

Strategic Plan 2021-2025



Acknowledgement of Country

At Country Arts SA, we live and create on the lands of the First Nations peoples of South Australia and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We embrace the principle of 'First Nations First' and are committed to working together to safeguard, celebrate and present our First Nations' living cultures.

Our vision is for artists and communities of regional South Australia to thrive through engagement with the arts, and be recognised as valued contributors to the nation’s cultural voice.

Country Arts SA aims to transform the way the arts are made and engaged with in regional South Australia.

Our Values

- Place**

We keep regional South Australia at our core.
- Impact**

We generate local and national legacies by embedding artists in regional communities.
- Inclusion**

We embrace diverse experiences and perspectives, and address the barriers that keep people from getting involved.
- Creativity**

We nurture, celebrate and showcase creativity from across regional South Australia.
- Respect**

We embrace diversity and act with integrity, transparency and generosity.





The art of inspiring communities

Our work

Country Arts SA increases access to the arts for regional South Australian communities and shares unique stories through extraordinary arts experiences.

We listen, respond and collaborate.

We produce ambitious and accessible arts experiences.

We present work for people of all ages and interests.

We empower regional communities to create and interact with the arts as audiences, participants, artists and leaders.

Our purpose

Country Arts SA's unique state-wide, multi-artform remit and 25+ years' experience puts us in a singular position to make art and tell stories that can't be made anywhere else in the world, and to contribute to a national cultural identity that embraces the regional communities at its heart.

The arts are a leading contributor to the strength of our regional communities. They shape our culture, identity and economy, contribute to employment, tourism and education, and support good health, wellbeing and community cohesion.

Opportunities to experience, participate in and benefit from the arts should be available to all South Australians.

Our people

The combined strength of our team, board, partners and collaborators gives us our reputation as a national leader in regional arts practice.

Our Board inspires the leadership of the organisation, builds relationships with strategic stakeholders, and oversees our governance and long-term sustainability.

Our First Nations Advisory Committee guides the Board in its engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, artists and communities, and the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Our Leadership Team provides stewardship and strategy to lead the organisation, enhance resilience and sustainability, and build a positive organisational culture.

Our Experiences Team produces and presents a diverse program of arts experiences, builds relationships with artists, arts organisations and communities and creates dynamic art spaces.

Our Relationships Team builds partnerships, develops support for our activities, and promotes the impact of our work.

Our Sustainability Team supports and nurtures our team, streamlines our processes, and manages our resources responsibly.

Our communities

When we say 'regional SA', we mean all of the communities of regional and remote South Australia, including Adelaide Plains, Adelaide Hills and Mount Lofty Ranges, APY Lands, Barossa Valley, Clare Valley, Eyre Peninsula, Far North, Far West, Fleurieu Peninsula, Flinders Ranges, Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Mallee, Mid North, Murraylands, Riverland and Yorke Peninsula.

When we say 'artists', we mean anyone doing or making any form of art including choirs, crafters, dancers, designers, digitalists, film-makers, musicians, performers, photographers, poets, singers, writers, visual artists and more at any level from hobbyists to professionals.

Our priorities

From 2021-2025, Country Arts SA's work will be focused on the following four goals:

Art and artists: We will support and empower artists, arts workers and organisations in regional South Australia to develop their practice, produce extraordinary arts experiences, and share their unique stories.

Communities: We will listen and respond to the diverse communities of regional South Australia and create opportunities for engagement in the arts at every level.

Art Centres and spaces: We will continue to develop our Art Centres as fit-for purpose cultural hubs and activate a range of other spaces to produce or present work in regional South Australia.

Our organisation: We will work together to create a strong, viable and values-driven organisation that is committed to continual improvement and that supports and inspires its team to strive and thrive.

Each of these goals will be measured against five key priority areas:

- **First Peoples First**
How we engage and elevate regional Aboriginal Elders, artists and communities, guided by our First Nations Advisory Committee and Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).
- **Regional**
How we are informed, led by and relevant to regional South Australia.
- **Diversity**
How we represent and reach all of South Australia's diverse communities.
- **Climate change**
How we measure, respond to and reduce our environmental impact.
- **A thriving organisation**
How we develop, improve and continue.

Our Goals and Strategies

Goal 1

Support and empower artists, arts workers and organisations in regional South Australia to develop their practice, produce extraordinary arts experiences, and share their unique stories.

Throughout 2021-25, we will:

- **First Peoples First:** Create opportunities for Aboriginal artists and arts workers, and work in collaboration with regional Elders, artists and communities to produce and present work that honours their living cultures.
- **Regional:** Produce and present ambitious and accessible new work in collaboration with local communities that uncovers and celebrates local stories.
- **Regional:** Produce work that responds to evolving artistic and audience trends, that encompass all art forms (from traditional to digital), and share those experiences with local, national, international and online audiences.
- **Regional:** Provide opportunities for artists, arts workers and organisations to make new work and build their practice through residencies, mentorships, profile-raising activities, creative and professional development opportunities (in-person and online).
- **Regional:** Re-shape the way we work with artists and companies by embedding them in regional communities for longer periods of time.
- **Regional:** Showcase, celebrate and profile regional artists and arts practice.
- **Regional:** Make sure artists are included in decision making, and that we cultivate employment opportunities for regional artists and arts workers.
- **Diversity:** Work with artists who share lived experiences with the diverse, intersectional communities of regional South Australia.
- **Climate change:** Respond to the effects of climate change on regional communities through the work we produce (awareness, issues and conversations).
- **A thriving organisation:** Continue to use digital platforms to transform our delivery and streamline our processes.

Goal 2

Listen and respond to the diverse communities of regional South Australia and create opportunities for engagement in the arts at every level.

Throughout 2021-25, we will:

- **First Peoples First:** Create opportunities for Aboriginal communities to engage with the arts, and work in collaboration with regional Elders and artists to present culturally appropriate work.
- **Regional:** Be informed, inspired and led by the needs and ambitions of regional communities and artists.
- **Regional:** Increase the capacity of communities to create and interact with the arts in everyday life, involving communities in our creative processes as observers, participants and co-collaborators (in-person and online).
- **Regional:** Embed ongoing consultation and feedback mechanisms to understand, measure and communicate the value of the arts.
- **Regional:** Present regional audiences with diverse arts experiences.
- **Diversity:** Grow the number and diversity of people engaging with the arts in regional South Australia, including increasing access for and engagement with: Aboriginal artists and communities, young people, people from culturally diverse communities, refugees and new arrivals; disabled people, LGBTQI+ and gender diverse people.
- **Climate change:** Respond to the effects of climate change on regional communities through the work we present (awareness, issues, conversations and themes).
- **A thriving organisation:** Develop and nurture partnerships with all levels of government, large and small arts- and non-arts partners in order to maximise resources and outcomes.

Goal 3

Activate our Art Centres and a range of other spaces to produce or present work in regional South Australia, and support them to become viable, accessible and fit-for purpose.

Throughout 2021-25, we will:

- **First Peoples First & Regional:** Develop our Art Centres as open, welcoming and accessible community hubs and resources.
- **Regional:** Position our Art Centres at the heart of their communities.
- **Regional:** Pilot a new model for supporting associate artists through our Art Centres.
- **Regional:** Support and build capacity of formal and informal arts spaces across the state.
- **Regional:** Use new technologies to find new ways of making and presenting arts experiences.
- **Diversity:** Increase innovative use of Country Arts SA spaces so more individuals and groups can access them for more reasons.
- **Climate change:** Actively reduce the environmental impact of our Art Centres.
- **A thriving organisation:** Explore opportunities to redesign and upgrade our Art Centres through a master planning process and rolling program of co-investment that will transform our Art Centres over the next 20 years. Pursue the investment required to make these venues accessible, sustainable and fit for purpose.

Goal 4

We will work together to create a strong, viable and values-driven organisation that is committed to continual improvement and that supports and inspires our team to strive and thrive.

Throughout 2021-25, we will:

- **First Peoples First:** Work with Aboriginal Elders, artists and communities to increase familiarity with and decolonise our organisation, Art Centres and programs, including increasing employment, representation and access, prioritising Aboriginal culture and arts practice, and centering Aboriginal ways of learning and doing.
- **Regional:** Create more regional employment opportunities (both at our own Art Centres and in communities).
- **Diversity:** Increase the diversity of our team and board members to make sure we are representative of all of the communities the organisation represents.
- **Climate change:** Reduce our carbon footprint.
- **A thriving organisation:** Offer training, development and cultural sharing experiences to make sure our team are appropriately skilled, knowledgeable and culturally sensitive.
- **A thriving organisation:** Continuously improve our internal operations to maximise time to make art and support artists and communities.
- **A thriving organisation:** Develop and support new and existing programs through new funding, business development and partnership models.



Dave Laslett and Kasia Tons.
To live deliberately, 2020,
Site based installation/sculpture, Flinders Ranges.
Courtesy of the artist.
Commissioned by Country Arts SA.

To live deliberately

Nestled between wrapping spinifex, enveloped by opposing elements, a vibrant lone artist sits transfixed, all consumed, by a paramount process of discovery and determined expression.

The reality of the regional artist is often filled with traps and pitfalls, coupled with oppressive waves of non-additive elements of distraction, and yet within all of this a quiet calmness remains as the artist searches fervently for pathways and opportunities.

To have arrived at this point of stillness, focus and creation, a plethora of obstacles have needed to be overcome on a regular basis; financial sustainability, access to goods and services and living face to face with the ever-changing weather.

Out of this existence, a resilient fortitude is born, enabling the creation of pathways toward Nietzsche's true worlds. The ability to live within these worlds, requires a deep focus while nurturing an undiluted practice from external noise and distractions of the external fast-paced world.

Throughout the process the figure itself begins to wear the mark of a regional artist, the red dust a mark of endurance, reinforcing the process and the practice instinctively.

— Dave Laslett and Kasia Tons



Government of
South Australia



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ARTS
SA



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