

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Arts and Culture Policy</b>
<b>Type:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Adopted:</b>	18 December 2019
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### 1. Purpose

Creative expression is an essential element in communities. Engaging in art and cultural activities builds a sense of community pride and identity; inspires community and civic participation; creates a culture of inclusion; contributes to resilient local economies; promotes health and wellbeing and enhances the liveability of the Murrindindi Shire. This Arts and Culture Policy provides a framework for the support and delivery of arts and cultural services into the future and describes Council's supporting role in arts and culture activities and initiatives.

### 2. Rationale

In recognition of the importance of arts and culture in our communities, there is a strategy in the Murrindindi Shire Council Plan 2017-2021 under Our People to "Encourage activities and events that celebrate our vibrant, diverse and creative people and communities". The development of an Arts and Culture policy supports this strategy and communicates Council's commitment to encouraging artistic and cultural activities and events into the future.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to the Murrindindi Shire Council and all officers, as well as any agencies working on behalf of council.

### 4. Policy

Murrindindi Shire Council understands the value of its arts and culture sectors in enhancing social, cultural, economic and other opportunities for our residents. Arts and cultural activities create a ripple effect of benefits across the community and make a vital contribution to community health and wellbeing. Council recognises that a range of art and cultural activities occurs within communities due to dedicated volunteers.

#### *Our commitment*

Council will:

- Work to further develop the arts, culture and heritage through effective partnership with the community and other key stakeholders.
- Play an enabling and supporting role in art and cultural activities, wherever possible.
- Proactively use its resources to link people together to explore, create and produce.
- Provide access to art and cultural opportunities through Council delivered services including Libraries, Youth Services, Children's Services, Positive Ageing and Access and Inclusion activities and other community building activities.
- Provide the Grants and Contributions program or other similar program to support arts and cultural activities.
- Support community participation and expression through new and emerging forms of art?

To support Council with this commitment, Council's guiding principles are:

#### **5.1 Encourage community participation and inclusion**

Community arts and cultural initiatives are an important contributor to the health and wellbeing of Murrindindi communities. They provide an opportunity for creative expression and for the community

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to socialise and develop support networks. Like any essential service, these initiatives should be available to all residents regardless of income, age, physical ability, gender and race.

To encourage community and civic participation Council will:

- Encourage opportunities for all members of the community to participate in art and cultural activities.
- Foster and celebrate an understanding and appreciation of local Indigenous culture.
- Support artistic initiatives and cultural events that promote shire wide, community and individual involvement.
- Engage with the community in relevant activities and events, to ensure inclusion and access for all members of the community.

### **5.2 Creative partnerships and networks**

Council recognises that key stakeholders, including government, business and the broader community can together play an important role in creating a strong and vibrant region.

To foster connections within and outside our Shire, Council will:

- Maintain and develop partnerships with state and federal governments and peak bodies including Regional Arts Victoria and Creative Victoria to enhance our capabilities and achieve our goals.
- Seek opportunities to forge links between the many cultural groups within our shire, and to help optimise the use of existing resources and skills.
- Where appropriate, facilitate and encourage cross departmental planning and partnerships to ensure an integrated "Whole-of-Council" approach to arts and culture.
- Emphasise the importance of networks and partnerships, not only between different parts of the arts, culture and heritage sectors, but in linking these sectors with the broader community.

### **5.3 Creative spaces and public places (Built and natural environment)**

Although limited in number, Council understands the importance of providing creative spaces and public places to encourage and develop art and cultural experiences across our area. Our built and natural environment plays an important role in bringing the community together to create and enjoy many and varied cultural activities. Council will:

- Encourage the use of our existing Council-owned infrastructure, such as our Libraries, Town halls, Visitor Information Centres, parks and gardens, to enable a diverse range of art and cultural activities to occur.
- Work with community and groups to ensure all arts and culture activities have appropriate permissions from Council where required.
- Consider and support the facilitation of art and cultural initiatives that support innovative and creative design when planning civic spaces and places, where appropriate.
- Encourage the protection and promotion of natural and cultural heritage places and culturally significant areas.

### **5.4 Investing in local practices**

Investing in local practices is important for the growth, longevity and vitality of our community.

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- Provide support to local artists and cultural industries to encourage economic growth and cultural diversity, where possible.
- Make use of local artists, including Indigenous artists to produce promotional material for the shire, wherever possible.
- Provide support to local artists, arts organisations and community groups through an accessible grants and contributions program, in-kind support and physical resources.
- Encourage mentoring between established creative businesses and new entrants.

### **5.5 Promotion, Communication and Cultural Tourism**

With our close proximity to Melbourne, and our strengths in tourism, Council understands the economic potential of promoting our area as an exciting cultural tourism destination.

To help raise our profile, Council will:

- Promote art and cultural activities and attractions in the Shire via multiple platforms including online.
- Encourage the development of place-based arts, cultural and heritage projects to support the promotion of our region, including through our grants and contributions program.

### **6. Related Policies, Strategies and Legislation**

Murrindindi Shire Council recognises the following in development of this document;

- Health and Wellbeing Plan –2017-2021
- Murrindindi 2030 Vision

The Council's Community Grants program assists in supporting Arts and Cultural activities within the Shire. This document refers to the Grants Contributions Policy.

### **7. Council Plan**

This policy is in accordance with the Council Plan 2017-2021 Strategic Objectives:

1. Our People – Together we will celebrate and encourage diverse, caring and connected communities.
2. Our Prosperity – In partnership with community we will promote an environment in which business and community can thrive.

### **8. Management and Review**

Council recognises the cross-portfolio nature of the arts and culture sectors. While currently sitting in the Community Wellbeing portfolio, it is understood that this policy will have an impact on other departments of Council including, Development and Environment Services, Tourism and Events, Business Development, Infrastructure Assets, Communications, Library and Customer Services and Corporate Services.

This policy is managed by the Manager Community Wellbeing who will (either directly or through delegated authority) coordinate the implementation and operation of the policy and its review.

### **9. Consultation**

This policy is cross-functional across all departments. All staff were invited to participate in the review of the policy. Specific feedback was sought from the Manager Customer Experience and Coordinator Tourism and Events.

Regional Arts Victoria also assisted in the development of this policy.

### **10. Human Rights Charter**

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This policy has been developed with consideration of the requirements under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.