CITY OF
MONASH

Creative Monash Strategy 2032



Acknowledgement of Country

Monash Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Diversity statement

The City of Monash is inclusive and welcoming, celebrating the diversity of all our community. We want every individual to feel safe, respected and celebrated regardless of our differences of age, race and ethnicity, sex, gender identity and sexuality, ability, faith and religious beliefs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity and/or socioeconomic status.

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Introduction

Arts and culture are woven into everyday life in Monash.

Arts and culture show up in the places where we gather, the events we take part in, the stories that we share, and the many ways that we express our identity, belonging and creativity. From local artists and musicians to libraries, galleries, festivals and creative businesses, these activities contribute to what makes Monash a great place to live, work and spend time.

The **Creative Monash Strategy 2032** outlines how Council will strengthen and support arts, culture, and creative industries over the next five years.
It sets a clear direction for expanding creative opportunities, supporting local practitioners, building audiences and visitors, and making better use of the spaces across our city for creative activity.

The strategy recognises creativity in all its forms, from grassroots community participation and emerging practice to established organisations and commercial creative industries. By setting shared priorities, the strategy will help guide Council planning, partnerships, and investment to ensure that creativity remains visible, valued, and accessible throughout Monash now and into the future.




ECCLES BAKERS

Development of the strategy

The **Creative Monash Strategy 2032** has been developed through a comprehensive process, informed by research, analysis and meaningful engagement with our community and stakeholders. This strategy aligns with Council's Imagine Monash in 2024: our community vision or Council's community vision to be the most liveable city in Victoria by 2040.

Key stages of the development process included:

Community insights and program review
Review of existing programs and a community survey to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities.

Review of previous strategy
Assessment of the previous plan's objectives, goals, and actions to understand achievements and challenges.

Research and sector analysis
Review of key research and trends to inform direction and align with the broader creative sector.

Identification of key themes
Analysis of research and consultation findings to establish key themes for the strategy.

Stakeholder consultation
Engagement with Council staff, community organisations, businesses, and creative practitioners.

Strategic alignment
Consideration of how the strategy aligns with other Council plans, policies, strategies, and frameworks.

Refinement and public exhibition
Refinement of the draft, and incorporation of community feedback before finalisation.

State and federal strategies

Audience Atlas Victoria 2024 - Creative Victoria



Creative State 2028

Creative Victoria



First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Australia Council for the Arts



Creative Space Design Guide Creative Australia

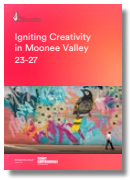


Experience Victoria 2033 Victoria State Government



Council arts strategies

Igniting Creativity 23-27 Moonee Valley Council



Creative Banyule 23-31 Banyule Council



Creative Industries Strategy 25-29 Southwest Council



Arts and Cultural Strategy 21-31 Geelong Council



Creative Programming Framework 25-24 City of Melbourne



Creative Strategy 18-28 City of Melbourne



Internal strategies and plans

Monash Health and Wellbeing Plan 25-29



Monash Community Vision - Imagine Monash 2040



Monash Council Plan 25-29



Monash Economic Development Strategy 26-30



Monash Placemaking Framework

Preliminary Advice Report Monash Programming

Monash Creative Programming Framework

Monash MAPh Strategic Plan

Monash Live Music Action Plan

Monash Public Art Policy

Industry research document

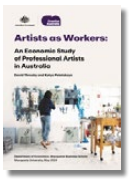
The Arts Ripple Effect Creative Victoria



Belonging Matters 26 MAV



Artists as Workers Creative Australia



Cultural value and economic value in the arts and culture

Patrycja Kaszynska

Planning Framework - Cultural Development Network

Imagine 2035:

Towards an arts And culture system that delivers for all Australians - A New Approach (ANA) Australia's national arts and culture think tan

"The expression of culture has the ability to transcend barriers."

Strategy feedback - why creativity matters



Creativity matters

Creativity plays a vital role in building connected and healthy communities.

Creativity shapes how we express ourselves, how we share culture and stories with others, and how we experience the places in which we live. When we encourage our community to take part in creative activity, whether that is through making, sharing, performing, or experiencing, we are supporting wellbeing, learning, connection, and pride of place.

Many of the benefits of creativity are deeply personal. Feeling inspired or sharing a meaningful experience with others strengthens our confidence, belonging and emotional wellbeing. These outcomes are not always easy to measure, but the benefits are widely recognised as being central to our quality of life and community health.

> ***Creativity plays a role in all our lives. From the design of our homes, schools, workplaces and public spaces, to what we wear, read, watch and listen to, and how we work, learn and connect. Creativity is just as integral to our economy, driving us to come up with new solutions, pursue new ideas, and unlock future growth.***
>
> Creative State 2028 – Victorian Government

Creativity represents approximately 8.5% of the Victorian economy. Investing in creativity is an investment in skills and innovation. Creative industries support jobs, small businesses and portfolio careers, and creative skills such as problem-solving, collaboration and imagination are increasingly important across many sectors.
Creative activity contributes to vibrant neighbourhoods and active public spaces, turning a city into a place that people want to live in, work in and visit.

Council investment in arts aims to ensure that creativity remains accessible, inclusive, and embedded in everyday life, not limited by cost, confidence, or opportunity.

In the City of Monash, arts and cultural experiences bring people together across cultures, generations, and backgrounds, helping to reduce isolation and build understanding. In diverse cities like ours, creativity provides shared spaces where people can meet, learn from one another and feel a sense of belonging.

> ***Social connection is not just a nice idea, it is the very foundation of thriving communities.***
>
> Loneliness to social connection, charting a path to healthier societies, World Health Organization, 2025

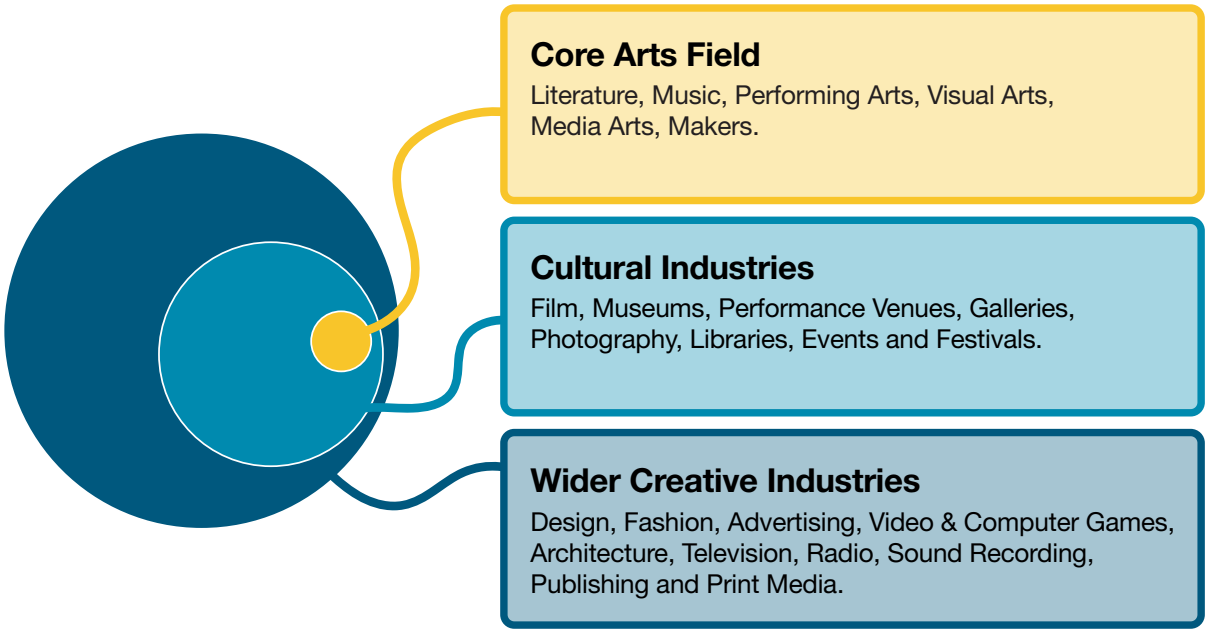
Creativity industries

The City of Monash is home to an active and vibrant arts and culture sector.

‘Creative industries’ is a collective term that describes an evolving mix of creative and cultural sectors that span arts, music, culture, design, performance and screen. It represents a diverse range of activities that produce cultural, social and economic value, from core arts that explore artistic expression, to broader creative and cultural industries in design, screen and commercial work.

> *In 2023–24, the creative economy contributed $41.1 billion to the Victorian economy.*





Core arts

This group includes creatives such as artists, singers, musicians, dancers, actors, writers and sculptors. Participation is typically driven by creative passion or vocation rather than economic return. Many of these creative practitioners supplement their creative practice with other employment, meaning their work is not always accurately reflected in census or workforce data.

Cultural industries

This group produces and presents cultural experiences, events and festivals, and provides venues and platforms for all kinds of creative expression. Examples include cinemas, museums, theatres and other performance venues, galleries, libraries, and a wide range of events and festivals. Cultural industries play a key role in enabling, showcasing and celebrating creative outcomes. Both creative practitioners and non-creative workers and volunteers play important roles in creative organisations.

Wider creative industries

This group encompasses more commercially-oriented creative activity, including sectors such as television and radio, gaming, publishing and print media, graphic and multimedia design, product design, communications, fashion, advertising and architecture. Creative industries often intersect with STEAM fields, using design thinking to develop products and programs, plan cities, and drive innovation. This sector includes both creative and non-creative roles across creative and non-creative organisations.

> ***Creative industries are an evolving mix of sectors spanning arts and culture, screen and design. They cover disciplines as diverse as game development and graphic design, fashion and filmmaking, media and music, comedy and craft; and include activities that are both commercially driven and community-based, experimental and export-intense.***
>
> Live in Melbourne – Creative Industries, Victorian Government

Creative industries in Monash

Creative activities take place in our community spaces, theatres, halls, galleries, libraries, and neighbourhood houses, supporting cultural development through exhibitions, performance, educational programs, and creative cultural events. Creative programming is a key tool in activating open spaces and business districts, and often include partnerships with education, private and public organisations.

The City of Monash is home to the Museum of Australian Photography (MAPh), which is a nationally significant cultural and educational institution, Clayton Theatre, Track Gallery as well as many smaller creative spaces including Lightbox Gallery, Civic Gallery and our artists in residence space, The Shared School. Across our libraries network we celebrate creative community outcomes and instil a love of literature and writing.

Development of our creative industries starts with our artists, who we provide with professional development, mentorships, creative opportunities, and connection with a broader creative community.

Our residents and visitors have access to a growing public art collection, pop-up placemaking and activation opportunities and a thriving festivals and events program.

> ***In 2021, more than 8% of Monash residents were employed in 42 creative occupations, including actors, dancers, visual arts and crafts professionals, multimedia specialists, and web developers.***





Audiences

Understanding who our audiences are and what they care about.

We have used insights from Creative Victoria's 2024 *Audience Atlas Victoria* report to better understand how people in our community engage with creative activities. *Audience Atlas Victoria* identifies eight culture segments, which describe eight broad groups of people who are connected by their values, their motivations, and the things they love, rather than by their demographics.

The report highlights four of these culture segments – **Expression, Affirmation, Stimulation** and **Essence** – as the key audiences to invest in. These people demonstrate high engagement with creative and cultural activities, and their advocacy for the arts helps support the sector financially.

Audiences in Monash

Through connecting to our community and listening to feedback we have refined these to represent segments unique to Monash. By considering our community through a values led lens, we ensure our programs are diverse in their design, inclusive in their approach, and are well considered and innovative to continue to attract these key audiences.

Audience Atlas Victoria provides portraits of the people in these segments by describing what they value, how they approach arts and culture and what their priorities are.

Expression



"Arts and culture celebrate community."

These people are open and enthusiastic about experiences that allow them to feel connected to their community and feel part of something bigger than themselves. They like everyone to be included and will advocate for shared experiences that are accessible and community building.

In Monash, this audience loves attending our community events such as our Clayton Festival, our pop-up creative activations, and our community exhibitions and programs, that allows community to see themselves reflected and feel part of something bigger than themselves.

This is an established audience in Monash.

Affirmation



"Arts and culture expand my knowledge and wellbeing."

These people embrace arts and culture as one of many leisure choices that contributes to their wellbeing. They make well-researched and considered decisions that prioritise and value ongoing self-improvement and quality time with others.

In Monash, this audience enjoys artistic experiences and high-quality exhibitions at MAPh, high profile theatre productions, and programs such as WordFest that provide an opportunity to learn. They seek bespoke cultural experiences that generate connection and understanding. This audience needs time to research and decide if the activity will meet their expectations.

This is an established audience that is growing in Monash.

Stimulation



"Arts and culture are the spice of life."

These people are actively looking for adventure and new experiences to ensure excitement and connection in their lives. They love a big innovative idea or an 'out of the ordinary' experience, will travel just to be a part of something different, and will showcase these experiences to family and friends.

In Monash, this audience seeks programs that have a point of difference like the 'MAPh up late' evening, the immersive event, Emerge, pop-up activations and unique offerings such as our First Nations Stargazing event. They look for stimulating ideas like comedy or film festivals, opportunities to be involved in arts creation, and interactive arts experiences.

This is a developing audience in Monash.

Essence



"Arts and culture is my sanctuary."

These people are passionate about high-quality creative experiences. They consider arts and culture as essential to how they live and experience the world. They tend to avoid or be critical of mainstream offerings. They are looking for curated programs and opportunities for deep connection or meaning through art.

In Monash, this audience looks for deeply emotional connections to art itself through creative programs such as our curator and artist talks, independent play or drama shows, artist studio tours and programming that showcases creative expertise. Artists align to this audience and seek arts immersion through programs such as our creative mentorships and residencies.

This is an evolving and high value audience in Monash.

Our vision

Our vision is for Monash to be an inclusive, thriving city where creativity is part of everyday life, supporting community connection, wellbeing and pride, and providing lasting economic benefit for our community.



Our values

These values grew out of listening.

They reflect what we have learned from conversations with our community, artists, creatives, partners, and staff, and from our work delivering creative programs across Monash. People spoke about the importance of inclusion, access, imagination, connection and belonging. These shared priorities shaped our values, which are grounded in lived experience and the everyday cultural life of our city.

Celebrate diversity

We value all voices and lived experiences.

Creativity for everyone

We make space for everyone to create and participate.

Lead with curiosity

We lead with curiosity, courage, and imagination.

Connect community

We bring people together through culture, collaboration, and shared experiences.

Pride and belonging

We strengthen pride of place and local identity.

> *"Investing in creativity means contributing to a community that positively encourages and respects people's individualism. It provides an implicit acknowledgement that it's ok to be yourself."*
>
> **Strategy feedback - why creativity matters**

Guiding principles

The development and delivery of programs and initiatives for Creative Monash is guided by three clear principles:

CREATE, **DEVELOP** and **SHOWCASE**.

CREATE

Creativity is for everyone.

Opportunities to experience.

Embracing new ideas and creative thinking.

CREATE shapes how Council designs opportunities for people to actively engage with arts and culture as part of everyday life in Monash. It ensures creativity is accessible, inclusive, and relevant to people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

This principle guides our participatory programs, events and creative experiences delivered across neighbourhoods, libraries, public spaces, and community settings. It supports curiosity, cultural expression, and creative thinking, close to where people live and gather.

CREATE is hands on and welcoming – an invitation to take part, have a go, and make something meaningful together.

Accessible, inclusive, and relevant creative experiences will resonate with our **Expression** and **Affirmation** audiences.

DEVELOP

Developing our artists.

Supporting our creative community.

Expanding education and cultural offerings.

DEVELOP guides how Council strengthens the capability, confidence, and sustainability of Monash's creative community. It focuses on supporting local artists, creatives, and cultural organisations to build skills, networks, and pathways across their practice.

This principle prioritises learning, mentoring, peer connection, and local opportunities that support creatives at different stages. It lifts quality across the sector, encourages collaboration, and contributes to a resilient, connected creative ecosystem.

DEVELOP is about supporting our creative sector – sharing knowledge, opening pathways, and helping good ideas grow into lasting practice.

Supporting skills, pathways and creative careers will engage our **Affirmation**, **Stimulation** and **Essence** audiences.

SHOWCASE

Highlight our talented creatives.

Attract investment in creative and cultural tourism.

Bring headline artists to Monash.

SHOWCASE shapes how Council presents arts and culture in Monash, elevating local talent while positioning the city as a place for high quality cultural experiences. It guides the curation and promotion of creative moments that strengthen Monash's identity, liveability, and appeal.

SHOWCASE balances showcasing local excellence with attracting headline artists, major acts, events, and festivals. It uses venues, precincts, and partnerships to increase visibility, draw audiences and build Monash's profile as a creative and cultural destination.

SHOWCASE is the moment the lights go on – when Monash's creativity steps into the spotlight and is celebrated.

High-quality, distinctive creative experiences will attract **Essence** and **Stimulation** audiences and will empower **Expression** audiences to act as advocates.

Our values

Our creative strategy focuses on the people – makers and audiences – places and shared experiences that bring culture to life in Monash.

Celebrating local creativity through events, places and stories also encourages visitors to experience Monash as a vibrant cultural destination that reflects and celebrates our local identity, which supports the local economy.

These four objectives reflect what we want to grow and strengthen over the coming years.

Objective 1: Creative practice and learning



Create meaningful opportunities for people to present and participate in creative activities and help them to build creative careers and explore new pathways.

Objective 2: Audience and sector growth



Build a thriving local creative ecosystem and economy through investment in initiatives that delight existing and new local audiences and attract visitors from outside Monash.

Objective 3: Diversity and wellbeing



Support inclusive creative and cultural experiences that bring people together and support their wellbeing.

Objective 4: Creative spaces and places



Use existing and new spaces in innovative and exciting ways so that creativity is more accessible to everyone and can happen every day.

Together, these four objectives shape a creative Monash that is active, connected, and accessible to all.

More than ever, Australians are engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts for its beauty, power and the understand who we are as a nation. Understanding and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures is essential to Australia's social wellbeing and benefits both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

First Nations Arts and Culture Stategy, Creative Australia



Objective 1:
Creative practice and learning



Create meaningful opportunities for people to present and participate in creative activities and help them to build creative careers and explore new pathways.

Goals

1.1 Develop careers
Provide professional development, programming, and resources for creative practitioners and performers at all career stages.

1.2 Increase connection
Increase networking, collaboration and connection opportunities for local artists and creatives, event organisers, and cultural organisations.

1.3 Foster partnerships
Develop strong industry partnerships to better educate and support career pathways, artist engagement, and professional practice in Monash.

1.4 Inspire learning
Nurture lifelong learning through educational programs that foster creative skills, encourage participation and a lasting passion for arts and culture.

1.5 Celebrate creativity
Increase opportunities and space for artists to create, exhibit, perform, present, and display their work across Monash.

1.6 Support new talent
Support young people and emerging creatives to develop their creative practice through programs, education, showcases, and youth focused initiatives.

What does success look like?

- A thriving and active creative community in Monash.
- New community-led creative programs and initiatives.
- More business opportunities for creative industries.
- Greater public awareness of local artists and creative practitioners.
- Local artists feel supported and celebrated by Council and the community.
- Council support for young and emerging artists.

Objective 2:
Audience and sector growth



Build a thriving local creative ecosystem and economy through investment in initiatives that delight existing and new local audiences and attract visitors from outside Monash.

Goals

2.1 Attract funding
Actively seek sponsorship, funding and investment pathways that support program quality and growth in the creative sector and raise the profile of Monash as a creative and cultural city.

2.2 Cultivate precincts
Invest in emerging creative and cultural precincts through strategic planning and partnerships with creative businesses, governments, and cultural organisations.

2.3 Raise profile
Position and promote the creative industry sector, the cultural tourism it generates, and the visitors it attracts as an economic and social benefit to the City of Monash.

2.4 Increase visibility
Explore opportunities to develop a marketing and brand position that increases visibility and promotion of creative and cultural content across Monash.

2.5 Build audiences
Develop data-informed strategies to grow and diversify audiences by increasing participation and reach.

2.6 Invest in digital
Build digital capability and infrastructure that opens pathways for creative participation, engagement, and long-term sustainability in a changing landscape.

What does success look like?

- Increased sponsorship of creative activities by industry and the private sector.
- Increased state and federal government funding for arts and events-based programs.
- Greater investment in urban design and planning of creative and cultural precincts.
- More public awareness of the valuable contribution that arts, cultural activities, and events make to our economy and quality of life.
- Targeted promotion of cultural tourism initiatives and destination-focused experiences to attract visitors who live outside Monash.
- Well-informed creative programming that aligns with the community's current needs and develops new and wider audiences.

Objective 3:
Diversity and wellbeing



Support inclusive creative and cultural experiences that bring people together and support their wellbeing.

Goals

3.1 Strengthen relationships
Build and sustain relationships with diverse communities, artists, cultural partners, and under-represented and vulnerable groups.

3.2 Support diversity
Embed diversity, equity and wellbeing through policy, frameworks and organisational practice, including sustainable funding and advocacy.

3.3 Enable belonging
Create, develop, and showcase equitable initiatives that enhance accessibility and reflect the diversity of the Monash community.

3.4 Evaluate benefits
Quantify and qualify the cultural and social benefits of arts and culture on community wellbeing and cohesion.

3.5 Ensure safety
Prioritise informed cultural safety for under-represented and vulnerable groups, and multicultural communities across creative initiatives, including following cultural protocols and ensuring protection of First Nations cultural and intellectual property rights.

What does success look like?

- Ongoing partnerships that deliver positive outcomes across our diverse community.
- Considered and equitable approach to our investment in, and programming of, creative activities.
- Positive feedback from formal and informal evaluations of Council-supported creative events and activities.
- Celebration of our diverse community through programs that are culturally safe and accessible to all residents.
- Availability of well-trained staff and adequate resources to support engagement with priority groups.
- Fact-based reporting on the cultural and social benefits of creative and cultural activities for the people of Monash.

Objective 4:
Creative spaces and places



Use existing and new spaces in innovative and exciting ways so that creativity is more accessible to everyone and can happen every day.

Goals

4.1 Plan ahead
Develop and undertake an audit of creative and performing arts spaces to inform and support the future planning, investment, sustainability, and activation across the municipality.

4.2 Activate spaces
Enable affordable, accessible, and adaptable creative spaces across Monash by activating underutilised or nontraditional spaces and ensuring existing and new creative facilities are fit-for-purpose, culturally safe and technically capable.

4.3 Invest wisely
Explore a model that integrates a 'percentage for art' for major capital projects and private development to support new commissions, maintenance, and ongoing activation.

4.4 Strengthen liveability
Strengthen pride and liveability in our local places through investment in new and existing arts trails, festivals, creative events and placemaking that celebrates our local identity.

4.5 Reduce barriers
Stimulate creative activity across Monash by reducing administrative barriers to holding events and programs and partnering with creative organisations to deliver local outcomes.

4.6 Manage assets
Develop and maintain responsible management of Monash's creative and cultural assets, ensuring collections are preserved to support their public value and long-term legacy.

What does success look like?

- Futureproofing of our creative spaces and places.
- Council support for investment in creative spaces that align with our planning guidelines.
- More opportunities for artists to activate new or underused spaces.
- Increase in positive feedback and pride about living in Monash.
- More visitors from outside Monash to our places and spaces.
- Streamlined permit processes for cultural and creative events and festivals.
- Creation of easy-to-use self-learning resources for Council staff and the public to help with the design and delivery of creative events and programs.

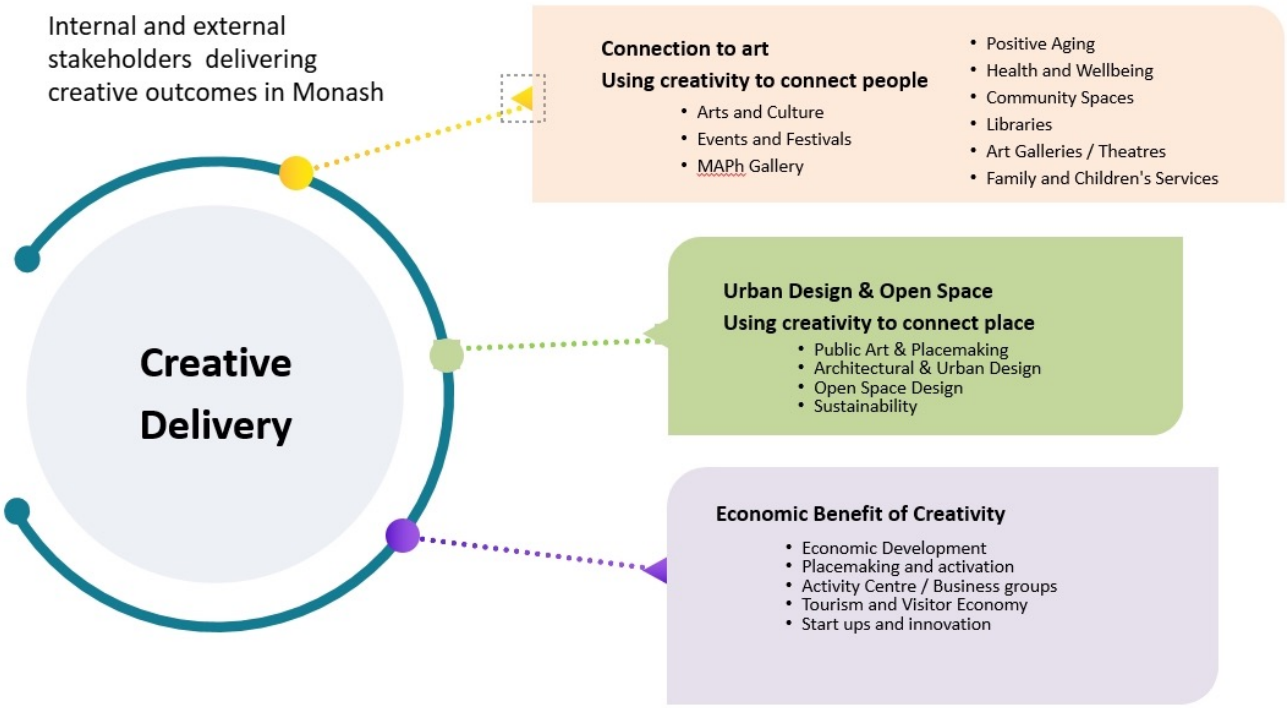
Implementation and delivery

The **Creative Monash Strategy 2032** will be delivered through an annual action plan that sets out clear priorities for all creative, cultural, and arts-based programs and activities in the City of Monash.

The action plan will be updated and presented annually to ensure that we remain adaptable to shifts in community sentiment and need, ensure budget commitment and Council support, and continue to encourage diverse and equitable representation.

We will:

- Use the three program principles CREATE, DEVELOP and SHOWCASE to ensure a balanced program across our key audience segments.
- Collaborate across Council teams to increase our capacity to deliver creative outcomes in Monash.
- Apply industry best practice to our programs and initiatives, and stay informed on current creative research, to better advocate for our creative community.
- Stay connected to our community and regularly align our vision, strategy, and programming to meet changing needs.





"I just wanted to say thank you to Monash for putting on such a lovely event, I didn't know any of the performers but they were all great".

Live at Warrawee – vox pop with attendee

Evaluation

The Creative Monash Strategy 2032 will be evaluated using qualitative and quantitative metrics to measure our progress and evaluate how successfully the outcomes contribute to improved social connection, liveability, and visitation.

It can be difficult to apply direct evaluation methods to the impacts of creativity. Many benefits are intrinsic or intangible in nature, and create social impacts that are frequently multilayered, subjective and context dependent. The value of the arts cannot be captured through a single metric because each outcome generates complex, and sometimes deeply personal, experiences.

Cultural value has been described as 'irreducibly social'. This means that, although investment in the arts is known to create economic benefit, it cannot be measured with the same tools that are used to evaluate economic value.

Any meaningful evaluation of creative and cultural outcomes in Monash must include a mix of qualitative and quantitative data that is tailored to each individual program or experience. Our evaluation will use a combination of methods to assess the indicators of success described for each of the four objectives.

We will:

- Proactively include feedback tools into our cultural activities to collect a wide range of formal and informal responses using surveys, translation services, and in-person verbal and written comments.
- Seek out and report on quantitative data that determines the impact of creative and cultural activities on economic benefit, visitation, and participation.
- Gather and celebrate stories of success and growth that demonstrate the outcomes of our creative development efforts.
- Use a proven framework, such as the one developed by the Cultural Development Network, to measure the outcomes of cultural engagement.



"Being in creative spaces can be inspiring, help meet new people and find new community."

Strategy feedback - why creativity matters

Appendices

- Our community – Data and what makes up Monash.
- What we heard from the community
- Gender Impact Assessment
- Programming Framework


#ThisIsMonash

CITY OF
MONASH

Monash Civic Centre | 293 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley, 3150 | 8.30am to 5pm | Monday to Friday
Oakleigh Service Centre | 3 Atherton Road, Oakleigh, 3166 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday
9518 3555 www.monash.vic.gov.au mail@monash.vic.gov.au NRS 1800 555 660

Monash Interpreter Service

普通话	4713 5001	Việt Ngữ	4713 5003	हिंदी	4713 5005	한국어	4713 5010	தமிழ்	4713 5021
廣東話	4713 5002	Ελληνικά	4713 5004	Italiano	4713 5008	සිංහල	4713 5020	Other languages	4713 5000