

Creative Wollongong 2019–2024 Snapshot

Our Wollongong Our Future

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



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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our city is built, 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 respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who call this city home. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 the city.

- 1 Reconciliation Action Plan launch, Wollongong Youth Centre.
- 2 Full Set Festival, Globe Lane.
- 3 Wander Wollongong.



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Creative Wollongong 2019–2024 Snapshot

The Arts, heritage and culture play an important role in our city. They bring people together, celebrate our identity, encourage learning and provide new opportunities for employment. Creative Wollongong 2019–2024 is a strategic plan that has guided Council in supporting the creative and cultural life of our city over the last 5 years. Creative Wollongong has 4 focus areas:

- Creative Life
- Creative Community
- Creative Spaces and Places
- Our City After Dark

These focus areas are based on what our community told us was a priority in making Wollongong a creative and vibrant city. This snapshot highlights and celebrates some of our achievements during the life of the plan. Examples of projects, programs and initiatives have been grouped together to demonstrate how we have delivered our work in line with the priorities and values of our community.

The delivery of each of these initiatives contributes to the outcome domains developed by the Cultural Development Network - that the plan utilised at that time:

- Creativity stimulated
- Aesthetic enrichment experienced
- New knowledge, ideas and insight gained
- Diversity of cultural expression appreciated
- Sense of belonging to a shared cultural heritage deepened

The relevant domain/s have been listed under each project.

4 Spin Fest, Helensburgh.

5 Eishan Ensemble, The Music Lounge, Wollongong Town Hall.



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Focus Area: Creative Life

Participating in creative life supports creative expression, provides opportunities for social connection and promotes feelings of happiness and wellbeing. It is important that our community is supported to express their creativity and participate in cultural activities. We aim to make art, heritage and culture a part of everyday life in our city.

Priority: Events, activities and opportunities to participate and connect

Our community told us they would like to see a greater variety of events and creative activities – large and small scale, for people of all ages and free for people to participate in. We also heard that people would like other opportunities to contribute to the creative life of our city and connect with other like-minded people.

6 *Spinfest Beach Party, North Wollongong Beach.*

7 *Spinfest.*

8 *Spinfest, Beyond the Breaking Waves, Lighthouse Projections. Artwork: Steven Russell (Dharawal People). Netting Mullet, 2009, woodcut.*

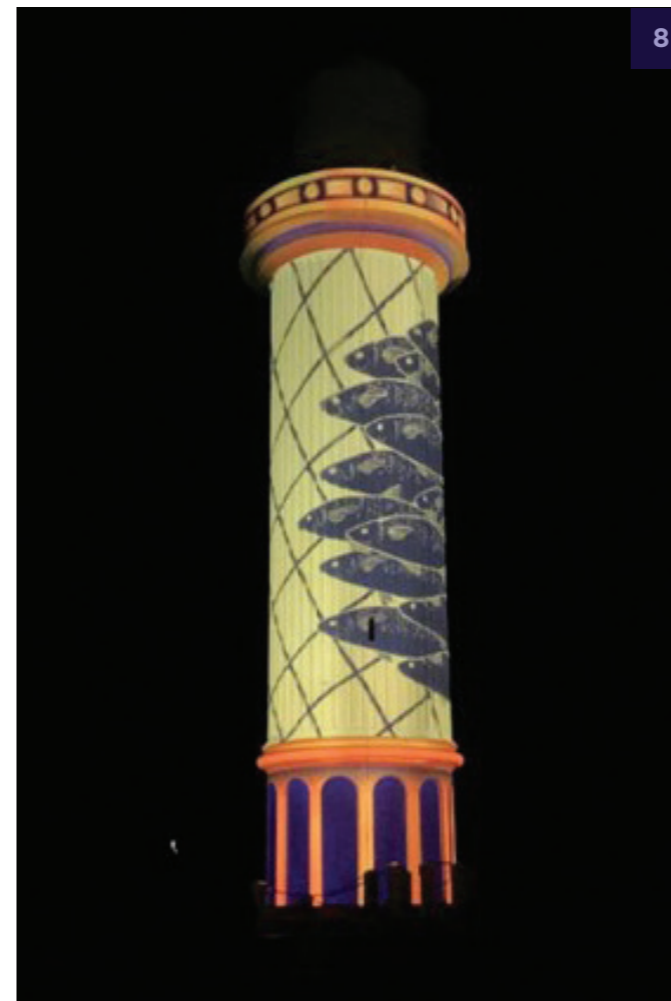
9 *Spinfest, Helensburgh.*

10 *Spinfest, Crown St Mall.*

Spinfest

From the 3 to 25 September 2022, the City of Wollongong was brought to life with Spin Fest, a world-class program of cultural activities and events staged to support the 2022 UCI Road World Championships. Events were staged in numerous locations across the LGA and included everything from nightly projections of First Nations artworks onto the Wollongong Lighthouse, which were beamed to a global audience, to more than 30 individual neighbourhood street parties. The breadth of programming was huge – engaging young people, the multicultural community, First Nations people, families, children and diehard cycling enthusiasts. There was a huge diversity in audience and reach across activations such as the Spin Fest Beach Party, Spin Fest Helensburgh and Spin Fest Live @ the Youth Centre.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.





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Creative Wollongong Short Film Festival

The Creative Wollongong Short Film Competition and Festival saw more than 50 young people enter their original short films which they created during lockdown. A selection of the best short films were screened at the Youth Week event at the Youth Centre outdoor cinema in 2021. They were screened again in 2022 at a community focused night for families at the Gala Cinemas with red carpet fanfare that celebrated the talents of the young filmmakers. The project was presented in partnership with Screen Illawarra who also hosted school holiday filmmaking workshops led by industry professionals.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

Wollongong Youth Services All Ages Events

Wollongong Youth Services works with young artists and promoters to stage their own events. These events have a focus on being accessible, safe, free, for all ages and drug and alcohol-free. This initiative includes events such as live music, art markets, rainbow formal, movie nights, cosplay events and more. While many of these events are delivered in the Youth Centre, some have been held in other locations across the Wollongong Local Government Area and in local high schools.

Some of our all ages events have created opportunities for young local bands to perform with established artists.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

- 11 Friends of the Botanic Garden - photo Sue Martin.
- 12 Creative Wollongong Short Film Festival, Gala Cinemas.
- 13 Music for the Mind, Halloween, Wollongong Youth Centre.
- 14 Standing on the Ceiling, 2022 Port Kembla Festival.
- 15 Music for the Mind, Halloween, Wollongong Youth Centre.

Standing on the Ceiling

A fun, easy community project of joy and art held across 2021-2022. This was a multi-disciplinary arts project integrating the talents of composer Jodi Phillis, choreographer Lisa Maris McDonnell and writer Malika Rees to develop a new song for the Gong, with participatory dance moves and poetry. This project was developed during Covid lockdown via online zoom rooms, creating an opportunity for members of the local community to connect, dance, sing and create music. The project eventually came to real life at the launch of the 2022 Port Kembla Festival with a public performance featuring the Femme Fatales, community dancers, alongside Jodi Phillis and her accompanying musicians.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced; Diversity of cultural expression appreciated.

Friends of Wollongong Art Gallery, Botanic Garden and Library

Wollongong Botanic Garden, City Library and Art Gallery are all supported by volunteer Friends groups. These groups are made up of community members with an interest in what these Council services deliver - The members bring their passion in service of the community. While their focus is different, Friends of the Wollongong Art Gallery, Botanic Garden and Library all contribute to programs and activities that:

- Encourage links and connection with these services and the community
- Encourage interest and participation in the services
- Advocate for community and Council support
- Sponsor special interest events including fundraising activities
- Build and strengthen social connections with other members.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated.

Priority: Diversity and Inclusion

Arts and culture should be accessible to all – young and old, people with varying abilities and needs, and people of all different identities, experiences and cultural backgrounds. Our community told us that the diversity of our local community is something that makes our city unique and that it should be embraced and celebrated.

Fashion Forest Seduction Exhibition

One of Wollongong Art Gallery's most important focus areas is providing access to unique art experiences for our diverse community. An example of this is the exhibition Rosie Deacon: Fashion Forest Seduction. The exhibition was an interactive sensory experience, including costumes, wearables, sculpture, sound and video made by the artist and community workshop participants. Visitors were encouraged to wear the costumes and glide down an all-access catwalk, celebrating their transformation and delighting in the colours and textures of the fashion forest installation.

This exhibition was accompanied by an enrichment program for school students with disability and an Auslan tour of the exhibition.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

I love Wollongong Because Exhibition

This rolling exhibition provides young people the opportunity to have a voice and be heard in the community through display of digital images in a public environment. It creates an outdoor exhibition space and celebrates the skills and talents of young people in our community. The most recent exhibition included works by photography students from Year 9 and 10 at Wollongong High School of the Performing Arts. The exhibition was in honour of Youth Week 2023 with the theme of Connect. Participate. Celebrate.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

Accessible Events – Spinfest Beach Party

Accessibility and enabling the participation of people with disability and other needs is a key consideration when planning our events. The Spinfest Beach Party included elements to make it more accessible for people with disability. As part of our planning for this event we provided an accessible viewing area for people with limited mobility, this was located in an area that ensured people had an uninterrupted view of the stage. Auslan interpreters were part of the event and interpreted the live performances of the main stage. We also provided dedicated accessible parking spaces and an accessibility vehicle drop off point, making it easier for people to get to and from the event.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

Nandhi (Look) Ngara (Listen)

A community reconciliation artwork project which involved children from Warrawong and Corrimal East Public Schools, Para Meadows School, Keiraview Childcare Centre and young people of Five Islands Secondary College. Participants had the opportunity to learn and share culture with local Elders, and work with Aboriginal artist Daren Dunn and Adam Towney from AT_Culture, to create artwork inspired by the themes of Reconciliation and NAIDOC. Their beautiful artwork was used to create banners which were flown in Crown Street Mall from May-July 2023.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced; Diversity of cultural expression appreciated; Sense of belonging to a shared cultural heritage deepened.

16 *I love Wollongong Because Exhibition, Wollongong Youth Centre.*

17 *Nandhi (Look) Ngara (Listen).*

18 *Nandhi (Look) Ngara (Listen).*

19 *Nandhi (Look) Ngara (Listen), Banner.*

20 *Accessible Events, Spinfest Beach Party.*

21 *Rosie Deacon: Fashion Forest Seduction, Wollongong Art Gallery.*





Programs at our libraries

Wollongong City Libraries celebrates its diverse community every year celebrating Harmony week and Refugee week. In 2023, Warrawong Library saw a wonderful crowd of people get involved for their Dance, Craft, Film event to celebrate Harmony Week. Everyone got into their groove for the Macedonian dancing session and made beautiful Persian jewellery. The joy and connection felt was strong, made only sweeter by delicious teas from around the world.

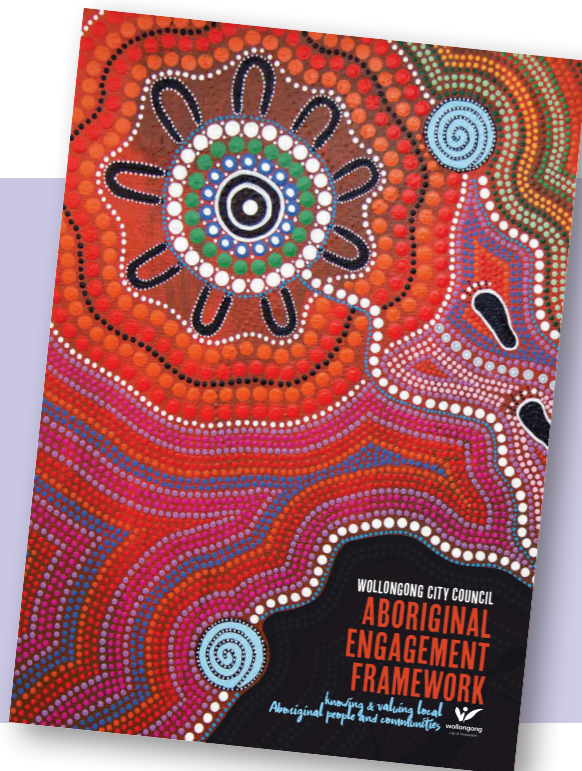
Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced; Diversity of cultural expression appreciated.



Aboriginal Engagement Framework

This document outlines our commitment to the Aboriginal community around how we will engage in a meaningful and consistent way. The Framework was informed by local Aboriginal culture, knowledge and heritage. This document aims to provide Council's elected members, staff and consultants with knowledge about local Aboriginal people and their communities, and how to engage with them in a culturally appropriate way. The Framework provides a set of principles, protocols and resources to support engagement with Aboriginal people and their communities.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.



- 22 Persian jewellery, Harmony week and Refugee week, Warrawong Library.
- 23 Dance, Harmony week and Refugee week, Warrawong Library.
- 24 Aboriginal Engagement Framework.

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Focus Area: Creative Community

Creatives interpret, reimagine and reflect the world around us; creating works that provoke our senses, challenge our way of thinking and provide us with new perspectives. We want Wollongong to be a city of makers, thinkers and innovators. To create this environment, we need to invest in our local talent by providing opportunities to learn and develop along with space to perform, produce and showcase work.

Priority: Supporting our creative community

The local creative community is rich in skills and talent. They have shared with us that they would like to see Council invest in the growth and development of their skills. We've delivered a range of programs in line with this priority.

Professional Development Bursary

As part of Council's creative covid relief package in 2022, Wollongong artists could apply for up to \$1,500 to go towards covering the costs of training or an arts mentoring opportunity, to upskill their practice. The professional development opportunities experienced by those who participated included expertise in script writing, magician skills, Aboriginal arts business mentoring, music lessons and upskilling from a master printmaker.

Feedback from Heidi Hoops, one of the recipients of the funding:

"I benefited from this project by being supported financially to reach the goal of professional presentation, which is difficult for an independent, unfunded, freelance artist. The show presented completely unique illusions created with mentoring, skill development and coaching."

- Heidi Hoops

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

25 Freelance artist Heidi Hoops.



Creative Arts industry Mentoring 2022-23

In 2022 and 2023, Council worked in partnership with Creative Plus Business to deliver a six-month Artsellerate and GROW program to a dedicated group of local creatives. Providing networking opportunities via an interactive program helped participants develop business plans.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

Creative Dialogues

This annual program of free workshops, forums and podcasts which aims to foster a local creative community through new approaches to growing professional practices, upskilling and connecting through strategic partnerships and encouraging new collaborations. Creative Dialogues is for everyone, particularly young and emerging artists, arts workers, professional creatives and arts producers.

In 2020, a podcast series was created in lieu of in person sessions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, Creative Plus Business delivered a series of workshops at The Servo Port Kembla and Bellambi Open Studio.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

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 include:

- Small Cultural Grants Program
- Small Grants NAIDOC Celebrations
- Creative Wollongong Quick Response Grants
- Sponsorship of Community Events
- Contribution to Public Bands and Choirs
- Connecting Neighbours Grants
- Signature Events

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.



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26 Creative Dialogues.

27 Creative Dialogues.

28 New Gen Global, Josh and Dom Hinton with Cody Moore.

29 Community engagement mural projects - Warwick Keen, Mitch Guerin, Jess Brown.



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Priority: Opportunities for emerging artists and creatives

It's important we provide opportunities for emerging artists and people wanting to work in the creative industries. We heard that we can best support people by enabling professional development opportunities and initiatives where they can gain skills, build confidence and develop networks.

New Gen Global

As part of this initiative, nine young artists were commissioned to create original music inspired by global sounds. The young musicians were mentored and supported by professional musicians from non-English speaking backgrounds through the 'Our Community Projects' 'Jam n Bread' initiative. New music incorporating multicultural instruments was recorded in partnership with Stranded Music Studios and ongoing professional practice support includes the opportunity to perform at Council events in the future.

Outcome domain: Aesthetic enrichment experienced; New knowledge, ideas and insights gained; Diversity of cultural expression appreciated; Sense of belonging to a shared cultural heritage deepened.

Community engagement mural projects

Mural projects across Wollongong saw our professional mural artists mentoring emerging artists in a program that aims to support new talent and nurture professional experience. The Karara Bridge project at Dapto was a great example of cross-cultural and cross generational collaboration with Aboriginal artists Warwick Keen and Jess Brown, working in partnership with Mitch Guerin to tell local stories through public art. This project presented a great opportunity for emerging artist, Jess, to be mentored by more experienced artists, Warrick and Mitch.

Outcome domain: Aesthetic enrichment experienced; New knowledge, ideas and insights gained; Diversity of cultural expression appreciated; Sense of belonging to a shared cultural heritage deepened.



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30 Team Ignite – Wollongong Youth Services Holiday Workshops

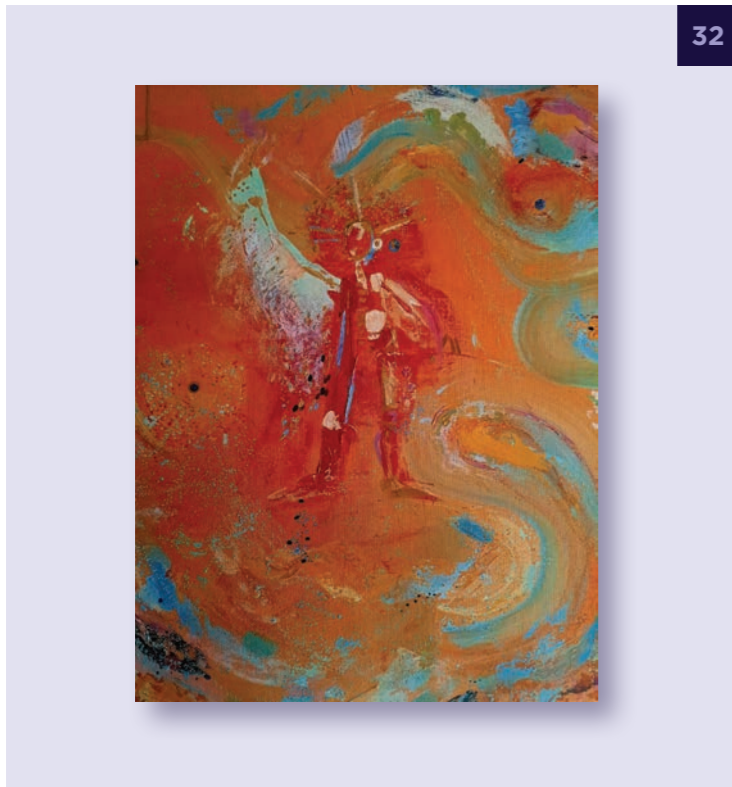
A creative industries incubator for young people. As part of the events steering committee for Youth Services, participants learned skills in AV production, event management, marketing and media, procurement and contracting. Through this initiative, participants were able to learn a range of transferable skills and gain confidence in staging events from scratch. Those involved were also supported to pursue further education or careers in creative fields through direct industry connections.



31 Young Artist in Residence Program

This program offered a local young artist (18-24 years) a 12-month residency at the Wollongong Youth Centre and \$1,000 towards arts supplies to support their professional development and artistic practice, across a broad range of modalities. As well as networking opportunities, the resident artist collaborated to explore themes relevant to young people based in the Wollongong LGA. Previous themes included belonging, identity and warmth, which culminated in a public exhibition celebrating young people's contribution to the cultural life of our city.

Outcome domain: Aesthetic enrichment experienced; New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.



- 30 Team Ignite, Wollongong Youth Services Holiday Workshops.
- 31 Team Ignite, Wollongong Youth Services Holiday Workshops.
- 32 Young Artist In Residence Program, Artwork SHERBERT.

Priority: Promoting local talent and opportunities

The creative community told us that they would like to be supported to promote themselves and what they had to offer to a variety of audiences – the community, local business and other creatives. They also shared that they found it challenging that there wasn't a central location to find out about local employment opportunities or opportunities to grow their skills and professional networks.



Creative Wollongong Facebook Page

Initiated in 2020, this platform showcases local creatives and their talents, promotes creative events and 'call outs' with creative opportunities for local artists. Allowing Council to connect directly with local creatives, the page also promotes projects funded by our grants schemes, as well as employment and collaborative opportunities.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

WEAVE Network

In 2020 Council joined other regional councils Shoalhaven, Kiama, Shellharbour, and Wingecarribee in an online directory of visual, literary and performing artists for creatives. Weave promotes and connects artists with audiences and investors, as well as showcases spaces, venues and annual events that engage the public with the creative arts.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

- 33 Creative Wollongong Facebook page.
- 34 Weave Network.



Focus Area: Creative Spaces and Places

Wollongong is in a state of rapid transformation and we are committed to making our city a place that challenges, excites and inspires. We want to infuse creativity into the built and natural environment, creating spaces and places that tell the story of our city, encourage new ideas and enable creative expression. By embedding art, heritage and culture into public spaces and places we will celebrate our beautiful city, its people and its culture.

Priority: Planning for the future

Like our community, we're passionate about the future of our city. Many people have shared their ideas about what they value and what they would like our city to look and feel like into the future. These ideas have informed the development of many plans and strategies that guide the work Council does.

Framing our Future: Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025

This plan provides a guideline that helps the Art Gallery deliver innovative art and cultural experiences that make an important contribution in shaping and enriching the lives of residents and visitors to the area. Many local creatives, community members, and business owners contributed to the development of the plan.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced; New knowledge, ideas and insights gained; Diversity of cultural expression appreciated; Sense of belonging to a shared cultural heritage deepened.



Animating Wollongong: Public Art Strategy 2022-2032

This Strategy was developed to provide a roadmap to help guide Council's direction and purpose in delivering art in public spaces to the community. Public Art helps provide communities a stronger sense of place, identity and social connection while beautifying the spaces and places we use and enjoy.

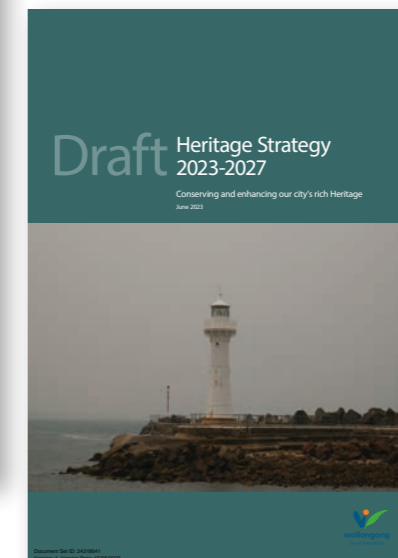
Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced; New knowledge, ideas and insights gained; Diversity of cultural expression appreciated; Sense of belonging to a shared cultural heritage deepened.



Draft Heritage Strategy 2023-2027

This plan provides a continued direction in managing this region's shared history and heritage including fostering our important First Nation traditions, culture, and stories. This strategy will guide Council in how we identify, conserve, record and celebrate our city's heritage, so it can be appreciated today and by future generations. This includes heritage places, objects, records, stories and memorials.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained; Diversity of cultural expression appreciated; Sense of belonging to a shared cultural heritage deepened.



West Dapto Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment

Council has been planning for the social infrastructure needs of the West Dapto community for many years. We recently undertook an assessment to find out more about the growing community of West Dapto and what kind of places and spaces they would need in the future to help people connect, be active, create and learn. This Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment includes recommendations for local cultural practice spaces like rehearsal rooms and artist studios; an Aboriginal community space; and other forms of social infrastructure to support this evolving community. Council will continue to explore these recommendations as the community of West Dapto expands into the future.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

Priority: Vibrant public spaces

We've heard that the community values having a creative and vibrant city. Art is a powerful and humanising way to communicate experiences, to help people connect, and boost community pride and wellbeing. We've been working to make art more accessible and available to our community.

Our major collections

Wollongong has two major art collections, one comprising over 3,500 objects housed at Wollongong Art Gallery, the other made up of over 170 permanent site-specific pieces spread in public spaces throughout the Wollongong Local Government Area. Both provide free access to some of Australia's most innovative art for everyone in the community.

Outcome domain: Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

- 35 Public Art, Bellambi Mews, Coomaditchi.
- 36 Sculpture in the Garden, Winner 2023, Deborah Redwood.
- 37 Sculpture in the Garden, Winner 2021, Fatiah Semiz.
- 38 Wander Wollongong.
- 39 Wander Wollongong.

Sculpture in the Garden

Sculpture in the Garden continues to build in popularity with 40,000 visitors in 2023 to view the sculptures by local, national and international artists in the beautiful Wollongong Botanic Garden. The exhibition and acquisitive award is held every second year and attracts a diverse range of emerging and professional artists for the event, which also offers a 6-week program of free creative activities, for all ages and abilities. The 2023 award winner, local Deborah Redwood joins previous winners, Fatih Semiz, Louis Pratt and Michael Purdy in having her sculpture permanently displayed at the Botanic Garden.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

Wander Wollongong - Art

Wander Wollongong - Art is an art trail that allows people to journey through the lively cultural landscape of the Wollongong CBD. This trail features a diverse collection of galleries, studios, creative spaces, and a selection of public art - showcasing the rich artistic talent found within the area.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.



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Priority: Spaces to create and perform

Cultural infrastructure and creative spaces are important to our community. We heard that there is a need for us to invest in our existing spaces and seek to create more spaces where people can create, rehearse and perform, and connect with others.

Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (IPAC) refurbishment

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 has been 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.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

Creative Wollongong Studios and artists in residence

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 in and around the Arts Precinct.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

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. Writing workshops, environmental art, sound scapes 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 pure response to place. The project has included the sound installations at Helensburgh Cemetery, a writer's group at Corrimal Library, and installation at Dapto Ribbonwood Centre. Each project was captured by a videographer to provide a digital echo. The funding for this project was part of Council's Creative Covid relief package.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced; New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

40 Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (IPAC) refurbishment.

41 ARTWARD, Corrimal Library.

42 ARTWARD, Corrimal Library.

43 ARTWARD, Corrimal Library.

44 Creative Wollongong Studios and artists in residence.



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Focus Area: Our City After Dark

A thriving evening and night-time economy plays an important role in the revitalisation of the city by providing economic, social and cultural benefits to our community. We want to support and enable the evolution of Wollongong's vibrant culture of nightlife by creating an environment that supports creative expression and diversity of night-time venues, events and activities. By enabling our evening and night-time economy to grow, we can create a city where people want to live, work, visit and experience.

Priority: Evening Activations

The community shared that they would like more opportunities to get involved in our city's nightlife. These are some examples of what we've done during the life of the plan to grow our evening economy:

Luminous

Wollongong City Council delivered Luminous across five days, from Wednesday 26 to Sunday 30 October 2022. The event took place daily between 11am and 10pm, with a focus on bringing the CBD to life after dark. Luminous was centred around Wollongong's Arts Precinct in Burelli Street and included events and installations at Wollongong Library, Wollongong Art Gallery, Wollongong Youth Centre, Project Contemporary Art Space and the Arts Precinct. Luminous delivered a range of activations such as lighting and illumination projects, installations and exhibitions, music programs, workshops and talks, interactive wellness programs and creative markets and was funded by the NSW State Government in partnership with Wollongong City Council.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

45 Luminous.

46 Upsurge art fair, Wollongong Arts Precinct.

47 Luminous.

48 Luminous, Wollongong Art Gallery.

Upsurge

Presented in 2022 following requests from local creatives wanting to showcase their work in contemporary ways, the Upsurge Art fair showcased a mix of craft and fine art created by local artists and creative businesses in a bespoke pavilion tent sited in the Arts Precinct. Curated by Virginia Settre, the 3-day creative market included a mix of work by a diverse range of artists and artisans, a free program of aligned community events and vibrant night-time music by HONK, plus a live DJ in the pavilion.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.

Gallery After Dark

Wollongong Art Gallery has explored different ways to activate the Gallery space in the evenings. The Gallery After Dark program has enabled this space to engage a range of creatives to provide a range of cultural programs for the community. Programs have included:

- Live music performances by local and other artists in partnership with Yours and Owls
- World music performances by World's Collide in partnership with Cultural Arts Creative
- Shadow Puppet performances with local artists The Shadow Theatre of Anaphoria
- Contemporary jazz and alternative music with various bands.

Outcome domain: Creativity stimulated; Aesthetic enrichment experienced.



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Priority: Policy, planning and safety initiatives

Changes to policy and planning have enabled Council to grow our evening economy, provided a platform for businesses to operate into the evening and created more opportunities for people to participate in our city's nightlife. In addition to this, a range of initiatives have also been undertaken to improve people's sense of safety as they enjoy the night life of our city.

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.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

Night Time Economy Councils Committee (NTECC)

The NTECC is a working group of NSW local Council staff who meet monthly to share, advocate and strategise solutions and best practise approaches to shape vibrant, safe and sustainable Night Time Economies (NTEs). Wollongong City Council was an original member of NTECC in 2016 and continues to play an active role.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

49 *Globe Lane, Wollongong CBD.*

50 *Keira St, Wollongong CBD.*

51 *Safety Surveying, Wollongong CBD.*

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. 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.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

Alcohol Free Zones event exemptions

There are a number of Alcohol Free Zones (AFZ) located across the Wollongong Local Government Area. Within these public spaces, people are prohibited from consuming alcohol. In 2022 Councillors resolved to allow a maximum of 10 events per year to be exempt from these AFZ, allowing the consumption of alcohol in these areas as part of pre-approved licensed events. These AFZ exemptions apply to several areas in the Wollongong City Centre including Upper Crown Street Mall (including Crown Lane), Lower Crown Street Mall, Globe Lane, the Arts Precinct and Wollongong Foreshore area.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

Generic Event Sites Development Approvals

These Generic Event Sites Development Approvals provide event organisers with a simpler, more cost-effective approval pathway for major events held in public spaces. Council has generic event Development Approvals on 17 sites across Wollongong. Six of these were approved in 2020, expanding the approved sites from the city centre out into the suburbs including Helensburgh, Thirroul, Port Kembla, JJ Kelly Park and Greenhouse Park.

Outcome domain: New knowledge, ideas and insights gained.

