated jobs continue to grow in significance.

As of 2021 it is estimated that Fremantle's Creative economy directly contributed 2,310 jobs and \$181.1 million into the State economy¹³. These jobs included skilled professionals in creative industries and skilled creatives in non-creative industries. For perspective, the entire Southern Corridor creative economy directly contributed \$1 billion to the state economy¹⁴.

What the community told us

Extensive community engagement informed this strategy with approximately 400 community members sharing ideas about arts, culture, and creativity. [The Engagement Report](#) provides full details of the process undertaken and responses we received.

The top key engagement takeaways:

- Understand, respect, and look after Walyalup I Fremantle for current and future generations.
- Put values of fairness and inclusivity into practice through arts and culture—"the values that underpin community (are) key to ensuring the path forward is the best fit for the community."
- Prioritise improving City's current cultural infrastructure. Take a transparent and equitable approach to providing fit for purpose cultural infrastructure.
- Prioritise environmental action.
- Provide employment, pathways and professional development through mentoring, support, and training for artists and creatives and the wider creative industries.
- Provide brave and relevant programming—take risks and prioritise truth-telling. Aspire to sophisticated, contemporary programming that is in touch with community. "Large scale festivals to grassroots arts experiences are equally important."
- Prioritise vulnerable community members.
- Prioritise accessible and inclusive ways to engage in arts, culture and creativity.
- Prioritise First Nations community and culture.
- Be a leader in the youth arts space.
- Be alliance builders and increase collaboration and networking across industries and the sector.
- Advocate for affordable housing for artists and creatives.

What does arts, culture and creativity mean to you?

"It's the core value system of any society and it's at the core of what it means to be human."

"Making art is a reminder we are human, it can be defiance, it can be self-care, but also it can be a career, it can lead you around the world."

"Connection to soul, connection to others."

"It's everything, it adds colour to all our lives whether we realise it or not. It is the art we see, the music we hear, the food we taste, the perfumes we smell, the textures and environments we feel. Without culture and creativity, Fremantle would lose its heartbeat, its undercurrent, its accepting nature, and nurture."

"Storytelling is our most ancient form of teaching and remembering, passing down stories to share knowledge and keep history alive. Stories connect us, if we tell our story we are seen and if we listen to others, we realise we are not alone."

"An opportunity to question our world and contribute to making it more liveable, equitable and interesting."

Strategic priorities at a glance

Understand, respect, and look after Walyalup | Fremantle for current and future generations

FIRST NATIONS
Walyalup | Fremantle is a place that recognises, respects, and celebrates First Nations arts and culture

EXPERIENCE
Walyalup | Fremantle is a place of meaningful artistic, cultural, and creative expression and participation for everyone.

PURPOSE
Nurturing Creativity and Connection in Walyalup | Fremantle

PARTNERING
Walyalup | Fremantle is a place where people partner up to create work and sustain their practice, as well as to advocate for a thriving arts, culture, and creative sector.

INCUBATION
Walyalup | Fremantle is a place that values artists and creatives to help grow and sustain creative practices and careers.

Theory of change
By nurturing creativity and connection in Walyalup | Fremantle, we empower our diverse community and artists and workers within cultural and creative industries to facilitate meaningful experiences that lead to a more inclusive, compassionate, welcoming, sustainable, and vibrant city.

2034 Strategic Community Plan Vision

- A liveable city that is vibrant, socially connected and desirable
- A thriving city with a prosperous and innovative economy
- A creative city that is inspiring, diverse and dares to be different
- A resilient city that plans for the future and is empowered to take action
- An inclusive city that welcomes, celebrates and cares for all people, cultures and abilities

PRIORITY 1: *First Nations*

Vision:

Walyalup | Fremantle is a place that recognises, respects, and celebrates First Nations arts and culture.

The City of Fremantle is committed to the Uluru Statement from the Heart and support for progressive inclusive community that is focused on reconciliation. This strategy and action plan aligns to the City of Fremantle’s Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2024–27 which has a focus on Voice, Treaty and Truth Telling.

Self-determination is crucial and that means First Nations artists, creatives, organisations, and companies tell First Nations stories, and First Nations programs are designed by and with First Nations peoples and organisations.

Strategic Objectives:

- 1. Engage with First Nations people and communities.
- 2. Celebrate and grow First Nations led arts and cultural programming.
- 3. Create and advocate for training, employment, and professional development opportunities for First Nations people within City of Fremantle.

This looks like:

- Working with Traditional Owners to ensure First Nations knowledge and culture always guides our work.
- Ensuring culturally appropriate procedures, systems, experiences and places.
- Prioritising First Nations led programming.
- Increasing First Nation representation in the city’s Arts and Culture leadership and workforce.



Case study *First Nations: Wardarnji Festival*

Wardarnji is a spectacular annual event of Nyoongar performance and storytelling that has proudly long been held in Walyalup | Fremantle since 1998. Wardarnji celebrates the beauty of Nyoongar culture in breathtaking song, language, dance and story by First Nations artists, creatives and cultural leaders. Wardarnji joyously showcases one of the world’s oldest and richest cultures, with dancers performing traditional and contemporary works, fires burning well into the night and an array of markets showcasing the talents of local Aboriginal makers.

Renowned Nyoongar performers and producers who have directed Wardarnji include Richard Walley, Robyn Smith-Walley and Karla Hart. It has always been First Nations-led and supported by the City of Fremantle through event delivery at sites across Walyalup including Fremantle Art Centre and Esplanade Park.

The recent 2023 Wardarnji had an audience of 3,000 over the day, with eventgoers treated to 14 groups performing traditional and contemporary dances from over 10 clans. 150+ artists were involved, ranging in age from 4 to over 70!

“Wardarnji has a spot in the heart of our communities and the dancers look forward to this special time each year that they all get to dance together under the stars, raising the vibration of country through dance and song and making everyone’s spirit strong.”

—Karla Hart

Woola!!!



PRIORITY 2: *Experience*

Vision:

Walyalup | Fremantle is a place of meaningful artistic, cultural, and creative expression and participation for everyone.

There is much to learn, celebrate, and enjoy in Fremantle—world class artists and creatives, natural and built environments as a source of inspiration, and fascinating history, present day, and future. Participating in creativity is good for you, and anyone that lives, works, or visits Fremantle (in person or remotely) at any life stage and ability will have access to unique stories in meaningful ways.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Strengthen Walyalup | Fremantle's standing as a major cultural hub and destination city for cultural experiences.
2. Celebrate our community's long and rich history, cultural diversity and contemporary identity.
3. Ensure Walyalup | Fremantle's natural and built environment is protected and designed to enhance local identity and encourage cultural activity.

This looks like:

- Prioritising brave and risk-taking artistic practice to provide innovative audience and community experiences.
- Prioritising accessible and inclusive programming and services.
- Co-creating projects with the community in inclusive ways.
- Improving the environmental sustainability of the City's arts and culture services, whilst showcasing and facilitating community-led environmental advice and services.



Case study *Experience: Claiming Space*

CLAIMING SPACE is a photographic exhibition where multidisciplinary artists, Sam Kerr-Phillips and Hugo Flavelle, challenged the audience to rethink the infrastructure and inclusivity of Walyalup | Fremantle through performance, technology and humour. Fremantle's narrow staircases, grand historic buildings and grungy hangouts are alluring and inviting for many, but also impossible for others.

In Sam's series, he becomes the charismatic publican of his very own mobile tiki bar, 'The Spaboober', that rolls around to the various touristic and sub-cultural community sites around town.

Hugo's mobile media chair and iconic lighthouse trailer—complete with lighting, sound system, video capture and a high-powered projector, threw his world of drawings and subjects of interest on the city itself.

Commissioned by City of Fremantle for 10 Nights in Port 2022, the photographic works were hung at wheelchair height with audience invited to join TIKI Tours using wheelchairs provided to experience the artworks, films, drinks and music from Sam and Hugo's perspective.

The creative process was led entirely by both artists, with mentoring and producer support from Lincoln McKinnon and Simone Flavelle. Hugo just launched his latest project *viewsfromthewonderchair.com* and Sam has completed some more episodes of his film comedy series STICKY DATES.



PRIORITY 3: *Incubation*

Vision:

Walyalup | Fremantle is a place that values artists and creatives to help grow and sustain creative practice and careers.

Artists and creatives require career structures that are long-term and sustainable. They deserve fair remuneration based on industry standards and safe and inclusive work cultures. Cultural infrastructure in Fremantle needs to be maintained, restored and built, especially for the next generation, and our creative workforce needs leadership that is reflective of contemporary Australia.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Provide and improve fit-for-purpose cultural infrastructure.
2. Provide sustainable investment in the careers of artists and creatives.
3. Provide safe and inclusive environments in the city's arts and culture services.

This looks like:

- A new recording and performance space at Fremantle Art Centre, refurbishing the Fremantle Town Hall, reviewing the Bathers Beach Arts Precinct.
- Partnering with state and federal government agencies to provide new cultural infrastructure in Fremantle.
- Providing professional development and learning opportunities for Fremantle's artists, cultural and creative workforce at all stages of their practices.
- Improving policy and processes to provide safe and inclusive workplace standards for the creative workforce in the city's arts and culture services.



Case study *Incubation: Future Treasures*

Future Treasures annual all-ages event has been celebrating the next wave of local and young musicians since 2018. The initiative was created with a vision to support original music-making and provide young people a chance to meet with and be mentored by the music industry while performing at iconic venues including Freo Social, Fremantle Town Hall and the Naval Store.

The City of Fremantle partners with local high schools and offers songwriting workshops and upskilling with music industry professionals in the lead-up to the event. Participating schools have included Fremantle College, John Curtin College of the Arts, Christian Brothers College, Seton College and the Studio School. The showcase event has been a positive way for students to meet other young musicians in the community contributing to musical collaboration and experimentation.

Countless new bands and an exporter of locals-made-good including Mali Jose, The Stamps, Teenage Vertigo, JUNK and Sienna Rebelo.

“Fremantle College’s philosophy is to encourage students to find their voice, they don’t have to do covers and play other people’s music. Future Treasures is a platform for these students.”

—Mike Gowland, Head of Learning Area Music

“The City always aims to support local residents and businesses. For Creative Arts and Community Development, this is our ethos too, but if we are to be considered a Creative Hub, we need to show and share the value of the Arts. Future Treasures as a program, is a great example of how we try to do this holistically.

We work with the schools and teachers to celebrate and support creativity, we invite and introduce the students to working professionals in the music industry who offer advice and in some instances future gigs and we offer a performance platform as part of 10 Nights in Port to gain live experience in playing to audience with high quality production and marketing.

Previous Future Treasures participants playing in the over 18s event ‘Hidden Treasures’ and beyond is a testament to the impact of support programs like Future Treasures. Local councils can make a considerable impact by devising and implementing similar programs.”

—’Ofa Fotu, City of Fremantle Festivals Coordinator

PRIORITY 4: *Partnership*

Vision:

Walyalup | Fremantle is a place where people partner up to create work and sustain their practices, and to advocate for a thriving arts, culture and creative sector.

We are stronger by doing things together and we connect and broker opportunities to benefit many. We will create genuine and respectful relationships and our community and creative industries will benefit by being future focused and networked.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Contribute to a broader understanding of the role of arts, culture and creativity in society and advocate for the sector's growth.
2. Foster connections and partnerships between artists, creatives, community, and broader industries.

This looks like:

- Evaluate the social and economic impact of Arts and Culture services.
- Communicate the impact and outcomes of the arts, culture and creative industry in Fremantle.
- Facilitate networking between artists, creatives, community, local businesses and industry.
- Facilitate roundtables for communities of interest on specific issues to meet and work towards common goals.



Case study *Partnership: Fremantle Biennale*

The **Fremantle Biennale** is a festival of site-responsive contemporary art. The largely free program presents artworks from Australia and the world that reveals and celebrates the cultural, social and historical distinctiveness of the Walyalup | Fremantle region. Collaboration is key to how the Biennale team works with a myriad of partners helping to connect more people to the arts through inviting and challenging artistic and cultural experiences.

Occurring every two years since 2017, the Biennale was realised by co-founders and Artistic Director Tom Müller and then City of Fremantle staff Corine van Hall, with Ric Spencer and Pete Stone also from the City. Today, the Biennale team continues to work closely with the City to navigate the often complex process that comes with realising an artist's ambitious vision, accessing dormant spaces, presenting large-scale outdoor events, and shutting down streets.

The fourth—and most recent—iteration of the festival, SIGNALS 23, engaged with an audience of 87,000 exploring new and hidden places and spaces of Walyalup | Fremantle that spanned architectural pavilions, performance art, dance, large-scale visual art installations and welcoming ships to safe harbour in the Port. It travelled across the ocean to Wadjemup | Rottnest Island and upstream on the Derbal Yerrigan | Swan River to Dyoondalup | Attadale, and involved working with multiple local, state and federal government agencies to access buildings, waters, land and sky. Many generous private sector partners contributed to commissioning brave new works. Most importantly is the rightful and meaningful way the Biennale team works in partnership with our First Nations community, through care and a deep practice of reconciliation and commitment to creating powerful contemporary artworks.

SIGNALS 23 engaged 113 artists, commissioned 19 major new works and world premieres, with 38 partners. It had an economic impact of \$9 million.



Implementation

The Arts, Culture and Creative Strategy is primarily led by the City's Arts and Culture team, with a broader organisational commitment to the vision and delivery of actions. Many teams in the City advocate for and model creative and cultural practice including Community Development including Aboriginal Engagement, Positive Ageing and Youth, the LifeLong Learning Library team, Strategic Planning and City Design, Parks and Landscapes, and Economic Development.

This strategy is supported by an Arts, Culture and Creative Strategy Action Plan 2024–27.

Monitoring, Reporting and Review

This strategy and associated action plan will be reviewed regularly in conjunction with the Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan by establishing and integrating systems and capabilities to maintain progress tracking and measures on the Plans outcomes. To ensure accountability to the community, the City will transparently report on the Plan's achievements, challenges and lessons learned to the Council annually. This information will be summarised and distributed through communication channels for the public and interested stakeholders to view.

Responsibility and review information	
Responsible officer	Director Creative Arts and Community
Document adoption/approval details	Ordinary Council Meeting 10 April 2024
Document amendment details	N/A

The information in this document is available in alternative formats on request. Please contact the City of Fremantle on 1300 MY FREO (1300 693 736) to request.

The National Relay Service (NRS) The NRS can contact the City of Fremantle on your behalf.

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Image credits

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Page 7: Fremantle Art Centre long time tutor and ceramist Stewart Scrambler in studio, Gen Y house project designed by Cast Studio for Development WA img cr. Robert Frith, Walyalup Kannajil choir part of Mantle Music 10 Nights in Port 2022, One Day Ceremony at Walyalup Koort, Joan

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Page 11: Future Treasures at Fremantle Town Hall

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Page 15: Nonotak Studio, Satellites (2023) Commissioned by the Fremantle Biennale for SIGNALS 23, img cr. Rebecca Mansell, Cass Lynch & Ilona McGuire, First Lights—Kooranup (2023). Commissioned by the Fremantle Biennale for SIGNALS 23, img cr. Jarrad Russel, Fremantle Festival Partnership with WA Museum

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