

**15 REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES****15.1 Endorse for public exhibition - Creative Kiama: Cultural Plan 2025-29**

CSP Objective: Outcome 1.1: We want a strong sense of community and belonging, where social and cultural life can flourish; and our families, friends and visitors feel welcome and included.

CSP Strategy: 1.1.1 Provide spaces, services and initiatives that foster a proud, inclusive, and connected community for all.

Delivery Program: 1.1.1.1 Review Council's Arts and Cultural Strategy and policy framework and implement priority actions.

Item 15.1

**Summary**

“Creative Kiama” sets the vision and strategic goals for the future of arts and cultural activities in the Kiama region for 2025-29. This draft plan embodies the community’s aspirations and priorities for arts and culture, aligning with the key insights and feedback outlined in the Engagement Report.

Council is seeking approval for the new cultural plan to be placed on public exhibition starting mid-January 2025. The draft document will be rendered to a graphic design document once approved (refer to Mock Graphic Design Version). It should be noted that final images are subject to change following consultation with community and Traditional Elders.

**Financial implication**

“Creative Kiama” acknowledges our current situation and resources. Council is limited in financial and physical resources however is not limited by innovation and passion. Council can achieve great outcomes and results which are detailed within the Implementation Plan.

The new cultural plan will be financially sustainable by combining the existing Cultural Development budget, targeted external funding, collaborative internal efforts and regional resource sharing. This approach ensures that arts and culture initiatives are robustly funded and strategically managed, leading to greater community engagement and long-term cultural and economic benefits.

**Risk implication**

The Implementation Plan is designed as a SMART framework, with specific, measurable, and achievable goals tailored for the capacity of one (1) full-time Cultural Development Officer. It sets realistic and time-bound objectives that span the next four years, ensuring focused and effective implementation aligned with available resources.

**Policy**

“Creative Kiama” is a policy framework document for 2025-29 in relation to arts, culture and creativity in Kiama. Council recognises the importance of influencing and contributing to the development and implementation of key Council policies and strategies.

Report of the Director Planning, Environment and Communities

15.1 Endorse for public exhibition - Creative Kiama: Cultural Plan 2025-29 (cont)

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By aligning our efforts with these plans, Council can showcase its dedication to leveraging arts and cultural outcomes to achieve broader Council and stakeholder objectives across diverse areas beyond the arts. This integrated approach ensures that our cultural initiatives not only enrich the community but also support and enhance the wider goals of Council.

Such policies and plans will include the Community Strategic Plan (Review), Reconciliation Action Plan, Community Development Strategy, Library Strategy (Draft) and the Development Contral Plan (Public Art).

**Consultation (internal)**

See attached Engagement Report for comprehensive internal engagement for Creative Kiama.

**Communication/Community engagement**

See attached Engagement Report for comprehensive external engagement for Creative Kiama.

**Attachments**

- 1 Focus Group Data - Menti results [↓](#)
- 2 Survey Monkey - Lets talk about arts, culture and creativity [↓](#)
- 3 Engagement Report - Let's talk about arts, culture and creativity [↓](#)
- 4 DRAFT Creative Kiama: Cultural Plan 2025-29 [↓](#)
- 5 MOCK Graphic Design Version [↓](#)

**Enclosures**

Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Place the draft *Creative Kiama: Cultural Plan 2025-29*, on public exhibition starting mid-January 2025 for a period of 28 days.
2. Receive a further report for consideration, if any relevant submissions are received or if any substantial changes are proposed for any other reasons, detailing the public exhibition outcomes and proposed changes with further recommendations regarding adoption.
3. On the day after completion of the public exhibition period, adopt the *Creative Kiama: Cultural Plan 2025-29*, if there are no relevant submissions received and there are no substantial changes proposed.

Report of the Director Planning, Environment and Communities

15.1 Endorse for public exhibition - Creative Kiama: Cultural Plan 2025-29 (cont)

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### Background

Kiama Municipal Council last engaged in detailed cultural planning in 2016, leading to the creation of the 2017-2020 cultural plan, *The BISness of Creative Arts in Kiama*. Now, four years later, Council has come together once again to shape Kiama's new cultural vision for 2025-29.

### Community engagement

The community and creative stakeholders were invited to share their thoughts, dreams, and aspirations for the cultural life of our town. Engagement was delivered in two stages. The first stage was the delivery of a key internal (Council) stakeholder workshop on 29 May 2024. The second phase was opened for the broader community and other stakeholders to participate from 5 August to 13 October 2024. In this phase the community were invited to provide feedback and insights to help craft a fresh cultural plan that will reflect the community's creative aspirations.

A range of internal, key stakeholder and community engagement methods and activities have created a strong insight into future planning for arts and culture in Kiama. These activities have been summarised below.

- Key internal stakeholder workshop | 29 May 2024
- Flyers and posters
- Online and paper-based survey
- Community Pop-ups & Interactive displays
- Creative focus groups | 18 September 2024
- Consultation with key community groups
- Children's Survey Card
- Lego Competition.

The invaluable feedback gathered has helped craft a dynamic and inclusive cultural plan (*Creative Kiama*) that places the community's priorities, needs, and creative ambitions at the forefront of our strategy.

### Draft Creative Kiama

The draft *Creative Kiama* to nurture a vibrant, inclusive, and dynamic cultural ecosystem that celebrates diversity, creativity and community engagement. The draft contains the following four pillars:

1. Celebrate and honour Aboriginal stories, culture and our region's rich heritage
2. Provide create access to creative learning opportunities; professional development for artists and support for small creative industries
3. Provide more partnerships, collaborations and creative initiatives to fuel the creative economy
4. Provide innovative spaces and venues for exhibitions, performances and artistic participation, ensuring more opportunities for arts engagement.

The draft *Creative Kiama* contains a number of actions for Council to partner, advocate and host over the next five years.

Report of the Director Planning, Environment and Communities

15.1 Endorse for public exhibition - Creative Kiama: Cultural Plan 2025-29 (cont)

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**Public exhibition**

It is anticipated that draft *Creative Kiama* will be placed on the statutory 28-day public exhibition period throughout January and February 2025 and if significant amendments are required a finalised *Creative Kiama* will be reported back to Council for final adoption.

**Item 15.1**



# What is working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Local small grants offerings

Isolation and space

A small group of like minded creatives

Having the Old Fire Station available

The community, inspiration from the land

The ability to have a workshop and beautiful space to create and exhibit

My own commitment to the arts

A small collective of like minded creatives





# What is working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Seven Marks gallery

New artists joining the community, refreshing the "landscape"

The presence of performing arts and music festivals and exhibition spaces

GLAM community gallery

I am part of KIAMAART SOCIETY giving me connection with like minded others. I am able occasionally to have exhibition at OFS

Fire Station is a fabulous exhibition space  
Supportive community. Kiama Community page and Gerringong Community page on Facebook are very supportive  
Workshop opportunities  
Gatherings like today

A relatively supportive environment for local artists & supporting locally made products. The use of exhibition space is also an excellent opportunity and has worked well for artists who are fulltime

Access to the Coach house is critical for the full functioning of the Kiama Arts Society- to include various artists, workshops, tutoring & opportunity of the arts community.





# What is working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

The ability to show my work and join with other artists. Although finding exhibition space can take a long time with many on the list.

Arts groups e.g. Woodworks, Art Society, Music Society etc

Dynamic talent creative community in Kiama

Opportunity to listen to and share performing arts is vital.

The chance to network with others in the same field. Some opportunities to interact with people in other fields within the community

Carmelina's great support

The art community- support of fellow artists  
Community support for the arts- attendance - lots of art minded  
Council support for exhibition at Old Gore Station  
Inspiration from the natural environment

Engaged senior community





# What is working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Great Council facilities

Council listening

The environment

Seeing the increasing number of artistic programs and opportunities for artists post-covid

New artists moving to the area with new enthusiasm and ideas

Being known here. Bringing our global experience and connect to events here  
Bringing European style here  
Knowing and being connected to people like Sally and the team

Outdoor spaces being utilized in creative ways (festivals, street art etc)

Kiama as destination for quality music acts







# What is working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

I love the Old Fire Station as a cultural building in itself. The use of this building in hiring out for local artists is great for kiama and the local artists.

Minister interested in supporting regional arts

Kiama art society is a great platform for local artists. The markets bring diversity to our area.

Knowing and being connected to other artisys





# What is not working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Individual creatives having to pay private/business rates for council spaces because they are not community groups or NFP

Funding

Limited spaces for exhibitions

Glam Gallery is fabulous but a lot of locals don't know it is there and it doesn't have a street presence or signage on the building.

Council. Lack of vision.

The unprogressive vision

Too many of us to only have OFS . Gerringong is not viable yet . We need more venues or occasions to show our works

Culture is not considered in Kiama with the respect it deserves. Money & full support is not offered in a sector that potentially benefits so much of a community





# What is not working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Restricted exhibition space limits visual artists success. This is quite competitive now as exhibition space becomes more commodified by commercial enterprise.

Not enough exhibition space available, there are a lot of artists competing for space but that is a good thing. We just need to find other suitable venues. Thinking out of the box required !

Exposure to the local community for up and coming exhibitions.

Lack of community gallery-No suitable performance space in kiama Limited places for artists to exhibit Lack of publicity for Glam gallery- needs signage

Limited access to live music venues for musicians to play original work.

Lack of support / funding opportunities and serious opportunities in the arts

Lack of ongoing support from council and state government bodies that exclude artists from grants because Kiama has magically been classified as a city

The lack of a night economy - which is hopefully changing!





# What is not working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Limited exhibition space and competition for this due to commodification and private enterprise. Public access for exhibition outside of business is critical for community arts.

Kiama is very white, like to see greater involvement with CALD and First Nations creatives

The lack of a Kiama Arts Centre!

Exposure and events outside of the direct Kiama main st. Gerringong and Jamberoo do miss out a lot.

Communication of events and programs to wider Kiama LGA

Limited spaces to exhibit

Not enough spaces to show case local and out of area artists.

Size of facilities lack of medium size venues





# What is not working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Limitations with local event spaces / conflict with other activities

Focus on sport not so much arts

Parking limited and impacts ability for people to easily access venues

Reductions in funding  
Red tape with council especially when an event has been done many many times

Changes in staff during an event red tape process.

High demand on Old Fire Station

Clarity of roles within council - action planning and deliverables not always evident

Networking and collaboration limited





# What is not working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Many MANY cafes where shops along main street might be better utilised as creative or interactive spaces.

Private Galleries closing means visitor experience is limited

The arts being seen as less important than other things, especially related to money spent...when actually they have endless benefits to communities both financial and social.

Indigenous collaboration and input difficult

The arts are not seen as beneficial as they are, or it doesn't seem like they are supported to same financial level as things like engineering/science





# How can Council best support artists and creatives in Kiama?

Support live gig and 24 hr economy

4 Popular

A Kiama Arts centre would support Visual artists with exhibition space, venues for Performing Arts would attract visitors & enrich culture for residents. A central location for the arts would assist.

4 Popular

Listening to the creative community and working with them to create events

3

Providing appropriate venues and helping with promotion. Provide facilities for workshops and training

3

Think micro, not macro. Yes, support the big festivals, but encourage small arts entrepreneurs to run smaller cultural events

3

More venues and events and some funding, definately for social media

2

Professional development

2

With serious engagement

2





# How can Council best support artists and creatives in Kiama?

Support to those who are expanding the scope of creativity in Kiama. This goes beyond cultural development staff to planning and tourism departments

2

Ensure schools have innovative and quality arts programs and teachers

2

Develop partnerships that expand on the fiscal and human resource capacity of council

1

By treating it with more respect and following their no.1 objective as per their LEP

1

Opportunities to exhibit particularly in the best times for commercial sales

1

Better communication of the resources available to artists of all kinds, not just occasional social media posts

1

Offering affordable residence space and when exhibitions or events are held to help promote them.

1

Should all artists be supported? What is the scope of such help? Emerging, developing & professional? What experienced or knowledgeable person or board within Kiama is able to identify & minister help

1







# How can Council best support artists and creatives in Kiama?

Realise that for the town's community it, economy & tourist trade this is the best use of funds

1

Maybe provide workshops, the artist wont mind paying if new and exciting art techniques can be learned. And again create more exhibition space. Communicate with nearby councils to have a art trail experience

1

By creating multiple opportunities. Artists create for a variety of reasons / not just for local engagement

1

Studio spaces

1

Speaking to and debating the value of creativity andc creative practitioners

1

Incorporating arts objectives in all council plans and vice versa

1

More affordable spaces for artists to hire in areas that attract foot traffic. Advertising of events in social media.

1

Exploring different opportunities to showcase creatives

1





# How can Council best support artists and creatives in Kiama?

Offer residencies and grants so creative can focus on creative work

1

By pulling their fingers out and showing support beyond this room!

Prioritising Kiama residents for exhibition spaces

Get behind local cultural venues

Build a suitable arts centreSupport funding for smaller events that foster and promote local artists / performers. Many current events are focussed on bringing in the tourist dollar.

Make venues financially accessible

Affordable venues

Flexible venues





# How can Council best support artists and creatives in Kiama?

Offer spaces and support to innovative programs and events rather than those that have already been done

Find opportunities for new exhibition spaces

Facilitate networking

Partnership grants

Support live music scene by changing ideas around what a 'music venue' is. What alternative spaces can be utilised?





# What barriers/challenges do you experience as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Limited access to existing physical spaces and infrastructure

6 Popular

Council restrictions on trading hours for arts/performance venues

6 Popular

limited Exhibition space & capacity to experience live performances.

5

Regionality, isolation, lack of public transport, access to technology, distance of community and like minded souls, access to venues and education that promote profession growth

5

Opportunity to consume performing arts past afternoon tea time.

3

Limited support for creative business growth

3

Affordable exhibition space

2

Effective means of communicating events, exhibitions etc

2





# What barriers/challenges do you experience as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Frustrated nowhere to exhibit monthly. Maybe we need an expo of music, food art etc.that we can all be involved in. We need to see what each other is doing.

2

Acceptance by the larger community that our work is viable and worthwhile

2

Means to live and work as a creative.

2

It's all DIY in Kiama, not much to help boost you up. If you do manage to boost yourself up then there is a co start battle with the repressing short-sighted local government

1

Conflicts of interest & lack of knowledge/understanding from decision makers. Nepotism.

1

Not enough venues to exhibit your work. Maybe create an artists meeting place for networking and engaging, possibly monthly...

1

The narrow cultural view of the Kiama community, and its lack of awareness /interest in multicultural issues and events.

1

Lack of knowledge in running a small business

1





# What barriers/challenges do you experience as an artist or creative in Kiama?

Ability to connect authentically with indigenous community

1

Knowing who and what talents we have in our community in order to include and collaborate with

1

Limited access to funding

Invite well known artists into area so that artists could meet and expand their ideas. The local artist would pay...

Not enough supplies locally

Limited allocated time in allocated spaces.

Cost of living, costs are higher in Kiama





### Let's talk about arts, culture and creativity



Thank you for taking the time to complete this short survey.

Your insights will help shape Kiama Council's Cultural Plan 2025-2029.

This survey takes about 10 minutes to complete.



### Let's talk about arts, culture and creativity

#### About you

The following few questions are about you, so that we can compare your wants and needs to other demographics in the Kiama community.

\* 1. To which age category do you belong?

2. If you don't mind us asking, how do you describe yourself? **Select all that apply**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQIA+                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Long-term resident (10+ years) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> Regular volunteer              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Person with a disability                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Working full-time              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-English speaking background          | <input type="checkbox"/> Working part-time / casual     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent with young kids (under 12)        | <input type="checkbox"/> Local business owner           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent with teenagers at home (under 18) | <input type="checkbox"/> Student                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New resident (< 3 years)                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Retiree                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medium-term resident (3 to 9 years)      |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)                   |   |

\* 3. Where do you live?



### **Let's talk about arts, culture and creativity**

\* 4. What are your main reasons for visiting Kiama?

- Visiting friends or relatives
- Working
- Holiday/Leisure
- Other (please specify)



\* 5. What are the top three activities you plan to do or like to do when visiting Kiama?  
**Select your top three (3)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoying the natural scenery (e.g., beaches, parks, blowhole) | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoying the local food and dining scene                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participating in arts and cultural events or activities       | <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting the Farmers Market or other markets                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Active activities (eg hiking, cycling, surfing)               | <input type="checkbox"/> Experiencing First Nations cultural and arts programs            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending live performances or music festivals                | <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting wineries or local breweries                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting public art and art installations                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending literary events (e.g., Reader's Festival, Slam Poetry) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exploring local history at museums or historical sites        | <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping for local arts and crafts                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participating in community art projects or workshops          | <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxing at cafés and social spots                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)  |   |



### Let's talk about arts, culture and creativity

#### The now

The following questions are about your connection and experience of the arts, culture and creativity in the Kiama Local Government Area (referred to hereafter as Kiama).

6. In **one sentence**, what does art, culture and creativity mean to you?

7. If you identify as an artist, creative practitioner or facilitator, what area/s of the arts do you practice in?

- Visual arts (painting sculpture, photography)
  - Literary arts (poetry, reading, writing)
  - Culinary arts (food preparation, preserving, baking)
  - Traditional arts (Indigenous arts, traditional dance)
  - Performing arts (music, acting, dance, comedy)
  - Community arts events (festivals, public art projects)
  - Other (please specify)
- Craft and traditional making (weaving, felt, basket making, woodwork, leatherwork, ceramics)
  - Film, media and technology (script wiring, directing, multimedia, videography, producing)
  - Arts education or facilitation
  - Working in the arts, culture and creative industry
  - Venue provider

\* 8. How often do you attend arts and cultural activities or events in Kiama?

	Weekly	Monthly	A few times a year	Rarely	Never
Workshops and classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Live performances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music and festivals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Literary events (e.g. Reader's Festival, Slam Poetry)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public art and public art installations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community participation art projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

\* 9. Why do you attend arts and cultural activities? **Select your top three (3)**

- Learning/upskilling
- Health and well-being
- Enjoyment
- Learn about cultures and perspectives
- Other (please specify)
- Connect and socialise
- Self expression
- Working in the arts, cultural and creative industry

\* 10. How does arts, culture, and creativity provide value to our community? **Select your top three (3)**

- Enhancing community engagement and social cohesion
- Boosting the local economy
- Fostering creativity and innovation
- Preserving and promoting local heritage and traditions
- Other (please specify)
- Providing educational opportunities for all ages
- Improving mental health and well-being
- Offering platforms for diverse voices and cultural expression
- Strengthening community identity and pride

11. Does anything stop you from attending cultural and creative activities in Kiama LGA? **Select all that apply**

- Lack of marketing or information
- Cost
- Accessibility
- Timing of events
- Lack of interest
- Other (please specify)
- Health
- Difficultly getting to and from
- Safety concerns
- None of the above

\* 12. How do you mostly hear about arts and cultural activities in Kiama LGA? **Select your top three (3)**

- Local newspaper
- Radio
- Friends or family
- Social Media
- Newsletter
- Council or Library Website
- Kiama - What's on Website
- Brochure in letterbox
- Other (please specify)

13. What do you like about Kiama LGA's current arts, culture and creative offerings?



### **Let's talk about arts, culture and creativity**

#### **Looking forward**

The following questions will be about your needs, wants and dreams for the future of arts, culture and creativity in Kiama LGA.

\* 14. How can Kiama Council better support local artists and creative practitioners?

**Select your top three (3)**

- Funding and grants
- Providing venues and spaces
- Offering professional development opportunities
- Other (please specify)
- Promoting local artists
- Facilitating networking events
- Forge better connections with regional/ statewide / national / global bodies and institutions

\* 15. What creative events or activities would you like to see more of in Kiama LGA?

**Select your top three (3)**

- Visual arts (painting, sculpture, photography)
- Literary events (Reader's Festival, Slam Poetry)
- Culinary arts (Food, preserving, farmers markets, baking)
- Traditional arts (Indigenous arts, traditional dance)
- Public Art (murals, sculpture, arts trail)
- Other (please specify)
- Libraries, Galleries and Museums
- Workshops and creative learning
- Fashion and adorning
- Live music and festivals
- Performing art (circus, theatre, dance, music)

16. What is your vision, or "Big Idea", for the future of arts, culture and creativity in Kiama LGA?

\* 17. How would you like to see cultural diversity reflected in Kiama? **Select your top three (3)**

- More multicultural festivals and events
- Inclusion of diverse artists in exhibitions and performances
- Programs highlighting First Nations cultures
- Diverse cultural workshops and classes
- Increased representation in public art installations
- Other (please specify)
- Cross-cultural collaborations and projects
- Showcasing international films and literature
- Offering multilingual arts and cultural programs
- Celebrations of cultural heritage days

18. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about arts and culture in Kiama LGA?

19. Please leave your email address if you want to stay updated with our progress and hear how we used your input.



From 5 August to 30 September, we invited you to share your insights, dreams, and experiences to help shape a Cultural Plan that reflects our community's creative aspirations and offers something meaningful for all.

### What we heard

- You want to engage with our rich history and Aboriginal culture
- You want to learn and collaborate to drive artistic excellence
- You want more spaces and places to showcase, exhibit and learn
- Your creativity is often inspired by our natural landscape and seaside scenery
- You want Council to support the cultural and creative sector and invest more in the arts
- You want opportunities to network and connect with like-minded creatives
- You want more support and professional development for creative start-ups and businesses
- You want more art in the public realm

### How you got involved



### What's next?

Your feedback will be used to draft the new cultural plan. This draft document will be available for you to review to review in early 2025. This feedback will then be used to further refine the plan before it goes to Council for adoption



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## Introduction

Kiama Municipal Council last engaged in detailed cultural planning in 2016, leading to the creation of the 2017-2020 cultural plan, *The BISness of Creative Arts in Kiama*. Now, four years later, we have come together once again to shape Kiama’s new cultural vision for 2025-2029. We invited our community and creative stakeholders to share their thoughts, dreams, and aspirations for the cultural life of our town. The invaluable feedback we gathered will help us craft a dynamic and inclusive cultural plan that places the community’s priorities, needs, and creative ambitions at the forefront of our strategy.

We couldn’t ask for a more passionate and visionary community when it comes to arts and culture in Kiama. Our creative community brought forth incredible ideas, enthusiasm, and creativity to the table. While we recognise the challenges—rising costs of living, fragile creative industries, funding cuts, budget limitations, and aging or limited infrastructure—we are also deeply aware of the vibrant cultural pulse that runs through our town. Kiama hums with life and creativity, and we’re committed to working alongside our creatives to find innovative ways forward. Together, we can create a positive, thriving future for arts and culture in our community.

We hope this document provides insight to the reader and aims to:

- Outline the consultation process that will inform the new Cultural Plan
- Gather and align thoughts and findings into key values and themes

## What do we mean by arts, culture and creativity?

When we talk about arts, culture, and creativity, we’re referring to the wide range of expressions and experiences that bring people together, inspire imagination, and celebrate diversity. Arts include visual, performing, and literary forms—everything from painting to music and theatre. Culture reflects the traditions, values, and shared experiences that shape our community’s identity. Creativity is innate to humanity and widely defined as the use of original ideas. If nurtured, creativity is a skill that can be developed to greatly benefit both the individual and wider community.

Our community engagement campaign was fittingly named *“Let’s Talk About Art, Culture, and Creativity in Kiama,”* so without further ado let’s explore the rich qualitative and quantitative insights gathered on arts, culture, and creativity in our beautiful town of Kiama.



## How we engaged

Engagement was delivered in two stages. The first stage was the delivery of a key internal (Council) stakeholder workshop on 29 May 2024. The second phase was opened for the broader community and other stakeholders to participate from 5 August to 13 October 2024. In this phase we invited your feedback and insights to help us craft a fresh cultural plan that will reflect your creative aspirations.

We used several methods to promote the engagement campaign and community had several means of providing input. These were to:



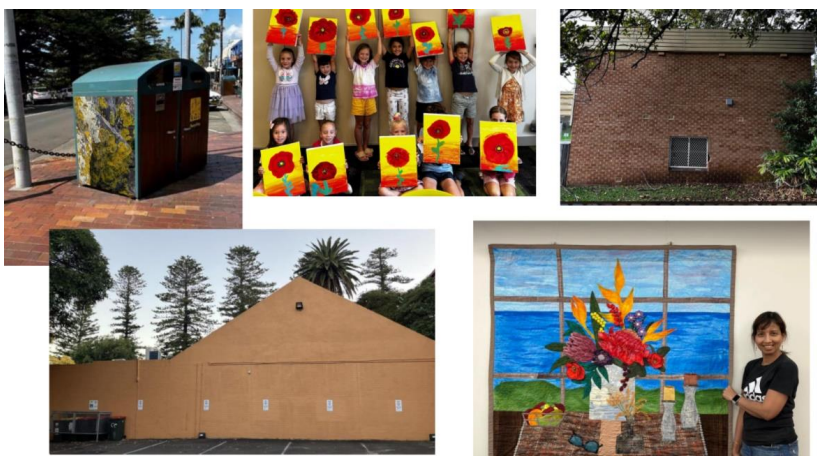
## Engagement activities

A range of internal, key stakeholder and community engagement methods and activities have created a strong insight into future planning for arts and culture in Kiama. These activities have been summarised below.

### Key internal stakeholder workshop | 29 May 2024

This Council workshop was conducted to gain early insights into Council commitments to arts and culture. It formed an important part of determining the vision and priorities for the new cultural plan. Key staff involved were the Manager of Library and Cultural Hubs, Manager of Community Hubs, Tourism & Events Manager, Manager of Property & Recreation, Community Hubs Coordinator, Community Engagement Officer and Cultural Development Officer. The Director of Planning, Environment and Communities and Economic Development Officer were also consulted.

The workshop involved a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of Kiama's arts and culture as well as discussions to determine key priorities and focus areas.



Community Engagement Report- Let's talk about Arts, Culture and Creativity

Flyers and posters



Our hard copy flyers linked to Council's Your Say page, with more information on the engagement activities and how community can participate in the Arts & Culture engagement campaign.

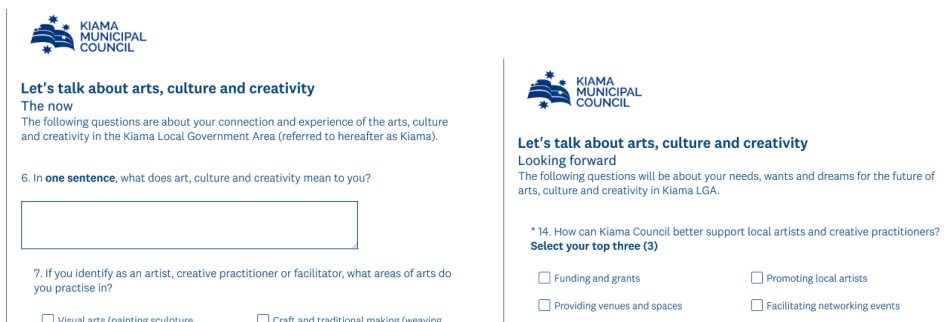
Artist credit: Krimstone and Scott Nagy "Deep Dive".

Online and paper-based survey

Our online survey consisted of 18 key questions (multiple-choice and open-ended). The survey was aimed at general community and took approximately 10 minutes to complete. The questions were divided into three key themes:

1. **ABOUT YOU** (Demographics)- questions relating to the respondent, such as age and locality.
2. **THE NOW** (Connection & Experience) - questions relating to arts and culture experiences, participation and values
3. **LOOKING FORWARD** (Needs & Preferences) - questions relating to wants and visions ('Big Ideas') for arts and culture in Kiama

See [attachment 1](#) for a full overview of the questions.



### Community Pop-Ups & Interactive displays



Two community pop-ups were held at high-traffic locations:

- 7 August 2024, at the Farmers Market
- 8 August 2024, at Jamberoo IGA

These events engaged over 100 community members. The pop-ups featured a variety of interactive activities, including:

- A dotmocracy board, allowing each participant to cast three votes on key activity areas.
- A "Big Ideas" board focused on gathering thoughts and suggestions on the types of arts, culture, and creativity.
- A paper-based survey for participants to provide feedback on the spot.

Our Dotmocracy and Big Ideas boards were also set up at three sites including Gerringong Library, Kiama Library and the Old Fire Station (Community Art Space, Kiama).

These locations were high traffic and sought feedback from community members on arts and culture via two key questions:

- What events or activities would you like to see more of in Kiama (participants used a sticky dot to vote on their top 3).
- What is your big vision or "Big Idea" for the future of arts, culture and creativity in Kiama.

Creative Focus Groups | 18 September, The Pavilion & 24 October, Gerringong Library



These sessions were conducted to gain a rich insight into the needs and visions of our creative community. Present were visual and performing artists, creative businesses, venue owners, cultural workers and art advocates. The group participated in a SWOT analysis via the Menti/word cloud platform. Four key questions were proposed:

1. What is working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama (Strengths)
2. What is not working for you as an artist or creative in Kiama (Weaknesses)
3. How can Council best support artists and creatives in Kiama (Opportunities)
4. What barriers/challenges for you experience as an artist or creative in Kiama (Threats)

Three top Opportunities and Threats were identified via a Menti vote. The participants then came up with creative solutions/ideas (on Butcher's paper) to:

1: An **Opportunity** and how we could cultivate success

And/or

2. A **Threat** and how we could mitigate the problem

**Consultation with key community groups**

During consultation with key community groups including the Kiama Quilters and the Kiama Art Society we asked participants to complete the dotmocracy and "Big Ideas" interactive boards. We also surveyed on the "what initiatives you would like to see more of". The options related specifically to artists needs and development. Those surveys voted on their top 3.

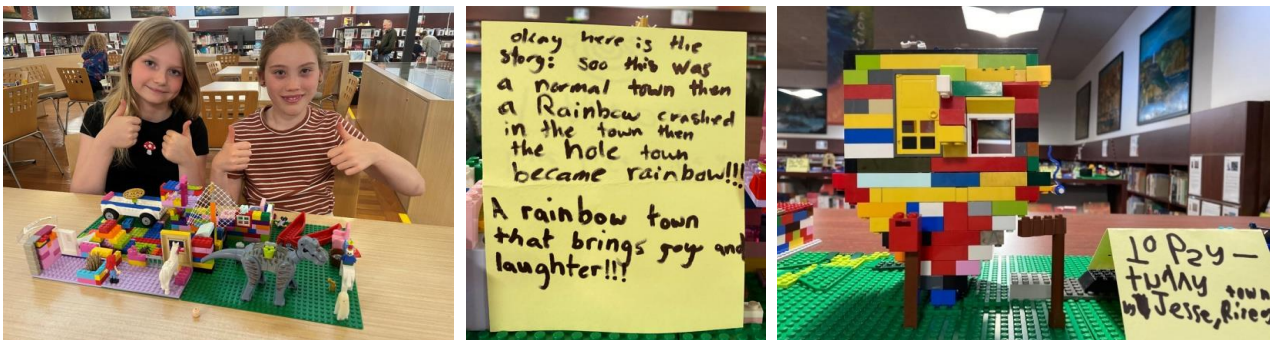


**Children's Survey Card**

We distributed survey cards to children during the October 2024 school holiday period. The survey card was a means of ascertaining favourite creative activities for this demographic (5 to 12 year olds).



**Lego Competition- "Build a Creative Town" | Tuesday 8 October, Kiama Library**



In this all-ages school holiday program we invited participants to *build a creative town*. We brainstormed what a creative town might include in relation to aesthetics, colour and infrastructure such as a gallery, theatre and museum.

## Key findings and insights

The following data, infographics and graphs represent a summary of the key themes and findings during the community and key stakeholder engagement, including the online survey and sentiment received from the various engagement activities.

### Online Survey

- Key demographic insights were captured mainly from respondents aged 55-84, representing 52% of all respondents.
- 42% of respondents were from the suburb of Kiama
- Only 1 survey was completed by a young person under the age of 18, and 6 surveys were completed by 25-34 year olds.
- Approximately 70% surveyed were artists or creatives with the main area of practice being Visual Arts (painting drawing, sculpture, photography).
- The top three reasons for visiting Kiama is for 1. **The food culture** 2. **Natural scenery** 3. **Arts and culture.**
- **Workshops and classes** were the most common activity that respondents attend, followed by **live performances** and **public art.**
- The main reason people attend arts and culture activities is for **enjoyment** and to **connect and socialise.**
- **Timing of events** and **lack of marketing/information** are the main barriers preventing people attending arts and cultural events.
- People value arts and culture most due to the benefits of **social cohesion** and its ability to **enhance community engagement and connectedness.**
- People appreciate Kiama's arts and culture offerings for the **variety and diversity**, with spaces like the Old Coach House and Old Fire Station playing key roles in visual arts and live music adding vibrancy to the community. There is also potential for building connections, such as with Kiama High School. However, some feel that the current offerings are **limited and could be improved.**
- The main way Council can better support artists is through **providing venues and spaces** (78%) and **funding/grants** (68%)
- Respondents would like to see more 1. **Visual arts activities** 2. **Workshops and creative learning** 3. **Live music and festivals.**
- The key "Big Ideas" for Kiama's arts and culture focus on establishing a vibrant cultural hub, including an arts centre with performance and gallery spaces, outdoor areas, and a dedicated regional art gallery. There's strong support for more creative opportunities for young people, regular events like arts festivals, live music and inter-generational programs, and a focus on integrating art into public spaces and the everyday experiences of the community. Emphasis is also placed on making creative activities accessible and supporting local artists to generate income from their work, while fostering a vibrant nightlife and more inclusive events that reflect the diversity of the region.

### Internal Engagement

The internal engagement workshop surfaced key challenges and opportunities in Kiama's evolving arts and culture landscape. With limited resources, Council seeks innovative, resource-sensitive ways to amplify creative initiatives, learning from models in other councils. Expanding partnerships within the community, local businesses, and cultural organisations is central, including deeper collaborations with the library to strengthen cultural programming, community connectedness, and lifelong learning.

Focus areas identified during the key internal workshop were:

- Infrastructure needs and creative spaces
- Inclusivity and community capacity building
- Supporting nighttime-economy
- Social connectedness

The five proposed focus areas from internals were:

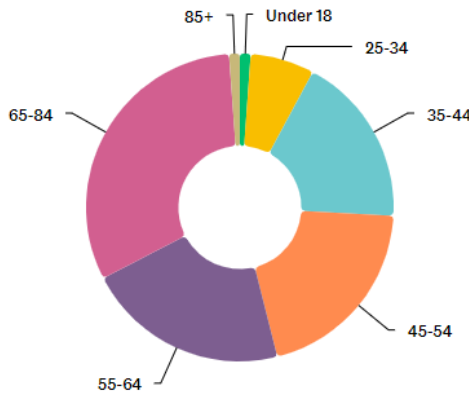
1. Demonstrate Council's commitment to arts and culture through a strategic organisational approach to planning (*this includes, but not limited to, the Development Control Plan, Local Environment Plan, Community Development Plan and the RAP.*)
2. Support and elevate diverse and marginalised groups (such as Youth, First Nations) through the participation of arts and cultural activities and initiatives.
3. Initiate "*great art for everyone*" by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people lives ("*art in the unexpected*")
4. Utilise arts and cultural activity to address social, economic, well-being challenges and foster a connection between Community, Libraries and Cultural Development Council teams.
5. Use arts and culture as a platform for participation and engagement, and to support creative talent (*professional development, creative & lifelong learning*)



Online Survey Data Trends

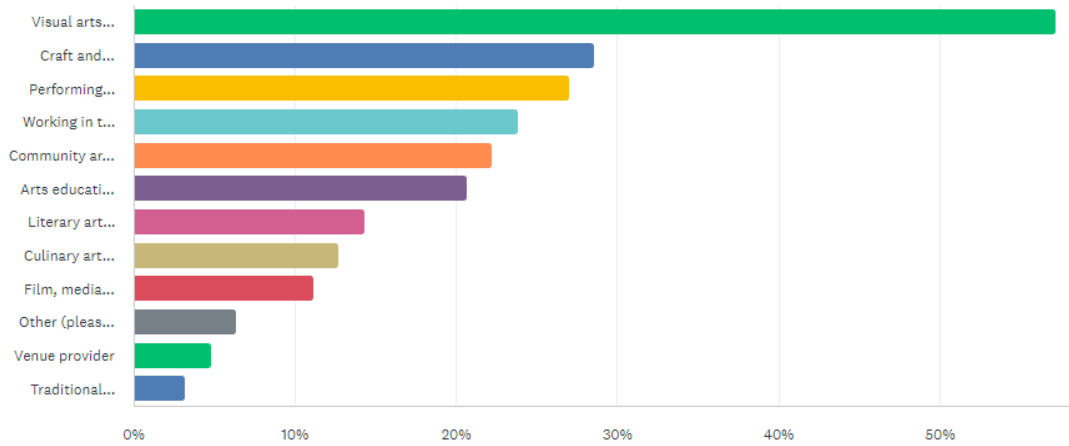
To which age category do you belong?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0



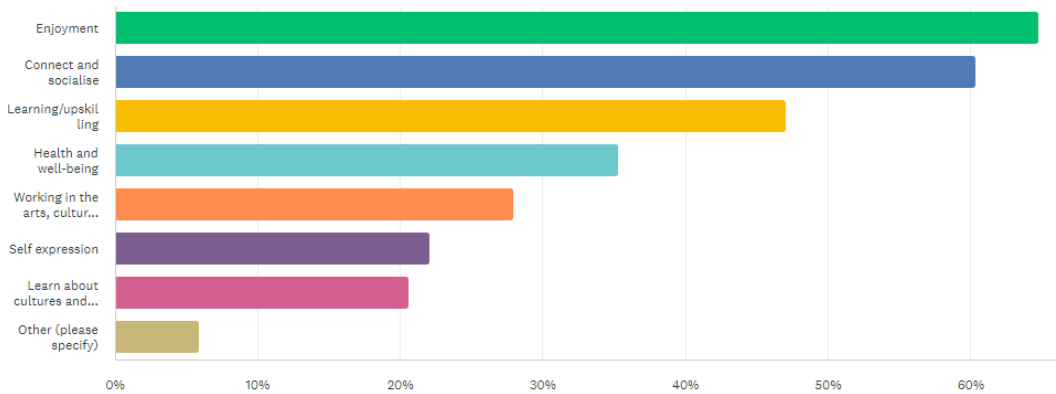
If you identify as an artist, creative practitioner or facilitator, what area/s of the arts do you practice in?

Answered: 63 Skipped: 26



Why do you attend arts and cultural activities? Select your top three (3)

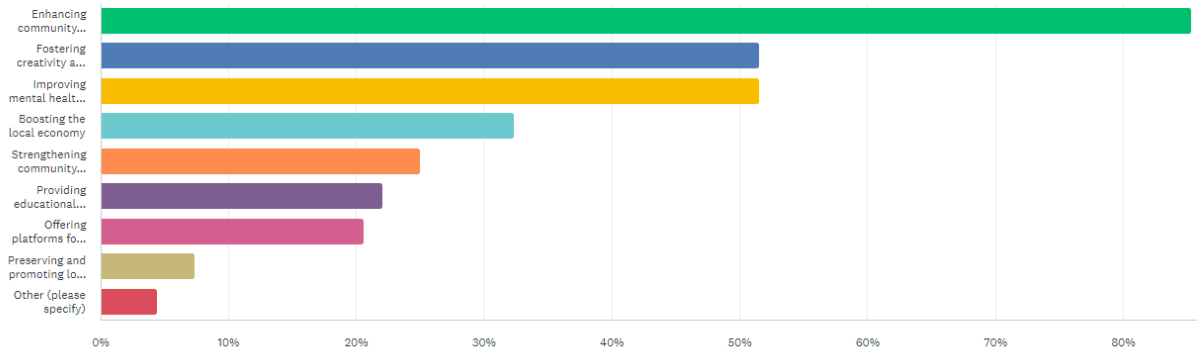
Answered: 68 Skipped: 21





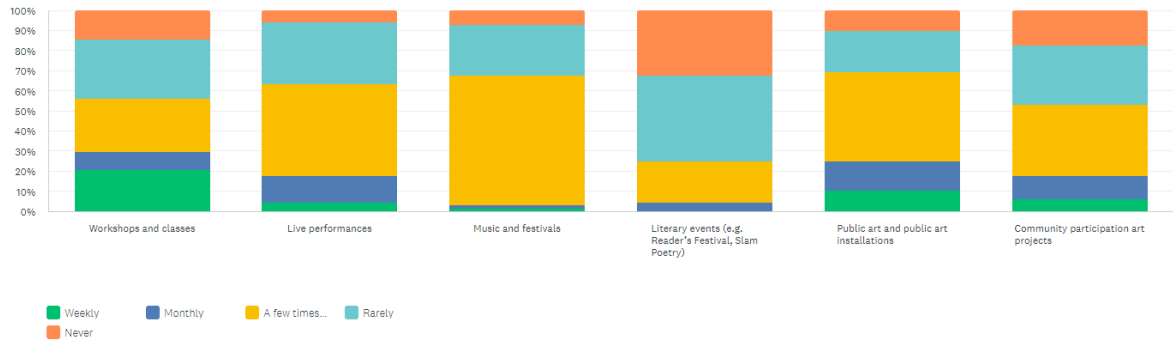
How does arts, culture, and creativity provide value to our community? Select your top three (3)

Answered: 68 Skipped: 21



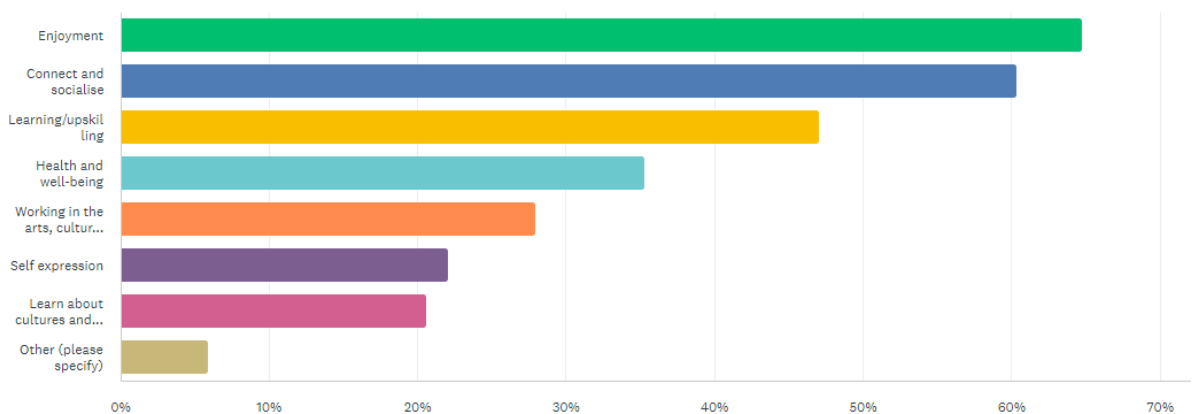
How often do you attend arts and cultural activities or events in Kiama?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 21



Why do you attend arts and cultural activities? Select your top three (3)

Answered: 68 Skipped: 21



Q6



In one sentence, what does art, culture and creativity mean to you?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 22



**Inspiration for Creating and Participating in the Arts**

Our community are inspired to create or participate in the arts community for a variety of reasons. Many are driven by a deep connection to their environment, whether it's the natural landscape, local scenery, or cultural heritage of Kiama. Others are motivated by personal expression, spirituality, or the desire to communicate and connect with an audience. Art provides a means for self-reflection, mental health, and human connection. It also fosters a sense of community, shared joy, and the intrinsic value of creativity. The arts allow people to reflect on beauty, capture the essence of life, and engage in lifelong learning.



Item 15.1  
Attachment 3

### The value of Arts and Culture

Arts and culture are seen as essential means of self-expression, creativity, and community connection. They provide opportunities for individuals to explore identity, share experiences, and engage with like-minded people. Public art, in particular, fosters pride in the community and allows people to see their surroundings with fresh perspectives.

#### Arts and culture:

- "is central to living and necessary to life".
- "means traditions that define and reflect a community's identity and values"
- "is a lifeblood of a community, elements that can bring disparate people & perspectives together"
- "is relief from the mundane; feeding the soul"
- "gives life meaning"
- "offers enrichment of quality of life"
- "is life!"
- "is food for the mind"
- "is enrichment of quality of life"
- "Freedom of spirit and mind, joining art in creativity"
- "An opportunity to engage in life merely beyond surviving, the process of living & thriving"
- "At the very core of humanity and is essential for a fully rounded society"
- "Good for the soul and mental health"
- "Public art makes me look at things with fresh eyes and makes me proud of where I live"

### Children and creativity

Children strongly associate creativity with **arts and crafts**, which emerged as their favourite activity, followed closely by **dancing**. They see a creative town as one filled with vibrant colours, like rainbows, which they link to feelings of joy, happiness, and imagination. This sense of colour and energy is what makes a place feel creative and inviting to them. Other creative activities children enjoy are **making music, creative writing and poetry** and **reading**.

## Our Key Pillars

*(The foundational values that will shape our new Cultural Plan)*

Through our extensive community and stakeholder engagement, the following core values emerged. These guiding principles will help us deliver on our vision for Kiama and direct the plan's outcomes and actions:

### First Nations First

Celebrate and honour Aboriginal stories, culture, and our region's rich heritage.

### Creative Learning & Participation

Provide greater access to learning opportunities for creatives, including professional development for artists and support for small business growth.

### Creative Opportunities & Partnerships

Foster business and economic growth through arts and culture by building more partnerships, collaborations, and creative initiatives.

### Creative Infrastructure

Expand spaces and venues for exhibitions, performances, and artistic participation, ensuring more opportunities for engagement in arts and culture.

## Key Values

### First Nations First

#### Strengths and opportunities

The feedback does not explicitly mention First Nations Culture as a strength. This suggests a potential area where greater efforts could be made to include and prioritise First Nations stories, artists, and cultural expressions. This could be done by engaging with local Indigenous communities to ensure their creative contributions are highlighted and celebrated in local events, exhibitions, and public spaces.

#### Weaknesses and Threats

There is a perceived difficulty in involving First Nations creatives in local arts and cultural initiatives, which indicates a gap in fostering deeper engagement with Indigenous voices.

Respondents also expressed concern that Kiama is very “white” in its cultural offerings, lacking a broader representation of diverse cultures, including Indigenous. This points to a need for stronger efforts to integrate First Nations’ stories into the broader arts landscape.

Overall, the feedback suggests a need for greater focus on inclusive practices, particularly when it comes to supporting and promoting Indigenous artists and culture within the community. Aboriginal art within the public realm, such as murals and installations, is a preference due to its visual impact.

### **BIG** Ideas...

Dharawal language classes and bush tucker workshops

Kiama\_suburb interpretive signage

Engaging with local Indigenous artists and communities to include cultural elements in events and public art

Cultural awareness training and experiences

Indigenous-led creative workshops

## Creative Learning & Participation

### Strengths and opportunities

Opportunities to build connections with educational institutions like Kiama High School were mentioned, indicating the potential to foster younger talent through educational partnerships and collaborative programs.

The Old Fire Station and Kiama/Gerringong libraries are critical venues where artists can exhibit, conduct workshops, and engage the broader community. These venues provide hands-on, creative learning opportunities for both artists and the public.

Regular arts events, festivals, and exhibitions (e.g., Winter Fest, KISS Arts Festival, Jazz & Blues Festival) contribute to the ongoing education of the community by exposing them to diverse artistic forms. This diversity is seen as an important factor in keeping the community engaged and fostering continuous creative learning.

Community members value opportunities for workshops and educational events. Libraries are seen as 'cultural hubs and highlighted as excellent spaces for creative learning and participation.

There is a strong appreciation for Kiama's diverse range of artistic events, including visual arts exhibitions, live music, festivals, and creative workshops. These events allow for widespread community participation, bringing people together to celebrate and engage in creative activities.

The festivals and live performances create a vibrant cultural atmosphere for active participation and spectator enjoyment. Community members also value interacting with like-minded individuals, strengthening social bonds through shared creative experiences.

The council is seen as a driver for expanding arts education, fostering new talent, and providing platforms for lifelong learning through various arts programs.

### Weaknesses and Threats

The community vision for creative learning appears fragmented, with some respondents expressing concerns that the historical foundations for arts and culture are "dissolving" rather than progressing. This suggests a clearer and more cohesive strategy is needed to promote continuous creative education.

Respondents highlight gaps in creative learning and professional development, particularly for local artists and creatives looking to grow their businesses. There is a perceived lack of support for creative business growth and limited resources for artists to learn how to run small creative enterprises effectively.

The lack of workshop spaces limits the ability of artists to engage in meaningful creative learning. Public exhibition spaces are also highly competitive, further restricting artists' opportunities to develop and showcase their work.

Some feedback suggests the need for better communication to ensure all residents, especially newcomers, can easily access information about events and opportunities to participate.

Limited spaces for exhibitions and performances are a recurring issue, with many respondents feeling that there are too few venues to showcase the work of local and visiting artists. The demand for venues like the Old Fire Station is high, creating competition among artists, which can limit creative participation.

Restrictions on trading hours for arts and performance venues, along with the lack of a night economy, reduce the opportunities for creative participation in the community. This is especially

problematic for musicians, who feel there are limited venues to perform original work and that the local music scene could benefit from more accessible live music spaces.

The lack of sufficient marketing and publicity for existing spaces like GLAM gallery also reduces the visibility of creative opportunities, meaning some venues are underutilised due to low awareness.

**BIG Ideas...**

Offering workshops for various age groups and skill levels, including innovative art techniques.

Providing professional development for artists through mentorship and professional development programs.

Encouraging schools to implement quality arts programs and connect with local artists for collaborative project

Facilitating inter-generational programs to foster connection among younger and older residents.

Art therapy workshops for mental health

Cultural cooking and language classes

Libraries to host creative workshops that are inclusive and affordable

Workshops or “masterclasses” with local artisans

## **Creative Opportunities & Partnerships**

### **Strengths and opportunities**

There is a strong sense of partnership within the local creative community. For example, the Old Fire Station is seen as vital in supporting the visual arts in Kiama, while live music venues play a key role in sustaining the vibrancy of the local scene. These partnerships between creative venues and artists help build a collaborative environment.

Council is recognised for actively supporting the arts, with community members noting the importance of expanding creative opportunities for locals and visitors. Some see this as a strength that could be further developed with the Council acting as a facilitator or “conduit” for more partnerships and initiatives.

Festivals and venues are seen as key to fostering community spirit, and there is acknowledgment of the Council's efforts to promote creativity. However, there is a desire for more locally-focused events, rather than those solely catering to tourists.

Local artists have frequent opportunities to exhibit and sell their work, with the community being described as supportive of locally made products. Markets, galleries, and festivals provide platforms for creatives to generate income and exposure.

The Old Fire Station and GLAM gallery are viewed as key assets, offering affordable and accessible exhibition spaces for artists. These venues foster creative entrepreneurship by providing artists the ability to reach both local audiences and visitors.

Artists appreciate the networking opportunities within the community, with groups like the Kiama Art Society, Quilters, Knitters and Woodcarvers being highlighted as strong platforms for collaboration and shared learning. Community members noted the importance of these societies in bringing like-minded creatives together and fostering a sense of community among participants.

The absence of increased cultural grants or art funding is a major concern, as many artists feel that they do not receive adequate financial support from the local council or state government. This lack of funding limits their ability to grow their creative enterprises or pursue more ambitious projects.

Many respondents feel that the arts are undervalued compared to other sectors, such as engineering or science. Despite the clear social and financial benefits that the arts can bring to a community, there is a perception that the arts receive far less financial backing, which stifles growth and opportunities for local creatives.

### **Weaknesses and Threats**

Respondents feel that cultural activities do not receive the level of respect, money, and support they deserve, which is seen as a missed opportunity given the potential of the arts to benefit the community socially and economically. Without the necessary backing from governmental and local institutions, artists are left to struggle with insufficient resources.

Partnerships with the broader business community, especially in terms of utilising creative spaces and supporting local talent, are also limited. The closure of private galleries and the competition for space at venues like the Old Fire Station further restricts creative opportunities.

Some respondents also note a lack of networking and collaboration opportunities within the local arts community, which creates barriers to growth and mutual support. This points to a need for stronger connections between artists, venues, and the wider community to help foster creative partnerships.



The lack of opportunities for creative business growth is highlighted, with some respondents pointing out that the local community does not always see artistic work as viable or worthwhile. This perception limits the potential for local artists to establish successful creative enterprises.

Finally, bureaucracy and red tape are seen as significant barriers to creative industry development, with respondents noting the difficulty in navigating council processes and securing funding for events that have been held many times before. This administrative burden hinders progress and limits opportunities for creative professionals to flourish within the local industry.

**BIG Ideas...**

- Kiama Arts Trail
- Establishing connections with local businesses to support arts initiatives and events
- Residencies, grants, and exhibition opportunities to showcase their work.
- Creating a comprehensive calendar of arts events to encourage ongoing participation
- Art Fair/Art Expo
- Kite Festival
- Comedy nights/Open Mic
- Mural (*Kiama Wonderwalls*)
- Legal Graffiti wall
- Creative business and mentor initiative
- Networking events for creatives
- Artist led workshops within local primary schools and our high school

## Creative Infrastructure

### Strengths and opportunities

The Old Fire Station and Coach House (Kiama Art Society) is mentioned as a critical cultural hub for Kiama, providing accessible and affordable exhibition spaces for local artists. These spaces offer consistent opportunities for artists to display their work and for the community to engage with a wide variety of creative offerings.

The feedback highlights the importance of venues like GLAM, the Pavilion, and Filmore's as key infrastructure supporting the local arts scene. These spaces allow for performances, workshops, and exhibitions, creating a diverse ecosystem of artistic opportunities in the region.

Outdoor spaces are also utilised creatively, such as during festivals or through public street art, enhancing the town's physical infrastructure with vibrant cultural touchpoints.

Live music venues are seen as particularly important in fostering a thriving local music scene. Community members appreciate the consistency of these spaces, which help support local musicians and attract audiences. Additionally, newer initiatives, such as music events at venues like The Co-op in Gerringong, offer growing infrastructure for live performances.

Workshops and creative learning spaces (e.g., Seven Marks Gallery, Kiama Library Service, Sentral Youth Space) are noted as essential components of the infrastructure, providing places for the community to learn, create, and share their work with others. The development of these spaces is viewed as a positive step towards building more capacity for creativity in the region.

### Weaknesses and Threats

The limited number of exhibition spaces, especially those available to individual artists or smaller groups, is a major concern. Spaces like the Old Fire Station and GLAM gallery are heavily in demand, which has resulted in competition and frustration among local artists. The commodification of exhibition space by private enterprises has made it more difficult for community-driven arts initiatives to thrive.

There is a notable lack of medium-sized venues for performances, exhibitions, and other creative activities. While there are some spaces, they are often not large enough to accommodate certain events, limiting opportunities for larger, more ambitious creative projects.

Several respondents mention the lack of a dedicated Kiama Arts Centre as a significant gap in the infrastructure. Such a centre could serve as a hub for exhibitions, performances, workshops, and creative collaboration, providing much-needed space for artists to showcase their work and engage with the community.

Parking limitations and the lack of easily accessible venues are also cited as barriers to community engagement with the arts. This is especially true for events held in central Kiama, where parking is often limited, making it difficult for people to attend.

Additionally, the lack of a night economy, especially in relation to live music venues, is seen as an issue that hampers the vibrancy of Kiama's cultural landscape. The current infrastructure does not support a thriving nightlife, which would create more opportunities for both artists and audiences to participate in the creative economy.

The feedback reveals that the primary value for creatives is having *opportunities to showcase their work*, indicating this is a key priority, followed by artist talks and panel discussions.

**Big Ideas...**

Art on electrical boxes and bus shelters

Portable (temporary) art walls

Deliver the "Live & Local" music program

Support live gig and the 24 hour economy model

Utilise vacant commercial shop fronts as pop-up exhibition spaces

Utilise Jamberoo School of Arts as an arts and performance space

Review fees & changes of community halls to increase usage and opportunities for arts projects

Dual use of spaces (*art space by day, restaurant by night*)

Art in unexpected places/outside the box

Support from local cafes and restaurants for regular in-shop exhibitions

Partnerships with Transport for NSW for public art along the station platforms

## Recommendations

Kiama is seen as a vibrant, creative community with a wealth of events, venues, and opportunities for artists to thrive. Strengthening communication, building deeper partnerships, and expanding focus on both local and First Nations creatives could help to further enhance the already dynamic creative landscape.

The feedback highlights significant challenges related to infrastructure, funding, inclusiveness, and participation in the arts in Kiama. There are clear gaps in support from local and state government bodies, a lack of sufficient venues and spaces, and a need for better communication and networking within the creative community. Addressing these issues could help unlock greater potential for Kiama's cultural and creative landscape.

By focusing on the four pillars we can create a thriving arts ecosystem that celebrates diversity, fosters learning and supports creatives while making arts and culture accessible to all.

The following themes will be explored in further details within the Cultural plan:

Honouring Aboriginal culture and stories

Expanding access to creative learning and participation

Building partnerships to foster creative business growth

Developing inclusive, accessible venues for arts and culture

Arts as a tool for community connection and wellness

Promoting arts and cultural events to the wider community

## Appendices

### 1. Survey questions – “Let’s talk about Arts, Culture & Creativity

A copy of the survey questions can be downloaded [here](#)

### 2. Creative Focus Groups – Menti Results

A copy of the Focus Group questions and results can be downloaded [here](#)

# CREATIVE KIAMA Cultural Plan 2025-29

Arts and culture are fundamental in shaping our town and building a strong, connected community. We envision fostering a vibrant, impactful, and thriving arts environment that enhances the creative spirit of Kiama.

*Creative Kiama* establishes a foundation for maintaining, nurturing, and advancing creativity, the arts, and our rich cultural heritage. It offers a strategic framework that leverages arts and culture to achieve diverse outcomes throughout our local government area.

We aspire to create an atmosphere where creative and cultural life can flourish, ensuring that our families, friends, and visitors feel welcomed and included.

## Acknowledgement of Country

Kiama Municipal Council acknowledges the Wodi Wodi people on Dharawal country as the traditional custodians of the land on which our Municipality is located. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We are committed to honoring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to our community.

We also recognise the rich and vital contributions of First Nations artists. Their art forms—rooted in ancient traditions and evolving through contemporary expression—continue to shape the cultural landscape of Kiama, weaving a profound sense of place, identity, and connection.

Through the arts, we aim to amplify these voices, ensuring their stories are integral to our shared cultural future.

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## Our vision

We aim to nurture a vibrant, inclusive, and dynamic cultural ecosystem that celebrates diversity, creativity, and community engagement. We aim to prioritise First Nations stories and cultural expressions, ensuring that First Nations voices are integral to Kiama’s cultural landscape. Through collaboration and partnerships, we will foster opportunities for creative learning, participation, and professional growth for artists, while making arts and culture accessible to all.

By focusing on inclusiveness, creative infrastructure, and lifelong learning, we will create a sustainable arts environment where culture thrives, and all residents and visitors can connect, express, and engage creatively. Our vision extends to making Kiama a hub of artistic innovation and a welcoming space for diverse cultural narratives.

Kiama recognises the pivotal role of artists as key contributors to local economic growth and community cohesion. We are fortunate to be the home and workspace for many outstanding artists who have enriched our public spaces, making them more dynamic and lively, establishing Kiama’s reputation as a culturally vibrant destination.

In developing this strategy, we acknowledge the distinct value our creative communities bring to our town.

**Creative Kiama is designed to:** *(full page)*





## Our creative community

### Infographics

For 23/24 fy

<b>Population</b>	<b>23,002</b>
<b>Land area</b>	25,766ha
<b>Library members (total)</b>	<b>Total 12, 957</b>
<b>Library Loans</b>	<b>137, 286</b>
<b>How many visitors to Kiama</b> (March 23-March 24)	<b>1.1 million a year</b>
<b>Tourism Economy</b> (March 23-March 24 )	<b>\$330 million visitor spend</b>
<b>Community Halls</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Sentral Youth Space</b>	<b>Over 1,600 young people attend programs and activities</b>
<b>Kiama Leisure Centre</b>	<b>over 280,000 people visits in 2023-24</b>
<b>Visitor Information Centre</b>	<b>55,000 (on average 152 per day)</b>
<b>Library programs and events</b>	<b>Total 468</b>
<b>Pavilion events</b>	<b>Over 450 per year</b>
<b>Destination/signature events</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Old Fire Station visits 2</b>	<b>Over 37,000 visitors</b>
<b>Od Fire Station exhibitions</b>	<b>52 exhibitions</b>
<b>Old Fire Station sales</b>	<b>Over \$1 million sales</b>
<b>Public Art collection</b>	<b>25</b>

Permanent Art Collection	140
Museums	2?

## What is arts, culture and creativity?

### Arts

The arts encompass a wide range of human activities and expressions that reflect creativity, imagination, and skill. This includes visual arts (like painting, sculpture, and photography), performing arts (such as dance, theatre, and music), literary arts (including poetry, storytelling, and writing), and digital and multimedia arts. In Kiama, the arts are a powerful way for individuals and groups to express identity, heritage, ideas, and emotions, bringing people together in shared experiences and inspiring conversation.

### Culture

Culture is the collective fabric that binds our community together, encompassing traditions, values, beliefs, and practices that shape our identity. It is expressed through our shared history, local customs, festivals, languages, and rituals, as well as through the physical and symbolic spaces that we inhabit. In Kiama, culture is celebrated through our festivals, the stories we tell, our heritage sites, and the diversity of our community, with a special emphasis on acknowledging and respecting the rich traditions of First Nations peoples.

### Creativity

Creativity is the driving force behind innovation and artistic expression. It's the ability to think imaginatively, challenge norms, and explore new ideas. Creativity is not limited to the arts; it infuses every part of our lives, from problem-solving and design to community-building and storytelling. In Kiama, creativity is about fostering new ideas, supporting our artists and makers, and encouraging every individual to engage in creative exploration, whether through arts practices, community projects, or collaborative efforts.

These definitions will guide our efforts to build a vibrant and inclusive cultural landscape in Kiama, celebrating the unique stories, voices, and creative potential of our community.

*Our community told us creativity is...*

- "central to living and necessary to life".*
- "means traditions that define and reflect a community's identity and values"*
- "a lifeblood of a community, elements that can bring disparate people & perspectives together"*
- "relief from the mundane; feeding the soul"*
- "gives life meaning"*
- "offers enrichment of quality of life"*
- "life!"*
- "food for the mind"*
- "enrichment of quality of life"*
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- "At the very core of humanity and is essential for a fully rounded society"*
- "Good for the soul and mental health"*
- "Public art makes me look at things with fresh eyes and makes me proud of where I live"*

## How we engaged

This Cultural Plan has been co-designed by the passion, ideas and feedback received by the community as well as key internal Council staff and stakeholders.

### Engagement methods



### Creative Conversations

Talking to the community about what they value was an essential part of the process to develop *Creative Kiama*. Discussions with artists, community groups, businesses and cultural experts informed the content and focus of this plan. Our conversations were open and diverse but also included the following areas of focus: spaces and infrastructure; funding, support and advocacy; participation and connectedness; professional development for artists and creating learning.

The feedback highlighted significant challenges relating to creative infrastructure such as the need for regional gallery in Kiama and an “arts precinct”. There are clear gaps in financial support and funding for creatives to thrive and grow as a professional artist and there is a greater need for artists to connect and network with each other and peak arts bodies. There is opportunity to expand our offerings in creative learning workshops and activities through the library service and advocate for nighttime economy and the live music industry to support music and performing arts.

### What we heard from you

Throughout our engagement campaign the following were consistent themes:

- We want to engage with our rich history and Aboriginal culture*
- We want to learn and collaborate to thrive artistic excellence*
- We want the importance and benefits of creativity to be recognised*
- We want more spaces and places to showcase, exhibit and learn*
- Our creativity is often inspired by our natural landscape and seaside scenery*
- We want Council to support the cultural and creative sector and invest more in the arts*
- We want opportunities to network and connect with like-minded creatives*
- We want more support and professional development for creative start-ups and businesses*
- We want more art in the public realm*
- We want inclusion of culturally diverse people*
- We want more focus on supporting local individuals and businesses*

### Strategic alignment

We recognise the importance of influencing and contributing to the development and implementation of key Council policies and strategies. By aligning our efforts with these plans, we can showcase our dedication to leveraging arts and cultural outcomes to achieve broader Council and stakeholder objectives across diverse areas beyond the arts. This integrated approach ensures that our cultural initiatives not only enrich the community but also will support and enhance the wider goals of Council.

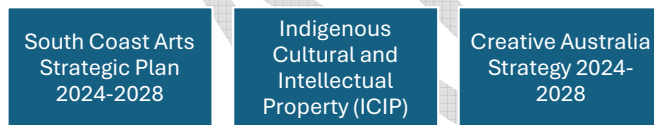
**Strategic documents:**



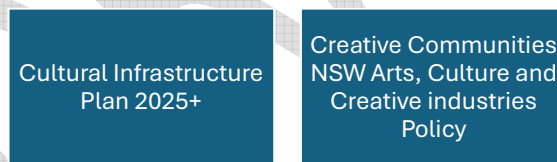
**Strategic documents for review**



**Guiding documents**



**State policy**



*Our way forward is to ensure that the Cultural Plan links to the objectives and where relevant, the actions, outlined in the above documents to ensure a consistent approach to planning for community.*

## Our Cultural Plan - background

Creative Kiama is a roadmap to supporting and celebrating arts, culture and creativity in everyday lives. It's a vision for where we want to be, and a framework for how to achieve a more creative and resilient Kiama. Importantly, *Creative Kiama* has been shaped by the stories and aspirations of the community.

### The role of Council

Kiama Council fulfils many different roles to support community participation in arts and culture and to achieve the outcomes through the delivery of this plan. The role of Council may fit into one of the following:



## Our way forward

### Our priorities for arts & culture across Kiama



#### **Community Quotes:**

*Opportunity to consume performing arts past afternoon teatime.*

*Ability to connect authentically with the Aboriginal community*

*Limited exhibition space & capacity to experience live performances.*

*Limited support for creative business growth*

*Kiama needs a regional Art Gallery*

*Live music precinct, thriving after hours creative scene.*

*Gerringong & Jamberoo do not get much of the spotlight. I'd like to see more events outside of the main street of Kiama.*

*Kiama is very rich creatively, we have a community of talented visual & performing artists. This resource is under-utilised & is an asset that should be capitalised on.*

*There's a lot on offer, but not for people who have accessibility or inclusion challenges. We can do better on this*

*We need more venues to enable artists to exhibit and showcase their work. Involving primary and secondary school age students where ever possible.*

DRAFT



## Creative Kiama

Our starting point for this strategy is to build upon the solid foundation that already exists within our creative community. Rather than starting from scratch, we aim to harness and enhance the resources, talents, and creative energy that are already in place. By leveraging our town's established strengths—its vibrant cultural venues, passionate local artists, engaged community groups, and creative spaces—we can achieve our vision for a dynamic and flourishing arts and cultural landscape. This approach allows us to make the most of what we have, while strategically identifying opportunities for growth and development.

**We recognise that our current resources—whether human, financial, or physical—are limited, but we believe this won't hold us back. With creativity, collaboration, and a strategic approach, we are confident that we can achieve remarkable outcomes and make a significant impact!**

The foundation of this Implementation Plan centres on our four strategic pillars, each aligned with the broader values of our organisation and community. These pillars are designed to guide decision-making, supporting arts and cultural development throughout the Kiama municipality.

### Pillar 1: First Nations First

**Celebrate and honour Aboriginal stories, culture and our region's rich heritage**

#### What we heard:

- Greater emphasis on First Nations culture, which is currently underrepresented in Kiama's arts landscape
- To better integrate Aboriginal stories, artists, and cultural expressions into local events, exhibitions, and public spaces.
- Kiama's arts scene lacks cultural diversity and is perceived as predominantly "white." This underscores the importance of inclusive practices that celebrate and support First Nations voices.
- More Aboriginal art in public spaces, such as murals and installations, to enhance representation and impact.
- Engage more deeply with local Aboriginal communities to enrich Kiama's cultural offerings and ensure a more diverse and inclusive arts environment.

#### What does success look like:

- Public spaces and events feature impactful Aboriginal artworks and diverse cultural perspectives
- First Nations artists feel respected and supported, with their work preserved according to best practices
- Alignment with the Reconciliation Action Plan; cultural branding, and recognition of spaces like the library as hubs for cultural exchange

#### Implementation Plan

Strategies	Actions	Council's role
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<b>First Nations inclusion and engagement</b>	Partner with local Aboriginal artists to deliver workshops, exhibitions, and public art projects, ensuring that their stories are highlighted in a respectful and authentic way.	Partner Advocate
	Deliver the annual NAIDOC Week Art Exhibition.	Host Partner
	Align to ICIP (Indigenous Copyright & Intellectual Property) protocols to ensure best practice for commissioning art and design from First Nations artists.	Advocate Advisor
	Alignment with the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to ensure meaningful and measurable progress	Advocate Advisor
<b>Public Art representation</b>	Actively seek funding opportunities for the commissioning of public artworks from local First Nations artists.	Host Advocate
<b>Cultural programming and education</b>	Expand public library programs to include cultural programs to raise awareness about the significance of First Nations culture, arts and storytelling.	Host Advocate
<b>Marketing and promotion</b>	Implement a creative wayfinding project to offer enriched information, education and acknowledgement.	Host Advisor
	Implement a Branding Project across Council for design integration across marketing collateral.	Host Advisor

**Pillar 2: Creative Learning and Participation**

**Provide greater access to creative learning, professional development for artists and support for small creative industries.**

**What we heard:**

- Venues like the Old Fire Station and Kiama/Gerringong libraries are highly valued as hubs for creative learning and public engagement, offering spaces for exhibitions and workshops.
- Kiama's diverse arts events, such as the Winter Street Festival, Kiama Jazz & Blues Festival and KISS Arts Festival, play a significant role in cultural education, social connection, and fostering a vibrant community atmosphere.
- The need for a clearer and more inclusive strategy to ensure ongoing support for creative learning and participation, with a focus on improving infrastructure, communication, and opportunities for both emerging and established artists.

**What does success look like:**

- Young people are inspired and integrated into the creative community
- Libraries serve as a vibrant hub of creative activity, offering workshops and creative learning programs that enhance community well-being and social connection.
- Local artists and creative businesses gain practical skills and networking opportunities, leading to better business outcomes
- A vibrant arts community supports a diverse range of cultural events, an expanded nighttime economy, and a flourishing local music scene

**Implementation Plan:**

Strategies	Actions	What does success look like
<b>Creative Learning</b>	Foster and maintain partnerships with the local education providers to initiate mentorship opportunities; artist demonstrations and other school based creative projects to foster young talent.	Conduit Partner
	Contribute to the libraries school holiday program to increase creative activities to children and young people.	Host
	Deliver well-being art programs to enhance community resilience and social connectedness.	Host
<b>Maximise use of cultural hubs</b>	Explore additional street signage for improved visibility and publicity of events/ exhibitions particularly at the GLAM Gallery	Advocate
	Ongoing creative programming that actively includes targeted groups,	Host Partner

	such as DisAbility and NDIS participants, fostering inclusivity and vibrant social connections across the community.	
	Libraries are fully activated and serve as central cultural hubs for creative learning and engagement.	Host Advocate
<b>Professional Development</b>	Professional development workshops covering skills like marketing, grant writing, business planning and digital tools.	Host Advisor
	Provide targeted support for local artists and creative businesses to grow and thrive such regular artist networking events.	Conduit Advocate Advisor
<b>Support a vibrant Night Economy</b>	Explore partnerships with local businesses to host after-hours events such as micro music festivals and offer new opportunities for artists.	Partner Advocate
	Develop strategies to foster a night-time economy to particularly support the local music scene.	Conduit Advisor
<b>Funding and support</b>	Facilitate the Cultural Grants program to encourage cultural events and initiatives in Kiama.	Host
	Acknowledge the ongoing contributions of artists across our region by exploring ways to support them to continue to sustain their practice locally.	Conduit Advocate

### Pillar 3: Opportunities & Partnerships

**Provide more partnerships, collaborations and creative initiatives to fuel the creative economy**

**What we heard:**

- Council is seen to actively support the arts, with many appreciating its role in facilitating events and opportunities for local creatives.
- A desire for more locally focused events that cater to residents rather than tourists.
- Council could play an even stronger role as a "conduit" for fostering partnerships between artists, venues, and the broader community.
- Concerns about limited financial support for the arts. Creative projects do not receive adequate funding from local or state government, which limits their potential to grow and pursue more ambitious projects.
- A sense that the arts are undervalued compared to other sectors, which stifles opportunities for creative businesses to thrive.

**What does success look like?**

- Local artists, creative groups, businesses, and Council work together, resulting in a flourishing Kiama creative network
- A stronger sense of place and identity is built around local creative expression, with public art projects, exhibition opportunities and cultural experiences.
- Paid opportunities for local artists, the celebrated Arts Honour Roll, and expanded creative programming inspire future talent and more value on the arts

**Implementation Plan**

Strategies	Actions	Council's role
<b>Strengthen local creative partnerships</b>	Actively promote the Creative South and WEAVE Artist Directory as a digital platform where creatives can profile themselves, share resources and find collaborators.	Conduit Advisor
	Facilitate and promote group exhibitions with open calls to artists at the GLAM gallery, encouraging diverse participation around specific themes that reflect local culture.	Host
	Increase support for initiatives which are advised and led by local creatives.	Advocate Advisor
<b>Strengthen internal partnerships</b>	Collaborate with internal divisions of Council including Community Development, Economic Development, Environment, Property, Youth and Library teams to foster more creative initiatives.	Partner Advisor
	Scope development of a combined Arts, Culture and Libraries Strategy for 2030+	Partner Advisor
<b>Strengthen regional partnerships</b>	Mutually beneficial partnerships formed with	Partner

	neighbouring councils and the cultural development teams; and our RADO Regional Arts Development Organisation (RADO).	
<b>External Funding</b>	Activity seek external funding to support more creative initiatives and provide paid opportunities for artists.	Advocate
<b>Creative spaces</b>	Investigate models like Renew Australia to implement shop-front activation programs for creative businesses.	Advocate
	Seek funding opportunities to invest in upgrades to existing venues to improve functionality such as lighting, display equipment and technology.	Advocate
	Facilitate the annual Arts Honour Roll to highlight the achievements of a local artist to foster a sense of local identity and pride.	Host
	Ongoing coordination of the Old Fire Sation exhibition program.	Host
<b>Creative economy</b>	Seek opportunities to engage artists for the commissioning of public art, designs for integration into capital works projects and art tuition for public workshops.	Advocate Advisor
	Work with local businesses to create opportunities for sponsorships, artist residencies, and collaborative projects. Encourage local businesses to showcase local art in their establishments, integrating creativity into everyday spaces.	Partner Advocate
	Scope potential partnership with TfNSW (Sydney Trains) for the development of public art along station platforms.	Partner Advocate
<b>Promotion of Arts and Culture</b>	Showcase artists and creative businesses on Councils social media and e-news platforms. Populate and update the Arts and Culture	Conduit Advocate

	webpage with offerings and artist opportunities.	
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## Pillar 4: Creative infrastructure

Expand spaces and venues for exhibitions, performances, and artistic participation, ensuring more opportunities for engagement in arts and culture.

### What we heard:

- Kiama's creative infrastructure is anchored by key cultural hubs like the Old Fire Station and the Coach House, providing accessible exhibition and learning spaces for local artists.
- The GLAM Gallery, the Pavilion, Seven Marks Gallery and Filmore's, play crucial roles in hosting diverse artistic events, while outdoor spaces and live music venues contribute to a vibrant arts scene.
- Limited exhibition spaces and limited opportunities, high competition for venues such as the Old Fire Station, and a lack of medium-sized and accessible locations, restricting larger projects and events.
- The absence of a dedicated Arts Centre, Regional Gallery and a thriving night economy are additional barriers.

### What does success look like?

- New and innovative exhibition spaces, themed exhibitions and unexpected public art installations showcase opportunities for artist and foster community engagement.
- Artist talks, panel discussions, workshops, and booked exhibition schedules reflect a strong commitment to cultural activities.
- Kiama's reputation as a lively, inclusive cultural destination is strengthened, as seen through live music and late-night cultural activities.

### Implementation Plan

Strategies	Actions	Council's role
Innovative creative venues	Partner with local businesses and organisations to create temporary or pop-up gallery spaces for individual artists and small groups.	Partner Advocate
	Gain support from local cafes and restaurants for regular in-shop exhibitions.	Conduit Partner
	Increase accessibility and usage of community halls by reviewing fees and charges, encouraging more	Advocate

	artist use and alleviating demand on popular venues like the Old Fire Station.	
	Expand the curatorial theme “art in unseen spaces” to integrate art into bus shelters, bin shelters and electrical boxes; and implement innovative and creative ways to showcase art.	Host
<b>Community Engagement</b>	Increase opportunities for artist talks, panel discussions, and interactive workshops that engage both local creatives and the community.	Host Partner
	Organise themed exhibitions at the GLAM gallery, open to all local artists. These group shows will foster inclusivity and provide consistent opportunities for emerging and established artists to showcase their work.	Host Partner
<b>Cultural Assets</b>	Create a visible and public online database of our public art and permanent art collection.	Host
	Ensure our Public Art and Permanent Art Collection policies and guidelines are reviewed and updated for a managed approach to the care and development of Council’s art collection.	Host
	Support more public street art, murals, and outdoor festivals that contribute to Kiama’s unique identity.	Partner Advocate
	Ensure the Old Fire Station, GLAM Gallery and Art in Chambers exhibition spaces are well-maintained.	Advocate
	Promote the Jamberoo School of Arts as a dynamic performance and arts space.	Advocate Advisor
<b>Promote a Thriving Night Economy</b>	Advocate for more evening performances, late-night cultural events, and creative markets. Seek inspiration/funding from the	Partner Advocate



	Live Music Office/Live and Local.	
	Scope the development of a permanent outdoor projection gallery	Advocate

### What can you do?

The more our community gets behind *Creative Kiama 2025-2029*, the greater our shared success will be. We invite you to engage, participate, and contribute in any way you can. Let's come together to cultivate creativity, Kiama!



# Creative Kiama Cultural Plan 2025-29



KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL  
your council. your community

Item 15.1

Attachment 5

# Creative Kiama Cultural Plan 2025-29

Item 15.1

Attachment 5



KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL  
your council. your community

## Contents

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- 03\_ Our vision
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  - Our Top Priorities for arts & culture across Kiama Creative Kiama
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CULTURAL PLAN 2025-29

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Arts and culture are fundamental in shaping our town and building a strong, connected community. We envision fostering a vibrant, impactful, and thriving arts environment that enhances the creative spirit of Kiama.

Creative Kiama establishes a foundation for maintaining, nurturing, and advancing creativity, the arts, and our rich cultural heritage. It offers a strategic framework that leverages arts and culture to achieve diverse outcomes throughout our local government area.

We aspire to create an atmosphere where creative and cultural life can flourish, ensuring that our families, friends, and visitors feel welcomed and included.

### Acknowledgement of Country

Kiama Municipal Council acknowledges the Wodi Wodi people on Dharawal country as the traditional custodians of the land on which our Municipality is located. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We are committed to honoring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to our community.

We also recognise the rich and vital contributions of First Nations artists. Their art forms—rooted in ancient traditions and evolving through contemporary expression—continue to shape the cultural landscape of Kiama, weaving a profound sense of place, identity, and connection. Through the arts, we aim to amplify these voices, ensuring their stories are integral to our shared cultural future.

CREATIVE KIAMA

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# Our vision

We aim to nurture a vibrant, inclusive, and dynamic cultural ecosystem that celebrates diversity, creativity, and community engagement. We aim to prioritise First Nations stories and cultural expressions, ensuring that First Nations voices are integral to Kiama's cultural landscape. Through collaboration and partnerships, we will foster opportunities for creative learning, participation, and professional growth for artists, while making arts and culture accessible to all.

By focusing on inclusiveness, creative infrastructure, and lifelong learning, we will create a sustainable arts environment where culture thrives, and all residents and visitors can connect, express, and engage creatively. Our vision extends to making Kiama a hub of artistic innovation and a welcoming space for diverse cultural narratives.

Kiama recognises the pivotal role of artists as key contributors to local economic growth and community cohesion. We are fortunate to be the home and workspace for many outstanding artists who have enriched our public spaces, making them more dynamic and lively, establishing Kiama's reputation as a culturally vibrant destination.

In developing this strategy, we acknowledge the distinct value our creative communities bring to our town.



“Public art makes me  
look at things with fresh  
eyes and makes me  
proud of where I live”

CREATIVE KIAMA

# Our Creative Community

All details 23/24 fy

CREATIVE KIAMA

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Population  
**23,002**

Land area  
**25,766ha**

Kiama Leisure Centre  
**280,000+ visits**



**468 total**  
Library programs  
& events

**Over 450**  
Pavillion events  
per year

**27**  
Destination  
events



CULTURAL PLAN 2025-29

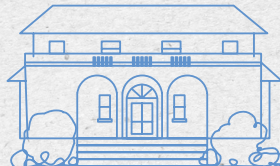


Old Fire Station  
**37,000+ visitors**  
**52 exhibitions**  
**Over \$1 million**  
in sales



Visitor Information Centre  
**55,000 visits**  
Average of 152 per day

**7**  
Community  
Halls



Sentral Youth Space programs and activities  
**1,600+ attendees**



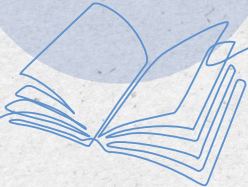
**2**  
Museums

Public Art Collection  
**25**

Permanent Art Collection  
**140**



**137,286**  
Library loans

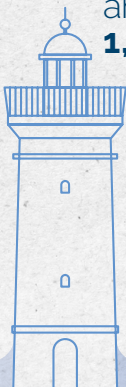
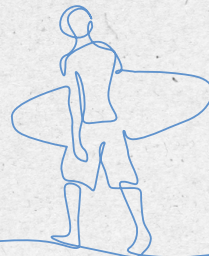


Tourism Economy  
**\$330 million**  
visitor spend

March 23 - March 24

Visitors to Kiama  
**1.1 million/year**

March 23 - March 24



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## Creativity

Creativity is the driving force behind innovation and artistic expression. It's the ability to think imaginatively, challenge norms, and explore new ideas. Creativity is not limited to the arts; it infuses every part of our lives, from problem-solving and design to community-building and storytelling. In Kiama, creativity is about fostering new ideas, supporting our artists and makers, and encouraging every individual to engage in creative exploration, whether through arts practices, community projects, or collaborative efforts.

These definitions will guide our efforts to build a vibrant and inclusive cultural landscape in Kiama, celebrating the unique stories, voices, and creative potential of our community.

## Arts

The arts encompass a wide range of human activities and expressions that reflect creativity, imagination, and skill. This includes visual arts (like painting, sculpture, and photography), performing arts (such as dance, theatre, and music), literary arts (including poetry, storytelling, and writing), and digital and multimedia arts. In Kiama, the arts are a powerful way for individuals and groups to express identity, heritage, ideas, and emotions, bringing people together in shared experiences and inspiring conversation.

## Culture

The arts encompass a wide range of human activities and expressions that reflect creativity, imagination, and skill. This includes visual arts (like painting, sculpture, and photography), performing arts (such as dance, theatre, and music), literary arts (including poetry, storytelling, and writing), and digital and multimedia arts. In Kiama, the arts are a powerful way for individuals and groups to express identity, heritage, ideas, and emotions, bringing people together in shared experiences and inspiring conversation.

### Our community told us creativity is:

- "central to living and necessary to life"
- "means traditions that define and reflect a community's identity and values"
- "a lifeblood of a community, elements that can bring disparate people & perspectives together"
- "relief from the mundane; feeding the soul"
- "gives life meaning"
- "offers enrichment of quality of life"
- "life!"
- "food for the mind"

- "enrichment of quality of life"
- "Freedom of spirit and mind, joining art in creativity"
- "An opportunity to engage in life merely beyond surviving, the process of living & thriving"
- "At the very core of humanity and is essential for a fully rounded society"
- "Good for the soul and mental health"
- "Public art makes me look at things with fresh eyes and makes me proud of where I live"

# What is Arts and Culture



"Creativity is central to living and necessary to life"



# How we engaged

This Cultural Plan has been co-designed by the passion, ideas and feedback received by the community as well as key internal Council staff and stakeholders.

## Engagement methods

- Focus Group
- Online Survey
- Interview
- Community Pop-Up
- Flyers & Posters
- Social media
- Dotmocracy and Big Ideas board

## Creative Conversations

Talking to the community about what they value was an essential part of the process to develop Creative Kiama. Discussions with artists, community groups, businesses and cultural experts informed the content and focus of this plan. Our conversations were open and diverse but also included the following areas of focus: spaces and infrastructure; funding, support and advocacy; participation and connectedness; professional development for artists and creating learning.

The feedback highlighted significant challenges relating to creative infrastructure such as the need for regional gallery in Kiama and an "arts precinct". There are clear gaps in financial support and funding for creatives to thrive and grow as a professional artist and there is a greater need for artists to connect and network with each other and peak arts bodies. There is opportunity to expand our offerings in creative learning workshops and activities through the library service and advocate for nighttime economy and the live music industry to support music and performing arts.



## What we heard from you

Throughout our engagement campaign the following were consistent themes:

- We want to engage with our rich history and Aboriginal culture
- We want to learn and collaborate to thrive artistic excellence
- We want the importance and benefits of creativity to be recognised
- We want more spaces and places to showcase, exhibit and learn
- Our creativity is often inspired by our natural landscape and seaside scenery
- We want Council to support

- the cultural and creative sector and invest more in the arts
- We want opportunities to network and connect with like-minded creatives
- We want more support and professional development for creative start-ups and businesses
- We want more art in the public realm
- We want inclusion of culturally diverse people
- We want more focus on supporting local individuals and businesses

Image credit: Drummer Boy Pictures, courtesy of South Coast Arts

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CULTURAL PLAN 2025-29



# Strategic alignment

We recognise the importance of influencing and contributing to the development and implementation of key Council policies and strategies. By aligning our efforts with these plans, we can showcase our dedication to leveraging arts and cultural outcomes to achieve broader Council and stakeholder objectives across diverse areas beyond the arts. This integrated approach ensures that our cultural initiatives not only enrich the community but also support and enhance the wider goals of Council.

## Strategic documents:

- Community Strategic Plan (2022-2032)
- Tourism and Events Strategic Plan 2022-2026
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023-2027

## Strategic documents for review

- Library Strategic Plan
- Development Control Plan
- Land Environment Plan
- Community Development Strategy
- Economic development Strategy
- Reconciliation Action Plan

## Guiding documents

- South Coast Arts Strategic Plan 2024-2028
- Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)
- Creative Australia Strategy 2024-2028

## State policy

- Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+
- Creative Communities NSW Arts, Culture and Creative industries Policy

Our way forward is to ensure that the Cultural Plan links to the objectives and where relevant, the actions, outlined in the above documents to ensure a consistent approach to planning for community.

# Our cultural plan

CREATIVE KIAMA

Creative Kiama is a roadmap to supporting and celebrating arts, culture and creativity in everyday lives. It's a vision for where we want to be, and a framework for how to achieve a more creative and resilient Kiama. Importantly, Creative Kiama has been shaped by the stories and aspirations of the community.



CULTURAL PLAN 2025-29



## The role of Council

Kiama Council fulfils many different roles to support community participation in arts and culture and to achieve the outcomes through the delivery of this plan. The role of Council may fit into one of the following:



### Host

Provide arts and cultural activity and learning opportunities



### Conduit

Collaborate and work with creatives and community groups to reach greater goals together.



### Partner

Build networks among creatives and organisations to achieve collaborative impact



### Advocate

Champion and celebrate arts and cultural achievements.



### Advisor

Support, share and link artists and creatives, advise on policy alignment to internal stakeholders.

# Our way forward

Our priorities for arts & culture across Kiama

1

Celebrate and honour Aboriginal stories, culture and our region's rich heritage

2

Provide greater access to creative learning opportunities; professional development for artists and support for small creative industries

3

Provide more partnerships, collaborations and creative initiatives to fuel the creative economy

4

Provide innovative spaces and venues for exhibitions, performances and artistic participation, ensuring more opportunities for arts engagement



## Community Quotes:

*"Opportunity to consume performing arts past afternoon teatime."*

*"Ability to connect authentically with the Aboriginal community"*

*"Limited exhibition space & capacity to experience live performances."*

*"Limited support for creative business growth"*

*"Kiama needs a regional Art Gallery"*

*"Live music precinct, thriving after hours creative scene."*

*"Gerringong & Jamberoo do not get much of the spotlight. I'd like to see more events outside of the main street of Kiama."*

*"Kiama is very rich creatively, we have a community of talented visual & performing artists. This resource is under-utilised & is an asset that should be capitalised on."*

*"There's a lot on offer, but not for people who have accessibility or inclusion challenges. We can do better on this."*

*"We need more venues to enable artists to exhibit and showcase their work. Involving primary and secondary school age students where ever possible."*

## Creative Kiama

Our starting point for this strategy is to build upon the solid foundation that already exists within our creative community. Rather than starting from scratch, we aim to harness and enhance the resources, talents, and creative energy that are already in place. By leveraging our town's established strengths—its vibrant cultural venues, passionate local artists, engaged community groups, and creative spaces—we can achieve our vision for a dynamic and flourishing arts and cultural landscape. This approach allows us to make the most of what we have, while strategically identifying opportunities for growth and development.

We recognise that our current resources—whether human, financial, or physical—are limited, but we believe this won't hold us back. With creativity, collaboration, and a strategic approach, we are confident that we can achieve remarkable outcomes and make a significant impact!

The foundation of this Implementation Plan centres on our four strategic pillars, each aligned with the broader values of our organisation and community. These pillars are designed to guide decision-making, supporting arts and cultural development throughout the Kiama municipality.



# Pillar 1: First Nations First

Celebrate and honour Aboriginal stories, culture and our region's rich heritage

## What we heard:

- Greater emphasis on First Nations culture, which is currently underrepresented in Kiama's arts landscape
- To better integrate Aboriginal stories, artists, and cultural expressions into local events, exhibitions, and public spaces.
- Kiama's arts scene lacks cultural diversity and is perceived as predominantly "white." This underscores the importance of inclusive practices that celebrate and support First Nations voices.
- More Aboriginal art in public spaces, such as murals and installations, to enhance representation and impact.
- Engage more deeply with local Aboriginal communities to enrich Kiama's cultural offerings and ensure a more diverse and inclusive arts environment.



CREATIVE KIAMA

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22 Image credit: Peter Izzard Photography

## What does success look like:

- Public spaces and events feature impactful Aboriginal artworks and diverse cultural perspectives
- First Nations artists feel respected and supported, with their work preserved according to best practices
- Alignment with the Reconciliation Action Plan; cultural branding, and recognition of spaces like the library as hubs for cultural exchange



## Implementation Plan

To achieve this we will implement the following tactics:

Strategies	Actions	Council's role
<b>First Nations inclusion and engagement</b>	Partner with local Aboriginal artists to deliver workshops, exhibitions, and public art projects, ensuring that their stories are highlighted in a respectful and authentic way.	Partner Advocate
	Deliver the annual NAIDOC Week Art Exhibition.	Host Partner
	Align to ICIP (Indigenous Copyright & Intellectual Property) protocols to ensure best practice for commissioning art and design from First Nations artists.	Advocate Advisor
	Alignment with the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to ensure meaningful and measurable progress	Advocate Advisor
<b>Public Art representation</b>	Actively seek funding opportunities for the commissioning of public artworks from local First Nations artists.	Host Advocate
<b>Cultural programming and education</b>	Expand public library programs to include cultural programs to raise awareness about the significance of First Nations culture, arts and storytelling.	Host Advocate
<b>Marketing and promotion</b>	Implement a creative wayfinding project to offer enriched information, education and acknowledgement.	Host Advisor
	Implement a Branding Project across Council for design integration across marketing collateral.	Host Advisor

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## Implementation Plan

To achieve this we will implement the following tactics:

Strategies	Actions	Council's role
<b>Creative Learning</b>	Foster and maintain partnerships with local education providers to initiate mentorship opportunities; artist demonstrations and other school based creative projects to foster young talent.	Conduit Partner
	Contribute to the libraries school holiday program to increase creative activities to children and young people.	Host
	Deliver well-being art programs to develop community resilience and social connectedness.	Host
<b>Maximise use of cultural hubs</b>	Explore additional street signage for improved visibility and publicity of events/ exhibitions particularly at the GLAM Gallery	Advocate
	Ongoing creative programming that actively includes targeted groups, such as DisAbility and NDIS participants, fostering inclusivity and vibrant social connections across the community.	Host Partner
	Libraries are fully activated and serve as central cultural hubs for creative learning and engagement.	Host Advocate
<b>Professional Development</b>	Professional development workshops covering skills like marketing, grant writing, business planning and digital tools.	Host Advisor
	Provide targeted support for local artists and creative businesses to grow and thrive such regular artist networking events.	Conduit Advocate Advisor
<b>Support a vibrant Night Economy</b>	Explore partnerships with local businesses to host after-hours events such as micro music festivals and offer new opportunities for artists.	Partner Advocate
	Develop strategies to foster a night-time economy to particularly support the local music scene.	Conduit Advisor
<b>Funding and support</b>	Facilitate the Cultural Grants program to encourage cultural events and initiatives in Kiama.	Host
	Acknowledge the ongoing contributions of artists across our region by exploring ways to support them to continue to sustain their practice locally.	Conduit Advocate

# Pillar 2: Creative Learning and Participation

Provide greater access to creative learning, professional development for artists and support for small creative industries.

## What we heard:

- Venues like the Old Fire Station and Kiama/ Gerringong libraries are highly valued as hubs for creative learning and public engagement, offering spaces for exhibitions and workshops.
- Kiama's diverse arts events, such as the Winter Street Festival, Kiama Jazz & Blues Festival and KISS Arts Festival, play a significant role in cultural education, social connection, and fostering a vibrant community atmosphere.
- The need for a clearer and more inclusive strategy to ensure ongoing support for creative learning and participation, with a focus on improving infrastructure, communication, and opportunities for both emerging and established artists.

## What does success look like:

- Young people are inspired and integrated into the creative community
- Libraries serve as a vibrant hub of creative activity, offering workshops and creative learning programs that enhance community well-being and social connection.
- Local artists and creative businesses gain practical skills and networking opportunities, leading to better business outcomes
- A vibrant arts community supports a diverse range of cultural events, an expanded nighttime economy, and a flourishing local music scene



# Pillar 3: Opportunities and Partnerships

Provide more partnerships, collaborations and creative initiatives to fuel the creative economy.



## What we heard:

- Council is seen to actively support the arts, with many appreciating its role in facilitating events and opportunities for local creatives.
- A desire for more locally focused events that cater to residents rather than tourists.
- Council could play an even stronger role as a "conduit" for fostering partnerships between artists, venues, and the broader community.
- Concerns about limited financial support for the arts. Creative projects do not receive adequate funding from local or state government, which limits their potential to grow and pursue more ambitious projects.
- A sense that the arts are undervalued compared to other sectors, which stifles opportunities for creative businesses to thrive.

## What does success look like:

- Local artists, creative groups, businesses, and Council work together, resulting in a flourishing Kiama creative network
- A stronger sense of place and identity is built around local creative expression, with public art projects, exhibition opportunities and cultural experiences.
- Paid opportunities for local artists, the celebrated Arts Honour Roll, and expanded creative programming inspire future talent and more value on the arts



## Implementation Plan

To achieve this we will implement the following tactics:

Strategies	Actions	Council's role
<b>Strengthen local creative partnerships</b>	Actively promote the Creative South and WEAVE Artist Directory as a digital platform where creatives can profile themselves, share resources and find collaborators.	Conduit Advisor
	Facilitate and promote group exhibitions with open calls to artists at the GLAM gallery, encouraging diverse participation around specific themes that reflect local culture.	Host
	Increase support for initiatives which are advised and led by local creatives.	Advocate Advisor
<b>Strengthen internal partnerships</b>	Collaborate with internal divisions of Council including Community Development, Economic Development, Environment, Property, Youth and Library teams to foster more creative initiatives.	Partner Advisor
	Scope development of a combined Arts, Culture and Libraries Strategy for 2030+	Partner Advisor
<b>Strengthen regional partnerships</b>	Mutually beneficial partnerships formed with neighbouring councils and the cultural development teams; and our RADO Regional Arts Development Organisation (RADO).	Partner
<b>External Funding</b>	Activity seek external funding to support more creative initiatives and provide paid opportunities for artists.	Advocate

Strategies	Actions	Council's role
<b>Creative spaces</b>	Investigate models like Renew Australia to implement shop-front activation programs for creative businesses.	Advocate
	Seek funding opportunities to invest in upgrades to existing venues to improve functionality such as lighting, display equipment and technology.	Advocate
	Facilitate the annual Arts Honour Roll to highlight the achievements of a local artist to foster a sense of local identity and pride.	Host
	Ongoing coordination of the Old Fire Station exhibition program.	Host
<b>Creative economy</b>	Seek opportunities to engage artists for the commissioning of public art, designs for integration into capital works projects and art tuition for public workshops.	Advocate Advisor
	Work with local businesses to create opportunities for sponsorships, artist residencies, and collaborative projects. Encourage local businesses to showcase local art in their establishments, integrating creativity into everyday spaces.	Partner Advocate
	Scope potential partnership with TfNSW (Sydney Trains) for the development of public art along station platforms.	Partner Advocate
<b>Promotion of Arts and Culture</b>	Showcase artists and creative businesses on Council's social media and e-news platforms. Populate and update the Arts and Culture webpage with offerings and artist opportunities.	Conduit Advocate





## Implementation Plan

To achieve this we will implement the following tactics:

Strategies	Actions	Council's role
<b>Innovative creative venues</b>	Partner with local businesses and organisations to create temporary or pop-up gallery spaces for individual artists and small groups.	Partner Advocate
	Gain support from local cafes and restaurants for regular in-shop exhibitions.	Conduit Partner
	Increase accessibility and usage of community halls by reviewing fees and charges, encouraging more artist use and alleviating demand on popular venues like the Old Fire Station.	Advocate
	Expand the curatorial theme "art in unseen spaces" to integrate art into bus shelters, bin shelters and electrical boxes; and implement innovative and creative ways to showcase art.	Host
<b>Community Engagement</b>	Increase opportunities for artist talks, panel discussions, and interactive workshops that engage both local creatives and the community.	Host Partner
	Organise themed exhibitions at the GLAM gallery, open to all local artists. These group shows will foster inclusivity and provide consistent opportunities for emerging and established artists to showcase their work.	Host Partner
<b>Cultural Assets</b>	Create a visible and public online database of our public art and permanent art collection.	Host
	Ensure our Public Art and Permanent Art Collection policies and guidelines are reviewed and updated for a managed approach to the care and development of Council's art collection.	Host
	Support more public street art, murals, and outdoor festivals that contribute to Kiama's unique identity.	Partner Advocate
	Ensure the Old Fire Station, GLAM Gallery and Art in Chambers exhibition spaces are well-maintained.	Advocate
	Promote the Jamberoo School of Arts as a dynamic performance and arts space.	Advocate Advisor
<b>Promote a Thriving Night Economy</b>	Advocate for more evening performances, late-night cultural events, and creative markets. Seek inspiration/funding from the Live Music Office/Live and Local.	Partner Advocate
	Scope the development of a permanent outdoor projection gallery	Advocate

# Pillar 4: Creative infrastructure

Expand spaces and venues for exhibitions, performances, and artistic participation, ensuring more opportunities for engagement in arts and culture.

### What we heard:

- Kiama's creative infrastructure is anchored by key cultural hubs like the Old Fire Station and the Coach House, providing accessible exhibition and learning spaces for local artists.
- The GLAM Gallery, the Pavilion, Seven Marks Gallery and Filmore's, play crucial roles in hosting diverse artistic events, while outdoor spaces and live music venues contribute to a vibrant arts scene.
- Limited exhibition spaces and limited opportunities, high competition for venues such as the Old Fire Station, and a lack of medium-sized and accessible locations, restricting larger projects and events.
- The absence of a dedicated Arts Centre, Regional Gallery and a thriving night economy are additional barriers.

### What does success look like:

- New and innovative exhibition spaces, themed exhibitions and unexpected public art installations showcase opportunities for artist and foster community engagement.
- Artist talks, panel discussions, workshops, and booked exhibition schedules reflect a strong commitment to cultural activities.
- Kiama's reputation as a lively, inclusive cultural destination is strengthened, as seen through live music and late-night cultural activities.



CREATIVE KIAMA

# What can you do?

The more our community gets behind Creative Kiama 2025-2029, the greater our shared success will be. We invite you to engage, participate, and contribute in any way you can. Let's come together to cultivate creativity, Kiama!

- Join your local Artist Society or start your own creative club
- Showcase your talent through the Weave Artist Directory
- Start a "street library" or "Little Art Gallery"
- Talk to us about your great idea and cultural initiatives
- Join a singing group
- Join a dance group
- Join a library book club
- Join a writers group
- Commission a local artist
- Buy and sell local, hand-made products
- Attend a live local gig
- Participate in a cultural event
- Promote a cultural activity, tell your friends.
- Attend a library program or event
- Apply for a Cultural Grant
- Learn Dharawal
- CREATE.



CREATIVE KIAMA

CULTURAL PLAN 2025-29



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