

Wollongong City Council

Creative Wollongong 2024-2033

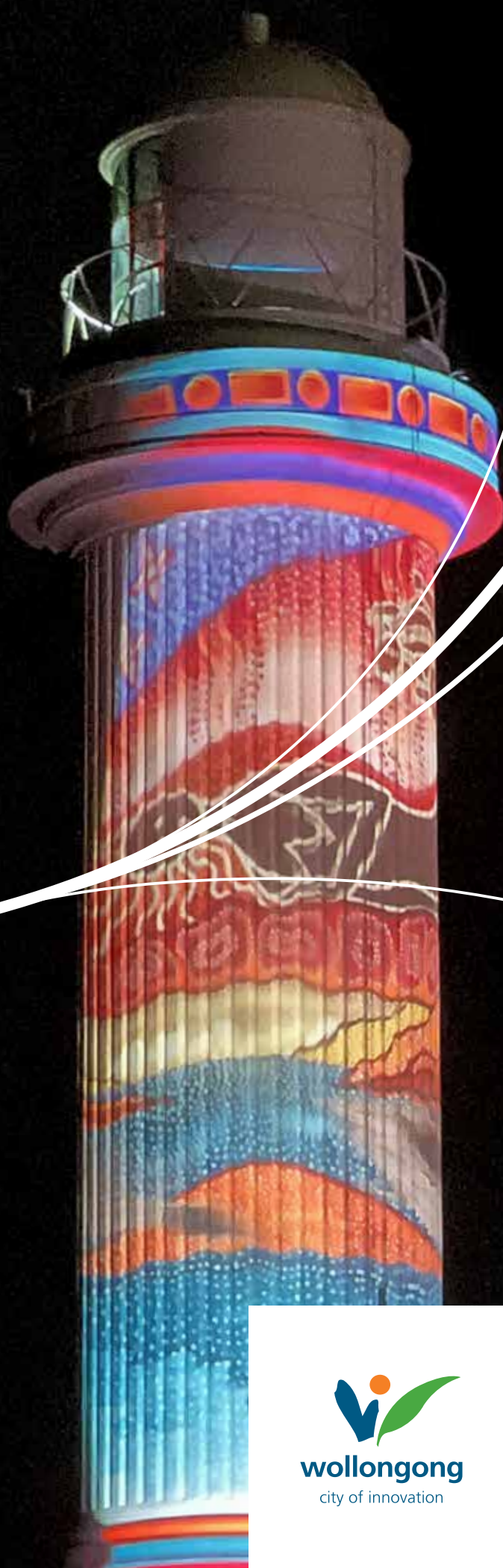




Image: Kugang Djarmbi, Culture Mix, 2023

Cover image: Spinfest, 2022, *Beyond the Breaking Waves*, Artists: Lorraine Brown, Cheryl Davison, Julie Freeman, Alice McKensie, Georgina Parsons, Steven Russell, Jodie Stewart, Phyllis Stewart, Val West

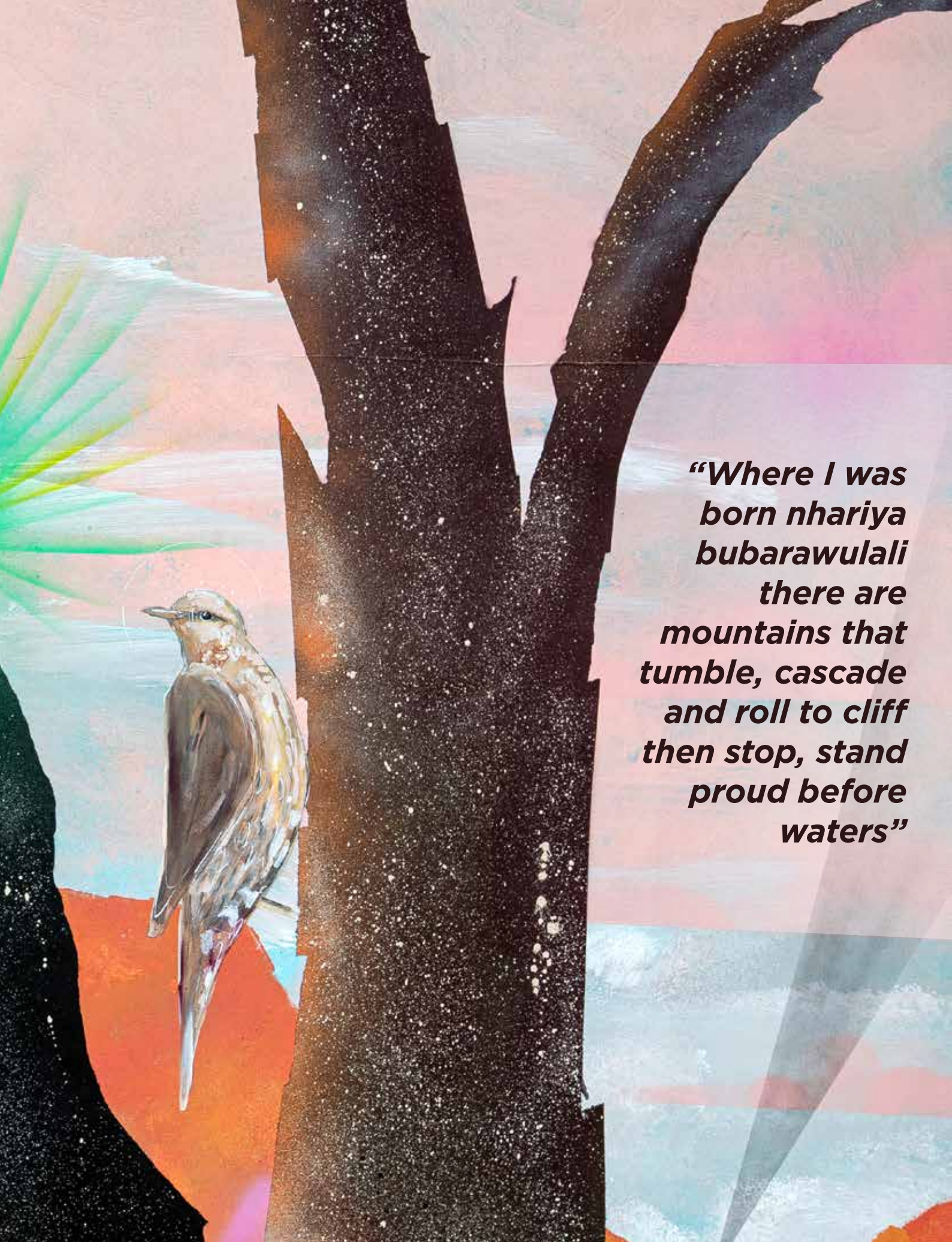
Acknowledgement of Country

Wollongong City Council would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this city is built, the Aboriginal people of Dharawal Country. We recognise and appreciate their deep connection to this land, waters and the greater community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and those emerging and extend our acknowledgement and respect to all Aboriginal people who call this city home. We recognise Aboriginal people as the first people to live in the area. We respect their living cultures and recognise the positive contribution their voices, traditions and histories make to this city.



Contents

Poem - nhariya bubarawulali (there are mountains)	2
Message from the Lord Mayor	3
Why this Strategy	4
Snapshot	6
Council's planning process	8
Delivering the Strategy	10
Who we are	12
Developing the Strategy	14
What you told us	16
Game changers	20
Focus areas:	23
Focus area 1 - Creative & vibrant communities	24
Focus area 2 - Creatives at the centre	26
Focus area 3 - Creative spaces and places	28
Focus area 4 - 24-Hour Economy	30



***“Where I was
born nhariya
bubarawulali
there are
mountains that
tumble, cascade
and roll to cliff
then stop, stand
proud before
waters”***



Lord Mayor's Message

'In Wollongong, we're proud of our city's unique identity. Our diverse heritage, culture and artistic expression are central to our sense of community...'

Our city's cultural strengths are layered through our creativity, our diversity, our multiculturalism, our values, beliefs, perspectives and shared stories. Whether it be through music, performance, visual, screen, literary or digital arts, our broad ranging creative pursuits have helped Wollongong form its own identity.

This Strategy has been informed by extensive community engagement, research and benchmarking against industry best practice, and through conversations with members of our city's passionate creative community. I'd like to thank all those who took the time and invested their knowledge and energy into the development of this important document. A Strategy like this is the sum of all its parts and I believe the end result reflects our community's diverse passions, interests and needs.

A creative city is an exciting place to call home. This Strategy provides a path to elevate Wollongong's creativity through events, festivals, pop-ups, exhibitions, mentorships, symposiums, public art, history and heritage, urban design, community cultural development and much, much more.

It builds on our existing successes, recognises the value of the creative industries as a form of expression, employment, investment and tourism, and nurtures creativity.

This document recognises our city's diverse people and seeks to represent all our residents. It makes clear Council's desire to champion local Aboriginal voices and support the artistic and cultural aspirations of Aboriginal people and demonstrates our commitment to learning through deep listening, productive dialogue and shared actions.

This Strategy is not shaped by the resources and opportunities alone, instead it reflects our community's various interests, imaginations and artistic ambitions. It highlights how creativity will always find a way to joy and meaning through our collective creative expressions. Through this Strategy we seek to build cultural and artistic capacity, embed our commitment to the arts and creative people, projects, spaces and places, and craft a thriving night-time economy. It allows us to continue on our journey to build Wollongong's reputation as an industry leader for creativity, and to shape our city into the liveable and energy-filled Creative Wollongong our communities have asked for.

Wollongong City Lord Mayor
Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM

Poetry excerpt by Nicole Smede, *nhariya bubarawulai (there are mountains)*, commissioned work for Culture Mix, 2023, Dharawal translations provided by Dr Aunty Jodi Edwards. Read the full poem at redroompoetry.org

Image: (detail) by David Cragg - painted in response to *nhariya bubarawulai*, commissioned work for Culture Mix, 2023

Why this Strategy

Creative Wollongong sets out Council's commitment to supporting arts, culture, and heritage across the Wollongong Local Government Area through a range of mechanisms from advocacy, partnership, program delivery and provision of creative infrastructure and environments. The Strategy has been developed through extensive community and stakeholder engagement as well as consideration of broader State and National policies on art and culture including - Revive (Australia's Cultural Policy 2023) and Creative Communities, NSW Arts Culture and Creative Industries Policy 2024 - 2033.

To deliver on this strategy for our community, Council plays a number of roles:

- We listen and respond to the changing needs of our communities and support and nurture arts and cultural practices through annual grants schemes, events and initiatives that spur cultural connectivity and a sense of belonging.
- We partner with our diverse cultural communities, cultural institutions, local arts and community groups, environmental organisations and businesses to build capacity and achieve positive outcomes for all.
- We support creatives through the commissioning of new works and we broker artistic collaborations while shaping our urban design through our creative placemaking and provision of cultural infrastructure spaces and places.
- We share the State and Federal Government's commitment to the preservation and nurturing of First Nations arts and culture, and we champion and respect our creative strengths and all artists as workers whose output uniquely contributes to our collective well-being, imaginations, and economy.
- We believe that creativity is for everybody and work to ensure that the city's arts and cultural events are accessible to all.
- We know that our city shines when we support and connect our expert creatives as well as our new and emerging ones. Our role is to advocate for the arts locally, and to promote our creative output nationally and internationally.
- We recognise that arts and culture is the thread that holds communities together and see Creative Wollongong as a living, breathing document and a blueprint for our city's bright and dynamic future.





Image: Culture Mix, 2023



Snapshot

Over the life of our previous Creative Wollongong 2019-2024, many projects were delivered, supported and advocated for. Below is a brief snapshot of projects across events, festivals, residencies, visual arts, artist support and facility provision.

Culture Mix

With its focus on belonging, accessibility and the interconnectivity of cultural experience, the Culture Mix one day festival in the heart of Wollongong's CBD layers music, dance, pop-ups, installations and interactive experiences with the sharing of cultural food and stories. The 2023 festival program offered 120 different experiences through eight hours of curated content across nine indoor and outdoor venues, three stages, one dance floor, five workshop spaces, a food fair and a bazaar. With more than 850 individuals from over 30 different cultural backgrounds, the festival also supported 17 local community groups and 13 contemporary, intercultural elements including six creative arts projects across visual art, dance, music and spoken word.

Coomaditchie: The Art of Place

Coomaditchie has long established itself in Wollongong as a centre for living First Nation culture underpinned by values of education, social and cultural understanding and inclusion, arts participation, and community wellbeing. This has been driven by a deep

connection to traditional stories expressed through art making. Coomaditchie: The Art of Place project was a Wollongong Art Gallery led project directed and developed by First Nation Curators Tess Allas and Wollongong Art Gallery Cadet Alinta Maguire. The project included numerous community workshops, a culminating art exhibition across four exhibition spaces, and a range of associated public programs and events. The exhibition toured to and was presented at Museum of Sydney and was shortlisted for the Annual Museums and Galleries NSW IMAGine Awards.

Artward: Art in Unusual Places

Over a period of 18 months, six artists were commissioned for an artist in residence program at various Wollongong City Council facilities such as community centres, Bushcare sites and cemeteries across the Local Government Area. Writing workshops, environmental art, soundscapes and natural dye textiles were created and delivered as part of the program. Some artworks were created with the involvement of community and some were a pure response to place. The project included sound installations at Helensburgh Cemetery, a writer's group at Corrimal Library, and an aerial installation at Dapto Ribbonwood Centre. This project was delivered as a part of Council's Creative Covid relief package.



Image: Coomaditchie artists and community members, (detail) *The First Three Decades (decade 2)*, 2022, acrylic on unstretched canvas, 302 x 213.5cm

Grants Program

We have a number of grant programs that provide financial assistance to local creatives, diverse cultural groups and other members of our local community. Over the last 5 years, our grants and sponsorship programs have included: Small Cultural and NAIDOC grants, Quick Response Grants, Sponsorship of Community Events, Contribution to Public Bands and Choirs, Connecting Neighbours and Signature Events grants.

Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (IPAC) upgrades

Council has made a significant investment in refurbishing the IPAC, a key piece of cultural infrastructure in our community. The refurbishment works included a new roof, heating and cooling system, lighting, carpet and seating. In addition to this, there was a strong focus on improving the accessibility of the venue – a new hearing loop system was installed along with upgrades to the café, box office and toilets. These upgrades make this venue a space for all to enjoy and bring it in line with contemporary access standards.

Creative Wollongong Studios

Our recently upgraded studios in the lower Town Hall allow for short term affordable residencies for six local artists. The twelve-month residencies awarded through an

'expression of interest' process attracts a diverse range of artists across a wide range of creative disciplines. Resident artists also take part in open studio days, workshops, talks and events.

I Belong in the Gong

This national award-winning social inclusion project aimed to reduce alcohol-related violence in bars and clubs in Wollongong's CBD. I Belong in the Gong focused on small and larger inner-city bars and hotels who were asked to display a decal sticker and commit to prioritising patrons' safety, in particular women. Patrons in participating venues were able to seek help from trained staff if they felt threatened or were being abused. Each participating venue received a laminated charter showing the easy steps to provide support as well as the agreed values to which they committed.

Wollongong CBD Night-Time Economy Policy

This Policy was developed to support the evolution of the city's diverse night-time economy by encouraging low impact businesses to extend their operating hours. Since it was adopted, the Policy has guided more than 35 approvals for new and expanding businesses in the CBD. These include gyms, theatres, restaurants, 24-hour public domain activations and 2am operation for small bars and takeaway businesses.

Council's Planning Process

Creative Wollongong provides a framework for future planning, provision and investment in arts and culture over the next 10 years. It sits alongside a suite of connected plans and policies, which underpin Council's Community Strategic Plan. These policies and plans inform the delivery of the actions linked to Creative Wollongong and its vision for a vibrant, artistically and culturally diverse and engaged city. You can access the full list of related documents at wollongong.nsw.gov.au



Image: Artward Art In Unusual Places, *Talking with Ribbon*, Artist Eloise Cleary





Delivering the Strategy

Creative Wollongong will become part of our Delivery Program and Operational Plan and will support the delivery of Wollongong's Community Strategic Plan.

Implementation

A detailed Action Plan that includes timeframes, priorities, resources and responsibilities has been developed. This internal document will guide the delivery of Creative Wollongong.

Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating the progress and delivery of the actions will be ongoing. A range of methods will be used to help us measure the outcomes of this Strategy. These methods may include surveys, focus groups, participation/attendance data, case studies, information collected from community, well-being and customer satisfaction surveys and ABS data.



Image: Culture Mix, 2023

Reporting

You can track the delivery and outcomes of this Strategy through the following:

- Quarterly reporting
- Annual review
- Mid-term review to the community before the development of the next Creative Wollongong
- Creative Wollongong E-Newsletter and Facebook page

Resourcing the Strategy

Creative Wollongong will help us make decisions and guide our work over the next ten years. Some actions in this Strategy are about continuing our work and others are about making improvements to what we do and how we do it. Some actions are funded from within existing budgets and funds may be allocated as part of Council's annual budget and planning processes, while some will require additional funding. Some of the actions require advocacy and partnership with levels of government and others to deliver on outcomes. Where appropriate we will apply for external funding to help us deliver the actions in this Strategy.

Who we are



People



219,141 people live in Wollongong

(with a population density of 320.5 persons per square km) in 2023. This population is expected to increase by 40,000 in the next 20 years.

3.2% (6,945 people) identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Median age 39 years.

(All people)

45,088 people living in Wollongong City in 2021 were born outside of Australia.

The top ten languages spoken at home are:

Macedonian, Arabic, Italian, Mandarin, Spanish, Greek, Serbian, Vietnamese, Portuguese, and Turkish.

Place



Wollongong is said to originate from the Aboriginal word Woolyungah, meaning Five Islands.

Dharawal is the Traditional language of the local Aboriginal people.

Positioned between the Tasman Sea (to the East) and the Illawarra Escarpment (to the West),

Wollongong stretches from the suburbs of Windang and Yallah (in the South) to Helensburgh (in the North).

Wollongong is Australia's 9th largest city.

(Based on population)

Economy



There are 15,408 (2023) registered businesses in Wollongong.

Night Time Economy:

In the 12 months to February 2024 there was \$750M in night time expenditure across the Wollongong LGA. Specific to Dining and Entertainment, total night time spending was \$298M.

In both instances spend was highest in Wollongong reflecting the importance of the Wollongong CBD as a night time destination.

Gross Regional Product for Wollongong is \$13.27B.

At the 2021 Census, there were over 780 residents of Wollongong LGA working as Arts or Media Professionals.

This included a wide range of creative occupations from Actors, Dancers, Musicians and other Entertainers to Photographers, Visual Artists, Directors, Authors, Journalists and Other Writers.

Liveability



The 2023 liveability index confirmed **Wollongong is one of Australia's best places to live, play, and work.**

The combined output of Heritage Activities' and Creative and Performing Arts sectors in 2021/22 was \$57.98M.

Australia's only UCI Bike City.

(Union Cycliste Internationale)

55% agreed there are enough opportunities to participate in arts and related cultural activities.

61% of residents participated in a cultural or creative activity in the last 12 months.

Source:

- Id. (2023) Wollongong City Council: Community and Economic Profile
- Illawarra Aboriginal Community Profile: A snapshot of an Urban Aboriginal Community University of Wollongong, 2016
- Wollongong LGA Wellbeing Survey 2024, Taverner Research Group

Developing the Strategy

We started this process by reviewing Creative Wollongong 2019 - 2024, which highlighted what we had delivered and achieved over the past five years and areas for focus into the future. To get a better understanding of the general trends and issues affecting the arts and creative industries worldwide, we also examined several scholarly works and the arts and creative plans of cities in selected Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. We then reviewed Creative Communities' - NSW Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy 2024 - 2033 and REVIVE, Australia's National Cultural Policy, to capture priority areas at the state and national levels.

Community engagement

Between August 2023 to January 2024, we asked the community to share their thoughts, dreams and aspirations for our City's cultural life.

We heard from 326 respondents at targeted workshops, drop-in sessions and via submission, and had conversations with many more. Our Communication and Engagement project webpage received 1.5k unique views and our social media posts reached over 17,000 people.

We received 86 online submissions, 3 hardcopy surveys, 6 emails and 1 phone call. There were 12 meetings/workshops and 10 informal drop-in sessions held with various community groups including creatives, school students and educators, professional networks, and youth groups. We held interactive workshops with a total of 204 participants. Some respondents provided photos with their submissions.



Image: Sculpture in the Garden, *Ghost Trees*, 2021



What you told us

You told us that you valued creativity and culture for our city's vibrancy and identity. Inclusive environments, quality experiences, spaces and places and diverse programming were seen as the most vital components. You told us that you're proud of the city's existing arts and cultural initiatives, while sharing some of the challenges you've experienced and what you see as important opportunities for the future.

Aboriginal culture and heritage

You told us that an understanding of 'place' starts with the knowledge and culture of its traditional owners and that you want to see Aboriginal heritage preserved and Aboriginal culture promoted and celebrated.

You want us to build stronger relationships with Aboriginal communities based on respect and honest dialogue and to provide opportunities for Aboriginal artists and creatives to tell their stories.

Cultural diversity

You identified arts and creativity as an opportunity to celebrate our city's uniqueness, and our distinct identity. You said that we have a rich and complex history that deserves to be told and celebrated where appropriate while providing platforms for the community to tell new and evolving stories and share, learn and celebrate.

We heard how significant celebrating cultural heritage is to diverse communities, and how it makes them feel represented and welcomed.



Accessibility and inclusion

You told us that everyone in our community has the same right to access arts and culture, and that our lives are enriched when everyone is included and celebrated. You said we should ensure programs and events reflect our diverse community appropriately. You also told us that transport was critical to be able to participate in arts and cultural events, particularly after dark.

Health and wellbeing

You talked about the positive impact that having access to or being immersed in creativity brings to personal wellbeing and mental health. People are passionate about culture and creativity enriching their own lives as participants, creators or audiences. Many spoke about physical works that brought colour, joy and emotion into otherwise dull public spaces, and how creative experiences are a means to connect with others and create positive social experiences. You asked for more creative and cultural programs to build relationships, connect with others, meet like-minded people and create social cohesion.

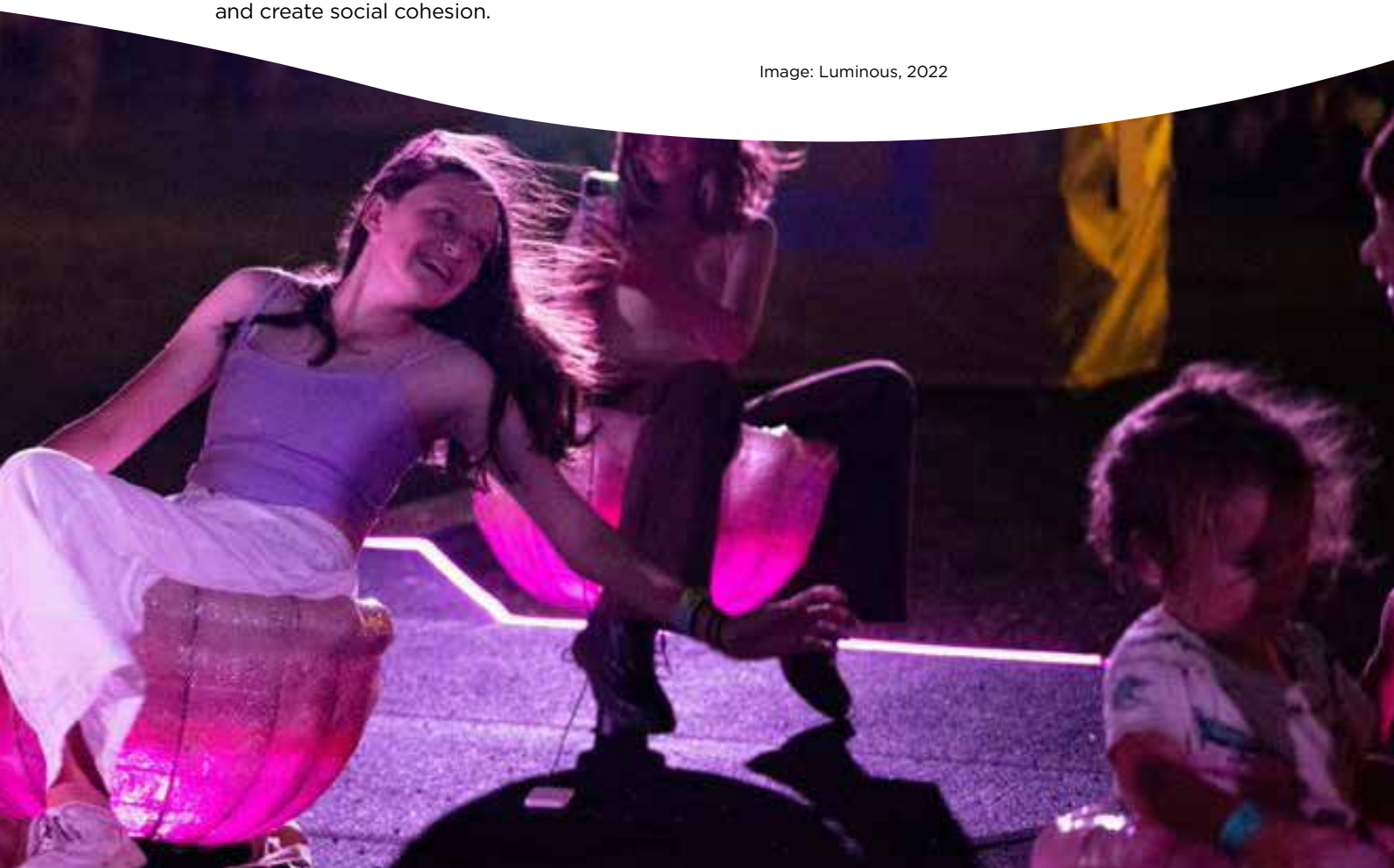
Youth engagement and education

You told us participation in creative life was essential for youth wellbeing and engagement. There was great support for events, programs and activities that appealed to different groups. You would like us to provide and support opportunities for young creatives and emerging artists.

Cultural sector, heritage and creative industries

You told us how critical creative industries were to our region. You expressed how important our diverse music scene is to Wollongong's cultural identity and that the music eco-system should be acknowledged and supported to thrive. You also discussed our burgeoning film industry and the opportunities inherent within Wollongong's unique natural and built environment which could be leveraged to support all levels of film enterprise. We heard that our region's cultural heritage should be preserved including museum collections and community stories.

Image: Luminous, 2022





Cultural infrastructure and public spaces

You told us that you'd like arts and culture to flourish in the CBD, suburbs and open spaces and you want to see events and programs used strategically to build and grow creative communities. You saw a role for us in providing access to arts spaces and low-cost options for creatives to develop and present their works. You asked that we look at better ways to enable creative use of underutilised Council owned facilities and buildings, both day and night. You also said that Public Art should be included in new building projects and upgrades.

Sustainability

You told us you value unique local natural assets like the coastline, escarpment and the lake, as well as Wollongong's cultural heritage and the diversity of community. You said these elements play a part in shaping our approach to creativity and that climate change mitigation including reducing energy consumption and waste was important due to the interconnectedness of environmental sustainability and cultural preservation. You said by protecting the environment we safeguard our art and cultural heritage.

You said how important it was to maintain and support thriving and sustainable creative arts industries.

Economic impact and business perspectives

You told us that the cultural value of the creative industries should be recognised alongside its economic value, with its important role in generating tourism and visitation. You want to see creative businesses and not for profits and those that employ creatives, being supported with increased opportunities for growth and development.

You told us you wanted to see ongoing support for the city's growing Night-Time Economy, and for advocacy around improved safety and transport for the public to enjoy the nightlife.

West Dapto

You told us that we need to incorporate creative arts into broader community and placemaking initiatives for West Dapto. You also said that cultural infrastructure in the West Dapto urban release area was important, and that we should be building awareness and identity for the area through infrastructure and cultural initiatives.

Image: Spinfest, 2022

Game changers

As well as Council's direct actions, there are a number of external 'game-changers' – significant projects or initiatives that have the potential to have a major impact on the creative landscape of the city.

BlueScope Land Transformation Project – Port Kembla

One of the most significant land transformation and job creation opportunities in Australia, the BlueScope Land Transformation Project involves the reimagining of some 200 hectares of excess landholdings adjacent to the largest steelmaking facility in Australia, within the established port precinct, an hour south of Sydney.

The Master Plan will see BlueScope transform the surplus land next door to its Port Kembla Steelworks into next generation multi-industrial precinct. This work has the potential to create 30,000 jobs in emerging industries like clean energy, defence and modern manufacturing as well as supporting creative industries, training, education and research.

Through the life of the project Council will continue to partner and advocate for inclusion of Arts and Cultural facilities and opportunities within this precinct for the benefit and enjoyment of the community and arts and creative industries.

Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner

The Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner sits within the portfolio of the NSW Minister for the Night-time Economy and the Arts. Working with government partners, local councils, industry and the community, the office helps champion and build vibrant, diverse, inclusive and safe hospitality and entertainment precincts across the six cities region of NSW. This includes a range of programs, reforms and advocacy designed to boost the state's 24-hour economy.

The key pillars of the 24-Hour Economy Strategy include:

- Encourage diverse night-time activities
- Develop industry and culture
- Improve mobility and connectivity
- Integrate planning and place-making
- Encourage positive change

As one of the identified NSW Six Cities, Wollongong has a dedicated Office of the

24-Hour Economy Commissioner regional representative. Council is committed to working collaboratively with the office to advocate for Wollongong across a range of issues and opportunities to support the development of the 24-hour economy. This includes key issues impacting participation in the night-time economy such as limited public transport, liquor licensing, noise and sound attenuation.

West Dapto

West Dapto is the fastest-growing residential area in New South Wales outside the Sydney region. Many new developments are underway or have already been finished in this area. Over the next few decades, it will become home to around 19,000 new homes and more than 50,000 people. West Dapto will also bring new employment land and job opportunities to Wollongong. Overseeing growth in West Dapto is the biggest and longest-running project Council has ever undertaken.

Our work includes setting planning rules, approving development, and designing and building new roads, paths and stormwater structures. We're also planning new cultural facilities, town centres, sports facilities, and public spaces for current and future West Dapto residents.

The West Dapto Development provides an exciting opportunity for the arts and creative industries. Planning for embedded community and cultural facilities are underway and this plan commits to the development of a standalone Cultural and Public Art Strategy for West Dapto and all the opportunities that will bring.

Illawarra Sports and Entertainment Precinct

Council continues to advocate to the NSW Government for the redevelopment of the Illawarra Sports and Entertainment Precinct (ISEP), which includes the Venues NSW assets of WIN Entertainment Centre, WIN Stadium and the adjacent training field. As one of the city's greatest assets as a destination for major events, a revitalised Illawarra Sports and Entertainment Precinct at the Wollongong foreshore will deliver a thriving and unique experience that will strengthen the region's visitor economy, support jobs growth and enhance the liveability of our city.

Image: BlueScope Port Kembla Master Plan conceptual render





Focus area 1:
**Creative
& Vibrant
Communities**

Focus area 2:
**Creatives
at the
Centre**

Goal 3:
**Wollongong
is a creative,
vibrant city**

Focus area 4:
**24-Hour
Economy**

Focus area 3:
**Creative
Spaces and
Places**

Image: Laneways Live, 2022



1.1
Honour our city's
cultural identity
through stories
told by Aboriginal
communities

1.2
Celebrate people
from diverse cultural
backgrounds and
provide opportunities
for the sharing of
their culture and
histories

Focus area 1:
**Creative & vibrant
communities**

Individuals and communities have the opportunity to engage and participate in the cultural life of the city, fostering creativity, expression and social connection. Aboriginal Cultural heritage and diverse communities are represented and celebrated.

1.5
Build on our
community's
existing talent and
creative initiatives

1.3
Make accessibility
a priority

1.4
Support,
collaborate and
deliver arts and
cultural activities
for and with our
communities

Focus area 1: Creative & vibrant communities

Number	Strategy		Action
1.1	Honour our city's cultural identity through stories told by Aboriginal communities	1.1.1	Partner with local Aboriginal communities to provide opportunities for sharing of local knowledge, stories and histories
		1.1.2	Work with Aboriginal community on permitted use of imagery and protection and use of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
		1.1.3	Commit to ongoing conversations with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure that our decision-making processes are appropriate and delivered with integrity
		1.1.4	Deliver creative and cultural Actions from Council's Reconciliation Action Plan
1.2	Celebrate people from diverse cultural backgrounds and provide opportunities for the sharing of their culture and histories	1.2.1	Deliver community and cultural programs that are co-designed with diverse cultural community
		1.2.2	Deliver community festivals and events at a range of scales across the LGA
		1.2.3	Deliver community cultural development initiatives that enable the development of new skills and the building of new relationships
1.3	Make accessibility a priority	1.3.1	Diverse communities are supported and represented through Council events, public art, and grants programs
		1.3.2	Provide and promote opportunities for children and families to engage in creative activities through Council's programs and events
		1.3.3	Offer and promote opportunities for people to volunteer in Council run events and activities
		1.3.4	Deliver actions which support participation in creative activities in line with Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan
1.4	Support, collaborate and deliver arts and cultural activities for and with our communities	1.4.1	Promote diversity in creative programming across venues, events, and festivals, representing a wide range of genres, cultures, and styles
		1.4.2	Review our annual program of events and activations to reflect our community's changing interests in our outdoor, public and natural environments
		1.4.3	Support Destination Wollongong to attract Major Events to the city
1.5	Build on our community's existing talent and creative initiatives	1.5.1	Preserve and celebrate the cultural heritage of Wollongong through documentation, exhibitions, and events that highlight our city's social and cultural history
		1.5.2	Provide partnership and support to increase the number of small and medium sized initiatives, festivals and events across the LGA

Image: Rosie Deacon exhibition, 2019, Wollongong Art Gallery



2.1
Build a strong creative community through capacity building, professional development and financial support

2.2
Create opportunities for our creative community to develop, perform, produce and showcase their work

Focus area 2:
Creatives at the centre

The expertise and vision of artists, makers and thinkers is acknowledged and respected, providing opportunities for artistic collaboration, innovation and cultural enrichment. Creative industries and their unique eco-systems are recognised and championed.

2.4
Support, recognise and advocate for local Creative Industries

2.3
Champion young people and emerging creatives

Focus area 2: Creatives at the centre

Number	Strategy		Action
2.1	Build a strong creative community through capacity building, professional development and financial support	2.1.1	Deliver sponsorship opportunities, Council's Financial Assistance Policy and grants programs for artists
		2.1.2	Investigate the viability of a regular ward-based artist in residence program
2.2	Create opportunities for our creative community to develop, perform, produce and showcase their work	2.2.1	Where appropriate provide opportunities for local artists and creatives in Council run initiatives and activations where practicable
		2.2.2	Investigate weighting criteria for local creatives in low value procurement
2.3	Champion young people and emerging creatives	2.3.1	Opportunities for young people to participate in skills development for creative industries are championed
		2.3.2	Target opportunities at emerging artists through grants programs, performance opportunities and EOI's
		2.3.3	Increase opportunities for young people to engage in Council's cultural programs
2.4	Support, recognise and advocate for local Creative Industries	2.4.1	Collaborate with and support the growth of the Live Music eco-system within Wollongong
		2.4.2	Provide advocacy for Wollongong's growing film industry
		2.4.3	Continue to advocate for local community arts organisations and creative initiatives

Image: Shakamoto, Wollongong Youth Centre

3.1
Identify
opportunities for
creative use of
Council owned and
managed spaces
and community
facilities

3.2
Cultural
infrastructure and
creative amenity are
considered in Council
planning for urban
release, development
and renewal

Focus area 3:
**Creative spaces
and places**

With dedicated spaces and places for learning, discovery, play and celebration, our city by design fosters creative expression and a sense of belonging. With respect for our heritage, we see our natural and built environments align and connect.

3.6
Incorporate creative
arts into broader
community and
placemaking
initiatives for the
West Dapto Urban
Release Area

3.3
Advocate for
creative cultural
use within the
BlueScope Land
Transformation
Project in Port
Kembla

3.5
Celebrate our city's
arts and cultural
heritage

3.4
Activate community
places and open
spaces through
accessible events
and placemaking

Focus area 3: Creative spaces and places

Number	Strategy		Action
3.1	Identify opportunities for creative use of Council owned and managed spaces and community facilities	3.1.1	Investigate improved access to Council owned and managed facilities for diverse creative uses
		3.1.2	Continue to facilitate management and activation of the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and Wollongong Town Hall through a Funding and Services Agreement
		3.1.3	Continue to activate the Lower Town Hall Artist Studios
		3.1.4	Undertake Actions in Framing Our Future - Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025
3.2	Cultural infrastructure and creative amenity are considered in Council planning for urban release, development and renewal	3.2.1	Ensure Public Art is considered in the design and scope phase of any new infrastructure or renewal project in line with Animating Wollongong - Public Art Strategy 2022 - 2032
		3.2.2	Embed the consideration of Public Art for infrastructure in Business Proposals and Project nominations
		3.2.3	Cultural infrastructure is considered inline with Places for the Future Social Infrastructure Future Directions Plan 2023-2036
3.3	Advocate for creative cultural use within the BlueScope Land Transformation Project in Port Kembla	3.3.1	Explore creative opportunities which could include film and entertainment, arts, events and museums within the BlueScope Land Transformation Project in Port Kembla
3.4	Activate community places and open spaces through accessible events and placemaking	3.4.1	Explore opportunities and advocate for the development of a dedicated festival site in the Wollongong Local Government Area that services the Illawarra Region and contributes to the cultural activation of the city
		3.4.2	Undertake initiatives that increase the vibrancy and accessibility of open spaces and places
		3.4.3	Utilise Council's Placemaking Framework in the development of new spaces
3.5	Celebrate our city's arts and cultural heritage	3.5.1	Support volunteer museum management committees through sector advocacy and connection with Museums and Galleries NSW
		3.5.2	Conserve and enhance our city's rich heritage in alignment with Council's Heritage Strategy 2023- 2027
3.6	Incorporate creative arts into broader community and placemaking initiatives for the West Dapto Urban Release Area	3.6.1	Cultural facilities are included in the West Dapto Open Space, Recreation and Community and Cultural Facilities Needs Assessment
		3.6.2	Develop a West Dapto Cultural Plan with associated Public Art Plan



4.1
Support the participation of artists and performers in the activation of the Night-Time Economy across the LGA

4.2
Stimulate the 24-Hour Economy by review of regulatory conditions and providing planning and event support

Focus area 4:
24 Hour Economy

We recognise and support the economic and innovative contributions of the creative industries. A thriving city renowned for its vibrancy, safety, accessibility, culture and creativity day and night, promotes a strong economy with immeasurable social and cultural benefits for our communities.

4.5
Promote the cultural sector as a driver of engagement with the local community, tourism and visitation, leveraging the city's unique cultural assets and activities

4.3
Support businesses to engage with artists and creatives in financially viable and sustainable ways

4.4
Advocate for improved safety, transport and connectivity including after dark

Image: Andy Ophee artwork, Upsurge, 2022

Focus area 4: 24-Hour Economy

Number	Strategy		Action
4.1	Support the participation of artists and performers in the activation of the Night-Time Economy across the LGA	4.1.1	Work with the Live Music Office to implement the Live and Local Initiative in the Wollongong CBD
		4.1.2	Investigate State Government initiatives such as 'Local Place Activation – planning and approval pathways guideline'
		4.1.3	Work with relevant partners to deliver a coordinated approach to activating Wollongong CBD and selected Town Centres at night
4.2	Stimulate the 24-Hour Economy by review of regulatory conditions and providing planning and event support	4.2.1	Work with the NSW Government Office of the 24-Hour Commissioner on matters of common interest to support the development of a sustainable night-time economy
		4.2.2	Test Council's existing policies and processes against the implementation in Wollongong of the NSW Government's Vibrancy Reforms – Amendment Act 2023
		4.2.3	Investigate Special Entertainment Precincts and assess their suitability for the Wollongong CBD and selected Town Centres and venues
4.3	Support businesses to engage with artists and creatives in financially viable and sustainable ways	4.3.1	Continue to work with Wollongong CBD businesses on a 'precinct based' model of engagement and support
		4.3.2	Develop targeted Expressions of Interest opportunities when and where appropriate
		4.3.4	Provide representation to the Wollongong Liquor Accord
4.4	Advocate for improved safety, transport and connectivity including after dark	4.4.1	Investigate infrastructure projects that promote vibrancy, and pedestrian safety during the night
		4.4.2	Monitor perceptions of safety to inform placemaking and project development
		4.4.3	Liaise with Transport for NSW and other stakeholders to improve public transport options to support people to participate in creative events and cultural activities
4.5	Promote the cultural sector as a driver of engagement with the local community, tourism and visitation, leveraging the city's unique cultural assets and activities	4.5.1	Utilise Council's marketing channels to highlight cultural events and promote inclusivity
		4.5.2	Promote the work of artists and creatives
		4.5.3	Investigate the potential for a marketing plan to support and promote creatives and cultural events in Wollongong





Image: Electric Korma, Culture Mix, 2023

From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and will be leaders in building an educated, creative, sustainable and connected community.

We value and protect our environment

We have an innovative and sustainable economy

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

We are a connected and engaged community

We have a healthy community in a liveable city

We have affordable and accessible transport



Wollongong City Council

wollongong.nsw.gov.au

Phone (02) 4227 7111

