

Unlocking the wealth of our creativity

Arts and Culture Strategy
for the City of Moonee Valley
2023 – 2027



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of what is now known as Australia, particularly the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which Moonee Valley is located. We pay our respects to Aboriginal Elders, artists and communities, and to their living culture.

Acknowledgement of the many people who made this Strategy happen

This strategy was developed in the following stages:

May-Sept 2022: Tony Grybowski & Associates facilitated community consultation including the preparation and publication of an in-depth Discussion Paper

Sept-Dec 2022: Tony Grybowski & Associates in partnership with Council management team developed the strategic context, framework, values, goals and sample actions drawing on the voice and aspirations of the community

From Feb 2023: Council finalised and refined desired actions and delivery plans in consideration of operating context

Mayor's Message



Welcome to the City of Moonee Valley's Arts and Culture Strategy for 2023 – 2027.

Welcome to the City of Moonee Valley's Arts and Culture Strategy for 2023 – 2027, **Unlocking the Wealth of our Creativity.**

We are at an important juncture in our history, and Council believes that the success of arts, culture and the broader creative industries will support our vibrant community and the City's growth and future success.

Moonee Valley has an established tradition in arts and culture: the infrastructure we have developed over many years and the gatherings and events that have become part of our annual activity and local rituals. We are home to artists, creative practitioners and diverse communities who see art and culture as part of their way of life. We all share a passion for our local environment, our neighbourhoods and the voice and stories of the traditional owners shared through our local First Nations community.

This Strategy focuses on the arts and cultural community, supporting their potential, working together in new ways, collaborating, and sharing an aspiration to make arts and culture a 'must have' rather than an 'add on'.

It will guide our focus and investment. It is an invitation to the community to engage and collaborate. It is how we will grow the City's arts and cultural offering and our reputation as 'a place for the arts'.

While we all have different passions and interests in arts and culture, I believe we share a common understanding that arts and culture is part of who we are. We all want to come together and celebrate. We want to be inspired, challenged, and feel comfortable expressing our voice and identity.

Council believes everyone in our community has a role to play in arts and culture: from our artists who earn a living from their craft, to the many residents who practice their artform in a community, cultural or local context, or those who simply enjoy the creations of others. We recognise this contribution and that everyone plays an important part.

The social 'dials' and priorities over the past three years have changed: many now have a greater appreciation of the role of arts and culture in our society, how it enhances our lives, our City's liveability, and how it can also drive economic opportunity.

Council is proud to instigate this work and thanks all the community who have contributed to the consultation process. We are delighted to put the 'spotlight' on arts and culture.

We look forward to working with you and realising our potential and opportunity. Let's make it happen together!

Cr Pierce Tyson
Mayor of Moonee Valley

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The role arts and culture plays in our City

Arts and culture are central to our society and are an important foundation in supporting liveability, enhancing social cohesion and community wellbeing.

Arts and culture plays a key role in the following areas:

Our identity

Culture, creativity and artistic expression showcase who we are, what makes us distinctive and who we aspire to be as a community. Arts and culture can be a beacon of civic pride.

A sense of community

Arts and culture are drivers of social cohesion – bringing us together to celebrate, commemorate, reflect and be entertained. Arts and culture can unify us in shared experiences and equal representation as we come together to share our stories and learn from each other. Our City has a proven track record and thrives on these moments of coming together. For example, at the 27 events and festivals Council hosted in 2018, over 67,500 people attended, almost half the City's population.

Our prosperity

The arts contribute to local prosperity with direct employment opportunities and reciprocal connections with hospitality and night-time economies. Pre-pandemic, over 4,500 people were employed by arts and culture in the City. As of June 2020, close to 1,300 cultural and creative businesses were operating, and 34 were each directly contributing over \$2 million in turnover. (ABS data source and Australia Council for the Arts interpretation).

Well-being

Studies demonstrate arts and culture support City-wide health and general wellbeing. As noted in VicHealth's Arts Strategy 2019–2023, *"Participating in the arts has multiple benefits for health and wellbeing: it reduces social isolation, strengthens community connection and builds self-esteem, as people pursue creative activity alone or in groups."*

The personality and vibrancy the arts bring to the public sphere can also greatly impact the way we inhabit a sense of place – providing feelings of comfort, safety and connection.



What do we mean by arts & culture?

Arts and culture can mean different things to different people. As a starting point, we define culture as ‘the distinctive set of beliefs and features of a society or social group’.

The arts, along with language, food, ceremony, sport, architecture and fashion, are all an expression of that culture.

Culture is part of who we are; it's the way we live. The arts are one way we reinforce, develop and invite the exchange of our culture.

The different ways we can consider arts include:

Artforms

Arts can be traditional, contemporary and evolving. Art covers many forms – music, visual arts, screen and moving image, digital and live arts, theatre, movement and dance, literature and heritage interpretation. Artists are present in all parts of our community, and their creativity is constantly evolving in a community where freedom of expression and diversity is encouraged. Artists are increasingly collaborating and working across a number of artforms.

Engagement and access

The ways we create, present and engage in the arts are also diverse. Cultural consumption can be collective moments of scale such as a festival, individual experiences like reading, contemplative opportunities at exhibitions, social participation in workshops or shared audience experiences in theatres or galleries.

Formats

Arts can be one-off events or make an indelible, long-lasting impression, such as public sculpture and street art. We can experience art in real life in real time, online, or a hybrid of these worlds with digital interfaces such as augmented and virtual reality.

Content and representation

The arts can be reflective of who we are and our experiences. It can bring into the foreground those that feel marginalised and give us insight and appreciation of other cultures. Art can provoke and inspire us to imagine a future and a range of possibilities. Art can also be about telling our stories, teaching us new things and inspiring our imagination. As our community changes and evolves, so does our art and culture – it can be dynamic and often surprises us.

Impact

Art can be for pure enjoyment and entertainment. It can range from the virtuosic to the joy of giving something a go. It can evoke a range of emotions whether we are makers, consumers, or participants. Art can encourage us to think differently and generate conversations or debates. Art can be a personal solo activity or something we share with our families and friends.



Objectives of the Strategy

Ultimately, the purpose of the Strategy is to enliven and enrich art and culture within the Moonee Valley.

The Strategy also aims to achieve the following:

- **A clear plan of action for Council**
- **Capture the voice and aspirations of the community**
- **An invitation to the community to participate in bringing the Strategy to life**
- **Put a spotlight on local artists and cultural assets**
- **Identify policy alignment across Governments**
- **Transparent and open accountability for supporting the community's arts and cultural ambitions**

The Strategy will help focus Council's energies, investments and priorities through defined goals and actions.

The Strategy captures the community's voice and creates a fresh narrative of aspiration and potential for arts and culture in the City. The Strategy invites the community to participate, collaborate and celebrate arts and culture across the Moonee Valley. The invitation is extended to all in the community – to our artists, audiences, community leaders, teachers, local groups and businesses.

The Strategy puts a 'spotlight' on our artists and cultural assets so we can celebrate our signature strengths and understand our unique attributes. So we can proudly celebrate our cultural identity.

Over the past three years, the pandemic has also significantly interrupted our social connections and access to arts and culture. This presents an opportunity to reimagine the role of arts and culture as we rebuild thriving local centres, night-time economies, and the ways we gather.

Values and Principles

Six foundational values and principles will guide the Strategy and its implementation, assisting decision-making and forming an important reference point as things evolve and change, and new opportunities emerge, over the next four years. These values were identified and strongly endorsed in our consultation process.

We value the following in everything that we do:

- Voice:** Amplify, celebrate and share stories of identity – welcome new voices
- Respect:** We cherish and respect our heritage and elders while encouraging and supporting the new and next generations
- Identity:** Celebrate our points of difference: our people, we are home for many communities
- Connection:** Creating new pathways to bring artists and the diverse community together
- Opportunity:** Work to realise the potential of our existing assets – our people and infrastructure and the willingness of others to participate and collaborate
- Place:** Embrace and respect our natural and built environment – largescale beauty, connected by the river and a love of outdoors

MV2040 Vision: Building blocks for a healthy city

Listed below are the five main themes in our community vision for Moonee Valley in 2040. They are the building blocks of a healthy, thriving city, and also guide how we approach this Strategy and its implementation. Highlighted below each theme are some of the most relevant strategic goals for arts and culture in Moonee Valley.

 <p>FAIR QEENTE BOORDUP</p>	 <p>THRIVING BANDINGITH</p>	 <p>CONNECTED YANONINON MAGGOLEE</p>	 <p>GREEN WUNWARREN</p>	 <p>BEAUTIFUL NGA-ANGO GUNGA</p>
<p>MV2040 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1</p> <p>A CITY THAT CELEBRATES DIVERSITY: Moonee Valley is a 'Welcome City' where we celebrate diversity as one of our greatest strengths.</p>	<p>MV2040 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 8</p> <p>A CITY WITH THINGS TO SEE AND DO: Across Moonee Valley there is an increased participation and value placed in the arts, sport, culture, and local community-run events.</p>	<p>MV2040 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 11</p> <p>A CITY WITH STREETS AND SPACES FOR PEOPLE: Our streets and spaces are safe and accessible for all to participate.</p>	<p>MV2040 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 13</p> <p>A CITY THAT IS LOW CARBON: Environmental responsibility is a pressing need, and we embed Green values into the planning of our arts and culture activities.</p>	<p>MV2040 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 17</p> <p>A CITY THAT FOSTERS LOCAL IDENTITY: We celebrate our rich heritage and the value of our cultural links to Wurundjeri Country.</p>
	<p>MV2040 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 7</p> <p>A CITY THAT RESPONDS TO A CHANGING ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE: Moonee Valley is a city where our economic environment facilitates thriving activity centres and new and emerging enterprise.</p>			<p>MV2040 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 17</p> <p>A CITY WITH VIBRANT AND SAFE PUBLIC SPACES: Our City is regarded as a beautiful place with spaces filled with activity and community life.</p>



Our community

The City of Moonee Valley is located between 4 and 13 kilometres north-west of Melbourne's CBD. Some of the distinct characteristics are:



WE ARE A GROWING COMMUNITY

The City covers 43 square kilometres, Around 130,000 residents, or 48,000 households, call Moonee Valley home. People moving into the area have increased the population by 1.21% each year.



WE ARE 'HOME' WITH DIVERSE PURPOSE

Moonee Valley is primarily an established residential municipality. Complementing its residential areas is an eclectic mix of retail strips and centres, combined with offices, some industrial areas and Essendon Airport.



WE ARE YOUTHFULLY MATURE

The percentage of the population between the ages of 25 and 49 is 37% – higher than the state and national averages. The median age of our residents is 38 years.



WE ARE WELL EDUCATED

Close to a third of the community has a Bachelor's degree or higher. The representation of completed tertiary-level education is 5% higher than the national average.



WE HAVE RICH CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

60% of the community have a parent or both parents born overseas. While most speak English at home, Italian features in 6.8% of households in comparison to the state average of 1.9%. Other languages include Greek, Vietnamese, Mandarin and Cantonese.

We love our art

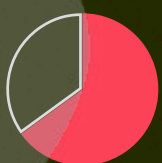
Moonee Valley residents 15+ years



91%
attend cultural
venues or events



77%
attend
cinemas



65%
attend
performing arts



49%
attend
live music



44%
attend
art galleries



35%
attend libraries
or archives



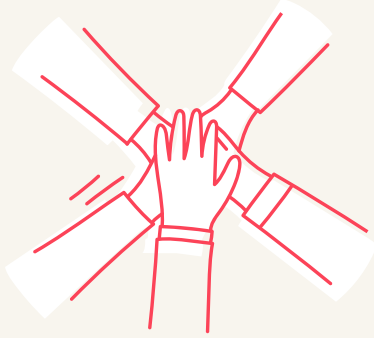


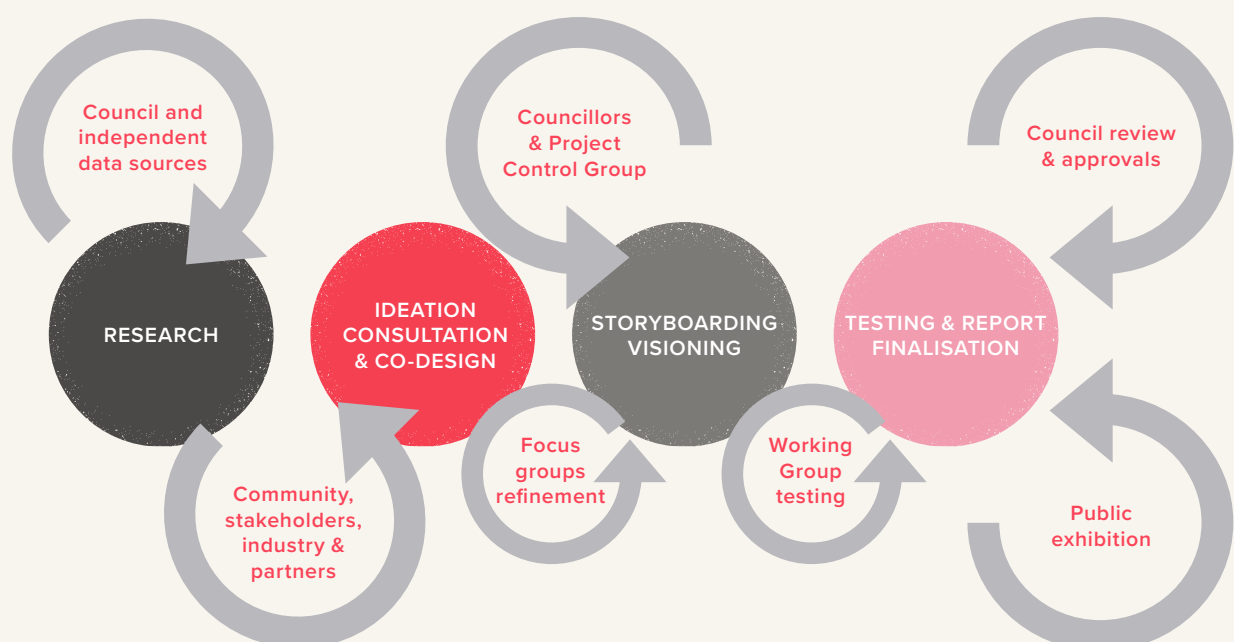
38%
participate in
creative activities

These figures are all significantly above the national average and demonstrate a highly engaged and culturally aware community.

How this Strategy was developed

This Strategy was developed across 2022-2023, including several stages of considered community consultation. The process of developing the Strategy is summarised:

Step 1: Gathering	Step 2: Co-design	Step 3: Refinement
<p>Collecting views and inspiration from community, industry and external partners</p>  <p>Online public discussion paper published on YourSay, with a discussion board and survey</p>	<p>Including opportunity for Council to observe</p>  <p>1 x open invitation forum + 6 x discussion forums</p>	<p>Feedback on evolving options from Steps 1 & 2</p>  <p>Focus group roundtables + Internal delivery team engagement</p>



What we heard from the community

The community and the arts sector welcomed the opportunity to consider the potential for arts and culture in Moonee Valley.

The discussions, with community members' input, generated very clear messages and themes. What was clearly evident in all our consultations was an impressive level of commitment and passion for the arts and the local area. There was also an interest and willingness to participate in driving change and working together to build opportunities for artists and the broader community.

There was a desire to celebrate First Peoples and increase the engagement and profile of First Peoples' arts and culture.

The consultation also recognised many people in our community live with a disability. Many of these members of the community also practice or experience the arts in their daily lives. We are committed to ensuring living with a disability is not a barrier to participation, engagement or enjoyment.

There also was an acknowledgement that the community is diverse and constantly evolving. There was much work to be done in ensuring the voice of different communities was heard and represented and included in programming, events and other opportunities and avenues.

Other key themes that emerged from the consultation included the following:

- **We have an existing community of artists**
They need to be profiled and given opportunities to collaborate and share. This must include the emerging, grassroots and artists in different communities.
- **Our community is increasingly 'looking local' for arts and cultural activities to engage and participate in.**
The pandemic reminded us how important 'being local' is!
- Our infrastructure – let's work to optimise existing infrastructure, activate **other dormant spaces, and bring them to life for arts and cultural activities.**
- Play to the individual strengths of neighbourhoods without the need for a one-size-fits-all approach – **'let's define our 'whole', which is greater than the sum of the parts.**
- Let's explore our night-time economy and the **potential arts and culture has to inject vibrancy and resilience** into connected food, hospitality and retail businesses.
- Let's celebrate our points of difference and share our vision with the community. Council is just one part in bringing this Strategy together – the community will bring the Strategy to life!



Our Arts & Culture Strategy strives to:

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The Strategy: Unlocking the wealth of our creativity 2023-2027

DRAFT



Priority areas

Celebration of our identity

A place of boundless creativity

Driving culturally-led prosperity

These three priority areas are intended to drive change and support long-term ambition.

The Strategy embraces and includes much existing great work and activity in the arts and culture spaces. This Strategy does not call for dramatically changing existing activity. It seeks to build on this solid foundation and, in some cases, calls for new ideas and ways of thinking, working together and collaborating.

Maintaining a focus on these three priority areas will help build a foundation to achieve success.





Priority area 1. Celebration of our identity

Our community is unique. We are home to many different cultures spanning long traditions and also including many new voices. Our community drives our identity, and our true identity is our community. Coming together will enable us to share our stories, build new relationships, collaborate, and learn from each other.

Our objective is to put the spotlight on the many diverse communities who call the City of Moonee Valley home. Let us celebrate this diversity and ensure we include new voices alongside existing cultural expressions and the narrative of the longest-living culture on earth, our First Peoples community.

The power of unity across our community sends a powerful message of who we are.

Priority area 1. Celebration of our identity

What does success look like in five years' time?

We imagine a future where all our community are inspired to come together and celebrate as they see themselves and their cultural identity reflected in what we present, exhibit and showcase.

We see our community as upholding the value and recognition of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People as the first Australians on this land. We will champion the diversity and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' culture, language, and heritage. We will be enriched by cultural exchange and supporting visibility and self-determination.

We will be increasingly recognised as a City that celebrates arts and culture in all forms and origins. We will be confident in welcoming new voices and cultures to our conversations.

We create opportunities to be inspired by art. We will enable our communities to participate, share culture and create memorable moments of expression.

We will utilise our neighbourhoods' distinctive scale and natural environment as the ideal setting for artistic ambition and cultural cohesion.

What are we currently doing in this area?

We have a strong foundation to build on as we continue to enhance our celebration of our identity.

Our existing programs include:

First Nations Community

Our commitment to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People is captured in our Bagarru Bagarru Djerring Reconciliation plan 2022–25. We actively deliver on the objectives of this Strategy and recognise there is opportunity to strengthen impact by connecting this Strategy with our overall arts and cultural programs and facilities.

We are also committed to maintaining an active dialogue and relationship with our local First Nations community as well as Indigenous artists and organisations from across Victoria and Australia to support a voice for these communities through their expression of arts and culture.

Clocktower Centre

The Clocktower Centre has operated in its current form since 2000. It offers local audiences a diverse range of performing arts experiences, as well as a venue for their own creative expression.

We are committed to making a diversity of performing arts experiences available, inclusive, and affordable. Our support of the Clocktower program helps address access barriers in the performing arts by providing the community with the best of local and national performing arts on its doorstep.

Incinerator Gallery

Located in the Aberfeldie neighbourhood, the Incinerator Gallery is Council's principal visual arts program and service provider. The gallery presents a program of contemporary art exhibitions that are free to attend and a public program of events, including artist and curator talks, school holiday programs, Incinerator Gallery historical tours, an art club, and art workshops.

The Incinerator Gallery is of historical significance, with the former industrial waste facility being designed by the office of Walter Burley Griffin.

Libraries

Our City has five libraries: Ascot Vale Library, Avondale Heights Library and Learning Centre, Flemington Library, Niddrie Library and Sam Merrifield Library in Moonee Ponds. Our libraries are more than books. Libraries provide free access to skills and cultural programs, vast collections of films and audiobooks, and services such as printing, computers, and rooms for hire.

Our community can also access an extensive digital library, a Makerspace, an innovative Seed Library, and Little Libraries throughout our streets for book exchange.

Festivals and Events

Council hosts a range of diverse events and festivals each year. These events and festivals enliven our spaces, connect our communities, celebrate our cultures and inspire our creativity. These events have evolved over the years, and many have become a tradition or ritual for some in our community. We look to enhance this festival offering in line with the dynamic nature of our community.

Vibrant Streets – street art

Since Council's endorsement of MV2040, Council has commissioned or supported the installation of 12 murals across the City. These installations are a prototype for a greater Council focus on activating and enlivening public spaces with art.

Home for community participation and expression

The provision of Council owned spaces has supported generations of community-led arts participation. We are home to some of the longest-running community theatre and music groups. These are grassroots generators of arts appreciation, creating new community connections, and shared moments of self-expression.



As we work to enhance our celebration of identity, you will see us:

- 1.1 Support engagement and participation by continuing and enhancing our existing arts and cultural facilities, services and programs.
- 1.2 Champion and strengthen First Peoples cultural expression and representation in all we do
- 1.3 Ensure representation of diverse community through arts and cultural programs provided by the City
- 1.4 Develop a commissioning framework and update the Art Collection Policy and Management Manual to identify priorities
- 1.5 Increase the visibility of arts, cultural and innovative expression
- 1.6 Maribyrnong River 'Cultural Precinct' Master Plan implementation

Priority area 1.
Celebration of our identity

Goal	Action
1.1 Support engagement and participation by continuing and enhancing our existing arts and cultural facilities, services and programs	Support performing arts activities through the Clocktower program
	Support visual arts activities through the Incinerator Gallery
	Support language and learning activities through our libraries
	Support community engagement and celebration through our Festivals and Events program
	Support the visibility of our identity through our Vibrant Streets (street art) with a temporary and permanent murals program
	Support community-led arts and activities through the provision of space for making and presenting, and investigate improving booking systems for access to spaces
1.2 Champion and strengthen First Peoples cultural expression and representation in all that we do	Integrate Reconciliation plan activities and other opportunities for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' expression and recognition into existing Council functions and programs
1.3 Ensure representation of diverse community through arts and cultural programs provided by the City	Develop and report against representation targets for City programs
	Annually review gaps in meeting targets to consider if there are changes to processes or partnerships needed to achieve our targets
1.4 Develop a commissioning framework and update the Art Collection Policy and Management Manual to identify priorities	Establish criteria for commissioning and collecting artworks that reflect the identity of our community
	Establish a biennial public art commission program
	Establish an acquisition fund
1.5 Increase the visibility of arts, cultural and innovative expression	Develop an Art in Surprising Places program for temporary public art and cultural expression
	Explore the opportunity for sculpture playgrounds in large natural open spaces
1.6 Maribyrnong River Cultural Precinct Master Plan implementation	Longer term implementation of actions and outcomes of the Master Plan, incorporating the plan's links to the Incinerator Gallery and cultural significance of the river, as being a potential premier Arts and Culture Precinct

Spotlight on a reimagined Incinerator Gallery

We value collections as markers of our history, successes, and challenges. The learnings of where we have been and are now can inspire our collective imagining of where we are heading.

We must transform the Incinerator Gallery into an accredited public art gallery to achieve our vision of presenting and collecting visual arts that reflect our community and creativity.

The gallery is the last remaining Walter Burley Griffin-designed incinerator building left in Victoria and one of only six left in the country. It has operated as a gallery since 2011. Our vision is to upgrade the facilities to industry-standard climate-controlled exhibition spaces and collection storage – creating a gallery for Melbourne's West capable of housing important collections, displaying local and touring Victorian and national exhibitions to benefit our community and visitors alike.

Council has developed detailed designs, documentation, and landscape plans in consultation with Heritage Victoria, which include significant work to protect the building's structural integrity and heritage, the installation of climate control and purpose-built storage for the Moonee Valley City Art Collection. We now look forward to welcoming investment partners to realise this vision for the benefit of our City.



Sub~Lingual, 2022. Installation view of work by Serwah Attafuah at Incinerator Gallery. Photo: Aaron Claringbold.



Priority area 2. A place of boundless creativity

Our arts and cultural community plays a big role in shaping our identity and enhancing Moonee Valley's reputation, liveability, and social cohesion – we will nurture and champion the artists in our community.

We will identify and acknowledge our existing local artists – recognise their work, understand their challenges and explore opportunities to support their development.

As neighbourhoods continue to grow and radiate out from the Melbourne CBD, we are ready to be the next place for artists to come to live, work and thrive.

Priority area 2. A place of boundless creativity

In 5 years' time, what does success look like?

We imagine a future when artists choose Moonee Valley as a preferred place to live – a City where they connect and have boundless opportunities. We see the collective energy of our artist community fuelling a vibrant, innovative, open and imaginative City.

Our future state will see artists of all genres, cultures and generations meet regularly to work, share and collaborate. Our artists will regularly feature in civic gatherings, celebrations, and acknowledgements. Our teachers will be empowered to welcome local artists to our schools to inspire future generations.

Artists from new communities and marginalised demographics will be welcomed and supported to join the conversation. Moonee Valley will be identified and become known as a place where arts and culture are embedded in society.

We will identify and champion our local artists and provide new opportunities to gather, work, and explore their practice. We will identify our real strengths and work to make what is already good – be great.

We will welcome artists, creative practitioners, and the creative industries from across Melbourne and other parts of Victoria, and highlight Moonee Valley as a great place to live and work.

We will celebrate our success and profile our arts and cultural leaders, giving them the recognition they deserve.

What are we currently doing in this area?

There is an opportunity to establish a place of boundless creativity by introducing new artist-focused programs and activities to complement the following core areas of support already provided:

Creative Spaces

We invest in and provide creative spaces, including a podcast room, writers' room and studio in the Clocktower Centre, exhibition and workshop spaces in the Incinerator Gallery, maker spaces and display opportunities in Libraries and a recording studio at Niddrie Hub. There is also the commitment to presenting a range of annual cultural festivals and events that are important core offerings to our local artists and audience.

Funding programs

We currently offer grants between \$5,000-\$10,000 to support individuals, groups, and organisations to deliver arts projects and events.

Advocacy

Advocating for our artists internally, with the community, and with other potential investors is an important part of our role. Effective advocacy is critical in any sector and any campaign for change and growth. Advocacy in arts and culture is complex and requires developing clear messages, understanding stakeholders, and knowing who to communicate with and influence. Increasing our advocacy results will be achieved by improving our in-depth knowledge of our artist community and mapping critical stakeholders.



As we work to establish a place of boundless creativity, you will see us:

- 2.1 Support artists with access to existing creative spaces
- 2.2 Increase the capacity of artists through targeted development programs
- 2.3 Increase our advocacy of our arts community
- 2.4 Activate under-utilised spaces and new development opportunities to provide regular and accessible spaces for artists to gather, create and/or present ideas and practice
- 2.5 Establish a holistic arts marketing approach
- 2.6 Host opportunities for diverse voices and practices to share knowledge, experience, and discuss needs and opportunities
- 2.7 Celebrate the achievements and profile of all our artists – emerging, mid-career and established

Priority area 2.
A place of boundless creativity

Goal	Action
2.1 Support artists with access to existing creative spaces	Continue to provide spaces in the Clocktower, Incinerator Gallery and Libraries. Annually review the criteria and ease of process for bookings to maximise space usage
	Advocate for funds to redevelop the Incinerator Gallery to create a professionally accredited public art gallery to serve Melbourne's West
	Where appropriate, continue to grow and expand Makerspaces in libraries with public access to creative technology such as sewing machines and 3D printers
2.2 Increase the capacity of artists through targeted development programs	Prioritise grants funding for professional development programs for artists that will enhance their sustainability (e.g. arts marketing)
	Encourage delivery of workshops by peak bodies in the municipality
2.3 Increase our advocacy of our arts community	Promote the benefits of a strong arts community to the municipality more broadly. Advocate for cross-government partnerships to support arts community's needs and increase opportunity for artists
2.4 Activate under-utilised spaces and new development opportunities to provide regular and accessible spaces for artists to gather, create and/or present ideas and practice	Introduction of a drop-in Creative Arts Workshop, led by community
	Establish the Woodlands Cottage Garage Artists in Residency Program
	Explore the potential of the historic Woodlands Park Settlers Cottage as a site for cultural expression
	Encourage the commissioning of new artworks and/or spaces in the planning process for business and new developments
	Investigate the possibility of developing quotas in future planning instruments for spaces dedicated to artistic practice and presentation
2.5 Establish a holistic arts marketing approach	Streamline and focus promotional reach for Council and independent arts activities throughout the City. Introduce a one-stop shop online portal facilitated by Council, or a partner, that lists all opportunities to engage in arts and culture
2.6 Host opportunities for diverse voices and practices to share knowledge, experience, and discuss needs and opportunities.	Program an annual gathering of artists and creatives
2.7 Celebrate the achievements and profile of all our artists – emerging, mid-career and established	Establish Artist Awards Program
	Use expansive outdoor spaces to profile artists, such as 'the face of our arts' billboard campaigns

Spotlight on the Creative Arts Workshop

Based on the well-known concept of the 'Men's Shed', the idea of developing an 'Arts Shed' - a shared creative arts workshop space - would be a new initiative for Australia.

So what is a Men's Shed? *'The modern Men's Shed is an updated version of the shed in the backyard that has long been a part of Australian culture. Men's Sheds are found in many cities and towns around Australia and continue to spring up internationally. Not all Men's Sheds are the same. If you looked inside, you might see a number of men making furniture, perhaps restoring bicycles for a local school, making Mynah bird traps, fixing lawnmowers. You might also see a few young men working with the older men obtaining new skills and learning something about life from the men with whom they work. You might see local elders making traditional weapons or designing arts and crafts. You will see tea bags, coffee cups and a comfortable area where men can sit and talk. You will probably also see an area where men can learn to cook for themselves or how to contact their families by computer.'* (mensshed.org). The benefits of the Men's Shed concept for individuals, families, skills, and communities are numerous.

Translating key elements of this model into an arts context has much potential. Having a space for artists to gather, work, share ideas and practice – across generations, cultures and creative practices – could be a powerful initiative to bring together the City's artists that would not normally have a meeting place. This concept could be trialled in Mooney Valley and initiated by Council, led by the community, and have artists of diverse cultures and disciplines at its core.





Aeon Resurrection, 2022. Installation view and opening night at Incinerator Gallery. Photo: Lucy Foster.

Priority area 3. Driving culturally-led prosperity

The arts and entertainment industry contributed over \$14.7 billion to the national economy and employed close to 200,000 prior to the pandemic. No more was this value more evident than when COVID impacted the ability to congregate and come together to experience and consume arts and cultural activities.

The knock-on impact sent ripples across our local economy. We all came to appreciate that arts, culture, and creative industries are interconnected with many other businesses – in particular, the health and success of our night-time economy, retail, food, hospitality, and tourism.

As we restore, reimagine, and grow our prosperity, we recognise there is potential to develop strategies to increase the arts influence and impact our local economy, particularly our nightlife.

Our objective is to ensure local artists and arts organisations have opportunities to work, create, perform, and exhibit locally. As they benefit individually, they equally stimulate and contribute to the financial sustainability of surrounding businesses and the City.

Priority area 3. Driving culturally-led prosperity



In 5 years' time, what does success look like?

Moonee Valley will be an identified precinct known for its arts and cultural activity, particularly in the night-time.

The creative industries will be acknowledged as an important element of the local economy – supporting skills development, training and opportunities with flow-on benefits to other businesses. Annual reporting of the local economy's Creative Industries will identify this sector's contribution to local prosperity.

Local artist spaces will be sought after, and Moonee Valley will be seen as a supportive place for artists to live and work. Local businesses will see the benefits of such spaces within the local infrastructure and will be keen to develop innovative ways of incorporating arts into existing and new buildings and facilities.

What are we currently doing in this area?

We have long recognised the ability of arts and culture to activate spaces, encourage visitation and stimulate hyper-local economies. Our previous events, such as Winter Fest, are examples of using the arts to stimulate night-time engagement.

However, this goal is relatively new for us. It goes beyond tactical interventions and sees the arts centred as a valued part of the local economy, particularly its role in leisure and night-time prosperity. Around the world, local governments are adopting this new approach of strategically focusing on artists, arts, and culture to enhance market benefits across many business sectors.

As we work to drive culturally-led prosperity, you will see us:

- 3.1 Develop a framework for festivals and events that considers timing and locations to support business planning and encourages commercial activity
- 3.2 Establish a local business and artist forum to explore opportunities and stimulate solutions
- 3.3 Create opportunities for enlivened activity in night-time precincts with physical enhancements such as the extension of footpath trading through the installation of parklets and other spaces for arts and culture gathering
- 3.4 Provide businesses with expert support to connect to artists that match their brand and consumers' interests
- 3.5 Prototype a holistic Night-time Economy (NTE) Precinct by providing incentives for local businesses and landlords to host arts

Priority area 3.
Driving culturally-led prosperity

Goal	Action
3.1 Develop a framework for festivals and events that considers timing and locations to support business planning and encourages commercial activity	Introduction of commercial event permits
	Institute Festivals and Events Framework
	Deliver a flagship event in a tourist precinct that supports an increase in tourism to Moonee Valley and builds upon the City's profile as a destination
3.2 Establish a local business and artist forum to explore opportunities and stimulate solutions	Work with local business and local artists to discuss creative opportunities
3.3 Create opportunities for enlivened activity in night-time precincts with physical enhancements such as the extension of footpath trading through the installation of parklets and other spaces for arts and culture gathering	Monitor business precincts to identify areas that would benefit from arts activations
	Deliver arts activations in night-time economic precincts, which may include live music, artistic performances, projections and temporary installations
3.4 Provide businesses with expert support to connect to artists that match their brand and consumers' interests	Invest in a specialised Music Contractor to work with local businesses and musicians to broker live music events in key activity precincts
3.5 Prototype a holistic Night-time Economy (NTE) Precinct by providing incentives for local business and landlords to host arts	Create a working group to identify and address barriers to the development of the night-time economy
	Prioritise grants funding for activation within activity precincts to enliven commercial precincts
	Continue the implementation of the Events Planning Framework supporting the night-time economy, local business, and increased visitation to local areas



Spotlight on what makes a successful Night-time Economy (NTE) Precinct

Studies of successful night-time economies and thriving precincts all reflect the same core ingredients:

- leadership: stimulating, seeding, and promoting precincts in the early stages of development
- amenity: an enabling environment that projects safety, is accessible, and encourages congregation and comfortable dwell time experiences
- authenticity: centering arts and culture to enliven spaces and develop a reliable, cherished, and distinct brand – making precincts a must-visit for a unique experience

In addressing action 3.5, Council has the opportunity to prototype and experiment across these three dimensions with trials of subtle but important enhancements such as parklets (permanent or temporary) right through to larger scale, longer-term precinct masterplans that might consider pedestrian-only zones, large digital screens for new forms of engagement, and encouraging congregation through permits arrangements for street performers.

The returns on creating the right environment for night-time economies to flourish is higher consumer spending and increased employment across all business that make up the evening ecology, from restaurants, pubs and clubs, arts and entertainment, events, to late-night retail trade.

Implementation and delivery

Council is committed to delivering this Strategy and monitoring progress over the next four years. We will adopt a whole-of-Council approach, connecting the areas of responsibility across arts, culture, community, planning, communications and economic development to strengthen our capacity for success.

We will also gather essential data to undertake a longitudinal evaluation to inform the future and adapt as new opportunities evolve over the next four years.


Overall, our objective is to ensure the Moonee Valley City Council is open, transparent and accountable for supporting the community's arts and cultural ambitions. We will do this through:

- Establishment of Community Working Groups as required to develop realistic implementation plans and achievable targets
- Providing an annual Arts and Culture Health Check report to communicate outcomes and regularly monitor progress over the life of the Strategy


Importantly, having a clear vision and goal allows the Council to plan for and attract new funds and partnerships to bring the actions to life in the next four years. Areas where new resources and partnerships are needed are highlighted below.

KEY:

To achieve our goals and aspirations we will

- \$ Utilise Existing budget
-  Aim to develop Partnerships
- \$\$ Strive to source new funds as required

PRIORITY AREA 1: CELEBRATION OF OUR IDENTITY

Goal	Action	\$		\$\$
1.1 Support engagement and participation by continuing and enhancing our existing arts and cultural facilities, services, and programs	Support performing arts activities through the Clocktower program	•		
	Support visual arts activities through the Incinerator Gallery	•		
	Support language and learning activities through our libraries	•		
	Support community engagement and celebration through our Festivals and Events program	•		
	Support the visibility of our identity through our Vibrant Streets (street art) with a temporary and permanent murals program	•	•	•
	Support community-led arts and activities through the provision of space for making and presenting, and investigate improving booking systems for access to spaces	•		
1.2 Champion and strengthen First Nations cultural expression and representation in all we do	Integrate Reconciliation plan activities and other opportunities for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' expression and recognition into existing Council functions and programs	•		
1.3 Ensure representation of diverse community through arts and cultural programs provided by the City	Develop and report against representation targets for City programs	•		
	Annually review gaps in meeting targets to consider if there are changes to processes or partnerships needed to achieve our targets	•		
1.4 Develop a commissioning framework and update the Art Collection Policy and Management Manual to identify priorities	Establish criteria for commissioning and collecting artworks that reflect the identity of our community	•		
	Establish a biennial public art commission program		•	•
	Establish an acquisition fund		•	•
1.5 Increase the visibility of arts, cultural and innovative expression	Develop an Art in Surprising Places program for temporary public art and cultural expression	•	•	•
	Explore the opportunity for sculpture playgrounds in large natural open spaces		•	•
1.6 Maribyrnong River Cultural Precinct Master Plan implementation	Longer term implementation of actions and outcomes of the Master Plan, incorporating the plans links to the Incinerator Gallery and cultural significance of the river, as being a potential premier Arts and Culture Precinct.		•	

PRIORITY AREA 2: A PLACE OF BOUNDLESS CREATIVITY

Goal	Action	\$		\$\$
2.1 Support artists with access to existing creative spaces	Continue to provide spaces in the Clocktower, Incinerator Gallery and Libraries. Annually review the criteria and ease of process for bookings to maximise space usage	•		
	Advocate for funds to redevelop the Incinerator Gallery to create a professionally accredited public art gallery to serve Melbourne's West		•	•
	Where appropriate, continue to grow and expand Makerspaces in libraries with public access to creative technology such as sewing machines and 3D printers	•		•
2.2 Increase the capacity of artists through targeted development programs	Prioritise grants funding for professional development programs for artists that will enhance their sustainability (e.g. arts marketing)	•		
	Encourage delivery of workshops by peak bodies in the municipality		•	
2.3 Increase our advocacy of our arts community	Promote the benefits of a strong arts community to the municipality more broadly. Advocate for cross-government partnerships to support arts community's needs and increase opportunity for artists	•		
2.4 Activate under-utilised spaces and new development opportunities to provide regular and accessible spaces for artists to gather, create and/or present ideas and practice	Introduction of a drop-in Creative Arts Workshop, led by community		•	•
	Establish the Woodlands Cottage Garage Artists in Residency Program	•		
	Explore the potential of the historic Woodlands Park Settlers Cottage as a site for cultural expression	•		
	Encourage the commissioning of new artworks and/or spaces in the planning process for business and new developments	•		
	Investigate the possibility of developing quotas in future planning instruments for spaces dedicated to artistic practice and presentation	•		
2.5 Establish a holistic arts marketing approach	Streamline and focus promotional reach for Council and independent arts activities throughout the City. Introduce a one-stop shop online portal facilitated by Council, or a partner, that lists all opportunities to engage in arts and culture	•		
2.6 Host opportunities for diverse voices and practices to share knowledge, experience, and discuss needs and opportunity	Program an annual gathering of artists and creatives	•		
2.7 Celebrate the achievements and profile of all our artists – emerging, mid-career and established	Establish Artist Awards program		•	•
	Use expansive outdoor spaces to profile artists, such as 'the face of our arts' billboard campaigns	•	•	•

PRIORITY AREA 3: CULTURALLY-LED PROSPERITY

Goal	Action	\$		\$\$
3.1 Develop a framework for festivals and events that considers timing and locations to support business planning and encourage commercial activity	Introduction of commercial event permits	•		
	Institute Festivals and Events Framework	•		
	Deliver a flagship event in a tourist precinct that supports an increase in tourism to Moonee Valley and builds upon the City's profile as a destination		•	•
3.2 Establish a local business and artist forum to explore opportunities and stimulate solutions	Work with local business and local artists to discuss creative opportunities	•		
3.3 Create opportunities for enlivened activity in night-time precincts	Monitor business precincts to identify areas that would benefit from arts activations	•		
	Deliver arts activations in night-time economic precincts, which may include live music, artistic performances, projections and temporary installations	•	•	•
3.4 Provide businesses with expert support to connect to artists that match their brand and consumers' interests	Invest in a specialised Music Contractor to work with local businesses and musicians to broker live music events in key activity precincts	•		
3.5 Prototype a holistic Night-time Economy (NTE) Precinct by providing incentives for local business and landlords to host arts	Create a working group to identify and address barriers to the development of the night-time economy	•		
	Prioritise grants funding for activation within activity precincts to enliven commercial precincts	•		
	Continue the implementation of the Events Planning Framework supporting the night-time economy, local business, and increased visitation to local areas	•	•	





