

Federal Budget Proposal – **Beyond the Walls**

Beyond the Walls, delivered in partnership with NSW Youth Justice, is a powerful, professional and innovative solution to rising violence and recidivism among young people in Youth Justice Centres.

Beyond the Walls is particularly relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, who are 24 times more likely to be incarcerated, making them the most incarcerated people in the world.

“Culture is prevention”

- The International Conference on Youth Mental Health 2019

Youth Justice Centres noted significant decreases in conflict and violence among detainees who had participated in the program in 2019.

“I can honestly say that the Beyond the Walls project was the pinnacle of all projects that Reiby has been involved with.”

- Reiby Youth Justice Centre Program Manager, NSW

KEY RECCOMENDATION

The Federal Government provides increased funding for Youth Justice programs to work with Phunktional Arts and build on the successful pilot in 2020, extending the program to include Orana Youth Justice Centre in Dubbo and other regional centres. Young people in custody will:

- Increase their confidence and cohesion
- Decrease their violent and antisocial behaviour
- Reduce their rates of recidivism



Justice
Juvenile Justice

Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre
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June 8, 18

To whom it may concern,

Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre would like to express support for Phunktional's *A Touch of Grace: empowering young people in custody* project in the greater Sydney region. We believe in the power of the arts to have positive and healing benefits for everyone involved, and for the community at large.

We want to work with Phunktional to deliver an arts program at Reiby that promotes positive movement and leadership for our young people. As part of the project, we would like to host a performance of *A Touch of Grace* and hold dance workshops for up to 45 young people.

Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre is located at Airds near Campbelltown, with a capacity for 55 young people. The centre offers a range of health, educational and spiritual services to the young people, including individual case management, specialised counselling, and training in job and living skills. We need programs that promote health and well-being, and Phunktional's program is an excellent fit for our young people.

Your support will make it possible for the young people at Reiby to participate in the world class performance process and workshops Phunktional are offering us.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

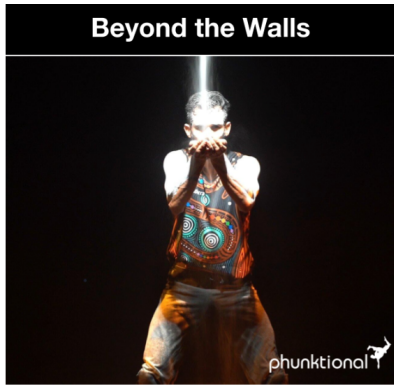
Sincerely,

Peter Bartolo
A/ Assistant Manager
Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre

Please note, Beyond the Walls was formerly known as A Touch of Grace.

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Beyond the Walls

12 December
at
Sydney Opera House

BOOK NOW

Beyond the Walls, the exquisite dance performance choreographed by young people in custody in NSW Youth Justice Centres will be presented at the Sydney Opera House at 7:00pm on Thursday 12th December. With an audience rating of 5 out of 5, this show will be a unique event not to be missed!

"I can honestly say that the Beyond the Walls project was the pinnacle of all projects that Reiby has been involved with."

Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre

"...one of the best productions that we have had the privilege to host here at Redfern."

Redfern Community Centre

"What was the best part of the show?"

"Everything"

Young people in custody



In conversation about Beyond the Walls

19 November
at
NSW Parliament

RSVP NOW

Phunktional and Amnesty International will present conversations about Beyond the Walls at NSW Parliament.

- Special guest performances by young people from Redfern Community Centre
- Hear from and speak with professional dancers that worked with young people in custody
- A panel discussion that includes celebrity journalist Lola Forester from Koorie Radio

When: 12:30pm - 1.20pm, 19th November

Where: Jubilee Room, NSW Parliament House

The event is free and open to the public but has limited spaces, if you would like to attend please RSVP now.

Please feel free to forward this invitation on to friends and family who are passionate about creative arts opportunities for young people, and may wish to attend.

Please don't hesitate to contact us for further details.
Stefan Bellas-Nekvapil - Administrator
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Beyond The Walls 2019

Audience Survey

Conducted for: Phunktional Ltd

Survey design and analysis: Ebony Hack

Report date: 15 July 2019



Everything
*Juvenile Justice Centre 2,
Aboriginal aged 18 or under*

All of it!
*Juvenile Justice Centre 2,
aged 18 or under*

AMAZEBALLS "ENCORE ENCORE"
*Juvenile Justice Centre 2,
aged 18 or under*

Awesome show!
*Campbelltown Arts Centre,
Aboriginal aged 19 to 49*

Everything in the show
was a pleasure to watch!
*Campbelltown Arts Centre,
male aged 19 to 49*

Contemporary stories - real sense
of connection, representation,
of difficulties faced.
Campbelltown Arts Centre, male aged 19 to 49

Thinking about what it is
giving to the young people
*Campbelltown Arts Centre,
Aboriginal aged 19 to 49*

Professionally,
a very good production.
*Campbelltown Arts Centre,
male aged 19 to 49*

The energy, focus and
determination that radiated out
from these beautiful creations.
Redfern Community Centre, aged 19 to 49

Inspirational dancing
*Redfern Community Centre,
aged 19 to 49*

That our young aboriginal people
allow us to see their
talent shine tonight
Redfern Community Centre, aged 50 to 64

Both the performers and discussion
were beautiful, and I'm so thankful
to have experienced them.
Redfern Community Centre, female aged 19 to 49

The talent, dedication and creativity in
portraying the voices and truth of the young
people was truly fantastic. WELL DONE!
Redfern Community Centre, aged 19 to 49

This is a great way to start the
conversation and include everyone
without judgement/discrimination.
Redfern Community Centre, female aged 19 to 49

What an excellent initiative.
*Redfern Community Centre,
female aged 19 to 49*

The reality of it. The personal stories and
thoughts of those imprisoned. It was
really moving to see THEIR expression.
Redfern Community Centre, aged 19 to 49

The underlying meaning behind
each piece was mind-blowing
and very thought provoking!
Bankstown Arts Centre, aged 19 to 49

Amazing, uplifting, energetic
*Redfern Community Centre,
female aged 19 to 49*

Empowering on the
detainees' behalf
Bankstown Arts Centre, 19 to 49

Great, deep, fantastic, fun
*Redfern Community Centre,
female aged 50 to 64*

All the best shows ARE STRANGE
*Redfern Community Centre,
Aboriginal aged 19 to 49*

Hopeful and beautiful
*Redfern Community Centre,
aged 19 to 49*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall impressions and the best parts

The Beyond The Walls performances were received extremely well by survey respondents in all four locations. For the overall impression question all selected the very happy smiley except for one who chose the happy smiley, resulting in a rating 5 out of 5.

The top five terms used to describe the show were **interesting** (70.0%), **awesome** (63.3%), **inspiring** (61.1%), **exciting** (52.2%) and **valuable** (52.2%).

The bottom five terms were **good** (16.7%), **challenging** (16.7%), **OK** (3.3%), **boring** (1.1%) and **strange** (1.1%).

Of the 20 'other' comments, the word **amazing** featured in 24%, **emotional** in 12.0%, and **fantastic** in 8.0%.

Almost a third of comments in response to the question about the best part of the show fell under the theme 'everything' (29.9%). At Juvenile Justice Centre 2, eight of the twelve comments were in this theme.

The next highest three themes about the best part of the show were aspects of the show format (14.9%), the storytelling (13.8%) and the performers or Q&A (11.5%).

Social disadvantages

Themes in the performance of social isolation (79.0%) and discrimination (70.4%) featured strongest for audience members, with two other themes featuring for just under half of the audience – violence (48.1%) and bullying (40.7%).

Social isolation featured strongest for Campbelltown Arts Centre at 100% of respondents, with other options much less prevalent. For Redfern Community Centre social isolation (81.6%) was closely followed by discrimination (71.4%). Three themes were similar for Bankstown Arts Centre – social isolation and discrimination both at 75% closely followed by violence at 66.7%.

All options were selected by respondents at all four performance venues, except for at Juvenile Justice Centre 2 where no-one chose sexual assault. Sexual assault was only selected by the 19 to 49 age group but it was lowest scoring at 22.2%, and that group selected social isolation more than any other group (84.1%).

64.9% of respondents said one or more of the social disadvantages had happened to them. This was highest for Bankstown Arts Centre (75.0%), followed by Redfern Community Centre (68.2%), then Campbelltown Arts Centre (60.0%), but only 45.5% at Juvenile Justice Centre 2.

For those who had not experienced social disadvantages, social isolation featured more in the show than for those who had experienced social disadvantages (90.5% versus 79.2%). Discrimination featured slightly less however (71.4% versus 75.0%), as did bullying (33.3% versus 47.9%) and violence (42.9% versus 52.1%).

The three C's: community, creativity and connection

Three quarters (75%) of respondents were inspired by the show to be more open to other cultures. Roughly two thirds were inspired to be more creative (65.5%) and/or pursue more opportunities (64.3%). Over half (58.3%) were inspired to deal with challenges in their life.

Bankstown Arts Centre and Juvenile Justice Centre 2 were particularly inspired, with 90.0% at Bankstown inspired to pursue more opportunities, and 90.9% at Juvenile Justice Centre 2 inspired to be more open to other cultures.

Recommendations to improve the event

Areas for improvement were grouped into four themes: suggestions regarding production aspects (72.9%), audience building activity so more people can see the show (20.8%), evaluation – feedback about the survey design (4.2%) and funding to allow the program to continue (2.1%).

Marketing channels

Word of mouth (friends/family or knowing a performer) was the key marketing channel for audience members attending the show in Campbelltown, Redfern and Bankstown. Seven comments on how to improve the event were suggestions to increase advertising, marketing and publicity so more people could experience it next time.

Media activity was most successful for Campbelltown Arts Centre (18.2%), with no one selecting it at Bankstown Arts Centre and only 10.0% at Redfern Community Centre.

Online activity was most successful for Bankstown Arts Centre (30.8%), followed by Redfern Community Centre at 24.0%. Only one person (9.1%) chose online at Campbelltown Arts Centre.

Demographic summary

- Roughly 92.3% of Bankstown and Campbelltown respondents were aged from 19 to 49 and 79.2% of respondents at the Redfern performance. 11.3% at Redfern were aged 50 to 64, one (1.9%) aged 65 or over and two (3.8%) aged 18 or under.
- A quarter of respondents were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander - 23.9% Aboriginal and 1.1% (one) Torres Strait Islander.
- Seven (7.6%) of respondents identify as LGBT+, and all were aged 19 to 49.
- 22.8% of respondents identify as multilingual with similar proportions at Bankstown, Campbelltown and Redfern. No respondents at Juvenile Justice Centre 2 identify as multilingual.
- 43.5% have a Bachelor degree, 19.6% a Trade/TAFE qualification, 17.4% a postgraduate degree and 13% secondary school education. One Aboriginal respondent aged 18 or under is in or did not continue past primary education, and one Aboriginal aged 19 to 49 did not continue past primary education.

SURVEY DESIGN AND DISTRIBUTION

Survey design

A visual, simplified style was used to increase the response rate with an audience who was expected to be culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD). See Appendix A for the survey.

Areas covered by the survey:

- Overall impression of the show
- Descriptive adjectives to describe the show
- Identification with social disadvantages such as bullying, violence and discrimination
- Community and connection
- Areas to improve
- The best part of the show
- How people heard about the show
- General demographics

Limitations

Some social desirability bias may be present, whereby participants provide what they consider to be a socially acceptable answer, rather than their true opinions.

Deliberate or non-deliberate selection error may be present. For example, one respondent at Juvenile Justice Centre 2 said they were aged 65 or over however none in that age group were present, and another centre resident aged 18 or under said they were a full time worker which is not possible.

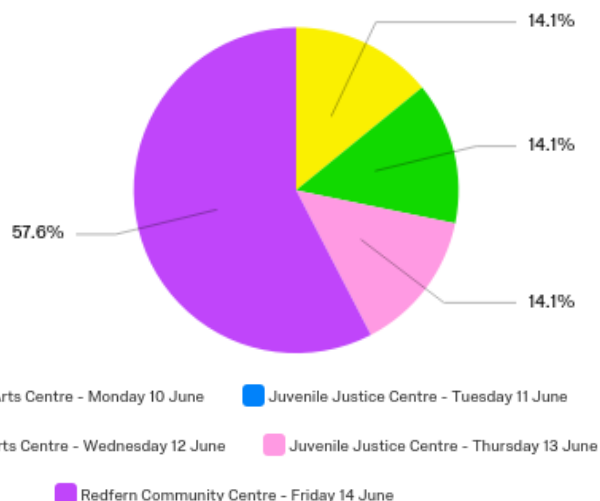
It was not possible to ensure all questions were completed as respondents were not supervised while completing the survey. Additionally, the simplified survey style meant for some questions, or for some skipped questions, non-response could be interpreted in three ways - 'no', 'prefer not to say', or that the person skipped the question for another reason such as time constraints or the survey design itself.

Non-responses to questions have been excluded from the results except where specified, for example in questions where it is unclear if not selecting a choice such as LGBT+ meant it was skipped or did not apply, or if the response rate to the question was low.

Distribution and response rates

Audience members were invited to complete a one-page paper survey after performances held in four locations. 92 responses were received, with just over half (57.6%) from the Redfern Community Centre performance and the remainder evenly spread across three other locations. The performance at Juvenile Justice Centre 1 (Tuesday 11 June) could not proceed due to circumstances beyond Phunktional's control.

Respondent location	%	Count
Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	57.6%	53
Juvenile Justice Centre - Tuesday 11 June	0.0%	0
Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June	14.1%	13
Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June	14.1%	13
Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June	14.1%	13
Total	100%	92



Most questions about the show, age and education level were answered by a high or very high proportion of respondents, but responses about gender and nationality were much lower than expected.

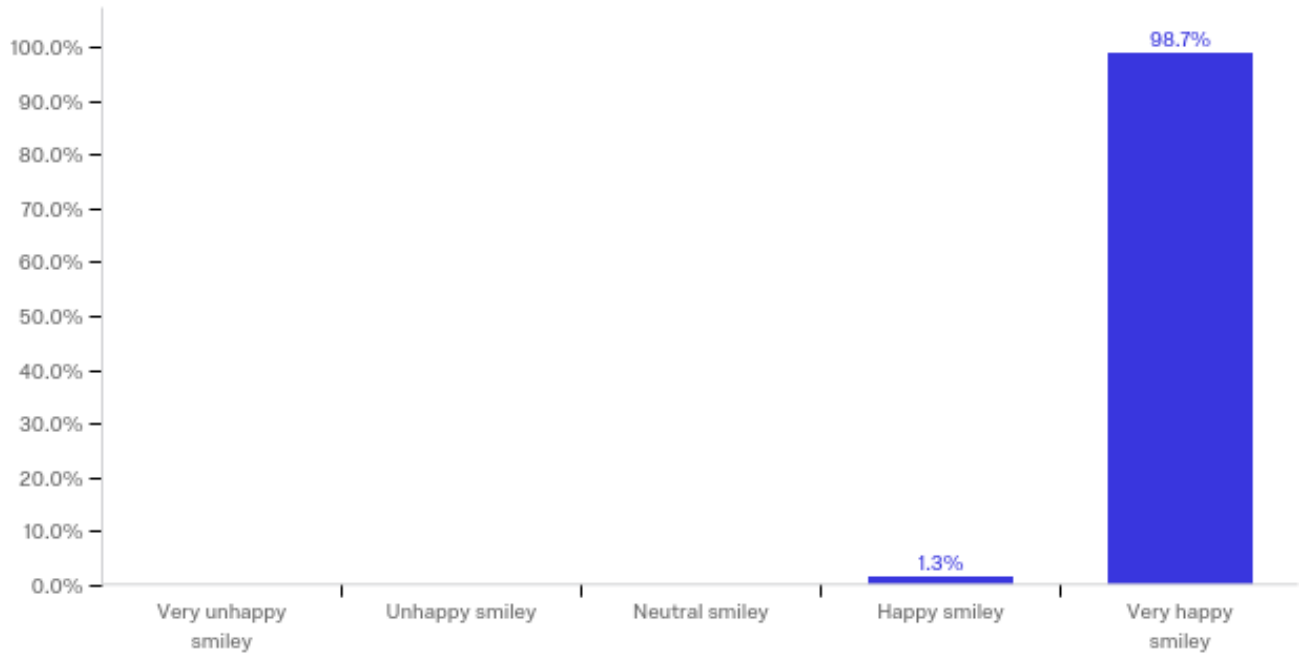
Question	% responded
My overall impression	81.5%
The show was...	97.8%
The show got me thinking about...	88.0%
Have any of these happened to you?	83.7%
The show inspired me to...	91.3%
I heard about the show...	94.6%
The event could be improved by...	69.6%
The best part was...	87.0%
About me – gender	23.9%
About me – nationality	56.5%
My age	97.8%
My education level	95.7%

RESULTS

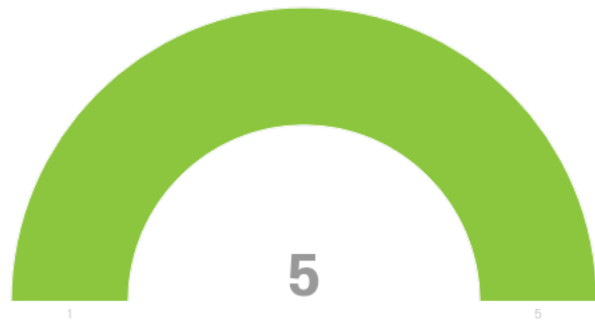
Overall impressions

Respondents were overwhelmingly positive, with all selecting the very happy smiley except for one Redfern Community Centre audience member aged 19 to 49 who selected the happy smiley, resulting in an overall rating of 5 out of 5.

Q2 - My overall impression (81.5% responded)



Answer	%	Count
Very unhappy smiley	0.0%	0
Unhappy smiley	0.0%	0
Neutral smiley	0.0%	0
Happy smiley	1.3%	1
Very happy smiley	98.7%	74
Total	100%	75



Show descriptors

The top five terms used to describe the show were **interesting** (70.0%), **awesome** (63.3%), **inspiring** (61.1%), **exciting** (52.2%) and **valuable** (52.2%).

The bottom five terms were **good** (16.7%), **challenging** (16.7%), **OK** (3.3%), **boring** (1.1%) and **strange** (1.1%).

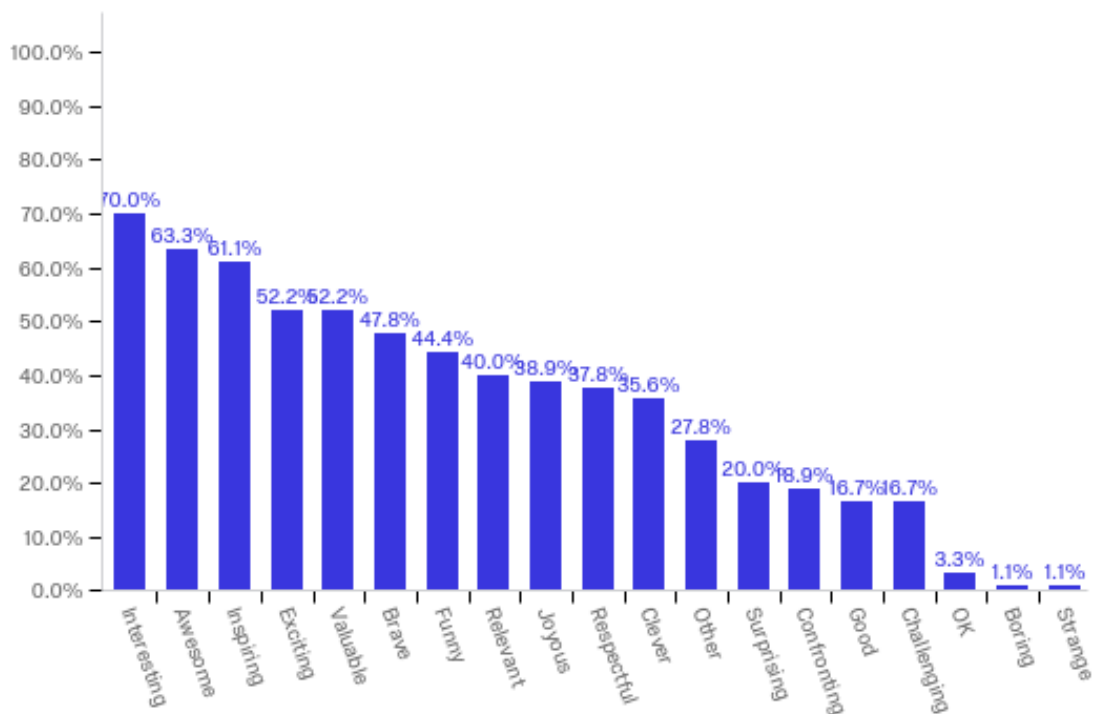
The following words were, encouragingly, not selected at all: annoying, awful, confusing, disrespectful, embarrassing, ordinary.

Of the 20 'other' comments, the word **amazing** featured in 24%, **emotional** in 12.0%, and **fantastic** in 8.0%.

Least selected terms were more negative for the community and art centre respondents but more positive for the respondents at Juvenile Justice Centre 2.

Least selected terms were all positive for the 18 or under group, although 'challenging' (selected least) could be interpreted as positive or negative. Least selected terms were also all positive for the 65 and over age group, but the other two age groups had more negative terms.

Q3 - The show was... (97.8% responded)

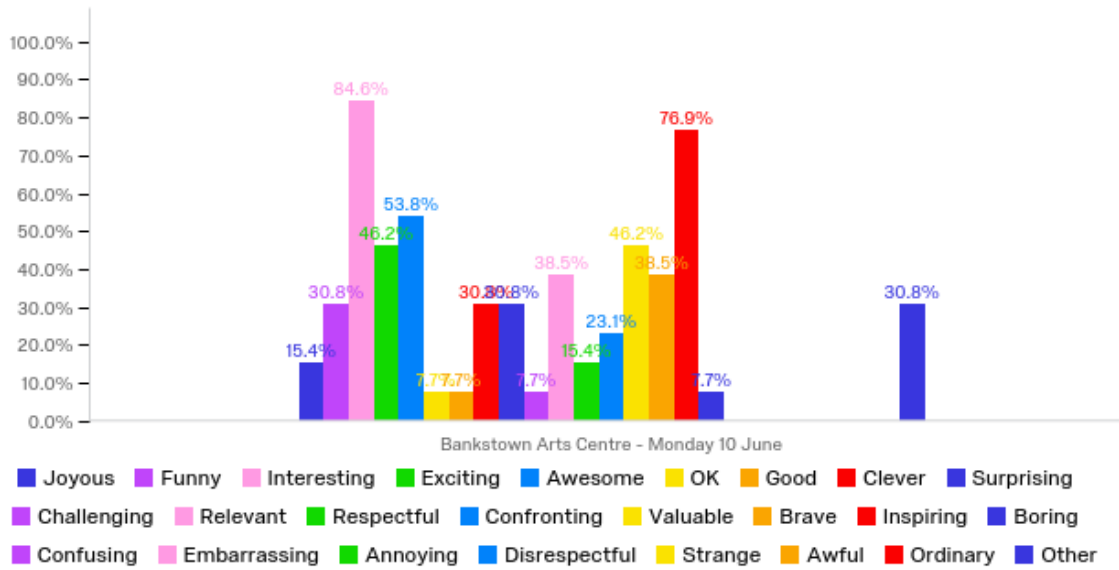


	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June	Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June	Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June	Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June
Top five terms	Interesting (84.6%) Inspiring (76.9%) Awesome (53.8%) Exciting (46.2%) Valuable (46.2%)	Valuable (76.9%) Inspiring (69.2%) Interesting (61.5%) Awesome (53.8%) Challenging and brave (46.2% each)	Exciting (61.5%) Funny (53.8%) Interesting (53.8%) Good (53.8%) Awesome and inspiring (46.2% each)	Awesome (72.5%) Interesting (72.5%) Brave (58.8%) Exciting (58.8%) Inspiring (58.8%)
Bottom five terms	Respectful (15.4%) Boring (7.7%) Challenging (7.7%) Good (7.7%) OK (7.7%)	Six terms share next highest score Boring (7.7%) Disrespectful (7.7%)	Three terms share next highest score Brave (15.4%) Surprising (15.4%) Challenging (7.7%) Respectful (7.7%)	Other (19.6%) Challenging (13.7%) Good (13.7%) OK (3.9%) Strange (2.0%)

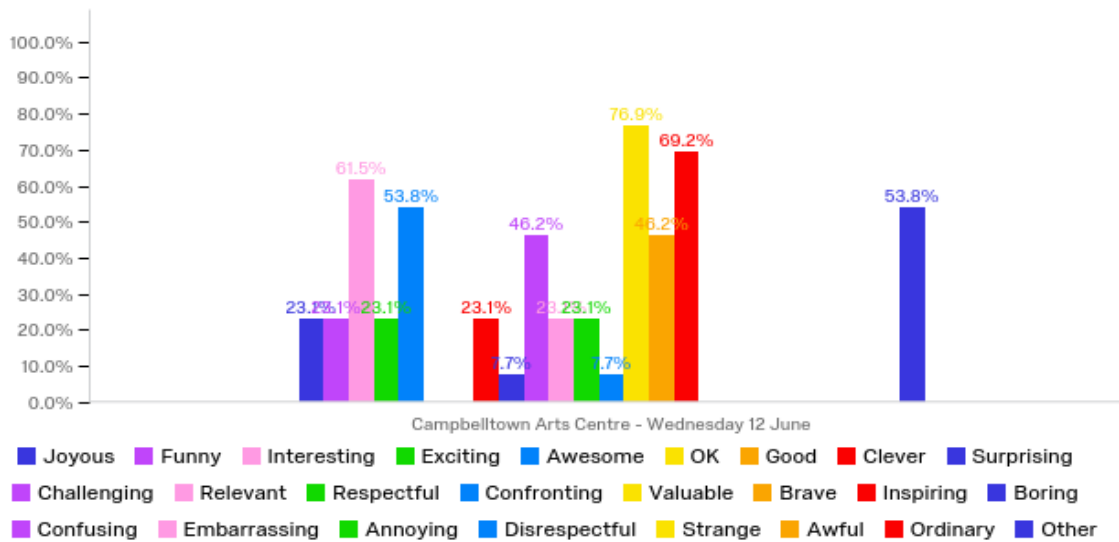
	0-18	19-49	50-64	65+
Top five terms	Exciting (64.3%) Funny (57.1%) Interesting (57.1%) Good (57.1%) Inspiring (57.1%)	Interesting (75.4%) Inspiring (69.2%) Awesome (63.1%) Valuable (60.0%) Brave (56.9% each)	Awesome (100%) Interesting (66.7%) Joyous, exciting, clever, relevant, respectful, valuable (50% each)	Awesome (100%) Funny (50.0%) Interesting (50.0%) Exciting (50.0%) Not enough other options
Bottom five terms	Four terms share next highest score Joyous (21.4%) Respectful (14.3%) Surprising (14.3%) Challenging (7.1%)	Challenging (16.9%) Good (7.7%) OK (3.1%) Boring (1.5%) Strange (1.5%)	Seven terms share next highest score Confronting (16.7%) OK (16.7%)	Joyous (25.0%) Challenging (25.0%) Relevant (25.0%) Valuable (25.0%) Not enough other options

Performance location	Verbatim 'other' text	About me - gender	My age	About me – Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander
Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June	Educational	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	empowering on the detainees' behalf	No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	Extraordinary	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Thought provoking	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June	Amazing	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Amazing	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Emotional	No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	Emotive	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	FUKN BRILLIANT	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Out of the box	Non-binary	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Powerful	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June	AMAZEBALLS "ENCORE ENCORE"	No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response
	Amazing	No response	0-18	Aboriginal
	Amazing	No response	0-18	Aboriginal
	Fantastic	No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response
Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	All the best shows ARE STRANGE	No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	Amazing, uplifting, energetic	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	beautiful	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	emotionally intense	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	EPIC!	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Great, deep, fantastic, fun	Female	50-64	Not ATSI or no response
	Hopeful and beautiful	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Just inspiring and excellent	No response	50-64	Not ATSI or no response
	Spiritual	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Thought provoking	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response

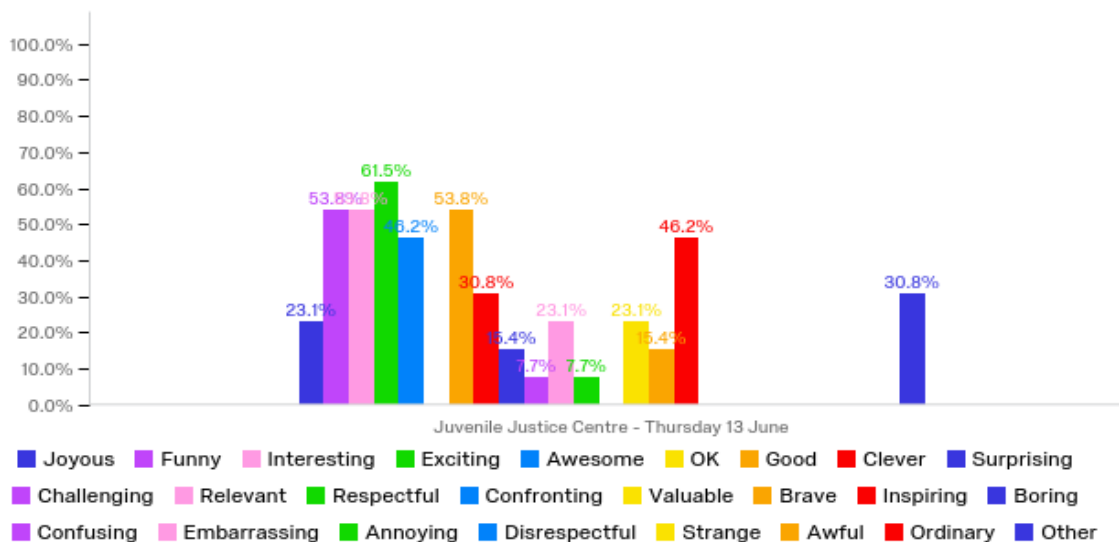
Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June



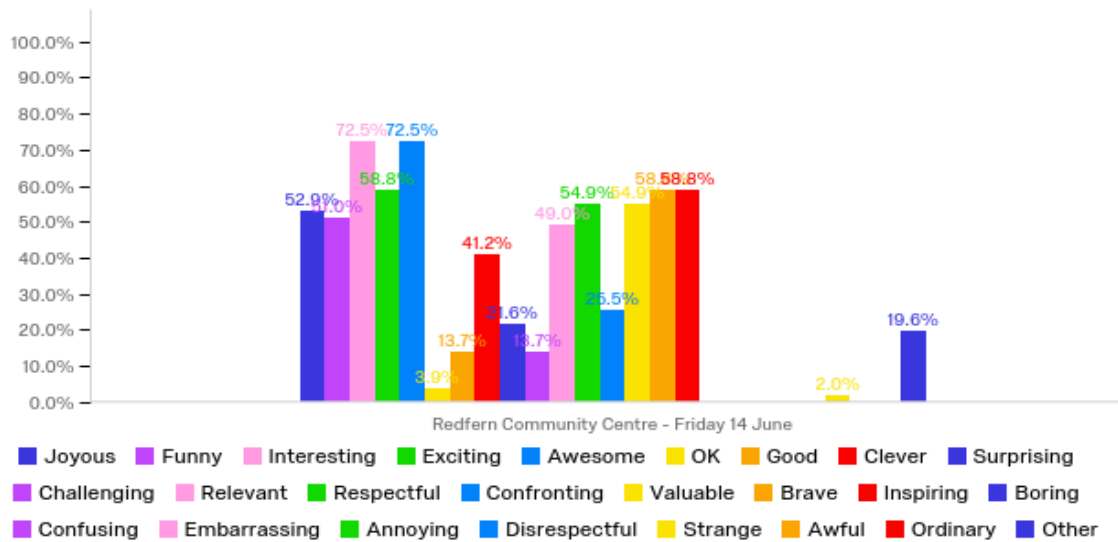
Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June



Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June

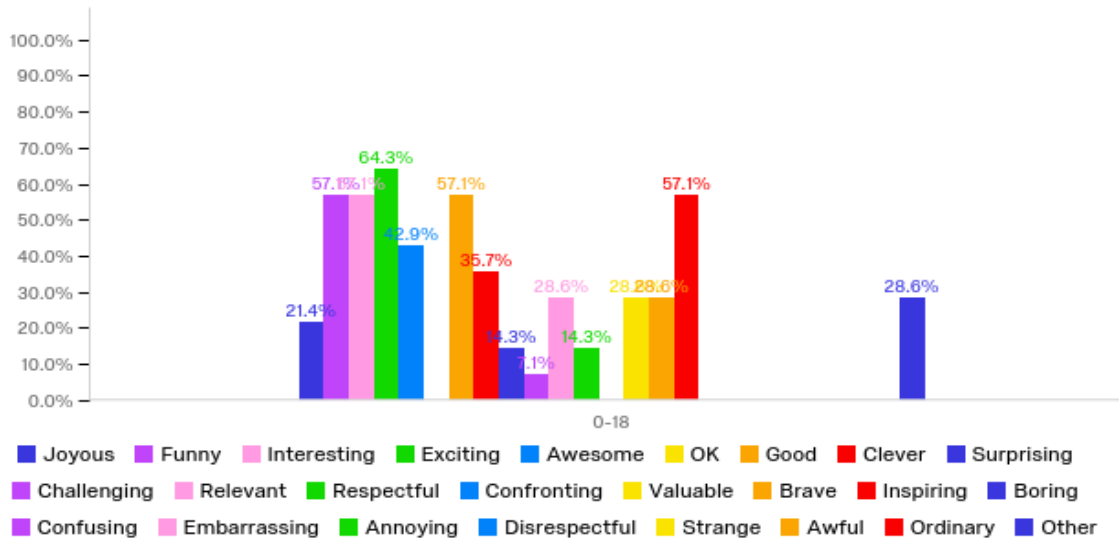


Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June

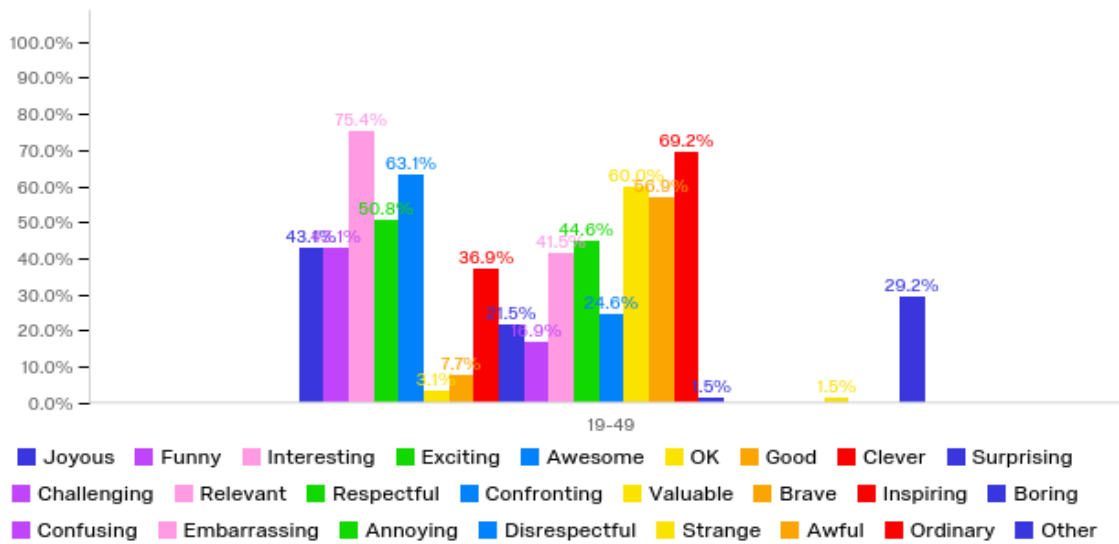


Answer	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June		Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June		Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June		Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June		Total %	Total Count
Joyous	15.4%	2	23.1%	3	23.1%	3	52.9%	27	38.9%	35
Funny	30.8%	4	23.1%	3	53.8%	7	51.0%	26	44.4%	40
Interesting	84.6%	11	61.5%	8	53.8%	7	72.5%	37	70.0%	63
Exciting	46.2%	6	23.1%	3	61.5%	8	58.8%	30	52.2%	47
Awesome	53.8%	7	53.8%	7	46.2%	6	72.5%	37	63.3%	57
OK	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	3.9%	2	3.3%	3
Good	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	53.8%	7	13.7%	7	16.7%	15
Clever	30.8%	4	23.1%	3	30.8%	4	41.2%	21	35.6%	32
Surprising	30.8%	4	7.7%	1	15.4%	2	21.6%	11	20.0%	18
Challenging	7.7%	1	46.2%	6	7.7%	1	13.7%	7	16.7%	15
Relevant	38.5%	5	23.1%	3	23.1%	3	49.0%	25	40.0%	36
Respectful	15.4%	2	23.1%	3	7.7%	1	54.9%	28	37.8%	34
Confronting	23.1%	3	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	25.5%	13	18.9%	17
Valuable	46.2%	6	76.9%	10	23.1%	3	54.9%	28	52.2%	47
Brave	38.5%	5	46.2%	6	15.4%	2	58.8%	30	47.8%	43
Inspiring	76.9%	10	69.2%	9	46.2%	6	58.8%	30	61.1%	55
Boring	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.1%	1
Confusing	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Embarrassing	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Annoying	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Disrespectful	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Strange	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	2.0%	1	1.1%	1
Awful	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Ordinary	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Other	30.8%	4	53.8%	7	30.8%	4	19.6%	10	27.8%	25
Total	Total	13	Total	13	Total	13	Total	51	100%	90

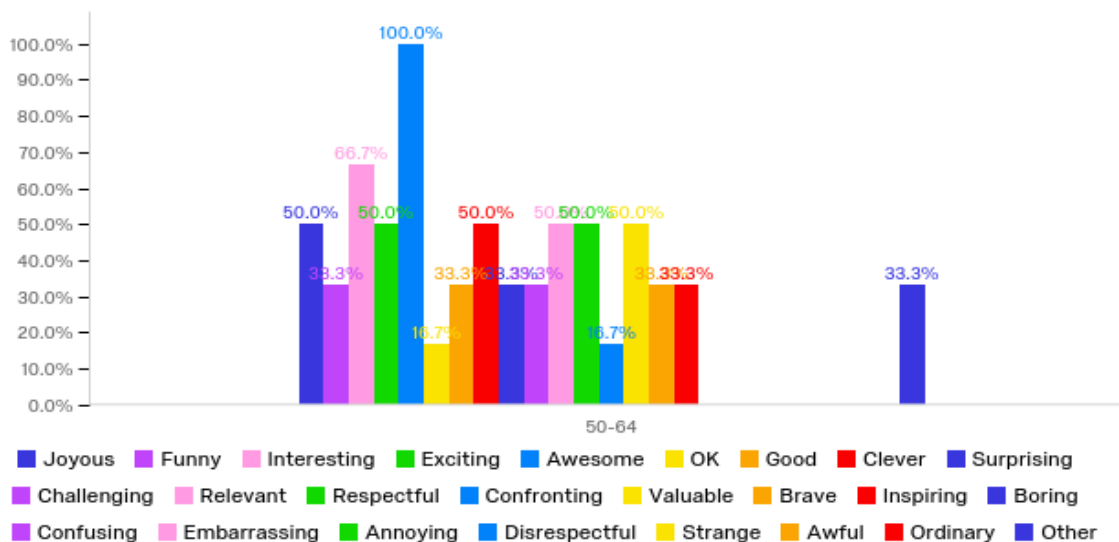
0-18 age group



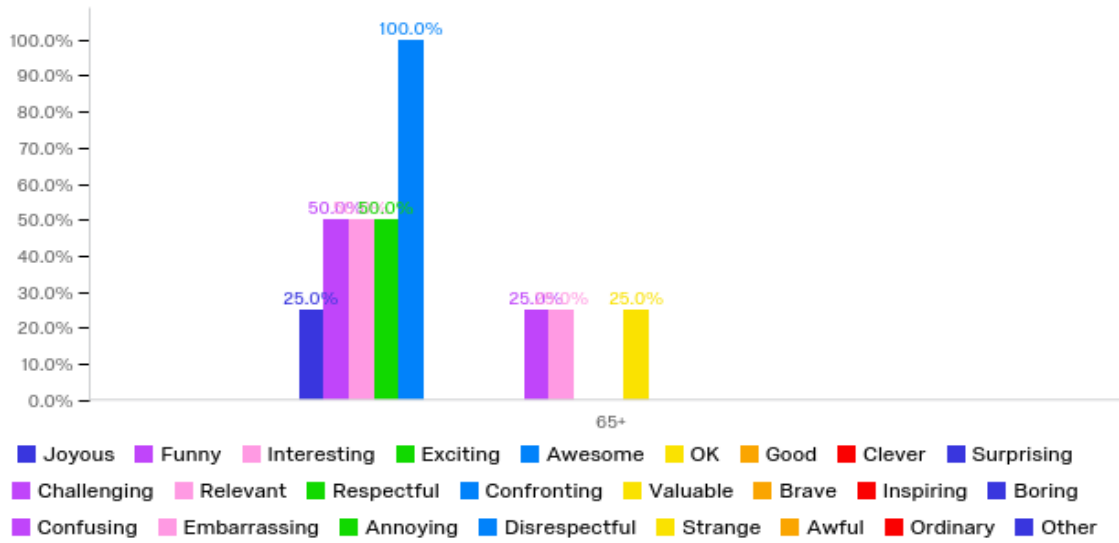
19-49 age group



50-64 age group



65+ age group



Question	0-18		19-49		50-64		65+		No response		Total %	Total Count
Joyous	21.4%	3	43.1%	28	50.0%	3	25.0%	1	0.0%	0	38.9%	35
Funny	57.1%	8	43.1%	28	33.3%	2	50.0%	2	0.0%	0	44.4%	40
Interesting	57.1%	8	75.4%	49	66.7%	4	50.0%	2	0.0%	0	70.0%	63
Exciting	64.3%	9	50.8%	33	50.0%	3	50.0%	2	0.0%	0	52.2%	47
Awesome	42.9%	6	63.1%	41	100.0%	6	100.0%	4	0.0%	0	63.3%	57
OK	0.0%	0	3.1%	2	16.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	3.3%	3
Good	57.1%	8	7.7%	5	33.3%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	16.7%	15
Clever	35.7%	5	36.9%	24	50.0%	3	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	35.6%	32
Surprising	14.3%	2	21.5%	14	33.3%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	20.0%	18
Challenging	7.1%	1	16.9%	11	33.3%	2	25.0%	1	0.0%	0	16.7%	15
Relevant	28.6%	4	41.5%	27	50.0%	3	25.0%	1	100.0%	1	40.0%	36
Respectful	14.3%	2	44.6%	29	50.0%	3	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	37.8%	34
Confronting	0.0%	0	24.6%	16	16.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	18.9%	17
Valuable	28.6%	4	60.0%	39	50.0%	3	25.0%	1	0.0%	0	52.2%	47
Brave	28.6%	4	56.9%	37	33.3%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	47.8%	43
Inspiring	57.1%	8	69.2%	45	33.3%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	61.1%	55
Boring	0.0%	0	1.5%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.1%	1
Confusing	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Embarrassing	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Annoying	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Disrespectful	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Strange	0.0%	0	1.5%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.1%	1
Awful	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Ordinary	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Other	28.6%	4	29.2%	19	33.3%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	27.8%	25
Total	Total	14	Total	65	Total	6	Total	4	Total	1	100%	90

Social disadvantages

Themes of social isolation (79.0%) and discrimination (70.4%) featured strongest for respondents. Other options were selected by less than 50% of respondents.

Social isolation (100%) featured strongest for Campbelltown Arts Centre, and discrimination (75%) for Juvenile Justice Centre 2. Three featured strongly for Bankstown Arts Centre – social isolation and discrimination at 75.0% each and violence at 66.7%. Featuring strongest for Redfern Community Centre were social isolation (81.6%) and discrimination (71.4%).

All options were selected by respondents at all four performance venues, except for at Juvenile Justice Centre 2 where no-one chose sexual assault. Sexual assault was only selected by the 19 to 49 age group but it was lowest scoring at 22.2%, and that group selected social isolation more than any other group (84.1%).

Additional aspects relating to social disadvantages that respondents mentioned in verbatim comments to other questions were:

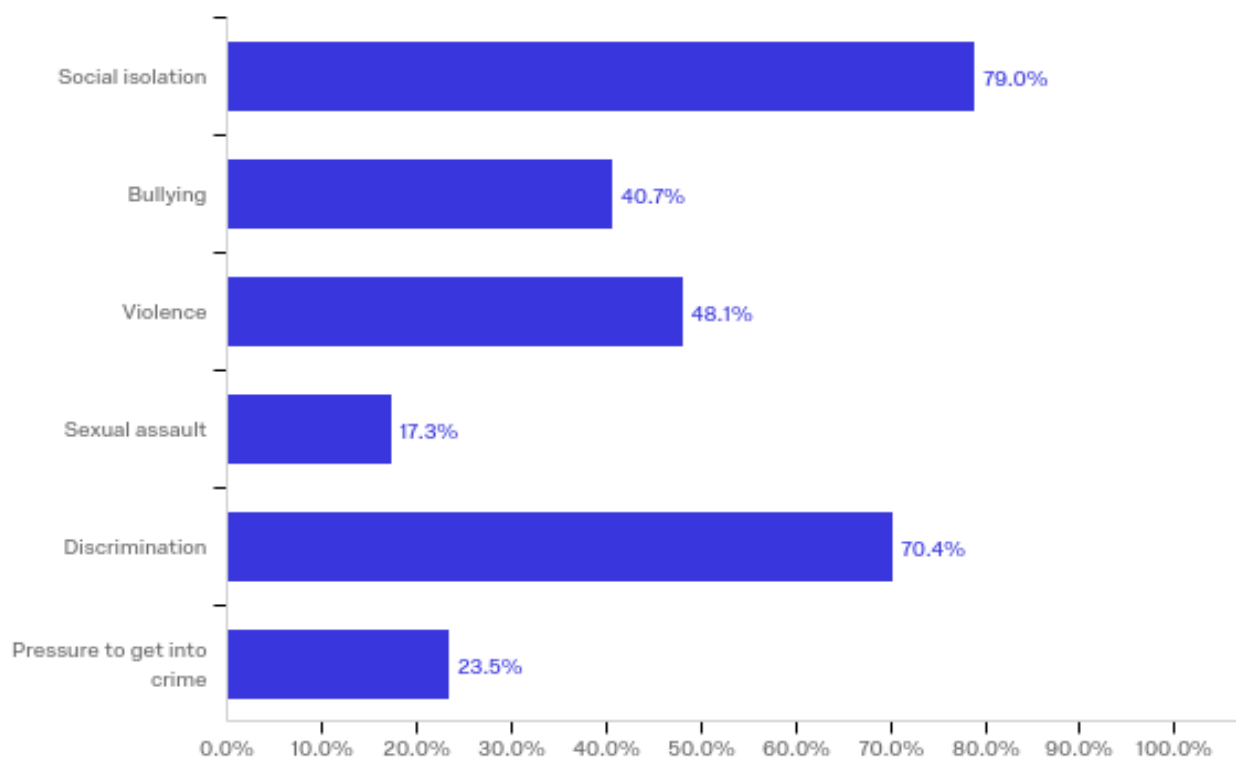
- 'How people see my students'
- 'Trauma from the past and the platform to release'

64.9% of respondents said one or more of the social disadvantages had happened to them. This was highest for Bankstown Arts Centre (75.0%), followed by Redfern Community Centre (68.2%), then Campbelltown Arts Centre (60.0%), but only 45.5% at Juvenile Justice Centre 2.

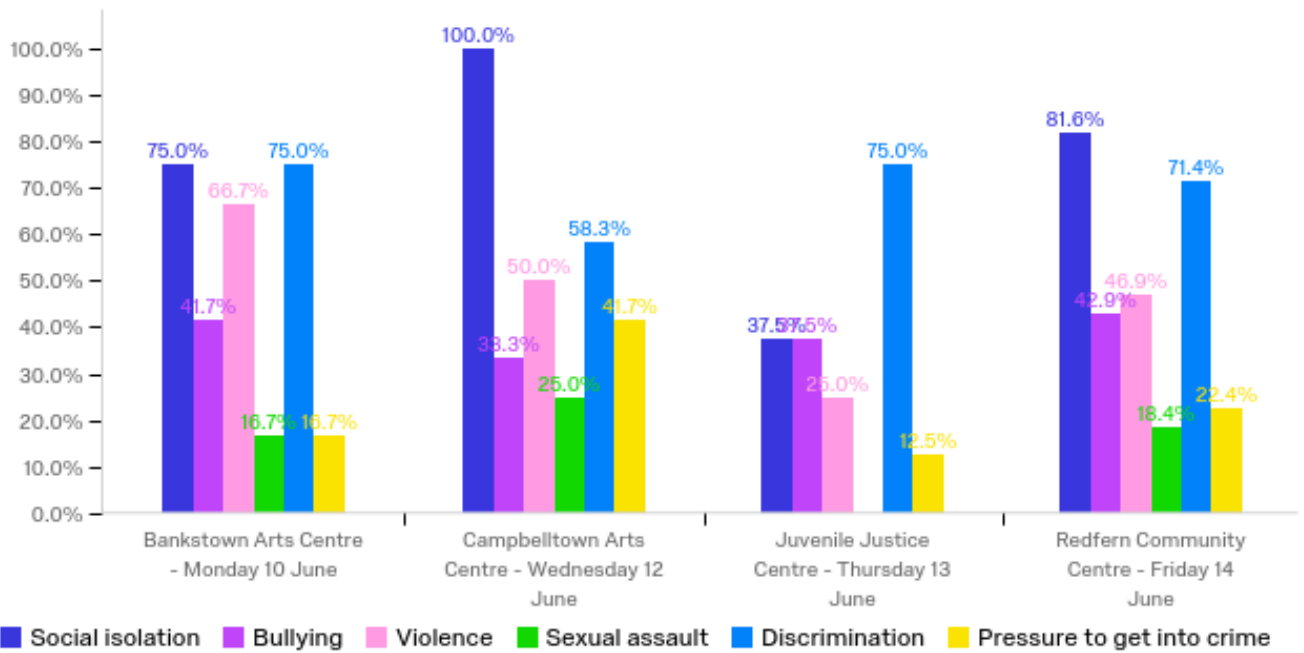
Experience of social disadvantage increased as age increased, except for the 65 and over group, of whom only a third had experienced social disadvantages. There were only three in this age group however that answered the question.

For those who had not experienced social disadvantages, social isolation featured more in the show than for those who had experienced social disadvantages (90.5% versus 79.2%). Discrimination featured slightly less however (71.4% versus 75.0%), as did bullying (33.3% versus 47.9%) and violence (42.9% versus 52.1%).

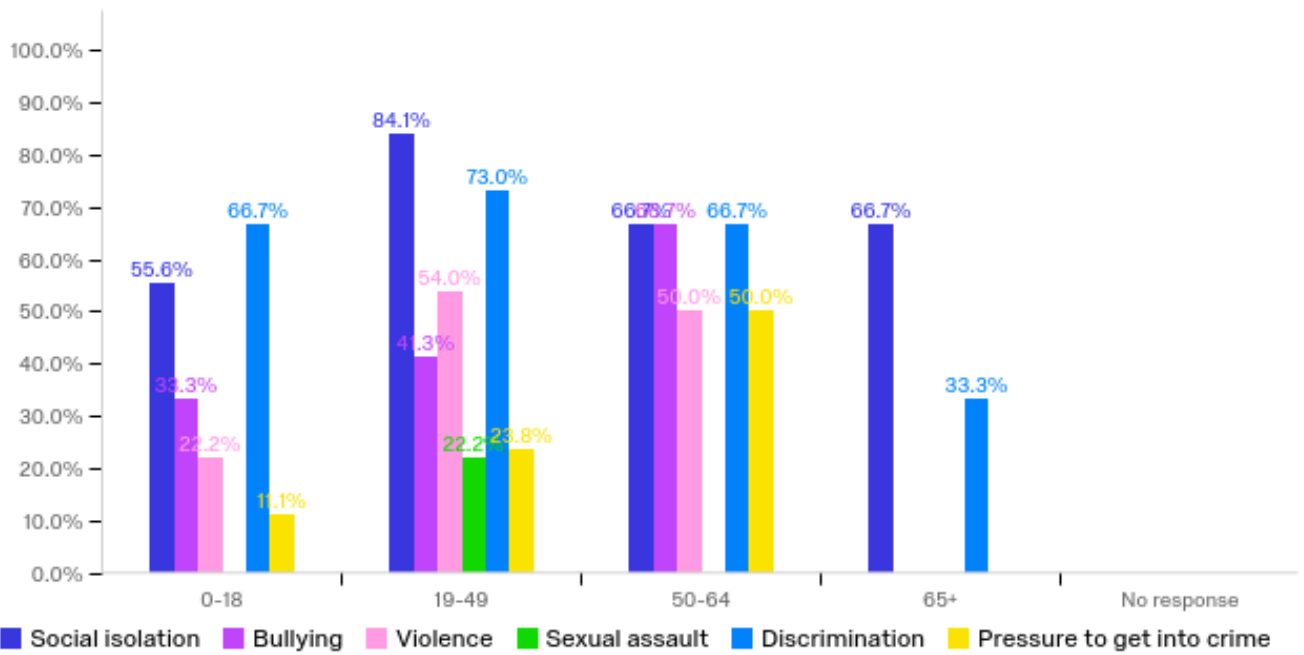
Q4 - The show got me thinking about... (88.0% responded)



Answer	%	Count
Social isolation	79.0%	64
Bullying	40.7%	33
Violence	48.1%	39
Sexual assault	17.3%	14
Discrimination	70.4%	57
Pressure to get into crime	23.5%	19
Total	100%	81

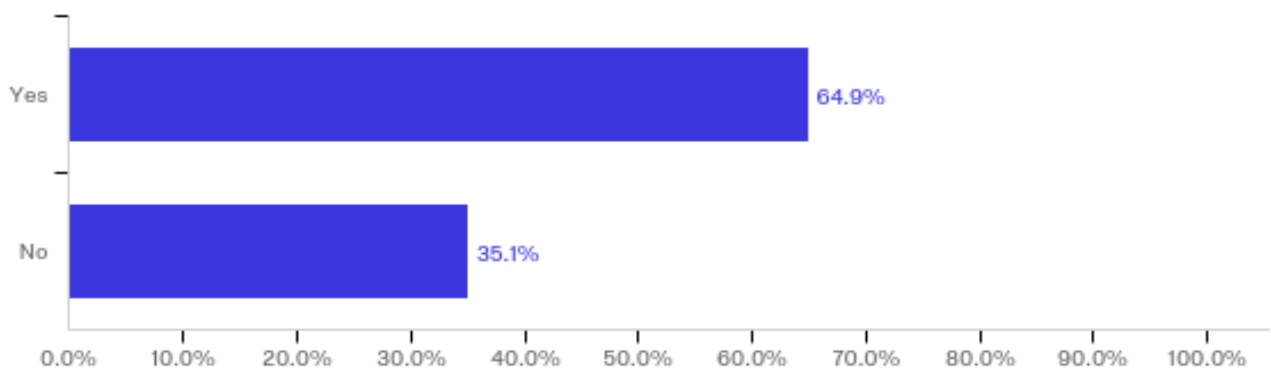


Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June	Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June	Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June	Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June
Social isolation	75.0% 9	100.0% 12	37.5% 3	81.6% 40
Bullying	41.7% 5	33.3% 4	37.5% 3	42.9% 21
Violence	66.7% 8	50.0% 6	25.0% 2	46.9% 23
Sexual assault	16.7% 2	25.0% 3	0.0% 0	18.4% 9
Discrimination	75.0% 9	58.3% 7	75.0% 6	71.4% 35
Pressure to get into crime	16.7% 2	41.7% 5	12.5% 1	22.4% 11
Total	Total 12	Total 12	Total 8	Total 49

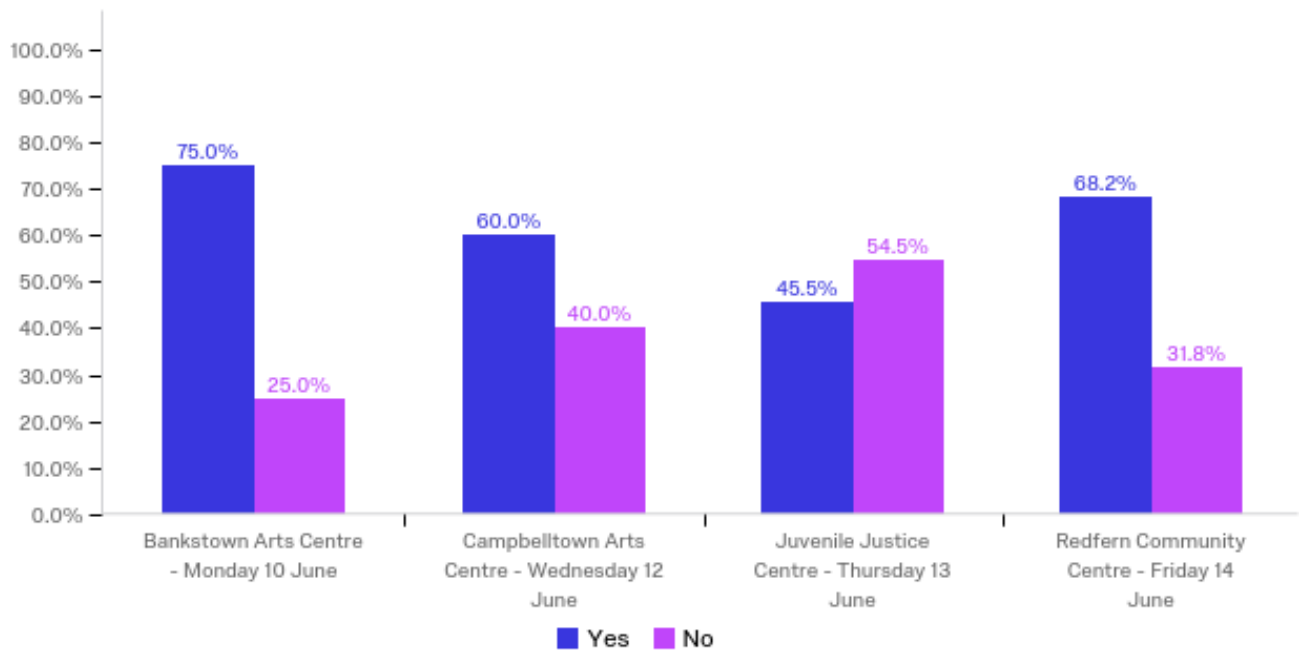


Question	0-18	19-49	50-64	65+	No response
Social isolation	55.6% 5	84.1% 53	66.7% 4	66.7% 2	0.0% 0
Bullying	33.3% 3	41.3% 26	66.7% 4	0.0% 0	0.0% 0
Violence	22.2% 2	54.0% 34	50.0% 3	0.0% 0	0.0% 0
Sexual assault	0.0% 0	22.2% 14	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	0.0% 0
Discrimination	66.7% 6	73.0% 46	66.7% 4	33.3% 1	0.0% 0
Pressure to get into crime	11.1% 1	23.8% 15	50.0% 3	0.0% 0	0.0% 0
Total	Total 9	Total 63	Total 6	Total 3	Total 0

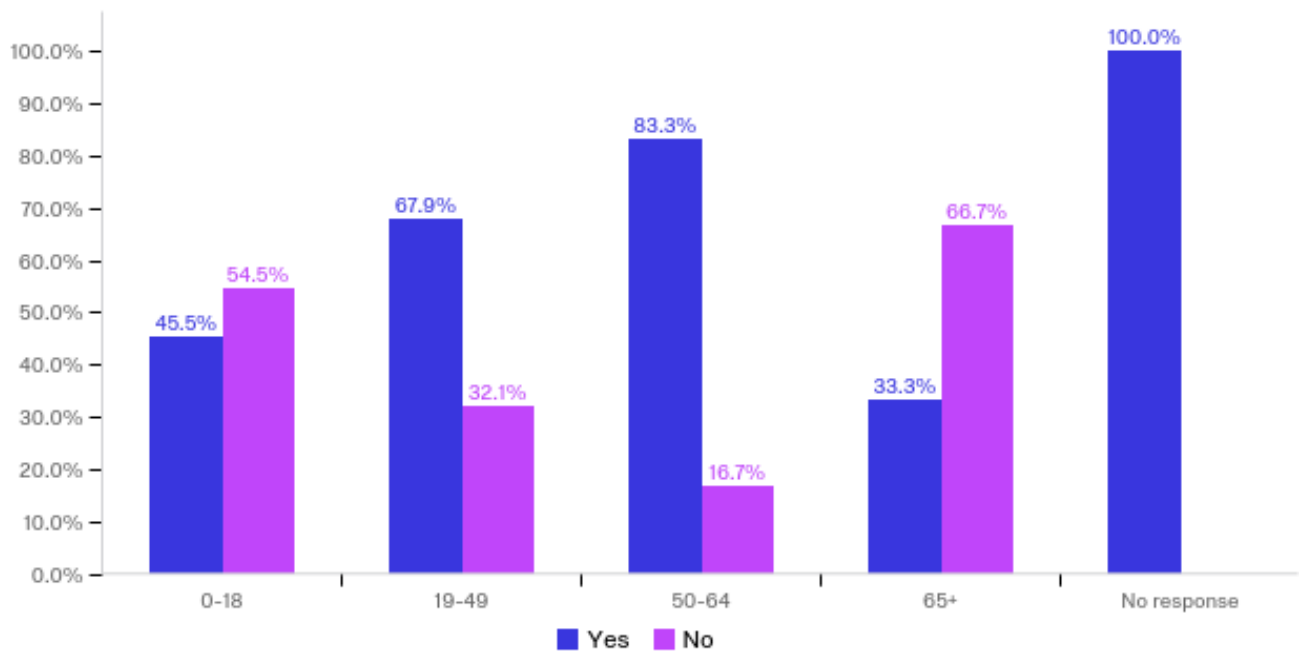
Q5 - Have any of these happened to you? (83.7% responded)



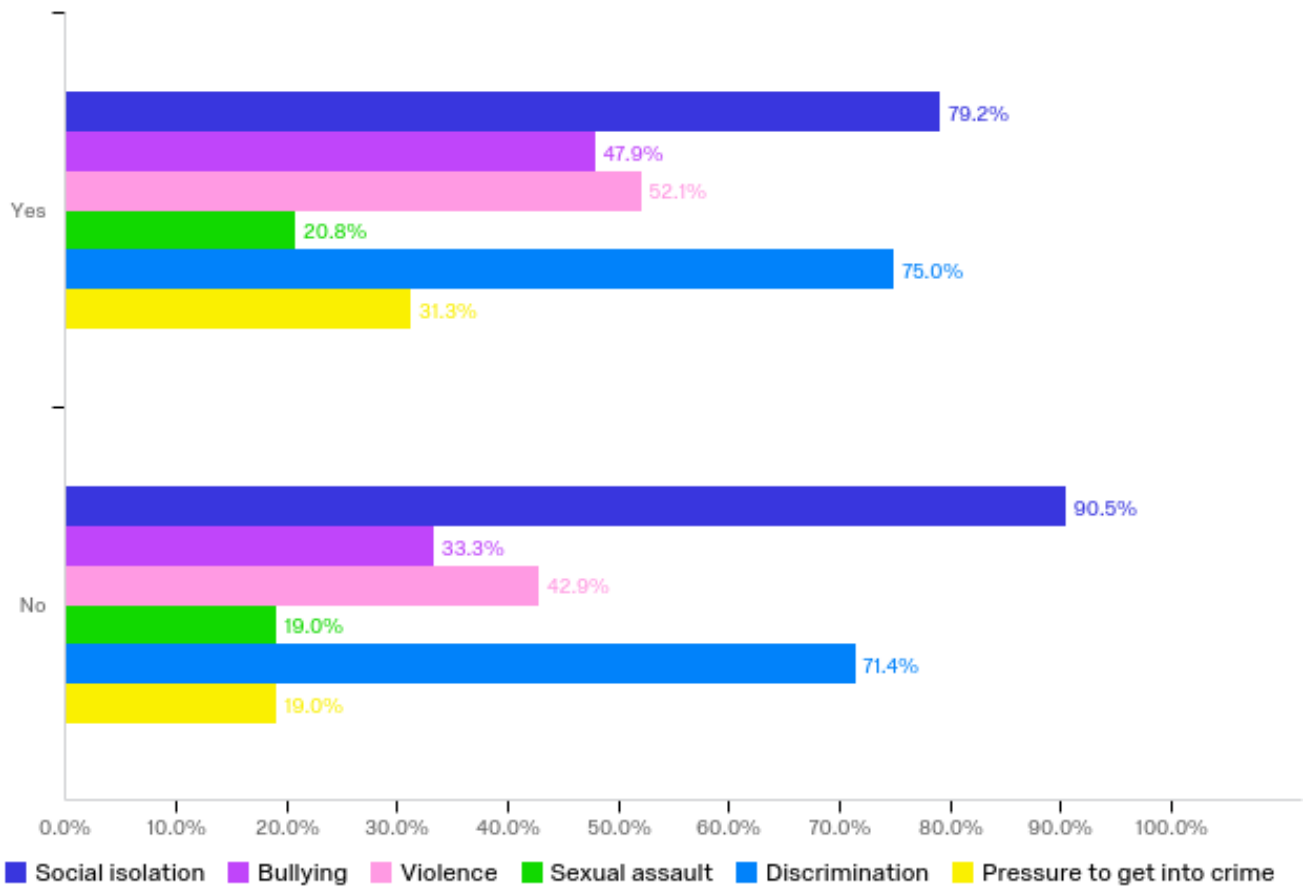
Answer	%	Count
Yes	64.9%	50
No	35.1%	27
Total	100%	77



Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June		Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June		Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June		Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	
Yes	75.0%	9	60.0%	6	45.5%	5	68.2%	30
No	25.0%	3	40.0%	4	54.5%	6	31.8%	14
Total	Total	12	Total	10	Total	11	Total	44



Question	0-18		19-49		50-64		65+		No response	
Yes	45.5%	5	67.9%	38	83.3%	5	33.3%	1	100.0%	1
No	54.5%	6	32.1%	18	16.7%	1	66.7%	2	0.0%	0
Total	Total	11	Total	56	Total	6	Total	3	Total	1



Question	Yes	No	Total
Social isolation	66.7%	33.3%	57
Bullying	76.7%	23.3%	30
Violence	73.5%	26.5%	34
Sexual assault	71.4%	28.6%	14
Discrimination	70.6%	29.4%	51
Pressure to get into crime	78.9%	21.1%	19

The three C's: community, creativity and connection

Three quarters (75%) of respondents were inspired by the show to be more open to other cultures. Roughly two thirds were inspired to be more creative (65.5%) and/or pursue more opportunities (64.3%). 58.3% were inspired to deal with challenges in their life.

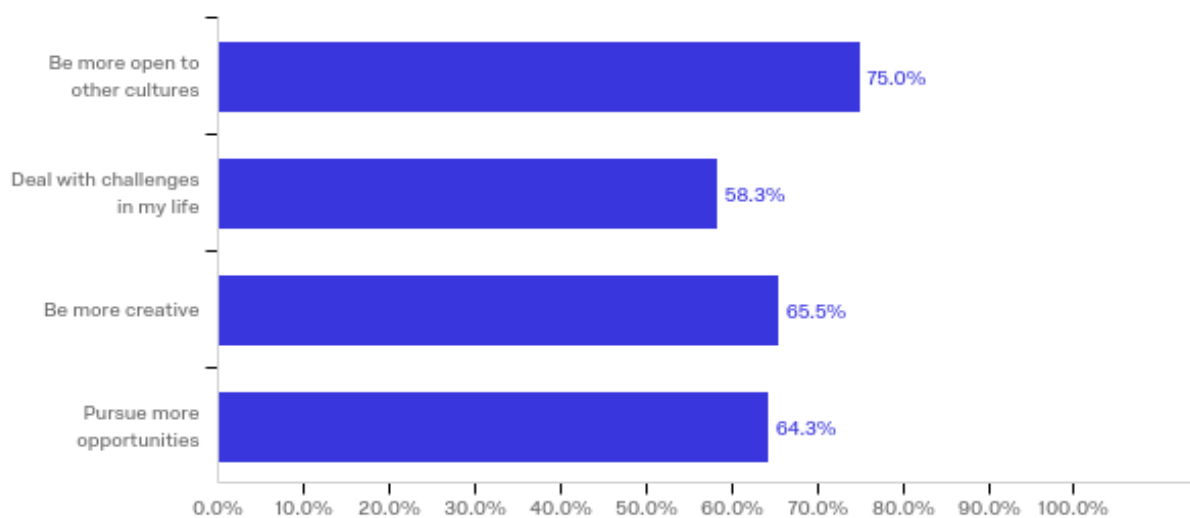
The standout inspiration for Bankstown Arts Centre was to pursue more opportunities (90.0%). Being more open to other cultures stood out slightly for Campbelltown Arts Centre at 83.3% with the other options not far behind. Being more open to other cultures was well ahead of the other options for Juvenile Justice Centre 2 at 90.9%. All four options were similar for Redfern Community Centre, ranging from 58.8% to 70.6%.

Being more open to other cultures was the key inspiration for all age groups except for the 19 to 49 group, for whom all options were similar, ranging from 64.5% to 75.8%.

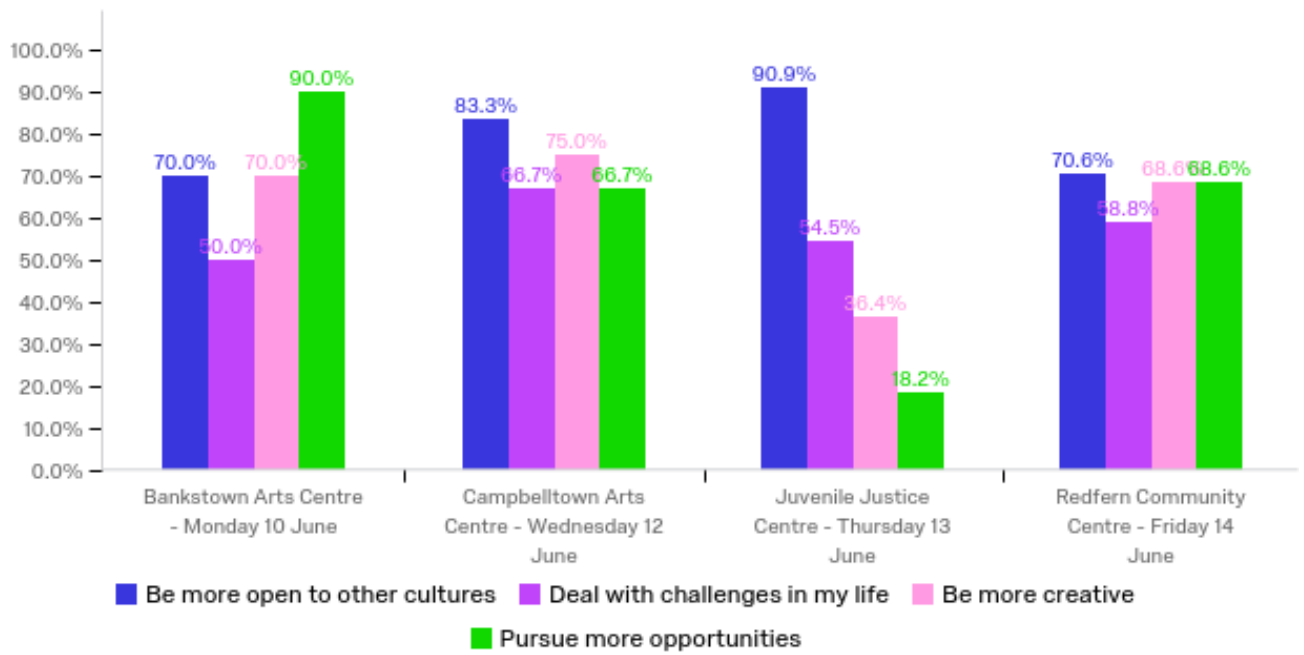
Additional aspects relating to this question that respondents mentioned in verbatim comments to other questions were:

- Encourage more dancing at school
- How can I possibly incorporate this into future
- Be more educated on Australia's social issues!

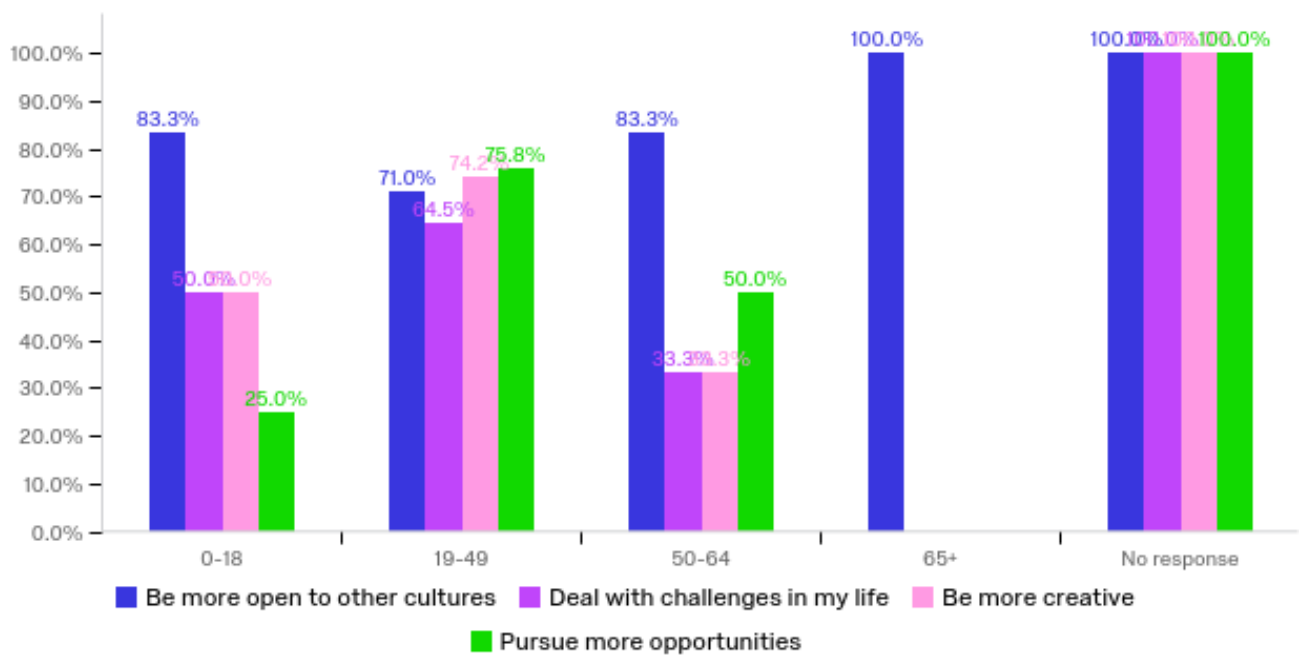
Q6 - The show inspired me to... (91.3% responded)



Answer	%	Count
Be more open to other cultures	75.0%	63
Deal with challenges in my life	58.3%	49
Be more creative	65.5%	55
Pursue more opportunities	64.3%	54
Total	100%	84



Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June		Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June		Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June		Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	
Be more open to other cultures	70.0%	7	83.3%	10	90.9%	10	70.6%	36
Deal with challenges in my life	50.0%	5	66.7%	8	54.5%	6	58.8%	30
Be more creative	70.0%	7	75.0%	9	36.4%	4	68.6%	35
Pursue more opportunities	90.0%	9	66.7%	8	18.2%	2	68.6%	35
Total	Total	10	Total	12	Total	11	Total	51



Question	0-18		19-49		50-64		65+		No response	
Be more open to other cultures	83.3%	10	71.0%	44	83.3%	5	100.0%	3	100.0%	1
Deal with challenges in my life	50.0%	6	64.5%	40	33.3%	2	0.0%	0	100.0%	1
Be more creative	50.0%	6	74.2%	46	33.3%	2	0.0%	0	100.0%	1
Pursue more opportunities	25.0%	3	75.8%	47	50.0%	3	0.0%	0	100.0%	1
Total	Total	12	Total	62	Total	6	Total	3	Total	1

Recommendations to improve the event

There were 64 verbatim comments about areas for improvement, 43 of which were valid. Comments were grouped into four themes: suggestions regarding production aspects (72.9%), audience building activity so more people can see the show (20.8%), evaluation – feedback about the survey design (4.2%) and funding to allow the program to continue (2.1%). Comments were then further grouped into sub-themes. Some comments were split or duplicated where more than one theme and sub-theme applied.

Theme / Sub-Theme	Percentage	Count
Production	72.9%	35
Audience participation	2.1%	1
Better preparation	4.2%	2
Costumes	4.2%	2
Direction	2.1%	1
Explanation	6.3%	3
Increase cultural diversity	2.1%	1
Increase participants	2.1%	1
Increase positivity	2.1%	1
Lighting	2.1%	1
More performances	22.9%	11
Music	2.1%	1
Other ways to experience it (eg film, online community)	8.3%	4
Participant input into other aspects	2.1%	1
Participants also perform	2.1%	1
Q&A duration	2.1%	1
Seating arrangements	6.3%	3
Audience building	20.8%	10
Audience participation	2.1%	1
Increase audience	18.8%	9
Evaluation	4.2%	2
Improve survey design	4.2%	2
Funding	2.1%	1
Increase funding	2.1%	1
Grand Total	100.0%	48

Performance location	The event could be improved by...	Theme	Category	About me - gender	My age	About me – Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander
Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June	Bringing more people	Audience building	Increase audience	No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	More stories/insight into centres	Production	Explanation	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response

Performance location	The event could be improved by...	Theme	Category	About me - gender	My age	About me – Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander
	Not improved, but maybe we could see a video of the people in detention doing the program.		Other ways to experience it (eg film, online community)	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June	More PR and marketing	Audience building	Increase audience	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Having more people experience it			No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	More advertisement on social media platforms			No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	More marketing			No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	More advertising			No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	More publicity and so many more people should have seen it tonight!			No response	65+	Not ATSI or no response
	More performances, bigger venues	Production	More performances	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June	Practice more to get better	Production	Better preparation	No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response
	Costumes and music		Costumes	No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response
	Costumes and music		Music	No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response
Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	Learning how much more we can get ourselves involved in this program.	Audience building	Audience participation	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Letting more people know about it		Increase audience	No response	19-49	Torres Strait Islander
	Should get more media coverage DEFINITELY			No response	50-64	Not ATSI or no response
	In response to 'Have any of these happened to you?' "None of your business"	Evaluation	Improve survey design	No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	Hard to read this survey!			No response	No response	Not ATSI or no response
	Secure funding to keep going, and to reflect the stories of young people and support independent artists	Funding	Increase funding	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	More audience participation for how to help	Production	Audience participation	No response	50-64	Not ATSI or no response
	Professionalism		Better preparation	No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	Better outfits		Costumes	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	More direction with the production.		Direction	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	More explanation behind the pieces		Explanation	Explanation	No response	19-49
More introduction about the facilities and statistics of where the kids came from etc.	No response				19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Embracing more cultures.	Increase cultural diversity				No response	19-49

Performance location	The event could be improved by...	Theme	Category	About me - gender	My age	About me – Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander	
	Involving more people in juvenile centres		Increase participants	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	Being more focused on joyousness of it all		Increase positivity	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	Lasers. Blue.		Lighting	No response	19-49	Aboriginal	
	more shows		More performances	Female	0-18	Aboriginal	
	more shows			Female	19-49	Aboriginal	
	Just more of them <3			Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	More like this!			Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	More events			No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	More frequent performances. Community discussion of how the c round can contribute.			No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	More... let's see more, lots of this. Please.			No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	There being more			No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	more shows			No response	50-64	Not ATSI or no response	
	More shows			No response	50-64	Not ATSI or no response	
	Eventually produce film productions and show their stories and experiences, with a Q&A with some of them, provided that they would like to share with the community			Other ways to experience it (eg film, online community)	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Might be difficult but would love to see the kids perform or see some BTS footage				No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Offering more opportunities afterwards for the audience to continue the journey. e.g. email list				No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Allow them to have input with the lights and promotion etc.		Participant input into other aspects	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	Might be difficult but would love to see the kids perform or see some BTS footage		Participants also perform	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	Q&A focus on the questions and be kept brief/succinct		Q&A duration	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	The seating arrangement made it difficult to see. However, we moved to the front to get a better view.		Seating arrangements	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
	It was hard to see			No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response	

Performance location	The event could be improved by...	Theme	Category	About me - gender	My age	About me – Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander
	The show itself was amazing. Some of the sight lines were obstructed, but I moved so I could see it all			No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response

The best parts

80 verbatim comments were made about the best part of the show, 78 of which were valid. These were grouped in to twelve themes, the top four of which were everything (29.9%), show format (14.9%), storytelling (13.8%) and performers/Q&A (11.5%). Some comments were split or duplicated where more than one theme applied.

At Juvenile Justice Centre 2, eight of the twelve comments were in the 'everything' theme.

Theme	%	Count
Everything	29.9%	26
Show format	14.9%	13
Storytelling	13.8%	12
Performers / Q&A	11.5%	10
Dancing	6.9%	6
Inspiration / meaning	6.9%	6
Opportunity	6.9%	6
Cultural diversity	4.6%	4
Energy / focus	1.1%	1
Production	1.1%	1
Professionalism	1.1%	1
Specific shows	1.1%	1
Total	100%	87

Performance location	The best part was...	Category	About me - gender	My age	About me - Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander
Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June	The mix of music and cultures. And the opportunity for Q&A	Cultural diversity	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	All of it!	Everything	Female	19-49	Aboriginal
	All of it!		Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Everything!		No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	I actually enjoyed it all		No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	All of it!		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	The underlying meaning behind each piece was mind-blowing and very thought provoking!	Inspiration / meaning	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	The performing and the Q&A	Performers / Q&A	Male	19-49	Aboriginal
	The concept	Show format	No response	19-49	Aboriginal
Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June	Everything in the show was a pleasure to watch!	Everything	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	All of it. Cannot fault.		No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	Everything		No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	Everything!		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	All of it		No response	65+	Not ATSI or no response

	Thinking about what it is giving to the young people	Inspiration / meaning	No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	Seeing the performance the girls put together	Opportunity	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Glenn	Performers / Q&A	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Everything especially the Q&A at the end. Awesome show!		No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	And the chance to discuss afterwards		No response	65+	Not ATSI or no response
	Professionally, a very good production.	Professionalism	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	My most favourite moments the beginning of show 3	Show format	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Knowing the young people's stories and seeing them connected through the performance.		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	The coming together at the end		Non-binary	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Contemporary stories - real sense of connection, representation of difficulties faced. Professionally, a very good production.	Storytelling	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June	the dancing	Dancing	No response	0-18	Aboriginal
	The funny dancings		No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response
	everything	Everything	No response	0-18	Aboriginal
	Everything		No response	0-18	Aboriginal
	Everything		No response	0-18	Aboriginal
	Everything		No response	0-18	Aboriginal
	Everything		No response	0-18	Aboriginal
	Everything		No response	0-18	Aboriginal
	All of it!		No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response
	Everything		No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response
	Everything	No response	65+	Not ATSI or no response	
The girl and the two boys duo	Performers / Q&A	No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response	
First performance Second performance	Specific shows	No response	0-18	Not ATSI or no response	
Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	Combination of culture and modern styles	Cultural diversity	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	cultural mix with hip hop		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	The mix of different culturalisation		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	The variety of dancers, and work that reflected their talents.	Dancing	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	Seeing dancers enjoy themselves		No response	19-49	Aboriginal
	inspirational dancing		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	The dance		No response	No response	Not ATSI or no response
	The energy, focus and determination that radiated out from these beautiful creations.	Energy / focus	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
	everything	Everything	Female	0-18	Aboriginal
	the whole show		Female	19-49	Aboriginal
	All elements together.		Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
All good. Loved it.	Female		19-49	Not ATSI or no response	
Everything	No response		19-49	Not ATSI or no response	

Everything		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
EVERYTHING!		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
I enjoyed the entire experience and talking to the performers after the show.		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Seeing the creative output of the youth.	Inspiration / meaning	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Seeing the emotions come out from the dancers.		No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
inspiration meaningful		No response	50-64	Not ATSI or no response
And raises awareness about youth incarceration.		No response	65+	Not ATSI or no response
That it happened	Opportunity	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Realising that it was created by own young men and women		No response	19-49	Torres Strait Islander
That our young aboriginal people allow us to see their talent shine tonight	Opportunity	No response	50-64	Not ATSI or no response
That the dancers were put together by people incarcerated	Opportunity	No response	50-64	Not ATSI or no response
That it was lead by the kids	Opportunity	No response	65+	Not ATSI or no response
Both the performers and discussion were beautiful, and I'm so thankful to have experienced them.	Performers / Q&A	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The people	Performers / Q&A	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Q&A	Performers / Q&A	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The performance	Performers / Q&A	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
THE TEAM	Performers / Q&A	No response	No response	Not ATSI or no response
The behind the scenes	Production	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Music, dance, sand etc.	Show format	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The battle The whole third segment	Show format	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The concept behind the show	Show format	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The Q&A	Show format	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Act 3	Show format	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The gangsta party	Show format	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The talent, dedication and creativity in portraying the voices and truth of the young people was truly fantastic. WELL DONE!	Show format	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The way the show was put together	Show format	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The questions and comments at the end	Show format	No response	No response	Not ATSI or no response
Hearing the stories	Storytelling	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
This is a great way to start the conversation and include everyone without judgement/discrimination. What an excellent initiative.	Storytelling	Female	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The unfolding nature of the first piece and how it evolved. The expression of both.	Storytelling	Female	50-64	Not ATSI or no response
Awareness to what is happening. Allowing them to speak through the dances	Storytelling	Male	19-49	Not ATSI or no response

The story of them transforming into the animals and finally the rainbow in the END	Storytelling	No response	19-49	Aboriginal
Hearing about the kids and imagining them while enjoying the amazing show.	Storytelling	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The reality of it. The personal stories and thoughts of those imprisoned. It was really moving to see THEIR expression.	Storytelling	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The storytelling and collab.	Storytelling	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
The talent, dedication and creativity in portraying the voices and truth of the young people was truly fantastic. WELL DONE!	Storytelling	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Watching the stories of criminalised young people come to life on stage	Storytelling	No response	19-49	Not ATSI or no response
Good vs. Evil	Storytelling	No response	50-64	Not ATSI or no response

Marketing channels

Most respondents heard about the show through friends and family (57.5%), followed by knowing a performer (33.3%).

Knowing a performer was the main channel for Bankstown Arts Centre (69.2%), and friends/family for Campbelltown Arts Centre (72.7%) and Redfern Community Centre (72.0%). All Juvenile Justice Centre 2 respondents were part of the project (100%), plus three knew a performer and one of those had also heard about the show in the media and from friends/family.

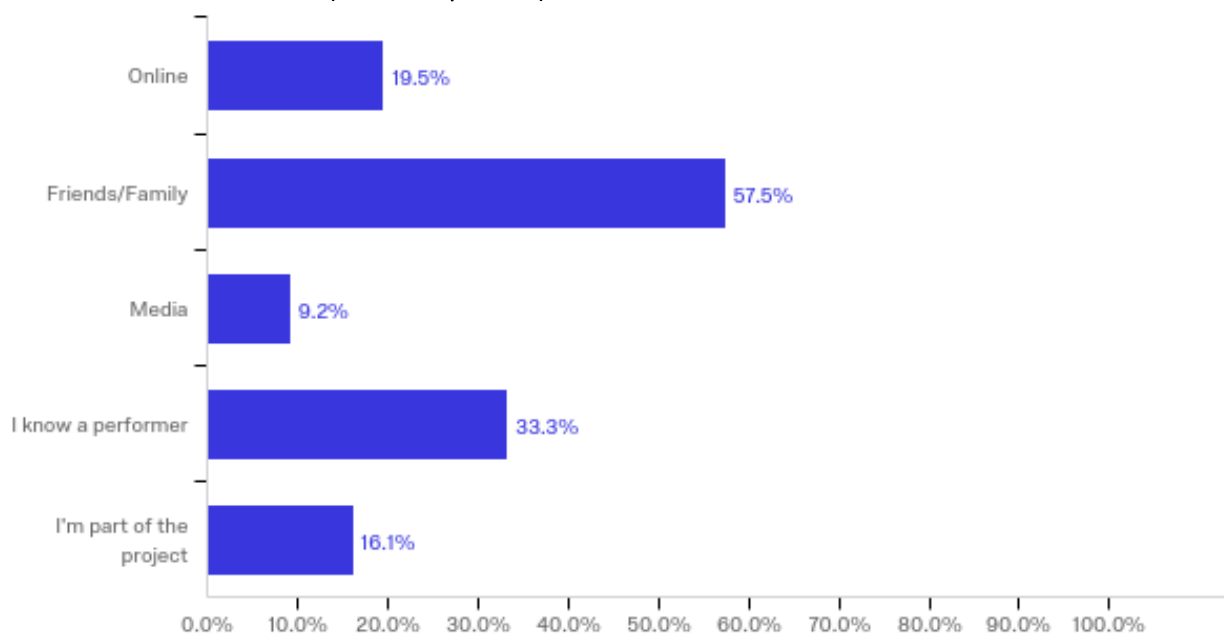
Media activity was most successful for Campbelltown Arts Centre (18.2%), with no one selecting it at Bankstown Arts Centre and only 10.0% at Redfern Community Centre.

Online activity was most successful for Bankstown Arts Centre (30.8%), followed by Redfern Community Centre at 24.0%. Only one person (9.1%) chose online at Campbelltown Arts Centre.

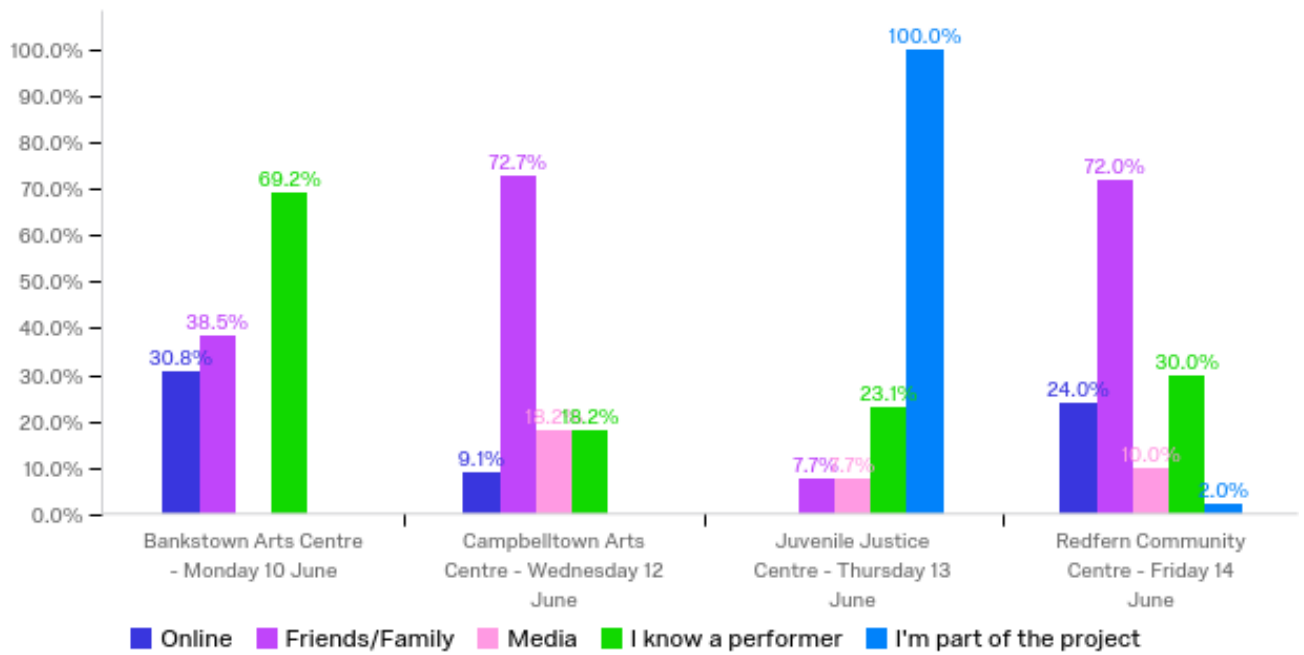
Of the two Redfern Community Centre respondents aged 18 or under, one heard about the show through friends/family, and the other online. Friends/family was the key channel for the adult age groups, ranging from 60.0% to 75.0%. Online and media were 40.0% for the 50 to 64 age group but reached less of the other adult groups (20.6% to 25.0%). Media was least successful with the 19 to 49 age group at only 7.9%.

An additional way two respondents heard about the show, provided as verbatim comments to other questions, was 'work'.

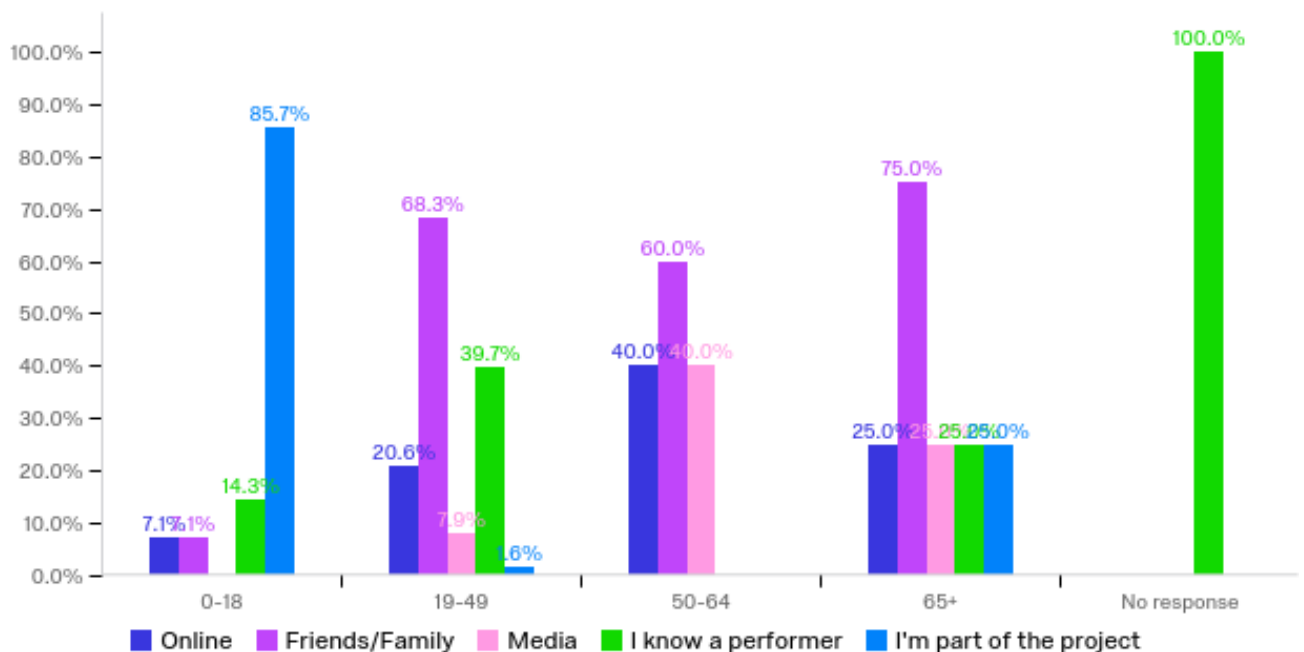
Q7 - I heard about the show... (94.6% responded)



Answer	%	Count
Online	19.5%	17
Friends/Family	57.5%	50
Media	9.2%	8
I know a performer	33.3%	29
I'm part of the project	16.1%	14
Total	100%	87



Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June		Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June		Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June		Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	
Online	30.8%	4	9.1%	1	0.0%	0	24.0%	12
Friends/Family	38.5%	5	72.7%	8	7.7%	1	72.0%	36
Media	0.0%	0	18.2%	2	7.7%	1	10.0%	5
I know a performer	69.2%	9	18.2%	2	23.1%	3	30.0%	15
I'm part of the project	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	100.0%	13	2.0%	1
Total	Total	13	Total	11	Total	13	Total	50



Question	0-18		19-49		50-64		65+		No response	
Online	7.1%	1	20.6%	13	40.0%	2	25.0%	1	0.0%	0
Friends/Family	7.1%	1	68.3%	43	60.0%	3	75.0%	3	0.0%	0
Media	0.0%	0	7.9%	5	40.0%	2	25.0%	1	0.0%	0
I know a performer	14.3%	2	39.7%	25	0.0%	0	25.0%	1	100.0%	1
I'm part of the project	85.7%	12	1.6%	1	0.0%	0	25.0%	1	0.0%	0
Total	Total	14	Total	63	Total	5	Total	4	Total	1

Demographics

Gender and age

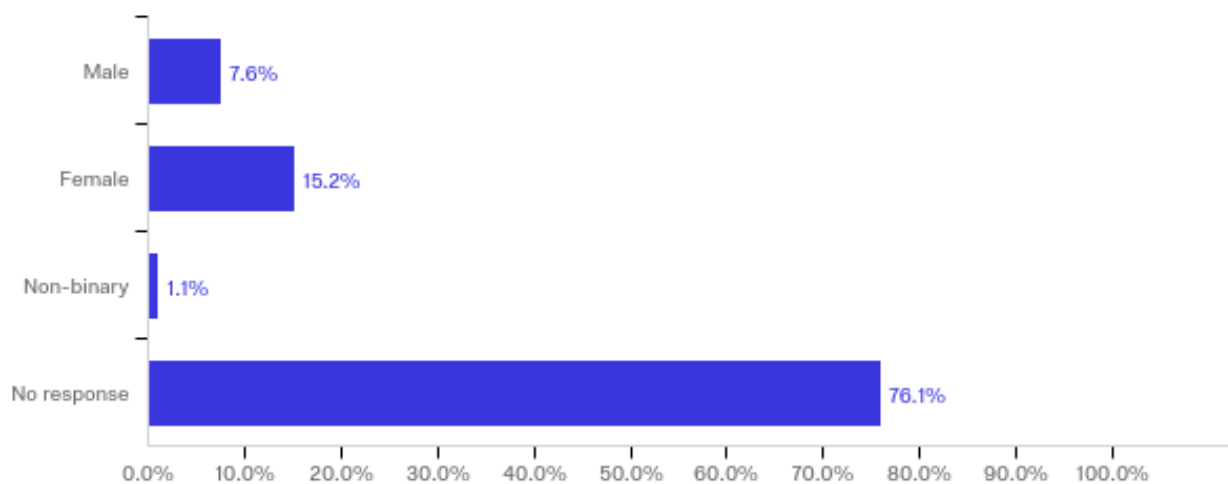
There was a poor response rate to the gender question with only 23.9% providing a response, and as such non-responses have been included in the results. Of those that responded there were twice as many females as males, and one respondent at Campbelltown Arts Centre aged 19 to 49 identifies as non-binary.

All age groups were represented in the survey and only two respondents skipped the question. The large majority were in the 19 to 49 age group (71.7%). The next largest group was aged 18 or under, and all but two were located at Juvenile Justice Location 2. The six aged 50 to 64 were at Redfern Community Centre. In each survey location there was one person aged 65 or over.

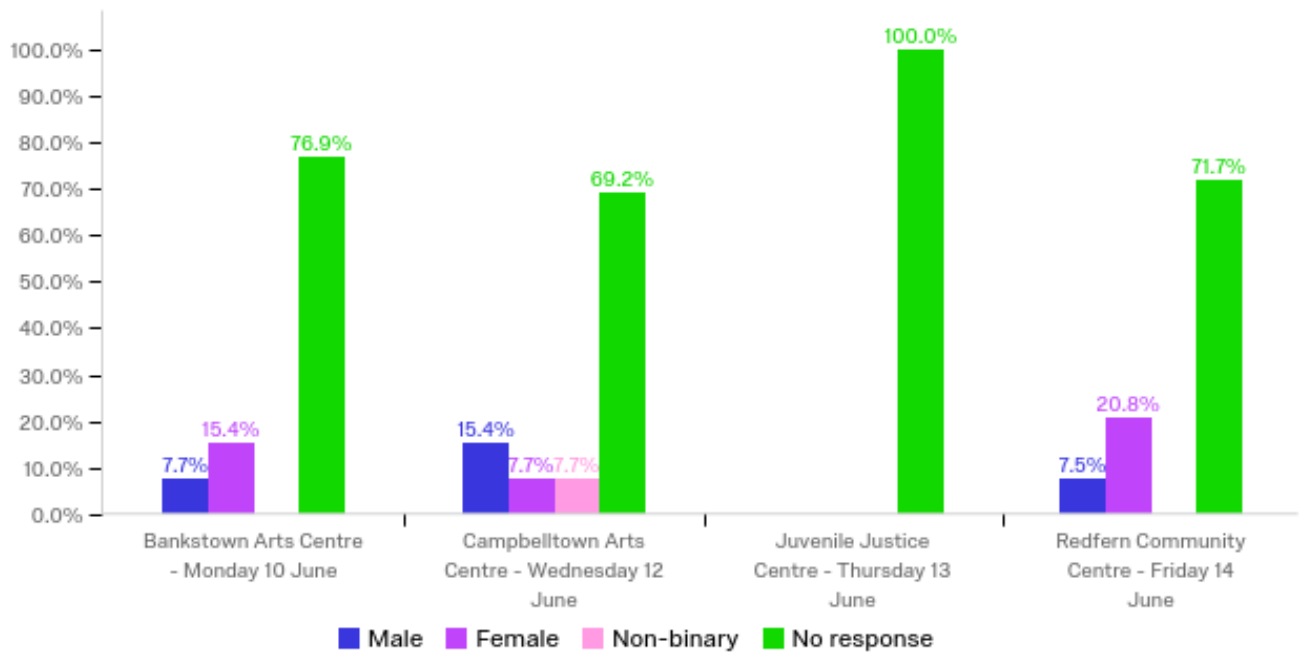
There was the most age diversity in those that did not provide their gender. Of those that did identify their gender, all males were all aged 19 to 49, as were females except for one aged 18 or under and one aged 50 to 64.

Setting aside those that did not respond, Bankstown Arts Centre and Redfern Community Centre respondents were mostly female and Campbelltown Arts Centre respondents mostly male.

Q10 - About me - gender (23.9% responded)



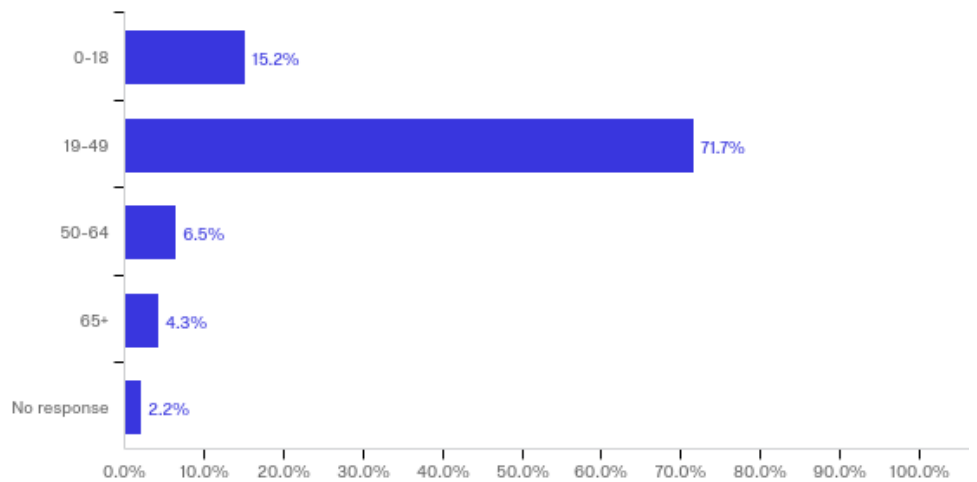
Answer	%	Count
Male	7.6%	7
Female	15.2%	14
Non-binary	1.1%	1
No response	76.1%	70
Total	100%	92

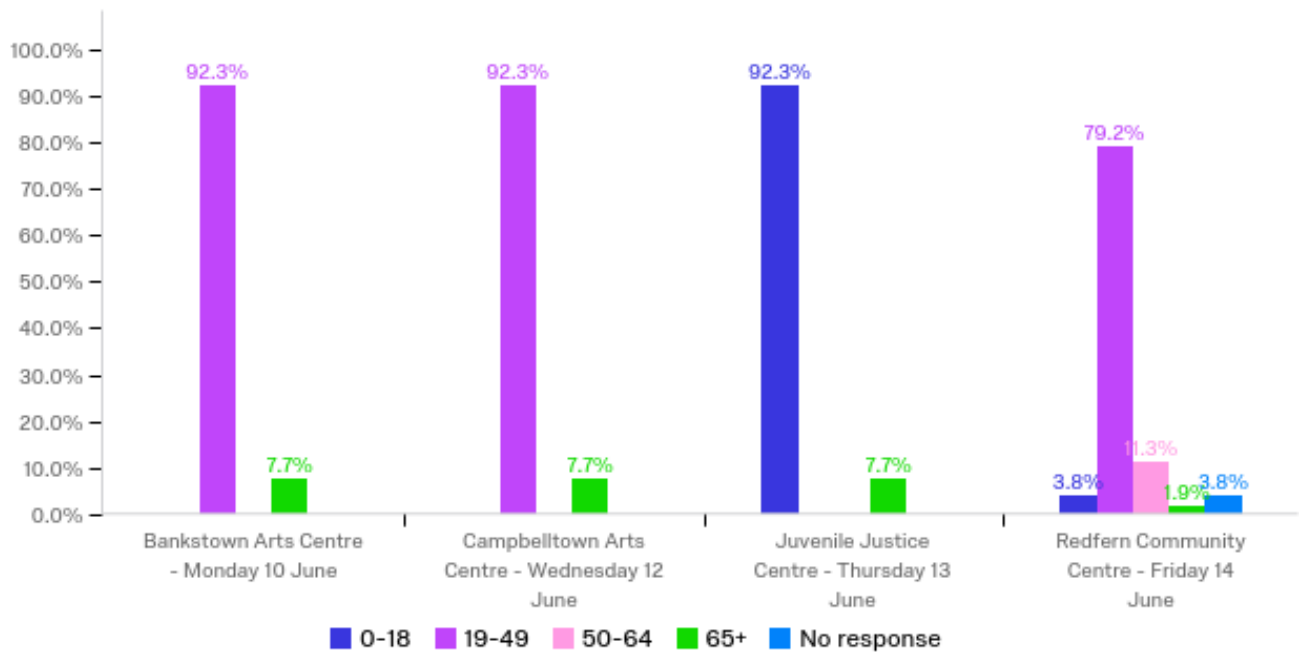


Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June		Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June		Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June		Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	
Male	7.7%	1	15.4%	2	0.0%	0	7.5%	4
Female	15.4%	2	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	20.8%	11
Non-binary	0.0%	0	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
No response	76.9%	10	69.2%	9	100.0%	13	71.7%	38
Total	Total	13	Total	13	Total	13	Total	53

Q16 - My age (97.8% responded)

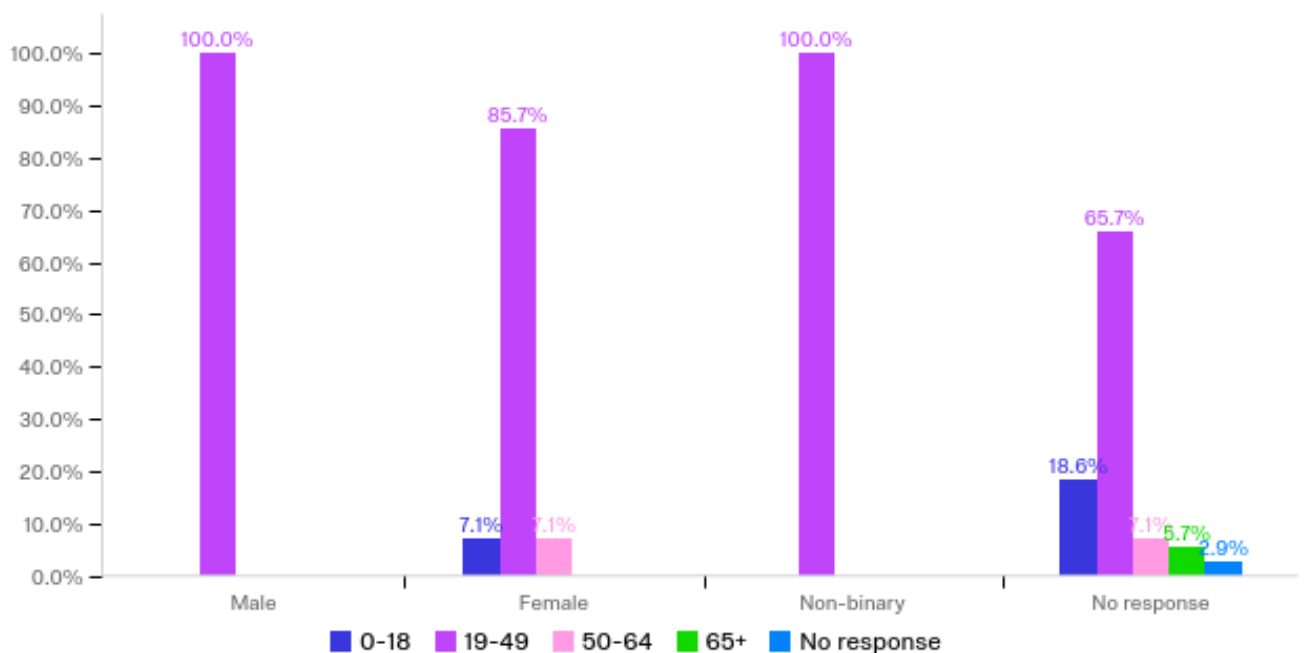
Answer	%	Count
0-18	15.2%	14
19-49	71.7%	66
50-64	6.5%	6
65+	4.3%	4
No response	2.2%	2
Total	100%	92





Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June		Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June		Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June		Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	
0-18	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	92.3%	12	3.8%	2
19-49	92.3%	12	92.3%	12	0.0%	0	79.2%	42
50-64	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	11.3%	6
65+	7.7%	1	7.7%	1	7.7%	1	1.9%	1
No response	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	3.8%	2
Total	Total	13	Total	13	Total	13	Total	53

Gender and age



Question	Male		Female		Non-binary		No response	
0-18	0.0%	0	7.1%	1	0.0%	0	18.6%	13
19-49	100.0%	7	85.7%	12	100.0%	1	65.7%	46
50-64	0.0%	0	7.1%	1	0.0%	0	7.1%	5
65+	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	5.7%	4
No response	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	2.9%	2
Total	Total	7	Total	14	Total	1	Total	70

Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander

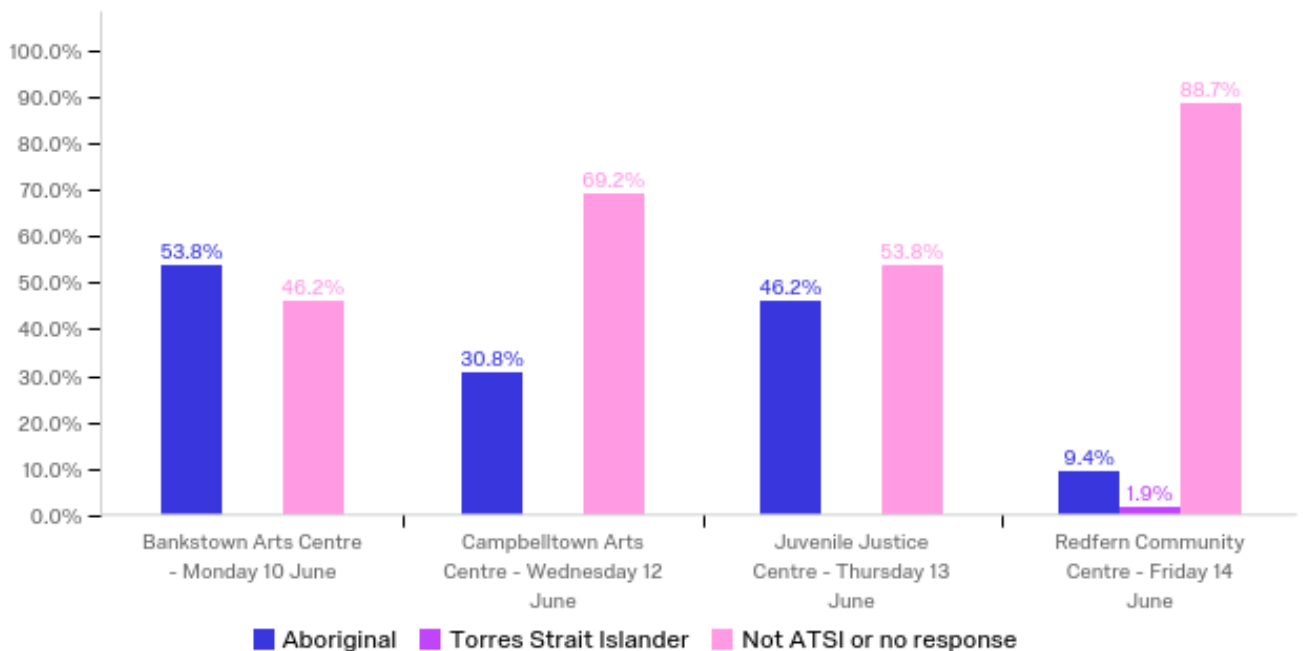
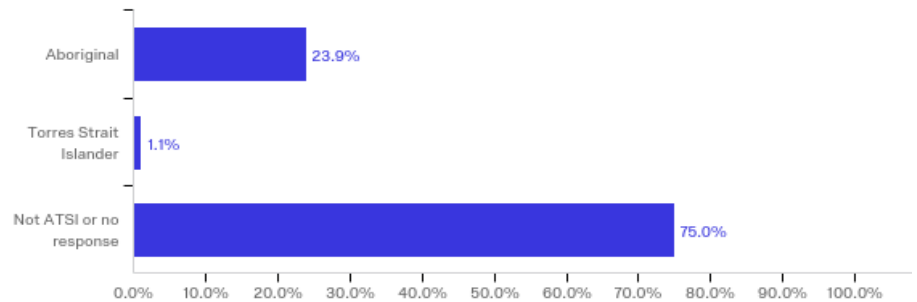
23.9% of respondents are Aboriginal and 1.1% (one) is Torres Strait Islander aged 19 to 49. No respondents identified as both.

Bankstown Arts Centre and Juvenile Justice Centre 2 were fairly evenly split, however Campbelltown Arts Centre was mostly non-ATSI/no response (69.2%) and Redfern Community Centre even more so (88.7%).

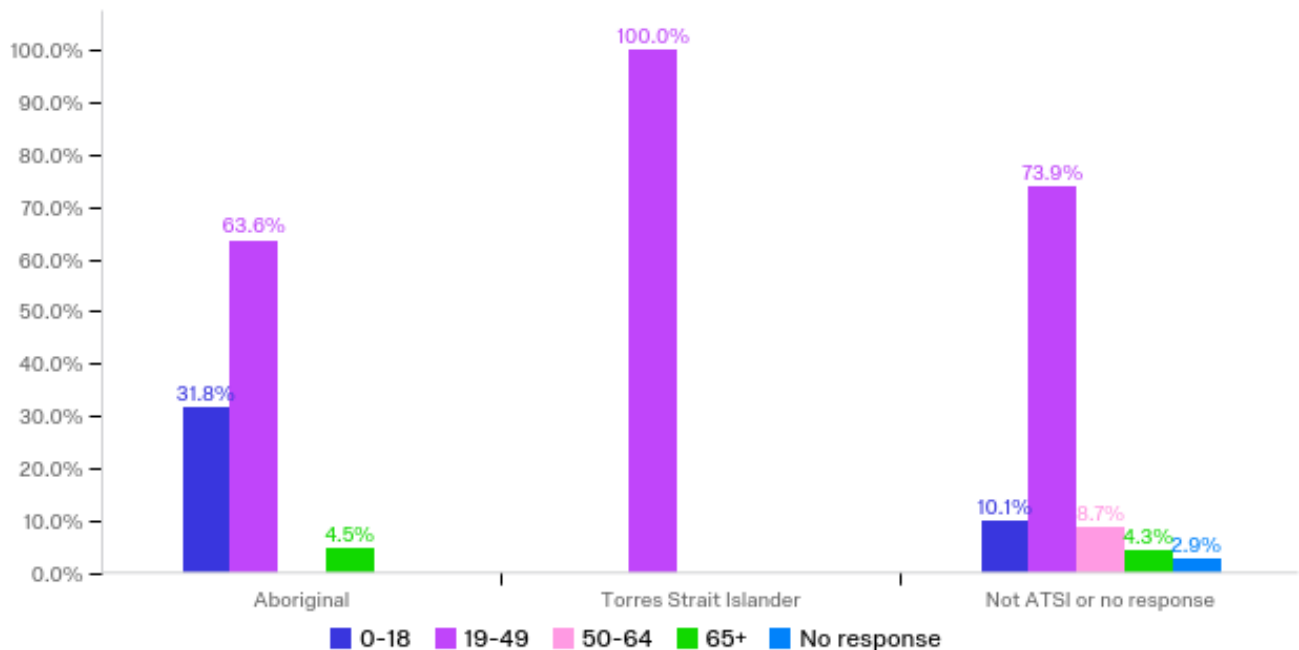
One Aboriginal is aged 65+, and of the rest the majority are aged 19 to 49 and half as many 18 or under.

Q11 - About me - Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander

Answer	%	Count
Aboriginal	23.9%	22
Torres Strait Islander	1.1%	1
Not ATSI or no response	75.0%	69
Total	100%	92



Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June		Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June		Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June		Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	
Aboriginal	53.8%	7	30.8%	4	46.2%	6	9.4%	5
Torres Strait Islander	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.9%	1
Not ATSI or no response	46.2%	6	69.2%	9	53.8%	7	88.7%	47
Total	Total	13	Total	13	Total	13	Total	53

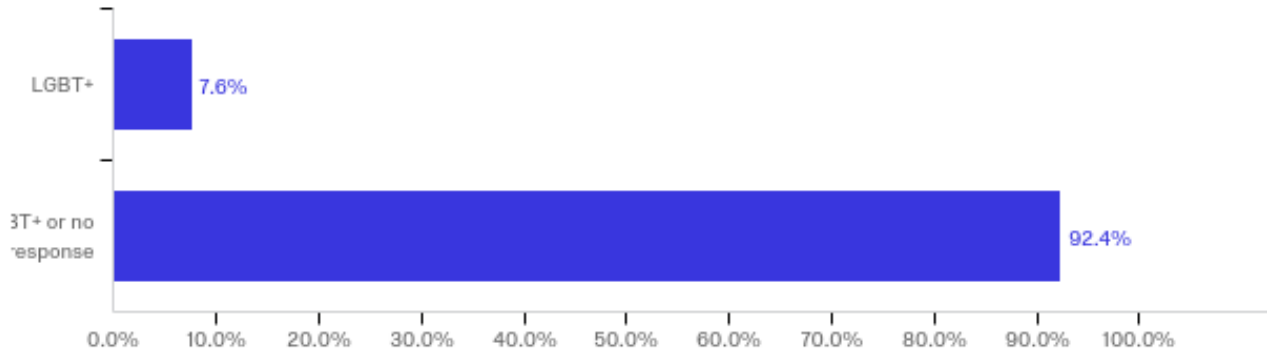


Question	Aboriginal		Torres Strait Islander		Not ATSI or no response	
0-18	31.8%	7	0.0%	0	10.1%	7
19-49	63.6%	14	100.0%	1	73.9%	51
50-64	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	8.7%	6
65+	4.5%	1	0.0%	0	4.3%	3
No response	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	2.9%	2
Total	Total	22	Total	1	Total	69

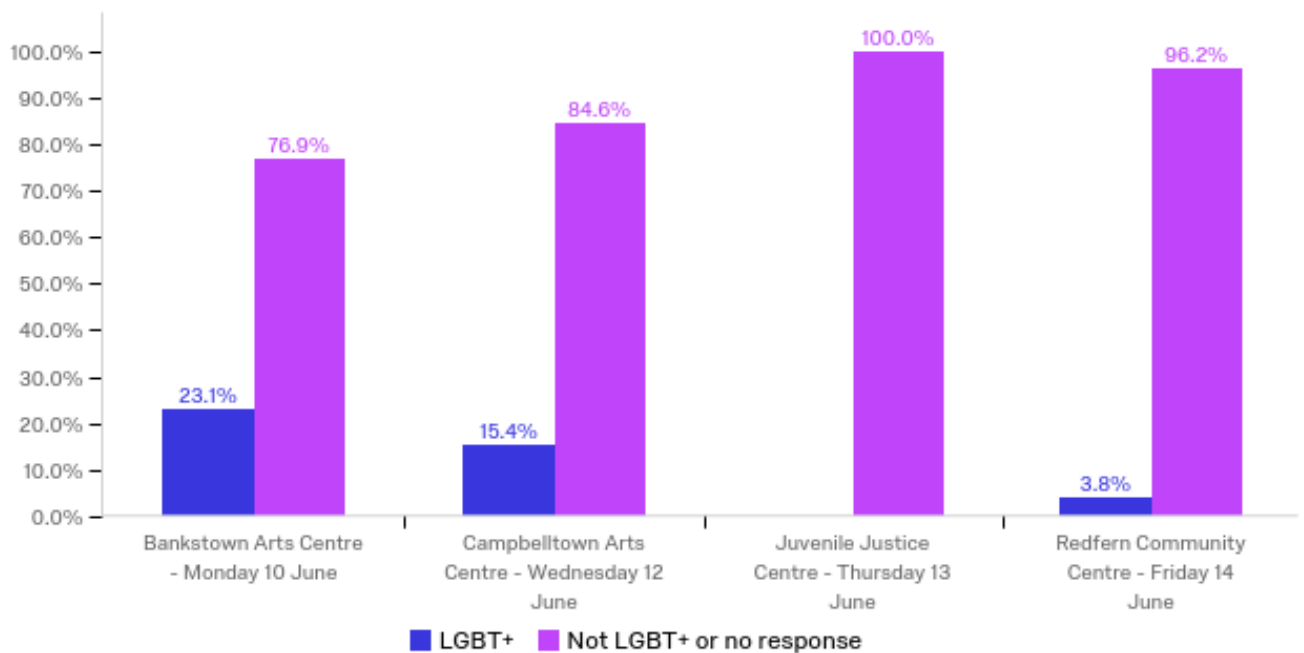
LGBT+

7.6% of respondents identified as LGBT+, three at Bankstown Arts Centre, and two each at Campbelltown Arts Centre and Redfern Community Centre. They are all aged 19 to 49.

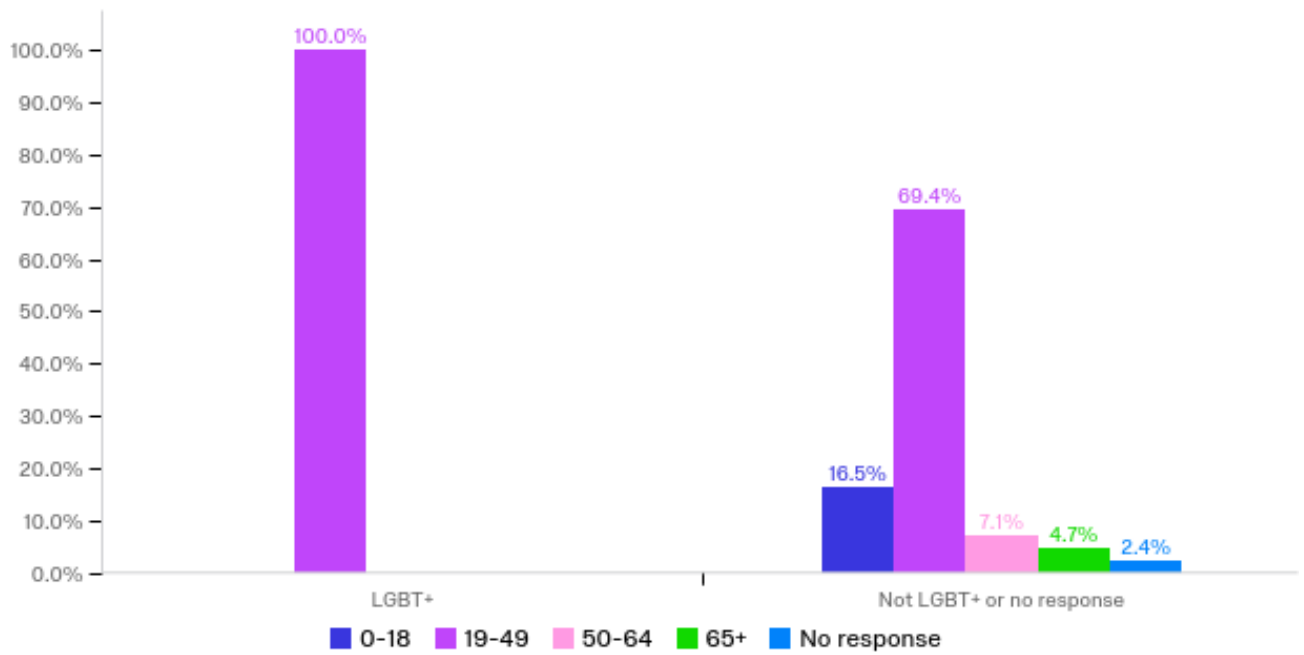
Q12 - About me - LGBT+



Answer	%	Count
LGBT+	7.6%	7
Not LGBT+ or no response	92.4%	85
Total	100%	92



Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June	Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June	Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June	Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June
LGBT+	23.1% 3	15.4% 2	0.0% 0	3.8% 2
Not LGBT+ or no response	76.9% 10	84.6% 11	100.0% 13	96.2% 51
Total	Total 13	Total 13	Total 13	Total 53

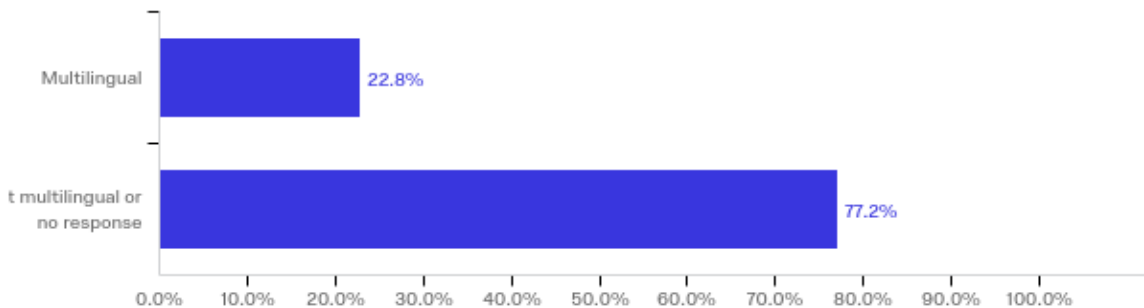


Question	LGBT+		Not LGBT+ or no response	
0-18	0.0%	0	16.5%	14
19-49	100.0%	7	69.4%	59
50-64	0.0%	0	7.1%	6
65+	0.0%	0	4.7%	4
No response	0.0%	0	2.4%	2
Total	Total	7	Total	85

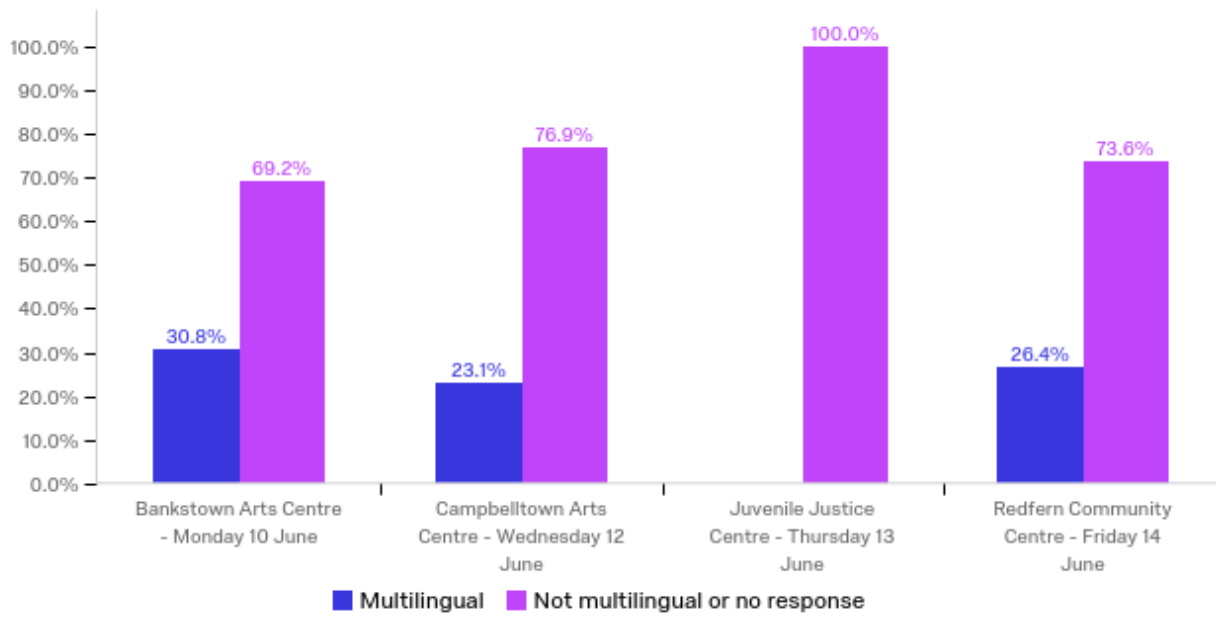
Multilingual

22.8% of respondents identify as multilingual and the proportions were similar the three art and community centres, although numerically most were located at Redfern Art Centre. The majority (85.7%) were aged 19 to 49 and the remainder 50 to 64. No respondents at Juvenile Justice Centre 2 identify as multilingual.

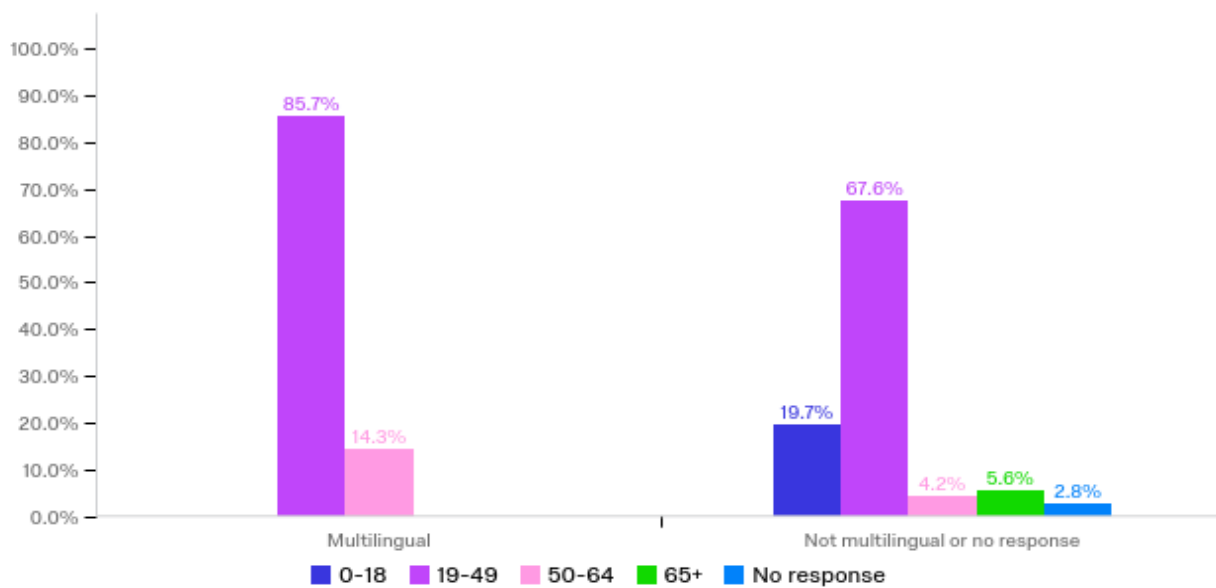
Q13 - About me - multilingual



Answer	%	Count
Multilingual	22.8%	21
Not multilingual or no response	77.2%	71
Total	100%	92



Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June		Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June		Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June		Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	
Multilingual	30.8%	4	23.1%	3	0.0%	0	26.4%	14
Not multilingual or no response	69.2%	9	76.9%	10	100.0%	13	73.6%	39
Total	Total	13	Total	13	Total	13	Total	53

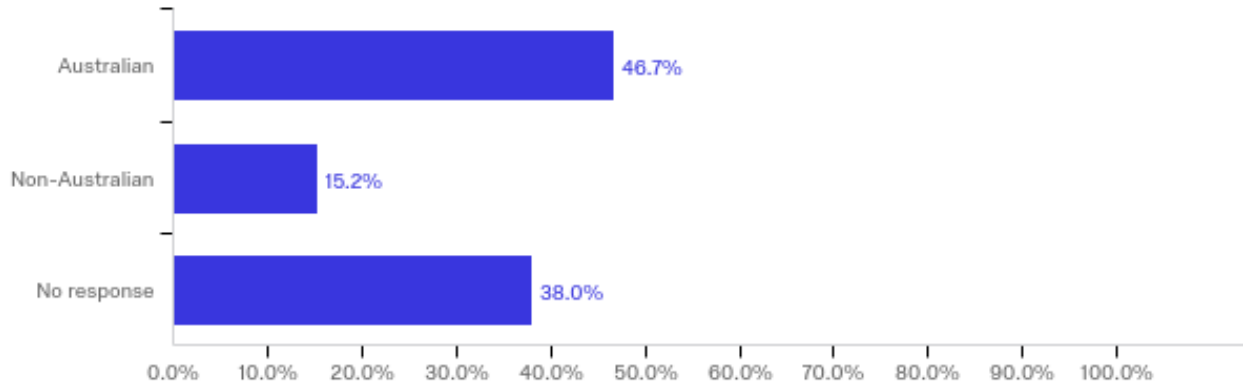


Question	Multilingual		Not multilingual or no response	
0-18	0.0%	0	19.7%	14
19-49	85.7%	18	67.6%	48
50-64	14.3%	3	4.2%	3
65+	0.0%	0	5.6%	4
No response	0.0%	0	2.8%	2
Total	Total	21	Total	71

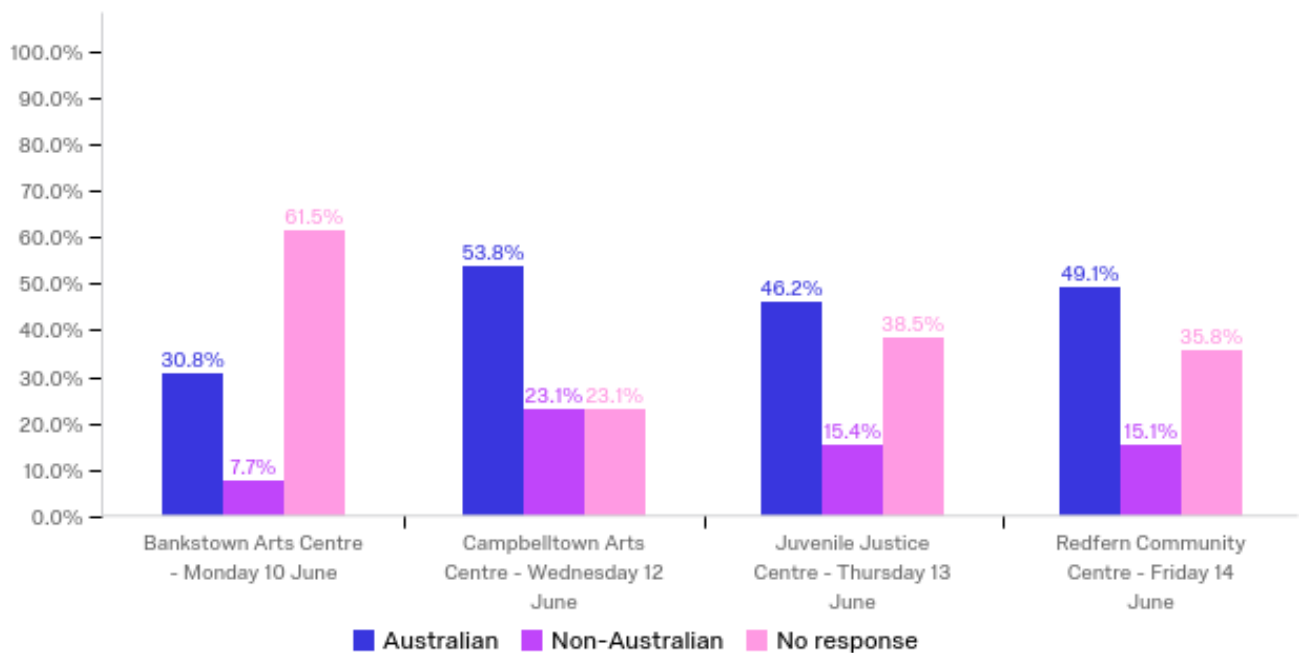
Nationality

46.7% of respondents identify as Australian, 15.2% as non-Australian, and a large 38% did not respond and so have been included in the results. The most non-Australians were based at Redfern Community Centre, and the majority were aged 19 to 49 (79.1%).

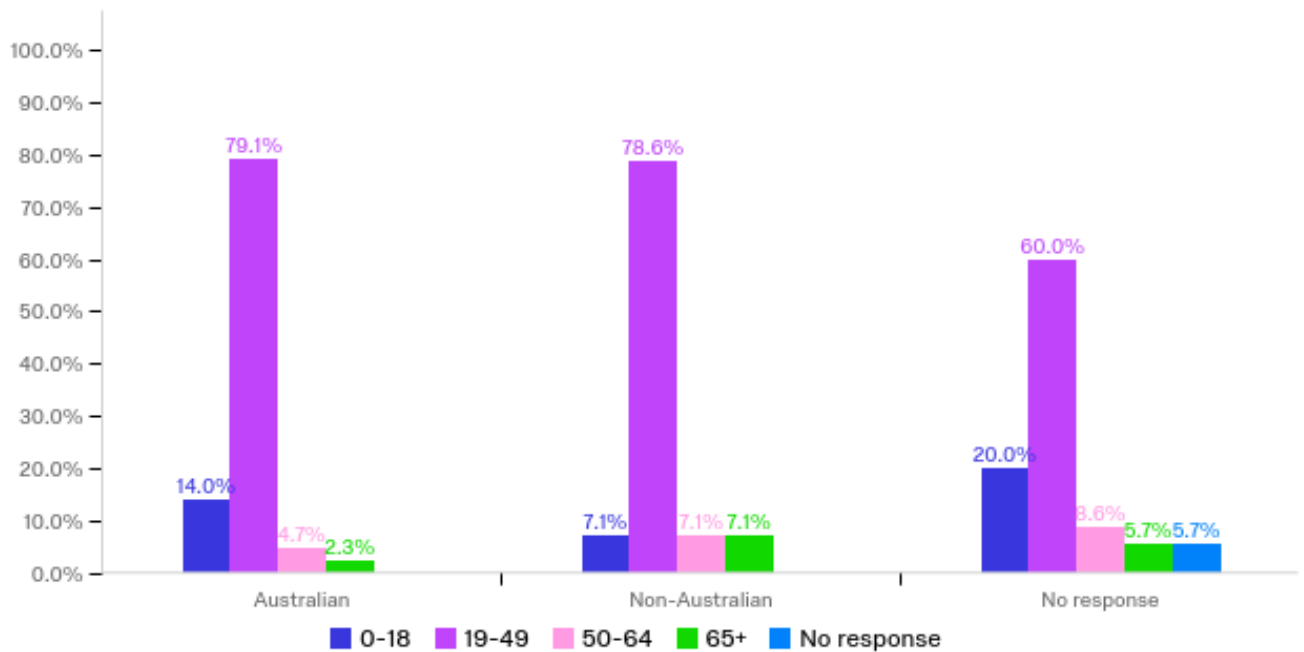
Q14 - About me - nationality (62% responded)



Answer	%	Count
Australian	46.7%	43
Non-Australian	15.2%	14
No response	38.0%	35
Total	100%	92



Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June	Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June	Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June	Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June
Australian	30.8% 4	53.8% 7	46.2% 6	49.1% 26
Non-Australian	7.7% 1	23.1% 3	15.4% 2	15.1% 8
No response	61.5% 8	23.1% 3	38.5% 5	35.8% 19
Total	Total 13	Total 13	Total 13	Total 53



Question	Australian		Non-Australian		No response	
0-18	14.0%	6	7.1%	1	20.0%	7
19-49	79.1%	34	78.6%	11	60.0%	21
50-64	4.7%	2	7.1%	1	8.6%	3
65+	2.3%	1	7.1%	1	5.7%	2
No response	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	5.7%	2
Total	Total	43	Total	14	Total	35

Employment

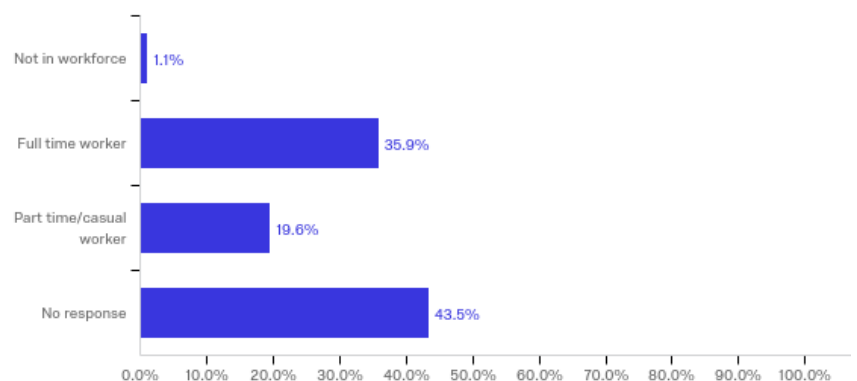
A large 43.5% of respondents did not respond to the employment question. 35.9% were full time workers and 19.6% work part time or casually. Only one said they are not in the workforce.

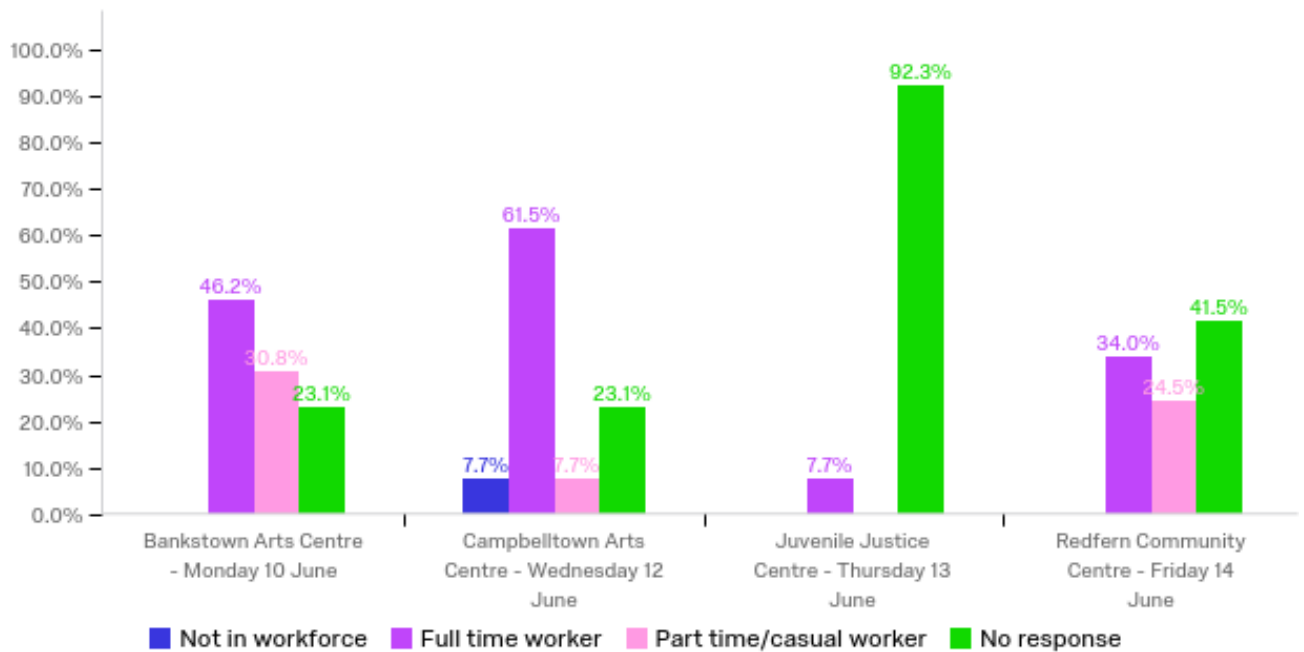
Campbelltown Arts Centre had the highest proportion of full time workers (61.5%).

Most of the 19 to 49 age group work full time. Part time / casual workers were more prevalent in the two groups aged 50 and over. The full time worker in the 18 and under group was at Juvenile Justice Centre 2 and was most likely selection error.

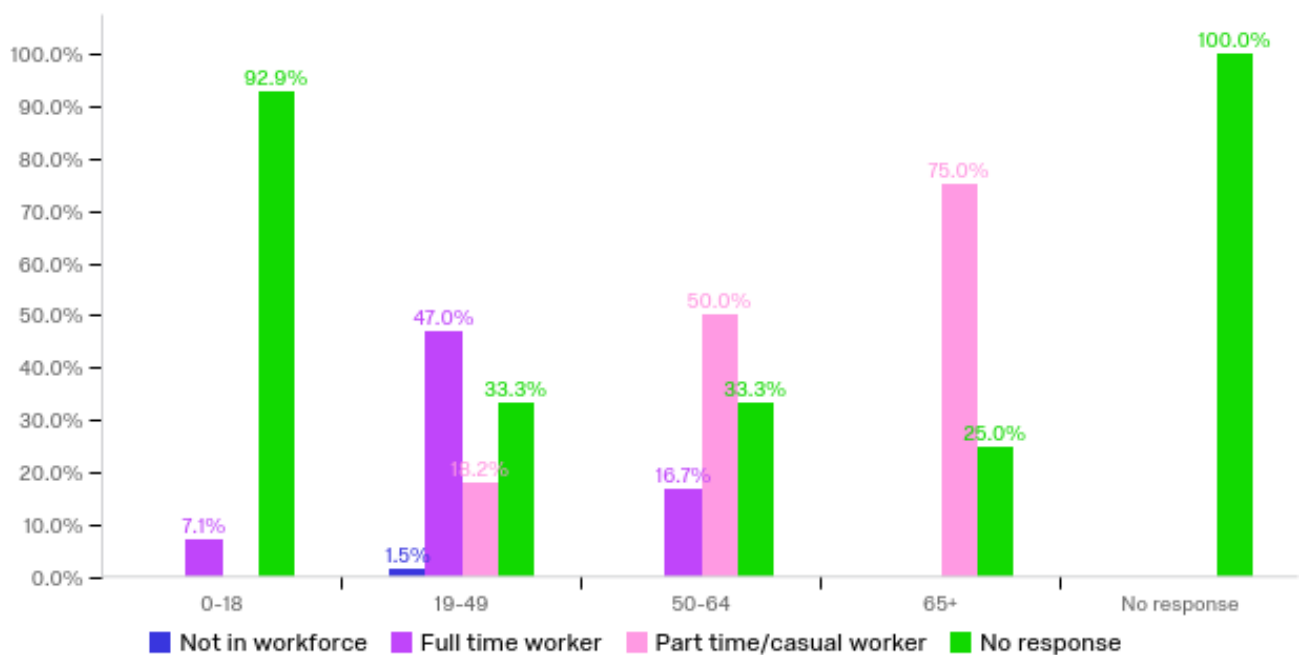
Q15 - About me - employment (56.5% responded)

Answer	%	Count
Not in workforce	1.1%	1
Full time worker	35.9%	33
Part time/casual worker	19.6%	18
No response	43.5%	40
Total	100%	92





Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June	Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June	Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June	Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June
Not in workforce	0.0% 0	7.7% 1	0.0% 0	0.0% 0
Full time worker	46.2% 6	61.5% 8	7.7% 1	34.0% 18
Part time/casual worker	30.8% 4	7.7% 1	0.0% 0	24.5% 13
No response	23.1% 3	23.1% 3	92.3% 12	41.5% 22
Total	Total 13	Total 13	Total 13	Total 53



Question	0-18		19-49		50-64		65+		No response		Total
Not in workforce	0.0%	0	100.0%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1
Full time worker	3.0%	1	93.9%	31	3.0%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	33
Part time/casual worker	0.0%	0	66.7%	12	16.7%	3	16.7%	3	0.0%	0	18
No response	32.5%	13	55.0%	22	5.0%	2	2.5%	1	5.0%	2	40

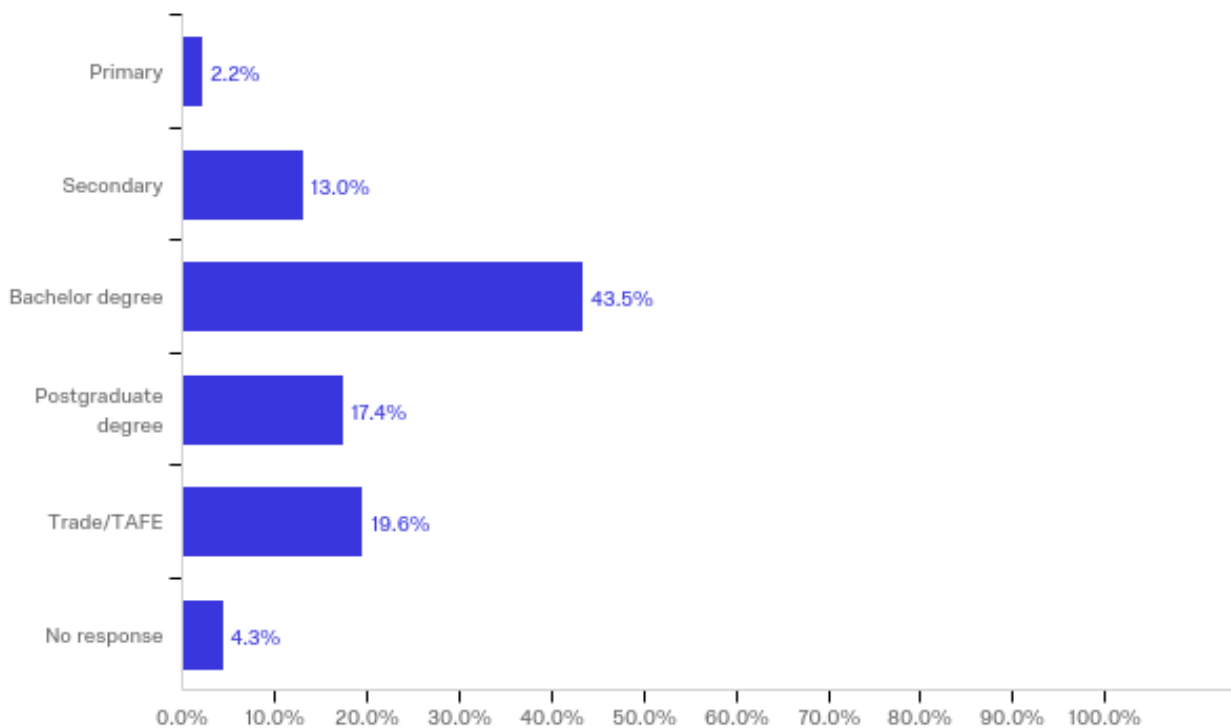
Education level

Nearly half of respondents achieved Bachelor degree level education (43.5%). 19.6% had Trade/TAFE qualifications, 17.4% a postgraduate degree, and 13% completed secondary education. One 19 to 49 year old Aboriginal did not progress past primary school, and there was another with primary education aged 18 or under who was also Aboriginal.

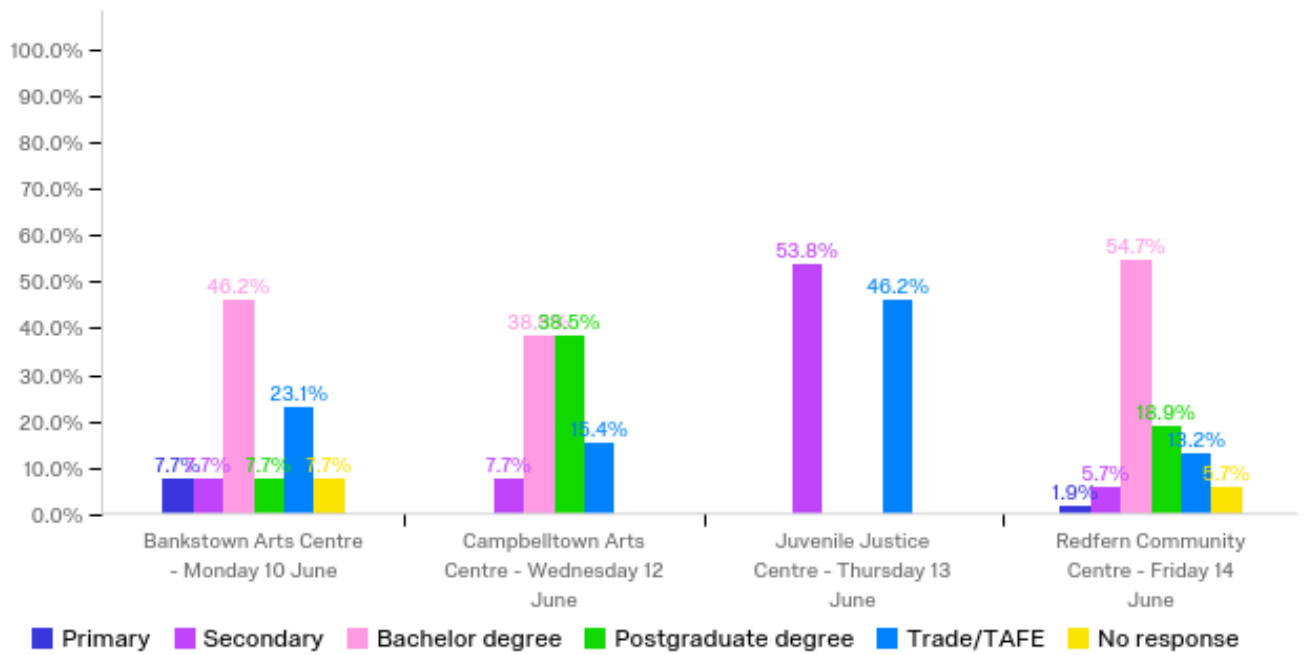
Campbelltown Arts Centre (77.0%) and Redfern Art Centre (73.6%) had the most with Bachelor or Postgraduate degrees. Juvenile Justice Centre 2 was almost evenly split between secondary education and Trade/TAFE qualifications.

The largest age group, those aged 19 to 49, had a high proportion of tertiary education (74.2%) and Trade/TAFE (15.2%), with only 7.6% not progressing past primary (1 person) or secondary education.

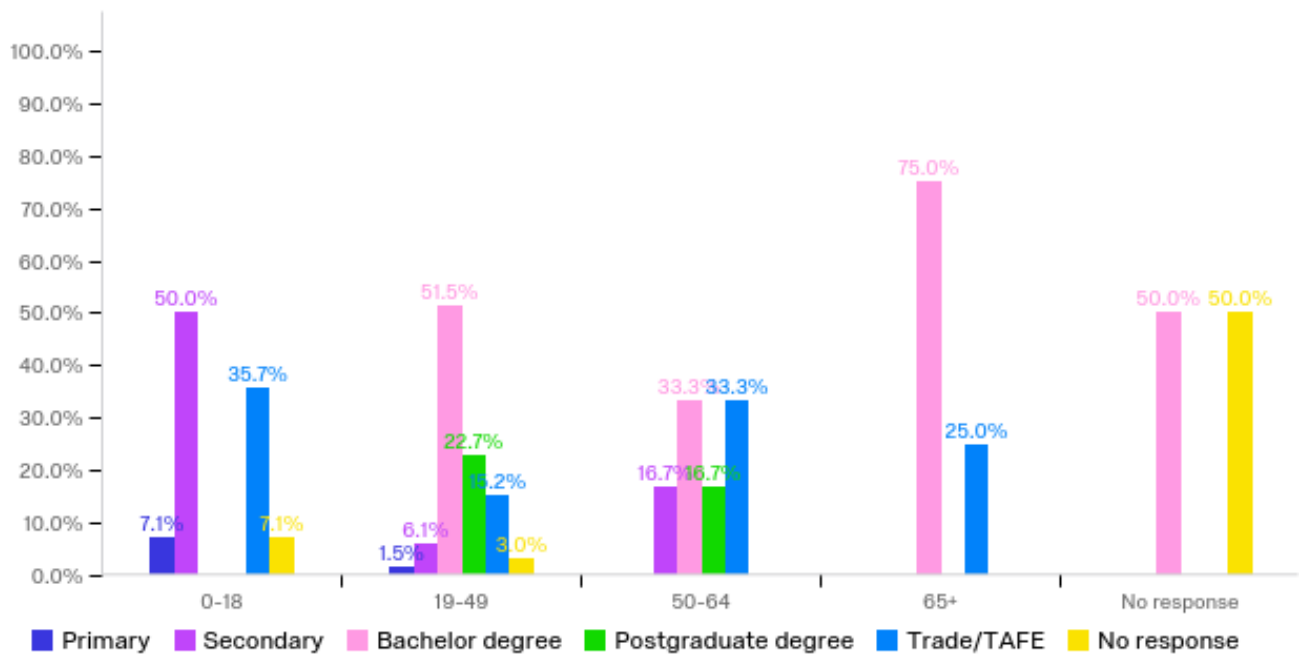
Q17 - My education level (95.7% responded)



Answer	%	Count
Primary	2.2%	2
Secondary	13.0%	12
Bachelor degree	43.5%	40
Postgraduate degree	17.4%	16
Trade/TAFE	19.6%	18
No response	4.3%	4
Total	100%	92



Question	Bankstown Arts Centre - Monday 10 June		Campbelltown Arts Centre - Wednesday 12 June		Juvenile Justice Centre - Thursday 13 June		Redfern Community Centre - Friday 14 June	
Primary	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.9%	1
Secondary	7.7%	1	7.7%	1	53.8%	7	5.7%	3
Bachelor degree	46.2%	6	38.5%	5	0.0%	0	54.7%	29
Postgraduate degree	7.7%	1	38.5%	5	0.0%	0	18.9%	10
Trade/TAFE	23.1%	3	15.4%	2	46.2%	6	13.2%	7
No response	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	5.7%	3
Total	Total	13	Total	13	Total	13	Total	53



Question	0-18		19-49		50-64		65+		No response	
Primary	7.1%	1	1.5%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Secondary	50.0%	7	6.1%	4	16.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Bachelor degree	0.0%	0	51.5%	34	33.3%	2	75.0%	3	50.0%	1
Postgraduate degree	0.0%	0	22.7%	15	16.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Trade/TAFE	35.7%	5	15.2%	10	33.3%	2	25.0%	1	0.0%	0
No response	7.1%	1	3.0%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	50.0%	1
Total	Total	14	Total	66	Total	6	Total	4	Total	2

BEYOND THE WALLS – AUDIENCE SURVEY



Thanks for helping Phunktional understand more about you and your experience of the show.
Please circle one or more options.

My overall impression

The show was...

Joyous Funny Interesting Exciting Awesome OK Good
 Clever Surprising Challenging Relevant Respectful Confronting
 Valuable Brave Inspiring Boring Confusing Embarrassing
 Annoying Disrespectful Strange Awful Ordinary

Other:

The show got me thinking about...

Social isolation Bullying Violence
 Sexual assault Discrimination
 Pressure to get into crime

Have any of these happened to you?

Yes No

The show inspired me to...

Be more open to other cultures
 Deal with challenges in my life
 Be more creative
 Pursue more opportunities

I heard about the show...

Online Friends/Family Media
 I know a performer
 I'm part of the project

The event could be improved by...

The best part was...

<p>About me</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/> LGBT+ <input type="checkbox"/> Multilingual <input type="checkbox"/> Australian <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Australian <input type="checkbox"/> Not in workforce <input type="checkbox"/> Full time worker <input type="checkbox"/> Part time/casual worker </p>	<p>My age</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 to 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 19 – 49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50 – 64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65+ </p>	<p>My education level</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor degree <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate degree <input type="checkbox"/> Trade/TAFE </p>
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THANK YOU!

PRIVACY STATEMENT

All the information that you provide in this survey will be treated as confidential and will be used for research purposes and to fulfil statistic reporting requirements for grant acquittals. Written comments may be used for promotional purposes. Your responses will not be identified as belonging to you. We do not use any of the information you provide for direct marketing or other non-research activities. Your participation is voluntary. You are entitled to ask that part, or all, of the record of your involvement in the survey be deleted or destroyed.

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Location: Date:

Federal Budget Proposal – **Branching Out**

Branching Out is a partnership between PCYC QLD, local Elders and Phunktional Arts to provide creative arts training, education and health activities for disengaged young people on Ngurupai (Horn Island), a remote island in the Torres Straits.

“Culture is prevention”

- The International Conference on Youth Mental Health 2019

Branching Out is a discreet project that builds on 5 years of community-led arts programs that address locally-identified cultural, social and wellbeing needs. It will provide:

- Jobs
- Professional training
- Pathways to education and employment
- Creative arts & cultural activities

Community leaders have noted that their at-risk young people were more engaged, job-ready, showed signs of increased social and emotional wellbeing, and had decreased participation in violence when engaging in previous programs run by this partnership.

KEY RECOMMENDATION

The Federal Government supports PCYC QLD, local Elders and Phunktional Arts to work with the Horn Island community and provide a creative arts training, education and health program for disengaged young people.



The Yumpla Project

2015 - 2018

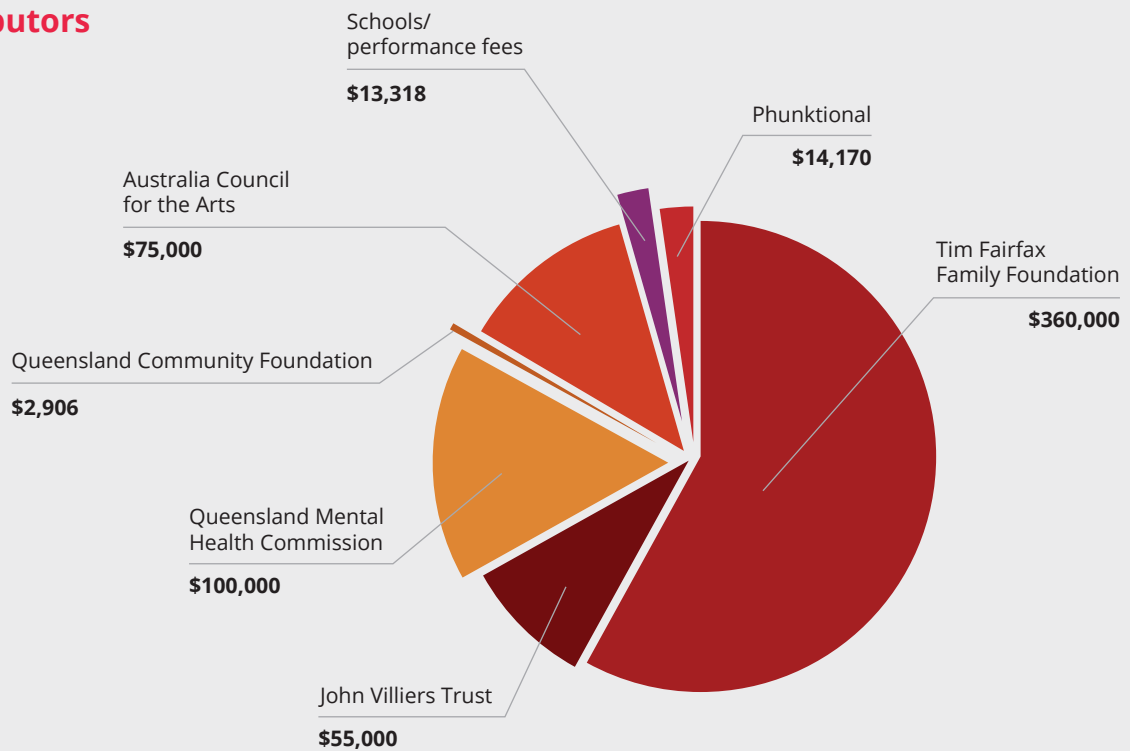
'Yumpla' in Torres Strait Islander Creole means, 'You and Me and the Group'.

The Yumpla Project used a combination of arts and wellbeing strategies to engage, educate and support young people to increase their connectedness with their peers, education, service providers and the wider community.

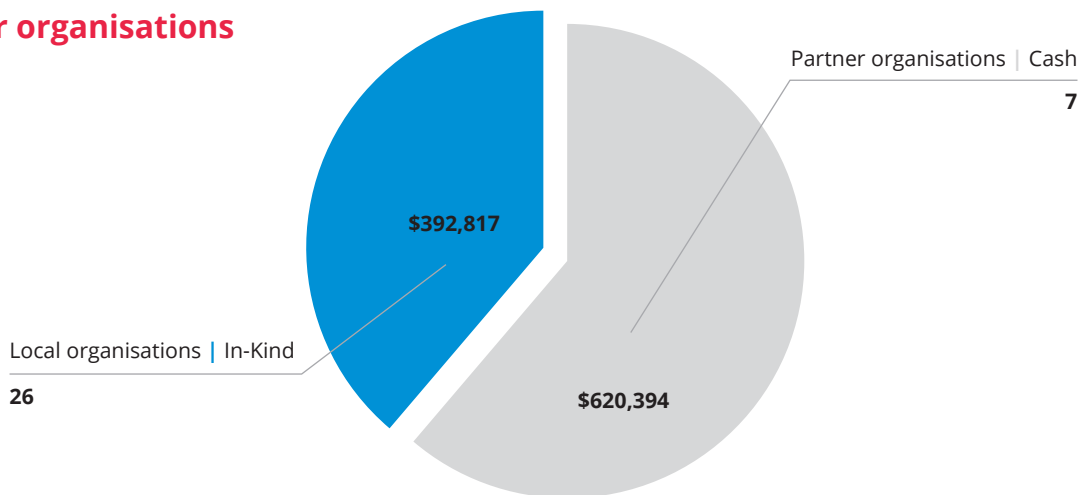
Investment

\$1,013,211

Contributors

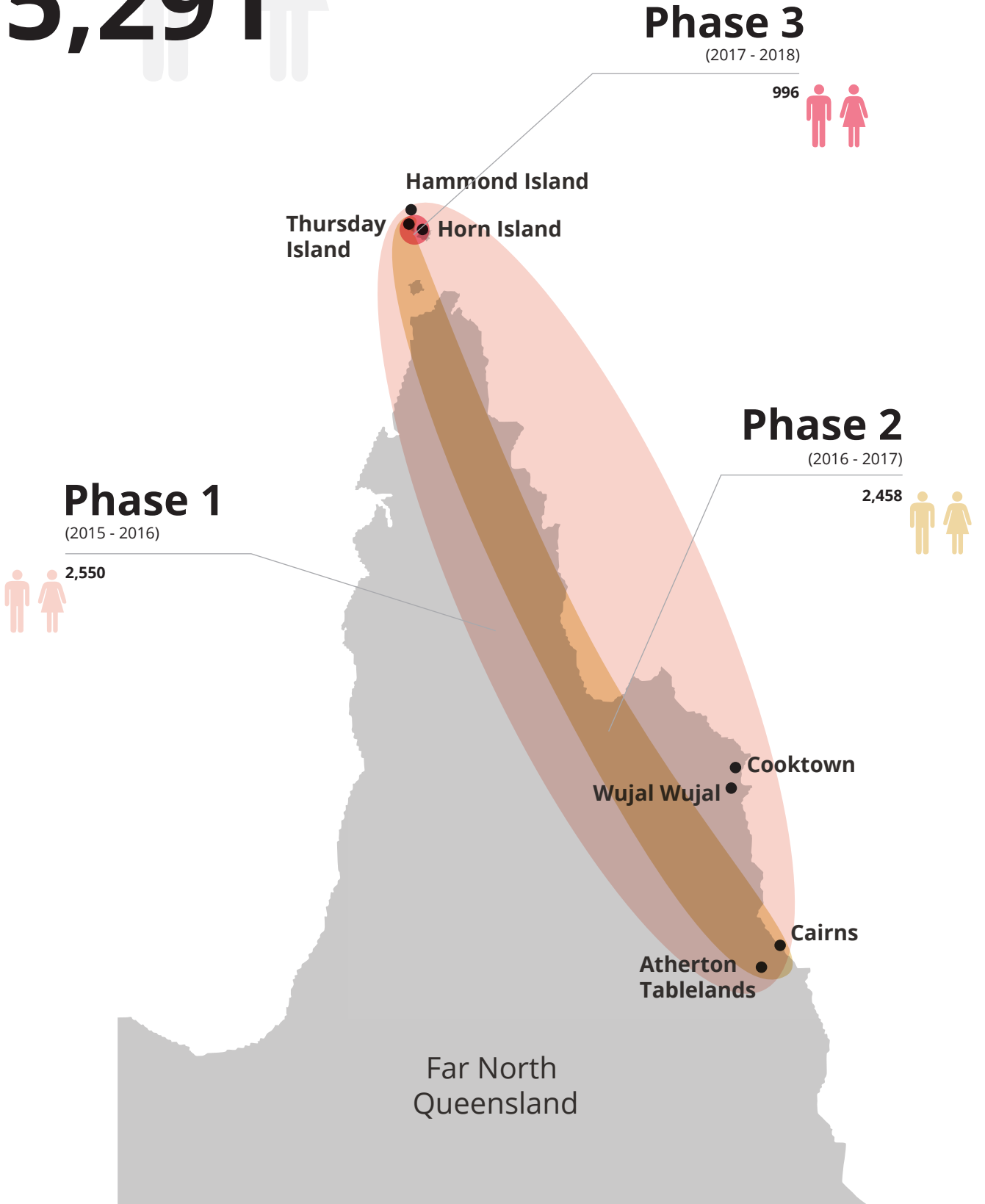


Partner organisations



People reached

5,291





*2018 - Getting ready for the performance on Horn Island.

177 Workshops for young people



*Satisfaction rating from young people surveyed

23 Professional performances

Several months after the project, **83% of students** were confident Phunktional's performances enriched or increased their knowledge about issues to do with **binge drinking**. Likewise, **89% of students** were confident the performances enriched or increased their knowledge about issues to do with **e-Safety**.
- Deakin University

27 Performances by young people

"This entire performance meant so many things to me on a personal level, as I believe it has with the rest of the audience. Everything was absolutely perfect and will change the way people think, feel and act. The performance and its actors will have a special place in my heart and many others. **This will stay with me forever.**"
- The Yumpla 2017 survey Final Report

15

Educators from 6 locations

participate in professional development workshops



*Satisfaction rating from educators surveyed

3

Reference groups

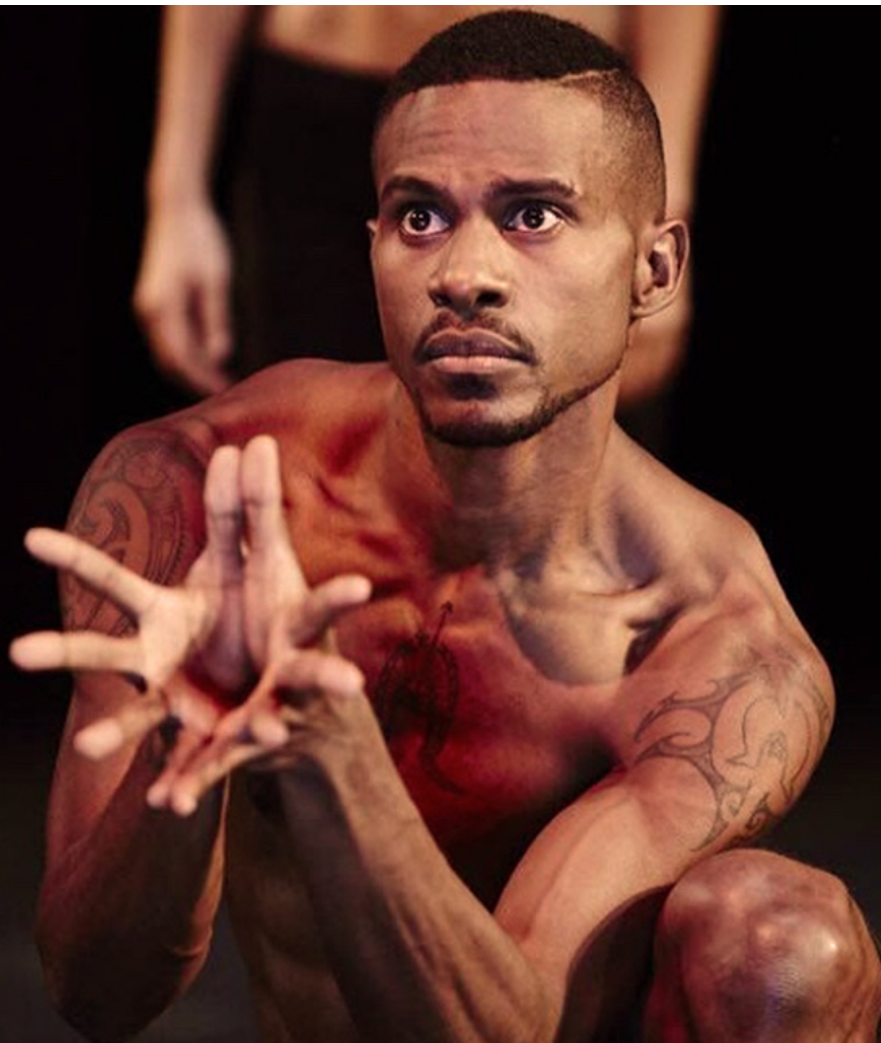
made up of local organisations guiding the delivery of the project.

Cairns | Atherton Tablelands | Thursday Island

32

Artists & arts workers employed by Phunktional

Over 50% of artists and arts workers employed were **local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders**.



* Hans AhWang - Lead Artist, Phunktional

Next steps

Creating

A contemporary, youth focused, tour-ready performance based on the 2018 in-progress showings with the support of local Artists, Elders and the wider community on Horn Island.

Celebrating

Youth focused performances from Horn Island shared with other young people from regional centers across Queensland.



Developing

Career pathways for young people and emerging artists from Horn Island



Federal Budget Proposal – Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre

RYPAC – A world class performing arts, culture and wellbeing training centre servicing over 100,000 people in the greater Sunraysia region.

RYPAC PROJECT PARTNERS:

- Mildura Rural City Council
- Swan Hill Rural City Council
- Robinvale District Health Services
- Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-operative
- Robinvale College, Neighbourhood House
- Mallee District Health Services & Domestic Violence Services
- Mallee District Aboriginal Services
- Phunktional Arts

After 8 years of successful arts and cultural projects in Sunraysia, Phunktional Arts has conducted a feasibility study into a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre (RYPAC) over 2 years. **With over 700 local respondents, 86% said they wanted a youth performing arts and training centre** that will provide jobs, skills, training and a new industry hub for the whole Sunraysia region.

The Sunraysia region is an integral farming and food producing region for Victoria and NSW with a vibrant and growing multicultural community. However, local young people are more likely to be disengaged from education and work, and more likely to have health and mental wellbeing challenges. Youth suicide rates for the region are particularly of concern.

Young people with opportunities to engage positively with culture and arts are more likely to have improved health and job pathways than their peers who don't. The RYPAC will be a multicultural hub that provides affordable, accessible and world-class arts and cultural training for local young people.

The RYPAC will employ 30 local people and provide training for more than 300 young people annually.

KEY RECOMMENDATION

The Federal Government supports Phunktional Arts and RYPAC project partners to deliver a 2-year pilot project for 600 young people in the Sunraysia region.



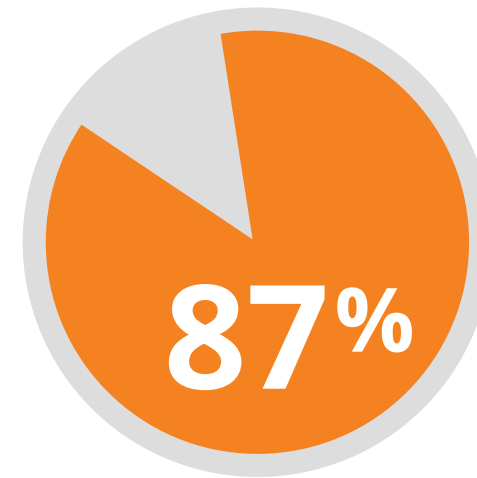
Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre Feasibility Study 2019

The Research

Feasibility Study Focus Area



Support & acceptance of a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre (RYPAC)



**700+ survey
responses**

**8 focus
groups**

Of surveyed locals said a
youth performing arts centre
of excellence would be good
for the region

The Need

Youth

72%

want to do performing arts for fun or as a career

71%

say there is a lack of opportunities to participate in performing arts

Parents & guardians

72%

feel that there are not enough performing arts opportunities in the region



Rated **4 out of 5** stars for importance of performing arts

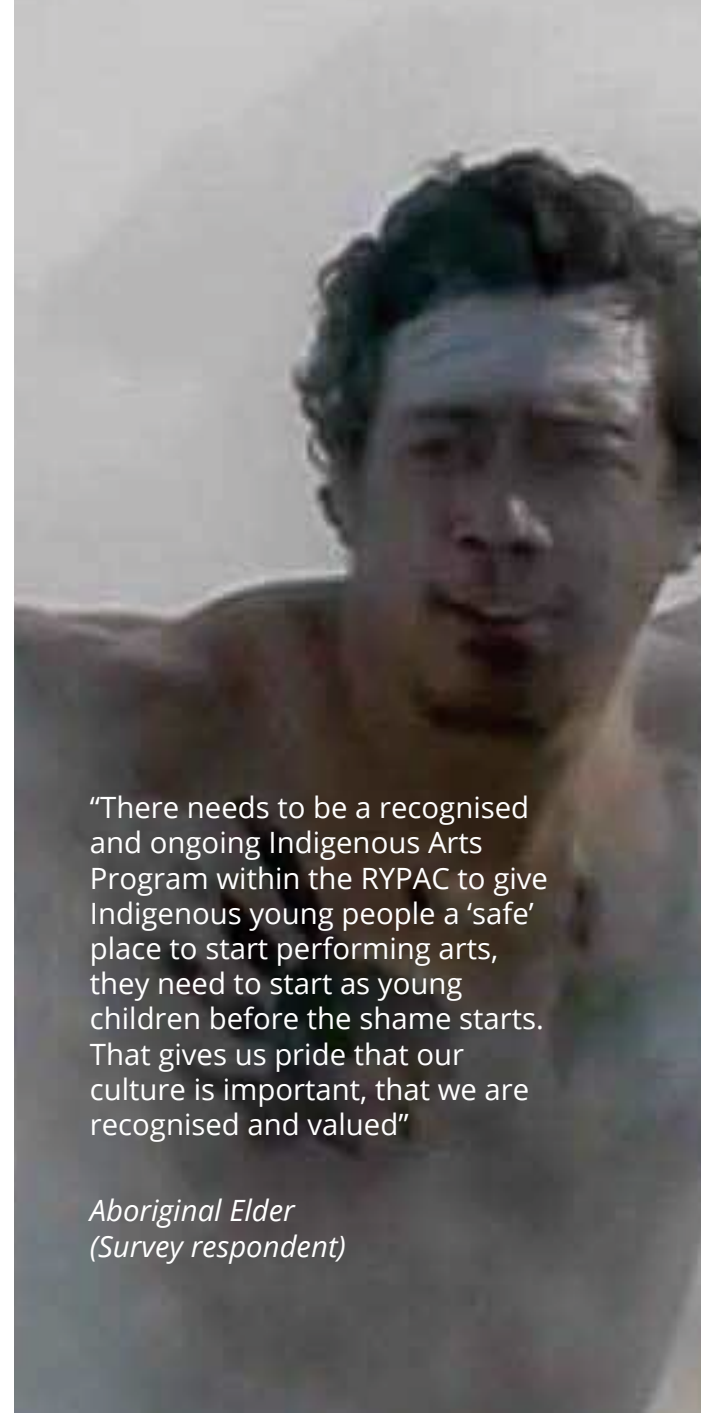
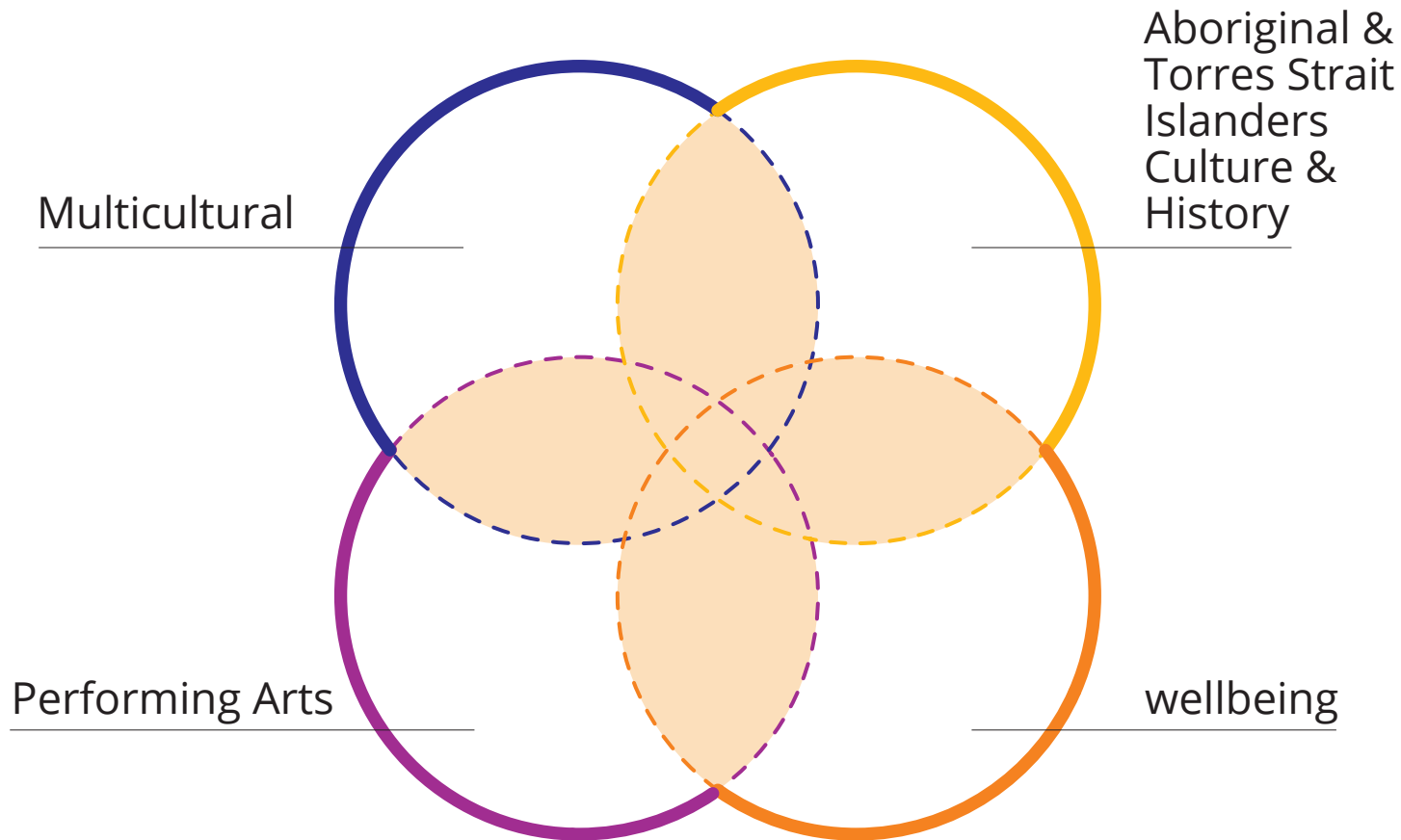


"It is long overdue. Our region is overlooked time and again, it would be an enormous surge of confidence in this community and in particular, the young people for years to come."

*Aboriginal Elder
(Survey respondent)*

The Approach

Sustainable community approach



“There needs to be a recognised and ongoing Indigenous Arts Program within the RYPAC to give Indigenous young people a ‘safe’ place to start performing arts, they need to start as young children before the shame starts. That gives us pride that our culture is important, that we are recognised and valued”

*Aboriginal Elder
(Survey respondent)*

The Impact

Communities with access to arts infrastructure and performance can experience:



Increased community cohesion



Economic growth through employment and tourism



Reductions in crime and violence



Positive environmental outcomes

49%

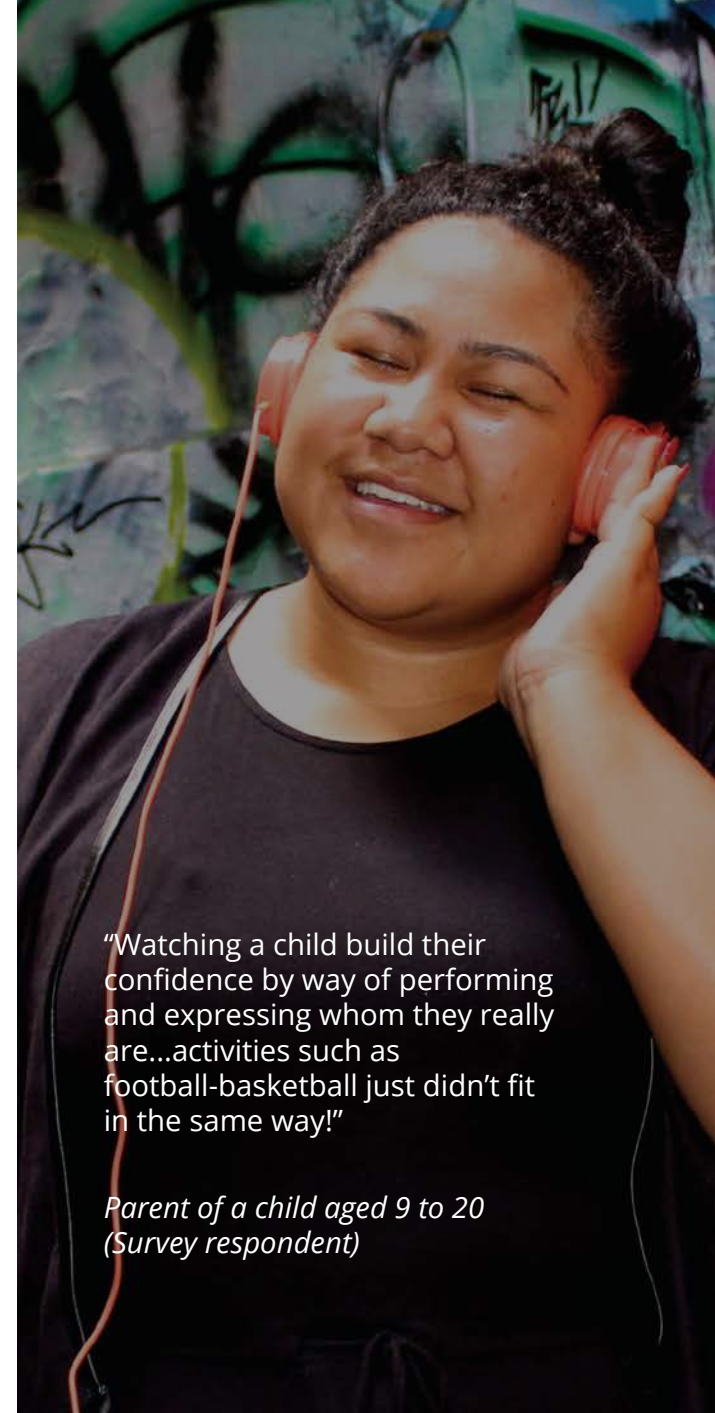
said performing arts has had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing or someone they knew



13/15 education providers said student confidence increased after participating in a performing arts program with arts company Phunktional

"Watching a child build their confidence by way of performing and expressing whom they really are...activities such as football-basketball just didn't fit in the same way!"

*Parent of a child aged 9 to 20
(Survey respondent)*



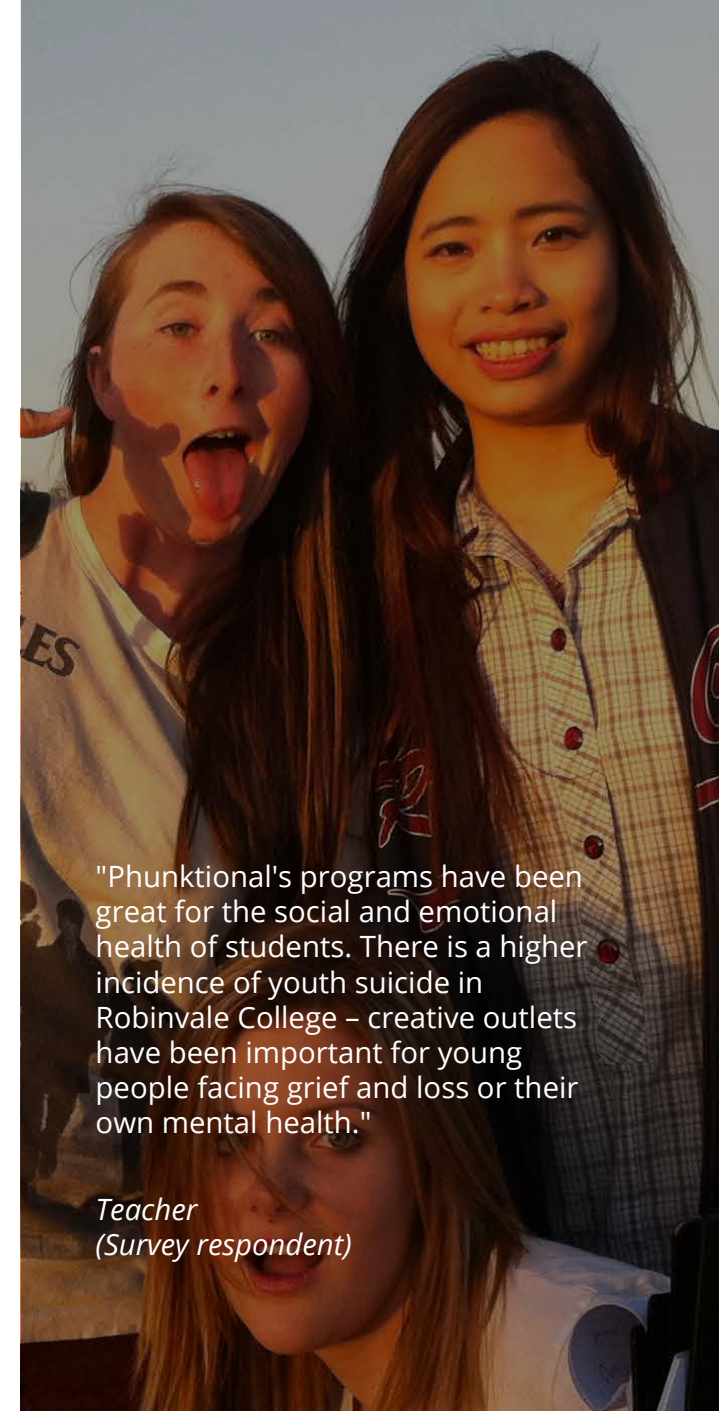
"On the brink of throwing in the towel, I was taken into the Phunktional program and got closer to my peers than I'd ever thought possible. My confidence in my musical works grew to the point where I could finally show them to others, and I became a part of many great communities I would have missed out on otherwise! To say something like art or a program has "saved" you is nearly always a dramatic overexaggeration, but in this case I really do feel that my life wouldn't have turned anywhere near as good as it has if it weren't for the fact I was brought into this program. Thank you."

*Male Sunraysia region participant,
aged 21 or over (Survey respondent)*



Factors For Success

- 1 Local culture must be core to the performing arts programs on offer
- 2 Parent and guardian support for their child's involvement in the performing arts
- 3 Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre being community owned and built on community partnerships
- 4 Promotion and understanding of the benefits of the performing arts
- 5 Demand drivers such as high quality and diverse experiences and opportunities
- 6 School commitment to students experiencing, and participating in, the performing arts



"Phunktional's programs have been great for the social and emotional health of students. There is a higher incidence of youth suicide in Robinvale College – creative outlets have been important for young people facing grief and loss or their own mental health."

*Teacher
(Survey respondent)*

Acknowledgements

Schools

Mildura South
Mildura Primary
Ranfurly Primary, Mildura
St Paul's, Mildura
Mildura West
Nichols Point, Mildura
Irymple South
Irymple Primary
Trinity Lutheran, Mildura
Irymple Secondary College
Mildura Senior
Chaffey Secondary, Mildura
Henderson College, Mildura
St Joseph's College, Mildura
Sacred Heart Primary School, Mildura
Mildura Specialist School
Mildura English Language Centre
Sunraysia TAFE, Mildura
La Trobe, Mildura
Merbein P-10
The Lake Primary, Merbein
Our Lady of The Sacred Heart Primary, Merbein
Red Cliffs East
St Josephs, Red Cliffs
Red Cliffs Primary
Cardross Primary
Red Cliffs Secondary College

Robinvale College
St Marys, Robinvale
Swan Hill TAFE
Manangatang P-12
Swan Hill North Primary School
Swan Hill Primary School
Swan Hill Specialist School
St Mary Catholic Primary School, Swan Hill
Sun Centre Christian School, Swan Hill
Swan Hill College
FLO Campus Swan Hill
Mackillop Catholic High School, Swan Hill
Lake Boga Primary School
Woorinen Primary School
Nyah District Primary School
Ultima Primary School
Beverford Primary School
Ouyen P-12 College
Balranald Central School (K-12)
St Joseph's Primary School, Balranald (K-6)
Euston Primary School (K-6)
Gol Gol Public School (K-6)
Dareton Public School (K-6)
Coomoalla High School (7-12)
Tooleybuc Central School (K-12)
Wentworth Public School (K-6)

Individuals

Annabelle Sharman (Local area co-ordinator Phunktional Arts)
Greg Rhodes (Assistant Principal Merbein Secondary College)
Garry Costello (Principal Irymple Secondary College)
Norsiyah Mokak (First People Training Institute)
Glenn Stewart (Regional Development Victoria)
Robin Laurie (Circus Elder)
Jim Hirst (School Focused Youth Services Swan Hill)
Rachael Williams (Local Logic Place)
Jennifer Grigg (M2C Consulting Services)
Ana Rees (Former Principal Robinvale College)
Wendy Saluni (Music Teacher)
Mary Khouri (Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-operative)
Barb O'hara (Wellbeing Red Cliffs Secondary College)
Sara Broster (Principal Robinvale College)
Antonette Zema (Mildura Arts Centre)
Jade Ficarra (Swan Hill Council)
Cindy Hinterholz (Coleman Foundation)
Bruce Myers (Director, Swan Hill Rural City Council)
Phillip Egan (Local Artist)
Phillip Murray (Local Artist)
Morgan Appleby (local Area Co-Ordinator Phunktional)
Tess Spaven (local Area Co-Ordinator Phunktional)

Organisations

Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-operative
Robinvale District Health Service
Mallee District Aboriginal Services
Mallee Sexual Assault Unit and Domestic Violence
Swan Hill Rural City Council
Mildura Rural City Council
Robinvale Network House

Report prepared November 2018 | Rachael Williams, Local Logic Place | Online survey design and results analysis by researcher Ebony Hack



Australian Government

Catalyst—Australian Arts and Culture Fund



Australian Government

Australia Council
for the Arts



NEWSBOYS
FOUNDATION
Supporting young Victorians
since 1893



locallogic
place

phunktional
Dance • Theatre • Film • Youth Projects

ROBINVALE YOUTH

Performing Arts Centre Feasibility Study

2019



*The Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre is considered a working title; the naming of the Centre will be undertaken by the community and through the purpose-formed Steering Group, with reference to the significance of including cultural naming.

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Report prepared January 2019:

Rachael Williams, Local Logic Place www.locallogicplace.com.au

Online survey design and results analysis by researcher Ebony Hack

Executive Summary

A social feasibility study assesses the impact of an initiative on the local community and the lives of people living in that community. This study into the feasibility of a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre (RYPAC) was initiated by Phunktional, who have delivered place-based, whole-of-community projects in the Mallee region since 2008.

Goal

To ascertain the viability of establishing a long-term, sustainable, community-driven youth performing arts centre, based in the Mallee region of northwest Victoria.

Methodology

The social feasibility study draws on:

The existing evidence base that increasingly shows that performing arts improve:

- educational outcomes (school attendance; motivation and engagement)
- health and wellbeing (including confidence and life satisfaction)
- community cohesion (reductions in crime and violence)
- economic growth through employment and tourism

An existing profile of need for young people living in the Mallee region compared with the rest of Victoria:

- higher disengagement from school
- lower levels of school completion and progression to further education
- greater welfare dependency
- lower income and employment rates
- higher proportions of one-parent families
- families in which mothers have low educational attainment

Whilst the report adopts a focus on the needs of young people in the Mallee, this is a reflection of deficits in their environment and should not be considered deficits of the young people. Importantly, taken together with the evidence, it speaks heavily to the power of performing arts in keeping Mallee youth socially and emotionally well, engaged in education, and connected to their communities.



- 5 'scoping interviews' with key service providers and community leaders
- 2 in-depth interviews with industry leaders
- A survey with 718 valid responses from the local communities
- 8 focus groups totalling 76 participants from key stakeholder groups:
 - Performing arts organisations and service providers
 - Aboriginal Elders
 - Past and current Phunktional participants
 - Students from Swan Hill Specialist School

Phunktional's expertise in the industry and knowledge of the region:

- 8 years of successful Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) project delivery in the region
- Calling the Shots – award-winning short films created by young people across the Mallee now airing on Virgin in-flight entertainment

Emerging Themes

Theme 1 Support for & Acceptance of a RYPAC

Support for a RYPAC was beyond all expectations. The community is looking for accessible and affordable options to encourage participation in the arts.

- 87% of surveyed locals said a youth performing arts centre of excellence would be good for the region
- 73% of young people surveyed wanted to participate in the arts for fun or pursuing a performing arts career

Theme 2 Current Needs & Services

The community feel their performing arts needs are not being met.

- 72% of parents and guardians felt there were not enough performing arts opportunities outside of school (66% felt there was not enough on offer at their children's schools)
- 48% of youth felt there were not enough performing arts activities available in their community

Theme 3 Location, Design & Implementation

Robinvale is the preferred location for a youth performing arts centre of excellence according to local performing arts service providers, businesses and the community.

Dance and music are clear preferences for activities provided by a RYPAC, and young people would prefer performing arts activities that were after school and on weekends.

Theme 4 Intended Positive Impacts

Existing evidence supporting the value of performing arts was clearly supported by this study.

- Parents and guardians rated the importance of performing arts a 4 out of 5 for their children's general development and for connecting them with the community
- 13 of 15 education providers said student confidence increased after participating in a program with Phunktional

Theme 5 Unintended Impacts

Positive impacts included strengthening the service delivery and content of existing performing arts, health, education, youth, cultural and community services and an increasingly satisfied and settled regional workforce due to improved amenity value.

Risks included a RYPAC increasing competition for resources already in short supply in the Robinvale community, such as housing. It is recommended that the implementation of a RYPAC addresses resource use and aims to complement and support existing services, rather than compete with them.

Theme 6 Challenges & Barriers

Primary barriers to young people's participation in performing arts activities in the local region included:

- Lack of accessible and affordable opportunities
- Lack of capacity, such as skilled performing arts professionals, venues, etc
- Competition for time with other activities such as sport

Theme 7 Factors for Success

Six community-informed factors for the success of a RYPAC emerged:

1. School commitment to students experiencing, and participating in, the performing arts
2. RYPAC being community-owned and built on community partnerships
3. Parent and guardian support for their child's involvement in the performing arts
4. Promotion and understanding of the benefits of the performing arts
5. Demand drivers such as high quality and diverse experiences and opportunities
6. Local culture must be core to the performing arts programs on offer

Recommendations

These findings yielded the following recommendations:

1. A centre of excellence in the performing arts is designed and developed to serve and support young people across the Victorian and NSW Mallee regions and beyond: The Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre (RYPAC)
2. This centre is located in Robinvale, which is physically central to the larger Mallee region and has a community with a strong cultural foundation in the performing arts
3. The enduring success the RYPAC is embedded in community ownership. This ownership is scaffolded by government and philanthropic support, ensuring the equality of all stakeholders as partners in the RYPAC's management
4. Based on the magnitude of complexities experienced by the young people in the Mallee region (in comparison to their Victorian peers), the RYPAC should uphold a youth engagement and wellbeing philosophy, with programs focussing equally on the development of performing arts skills alongside a comprehensive wellbeing program.

Recommendations & Next Steps

The Mallee communities who participated in the social feasibility study for the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre shared their time and knowledge without hesitation. They spoke in support of a Performing Arts Cultural Centre of Excellence and demonstrated a growing understanding of the importance and value of the performing arts. The potential which lies in extending this understanding and valuing of the performing arts shows capacity for even further demand for, and use of, a performing arts facility and supports the social feasibility of the initiative. In closing, on review of the study findings and evidence base, the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre Social Feasibility Study makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

A centre of excellence in the performing arts is designed and developed to serve and support young people across the Victorian and NSW Mallee regions and beyond: The Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre

Recommendation 2

This Centre is located in Robinvale, recognising Robinvale as physically central to the larger Mallee region and as a community with a strong cultural foundation in the performing arts

Recommendation 3

The enduring success of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre is embedded in community ownership. This ownership is scaffolded by government and philanthropic support, ensuring the equality of all stakeholders as partners in the Centre's management

Recommendation 4

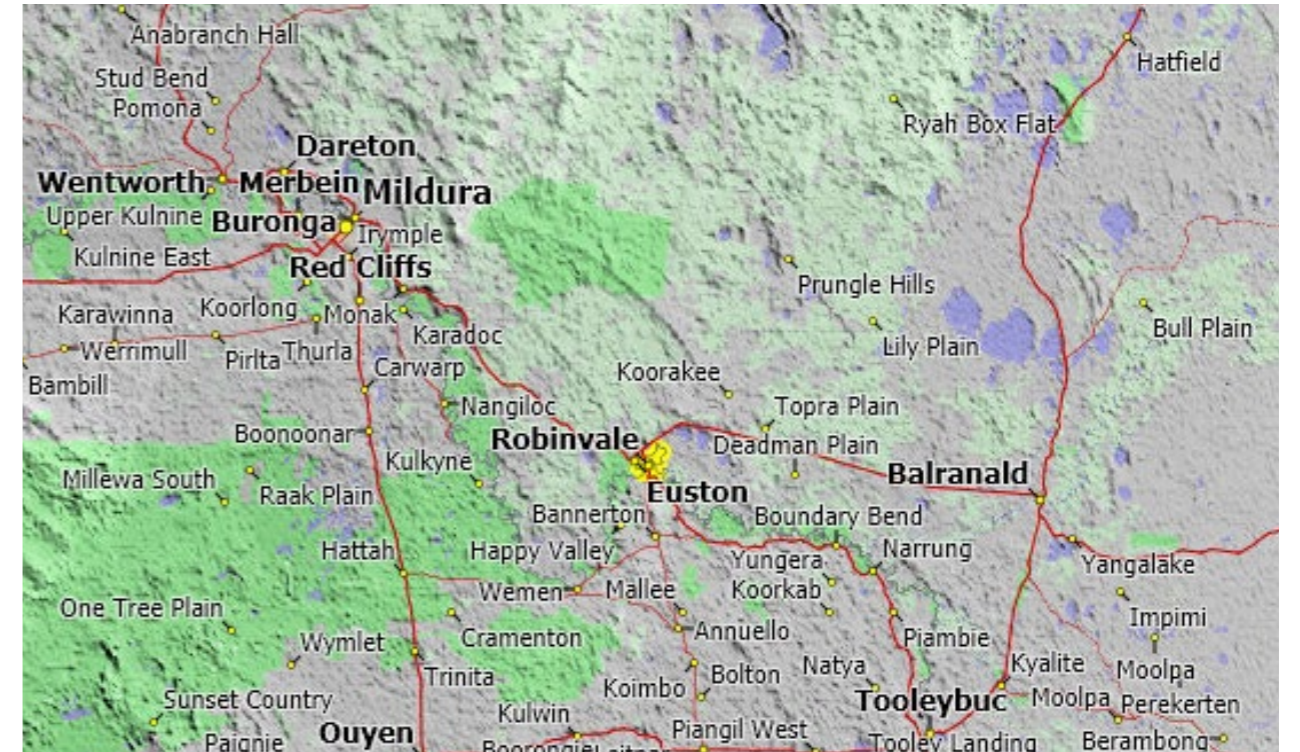
Based on the magnitude of complexities experienced by the young people the Mallee region (in comparison to their Victorian peers) the Centre should uphold a youth engagement and wellbeing philosophy, with programs focussing equally on the development of performing arts skills alongside a comprehensive wellbeing program

Drawing on these recommendations the short to medium term Next Steps include:

1. Form the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre Steering Group: the RYPAC Steering Group should be representative of the study region and cognisant of specific key stakeholders (including school, service, performing arts, cultural and community representatives). The first tasks of the RYPAC Steering Group should be to review the Financial and Social Feasibility Studies and:
 - Determine the governance framework of the Group (including Terms of Reference; decision making protocols; purpose and terms for formation of working groups; communication strategies, including protocols for clear and ongoing engagement with the broader community) and legal and financial architecture
 - Commence researching and securing the industry, philanthropic and government partnerships required to realise and sustain the RYPAC
 - Form a working group dedicated to establishing a partnership with the Department of Education and Training and local schools regarding the RYPAC program development and delivery, recognising the defining success factors - curriculum requirements and expectations, student's interests, school challenges in delivering high quality performing arts opportunities internally and practical challenges such as distance, timing and cost
 - Inform the imminent Swan Hill Rural City Council Robinvale Housing Strategy research to ensure the short stay accommodation and more permanent housing needs of the RYPAC are considered in both the short and longer term

2. Raise awareness: a key early imperative of the RYPAC is for a regionwide campaign to raise awareness of the scope, importance and value of the performing arts and to increase the community 'appetite' for performing arts (possible means include through an increasing profile of performing arts shows and events and encouraging 'champions' of the RYPAC including local past participants of Phunktional programs and political advocates).
3. Encourage an enduring Phunktional presence: work with Phunktional to support the continued provision of their services and activities to young people in the Mallee region pending the establishment of the Centre.
4. Determine the physical location of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre: with the Steering Group formed, critical partnerships established and the Mallee communities engaged, discussions must be facilitated to inform the actual location of the RYPAC within the Robinvale community.
5. Develop the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre service delivery model: the draft Centre service delivery model must be further refined and planned for, based on the findings of the Social and Financial Feasibility studies and the key partnerships of the Steering Group. The RYPAC model, whilst focussing on strategies to ensure world class performing arts opportunities, outcomes and products, must also ensure a comprehensive physical and mental health and wellbeing strategy is developed and maintained for all students. Inherent in this is a 'transitions' focus, which recognises Centre clients will potentially experience a number of key transitions whilst accessing RYPAC services. One such transition will be coaching for both career longevity and careers beyond the performing arts.
6. Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre Business Plan: develop a 10-year business plan to guide decision-making and actions in consultation with all stakeholders and investors (from the community and beyond).

Methodology - Feasibility Study Focus Area



Whilst it is anticipated that the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre would draw students from across Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia (with scope for national and international students) it was considered likely that those communities within a 130km radius of Robinvale would constitute the most enduring and consistent client base. As the map (right) depicts this includes the following key communities:

- Robinvale (SHRCC)
- Euston (BSC)
- Mildura (MRCC)
- Irymple (MRCC)
- Red Cliffs (MRCC)
- Merbein (MRCC)
- Ouyen (MRCC)
- Colignan/Nangiloc (MRCC)
- Wentworth (WSC)
- Dareton (WSC)
- Buronga (WSC)
- Gol Gol (WSC)
- Swan Hill (SHRCC)
- Manangatang (SHRCC)
- Nyah/Nyah West (SHRCC)
- Woorinen (SHRCC)
- Balranald (BSC)
- Tooleybuc* (MRC)

These communities are located within five neighbouring Local Government Areas (LGAs): Within Victoria, the Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC) and Swan Hill Rural City Council (SHRCC); within NSW and Balranald Shire Council (BSC), Wentworth Shire Council (WSC) and Murray River Council (MRC).

*Note Tooleybuc falls within the newly formed Murray River Council (the merger of what was the Murray Shire and the Wakool Shire councils). Because only a small proportion of this newly formed LGA falls within the RYPAC radius, meaningful demographic data for Tooleybuc could not be included in this profile. However, the Tooleybuc school was engaged through the survey process.

Methodology - Research Methodology

Phunktional felt strongly that the feasibility of the concept for a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre must be grounded in and informed by the Mallee communities. To support and facilitate this highly localised research, Jenny Grigg of M2C (based in Mildura) was engaged to determine the financial component, and Rachael Williams of Local Logic Place (based in Balranald) was engaged to undertake the social component of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre Feasibility Study. Researcher Ebony Hack was engaged to design and analyse the online survey component.

The research methodology for the social feasibility component of the feasibility study was as follows:

- Initial 'scoping' interviews (5) occurred with key service providers and community members to inform the research design, including research goals and objectives
- Two Industry interviews were conducted with youth performing arts industry leaders: Jodie Farrugia (choreographer for Quantum Leap, Artistic Director consultant for Circus Oz and former Artistic Director of Fruit Fly Circus) and Kim Walker (Artistic Director of NAISDA and former Artistic Director of Fruit Fly Circus)
- Eight Focus Groups (totalling 76 participants) were facilitated with key stakeholder groups. This included four Robinvale focus groups (one with past / current Phunktional participants; one with Aboriginal Elders; and two with service providers), two Mildura focus groups (one with past / current Phunktional participants and one with service providers), and two Swan Hill focus group (one with service providers and one with students from Swan Hill Specialist School)
 - The four Service Provider Focus Groups included a total of 41 participants representing a broad array of organisations and services
 - The two current/past Phunktional participants focus groups involved 11 participants
 - The Aboriginal Elders focus group engaged 6 participants, and
 - The Swan Hill Specialist School focus group engaged 15 senior students and 3 teachers
- An Online Survey was designed for and administered to a range of key stakeholders – most critically students, parents and carers and school staff along with service providers and the broader community. The online survey commenced circulation on 28 May 2018 and closed on 17 July 2018. A total of 718 valid responses were received (because of its significance to the research, the online survey is detailed further below)
- Research findings and proposed Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre 'model' were presented to the Robinvale College School Council.

Below is a summary of the networks used to circulate information regarding the feasibility study.

Key Stakeholders outside of the school setting were supported in accessing the online survey through existing e-lists and networks including:

- Robinvale Early Years Network (REYN)
- Swan Hill Child, Youth and Family Network (CYFN)
- Youth Services Providers Network, Mildura
- School Wellbeing Network, Southern Mallee
- A diverse range of organisation networks

Online Survey Design & Distribution

The overall aim of the survey was to establish the level of community support for a Youth Performing Arts Centre in the Mallee. The survey was written by independent researcher Ebony Hack and reviewed in a consultation process with Phunktional, Rachael Williams of Local Logic Place, and a small group of project stakeholders.

Language was simplified as much as possible, and graphics were used to aid comprehension by a range of literacy levels. For the youngest 9 to 12 age group some questions were simplified or omitted or had response options simplified from a 5-point range to yes/no. The order of response options was randomised where appropriate to reduce bias.

Topics covered through the survey included:

- Young people's attitudes, engagement with and aspirations in relation to performing arts
- Blockers to youth performing arts participation
- Perceptions about the provision of performing arts activities for young people in schools and outside of schools
- Level of interest by schools in utilising the new centre for provision of performing arts for the school
- The level of engagement with culture by young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people as perceived by ATSI respondents
- Challenges experienced by performing arts service providers
- Capacity for existing performing arts venues to host the new centre of excellence
- Capacity for businesses, community organisations and funding partners to provide financial or in-kind support to the new centre of excellence
- Attendance levels at performing arts events in the Sunraysia, Robinvale or Swan Hill regions
- The potential format of the new centre of excellence, including goals
- Wellbeing and performing arts engagement of respondents who have or are participating in a Phunktional performing arts program
- General demographics and incidence of social disadvantages

Survey Targets included:

- Young people aged 9 to 20 who go to school in the Sunraysia, Robinvale or Swan Hill regions
- Non-students aged 9 to 20 who live or work in the Sunraysia, Robinvale or Swan Hill regions
- Adults aged 21 or over who have a connection to the Sunraysia, Robinvale or Swan Hill regions, including:
 - Parent/guardian of children aged 9-20 years who live, study or work in Sunraysia, Robinvale or Swan Hill regions
 - Education provider (school/trade/vocational/university)
 - Health/CALD/government stakeholder or service provider
 - Aboriginal/Torres Strait Island/Tongan/Samoan Elder or other cultural community member
 - Performing arts venue operator
 - Performing arts worker/trainer/instructor
 - Business owner/manager in Sunraysia/Robinvale/Swan Hill
 - Philanthropist/Sponsor/Grant giver
 - Interested general community member

The survey was distributed to Sunraysia, Robinvale and Swan Hill region schools via local contacts of Phunktional (Sunraysia and Robinvale) and Local Logic Place (Swan Hill and NSW based schools). Custom URLs were provided to facilitate tracking of completion by schools. The following schools were engaged in the delivery of the online survey:

SUNRAYSIA EDUCATION PROVIDERS	La Trobe, Mildura	Sun Centre Christian School, Swan Hill
Mildura South	Merbein P-10	Swan Hill College
Mildura Primary	The Lake Primary, Merbein	FLO Campus Swan Hill
Ranfurlly Primary, Mildura	Our Lady of The Sacred Heart Primary, Merbein	Mackillop Catholic High School, Swan Hill
St Paul's, Mildura	Red Cliffs East	Lake Boga Primary School
Mildura West	St Josephs, Red Cliffs	Woorinen Primary School
Nichols Point, Mildura	Red Cliffs Primary	Nyah District Primary School
Irymple South	Cardross Primary	Ultima Primary School
Irymple Primary	Red Cliffs Secondary College	Beverford Primary School
Trinity Lutheran, Mildura	ROBINVALE EDUCATION PROVIDERS	Ouyen P-12 College
Irymple Secondary College	Robinvale College	NSW EDUCATION PROVIDERS
Mildura Senior	St Marys, Robinvale	Balranald Central School (K-12)
Chaffey Secondary, Mildura	SWAN HILL EDUCATION PROVIDERS	St Joseph's Primary School, Balranald (K-6)
Henderson College, Mildura	Swan Hill TAFE	Euston Primary School (K-6)
St Joseph's College, Mildura	Manangatang P-12	Gol Gol Public School (K-6)
Sacred Heart Primary School, Mildura	Swan Hill North Primary School	Dareton Public School (K-6)
Mildura Specialist School	Swan Hill Primary School	Coomealla High School (7-12)
Mildura English Language Centre	Swan Hill Specialist School	Tooleybuc Central School (K-12)
Sunraysia TAFE, Mildura	St Mary Catholic Primary School, Swan Hill	Wentworth Public School (K-6)

Respondents from eight Mildura and Robinvale schools and sixteen Swan Hill and NSW-based schools elected to participate in the survey.

Online Survey Respondent Demographics

The Swan Hill region formed the largest group of survey respondents at 41.5%, followed by Sunraysia at 30.1% and then Robinvale at 27.4%. Only 7 of those aged 21 or over selected 'other' or multiple locations (1% of total).

The majority of respondents were young people aged 9 to 20 (75.2%), and 178 (24.8%) were aged 21 or over. Youth broke down to 335 (46.7%) aged 9 to 12 and 205 (28.6%) aged 13 to 20. Overall, more students were from the Swan Hill region (56.2%) than Sunraysia (30.5%) and Robinvale (29.4%). The vast majority of the 13 to 20 year old respondents were secondary students (94.6%). There were also four undergraduates (two each in Sunraysia and Swan Hill), one postgraduate student in Robinvale, and six primary students (five in Robinvale, one in Swan Hill). No trade/vocational/TAFE students responded to the survey.

Of the top four 21-or-over cohorts:

- Over half of parents/guardians (57.9%) and education providers (60%) were based in the Swan Hill region,
- Almost half of the health/CALD/government respondents (48.8%) were in the Sunraysia region,
- Just under half of interested general community members (47.1%) were in the Swan Hill region.

In total, 55 respondents aged 21 or over worked for education providers in the three regions. Most education providers were secondary schools (71.4%) followed by primary schools (42.9%) and a very small amount of trade/vocation/TAFE institutions (4.1%). Educators were mostly female (79.6%).

Overall, more females than males responded to the survey (433, 60.3% compared to 282, 39.3%), and only three respondents (0.4%) identified as non-binary.

While a large majority of respondents spoke only English (90.2%), the remainder spoke a mix of 26 different languages, including 1.8% who do not speak English at all.

The youth age groups were more linguistically diverse than the 21-or-over group.

Respondents were even more culturally diverse, identifying with 73 different cultural backgrounds. The majority (55.6%) identified as Australian (45.7%) or Australian plus other cultures (9.9%). ATSI and Pacific island backgrounds accounted for 16.2% of respondents. More of the 9-to-12 age group had multiple cultural backgrounds compared to the other two age groups (for the full listing of language and cultural groups see Appendix 3).

In total 104 respondents identified as ATSI (14.5%). Of these:

- 57 (54.8%) were aged 9 to 12, 28 (26.9%) were aged 13 to 20, and 19 (18.3%) were 21 or over
- The ATSI group was evenly split between male and female with a very small non-binary group (1.9%)
- Almost half (48.6%) were unemployed or not in the workforce compared to only 18.1% for the non-ATSI group
- More of the ATSI group experienced social disadvantages (16%) compared to the 'prefer not to answer' group (11.4%)
- The majority were based in the Robinvale region (46.2%), followed by Sunraysia (31.7%) then the Swan Hill region (22.1%).

Employment analysis revealed:

- Almost half (49.5%) of 13 to 20 year olds were in part time or casual work, 34.7% were unemployed, 1% worked full time (non-student), and 13.9% were not in the workforce
- Nearly two thirds (65.7%) of those 21 or over were in full time employment, 27.5% part time or casual, only 1.1% were unemployed and 5.6% were not in the workforce.

Thirteen respondents aged 13 or over (3.1%) identified as LGBT+. Just over three quarters of the LGBT+ group were female (76.9%).

Question 24.5 "Which of these have happened to you?" (listing a range of social disadvantages where respondents could select multiple options) was asked of the 13-to-20 age group and parents/guardians with children aged 9 to 20 in the three regions. The 9-to-12 age group were not shown the question. Of the 267 respondents eligible for the question, 123 (46.1%) selected 'Prefer not to answer'. The 144 respondents that selected social disadvantage options represent 53.9%. The overall characteristics of those experiencing social disadvantages were as follows:

- 25.7% were parents/guardians, and 74.3% were aged 13 to 20
- Bullying (66%) and social isolation (44.4%) are the major social disadvantages experienced by the subgroup. The other options had similar levels ranging between 12.5% and 18.1%, with the notable exception of pressure to get into crime which was experienced by only 4.2% of respondents
- For the 13 to 20 year age group bullying at 72% was the most prevalent followed by social isolation at 41.1%. For the 21 or over group, however, bullying and social isolation were fairly even with social isolation slightly more prevalent (54.1% versus 48.6% for bullying). For this group underage drinking/ drugs also stood out at 29.7% of respondents
- 72.2% were female, 27.1% male and 0.7% non-binary
- 16% were ATSI
- Almost half (46.1%) were part time/casual workers, 29.3% were unemployed or not in the workforce, and 24.7% work full time.

Introduction - Phunktional

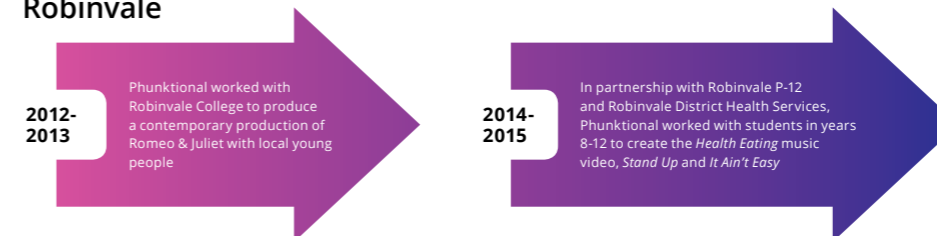
Who we are & our connection to Northern Victoria

Phunktional is a leading Australian not-for-profit arts company that delivers long-term Community Arts and Cultural Development projects, tours educational theatre and produces award-winning dance, theatre and film productions. Phunktional's purpose is to support the creation of art that is a catalyst for greater connectedness, community engagement and inter-cultural understanding. Their vision is to create world-class art that enables a greater diversity of human perspectives and experiences to be heard in Australian and international conversations.

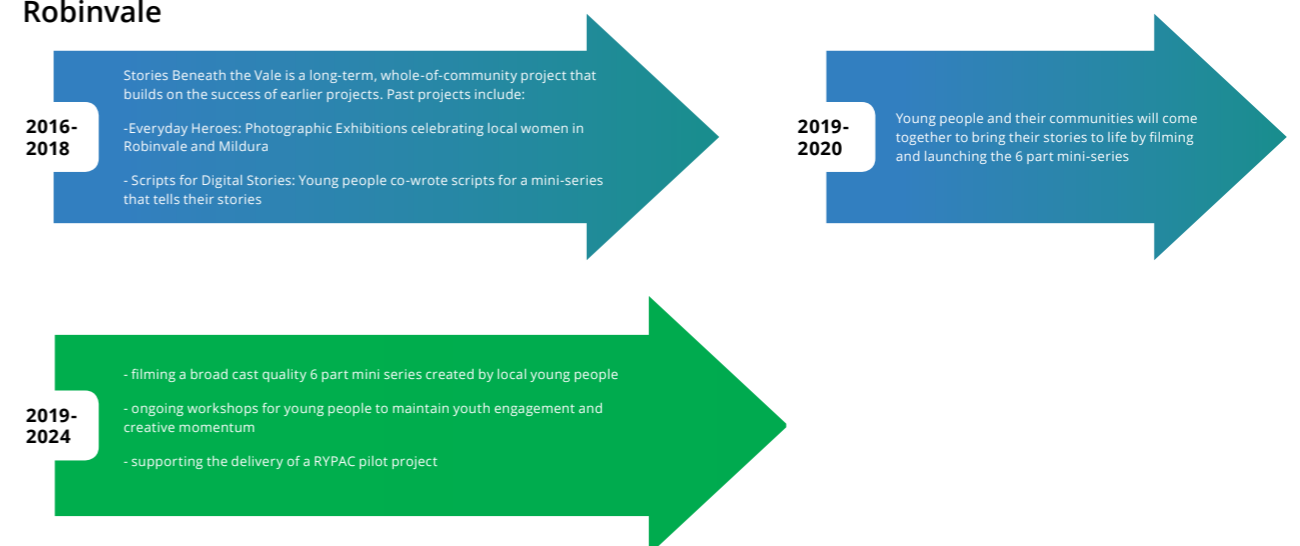
Mildura

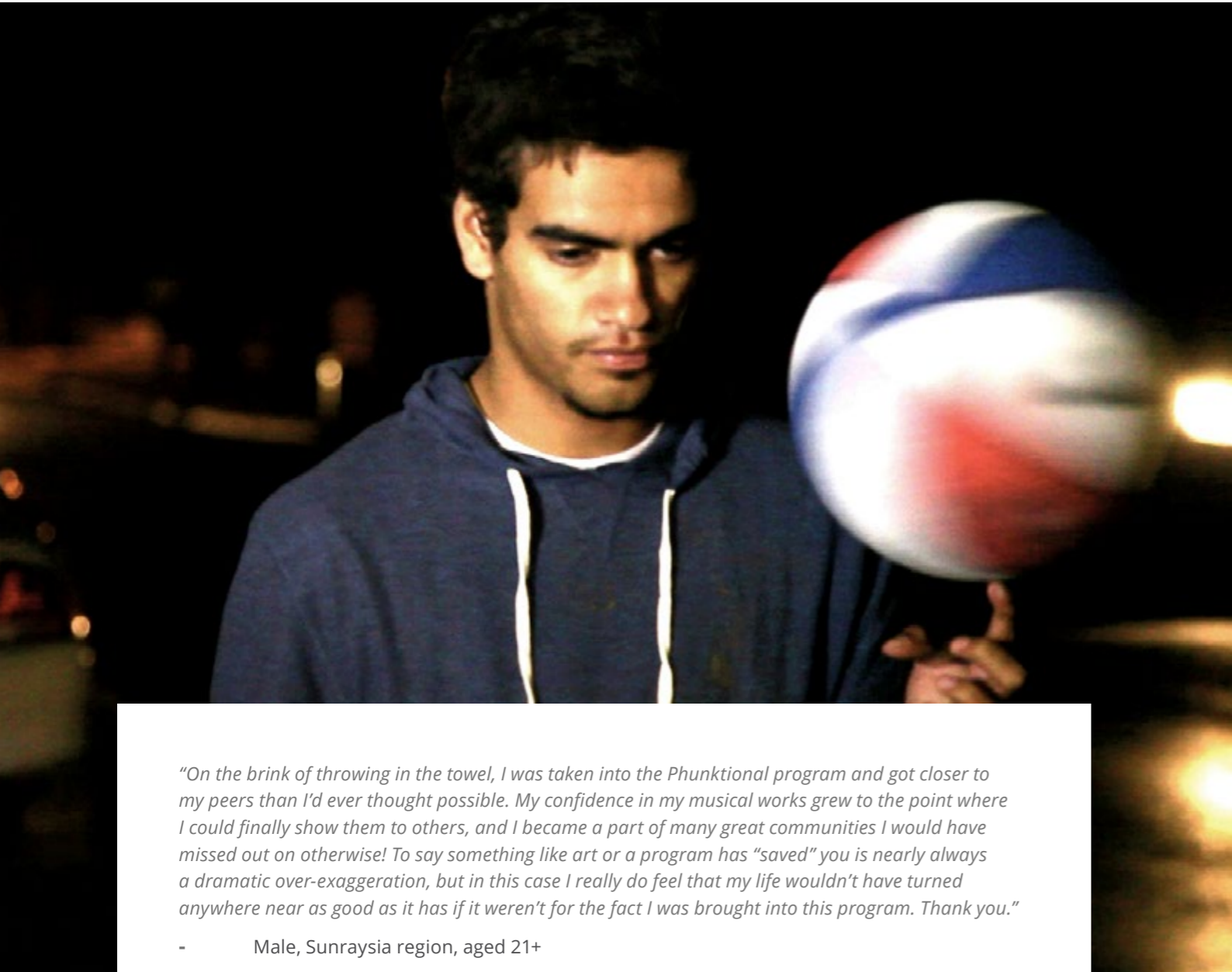


Robinvale



Mildura & Robinvale





“On the brink of throwing in the towel, I was taken into the Phunktional program and got closer to my peers than I’d ever thought possible. My confidence in my musical works grew to the point where I could finally show them to others, and I became a part of many great communities I would have missed out on otherwise! To say something like art or a program has “saved” you is nearly always a dramatic over-exaggeration, but in this case I really do feel that my life wouldn’t have turned anywhere near as good as it has if it weren’t for the fact I was brought into this program. Thank you.”

- Male, Sunraysia region, aged 21+

Introduction - Project Scope

The Research Goal was to: ascertain the viability of establishing a long-term, sustainable, community-driven youth performing arts centre, based in the Mallee region of northwest Victoria – Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre (RYPAC).

Research Objectives

Research Outcomes

Understand and engage the breadth of the RYPAC community of interest

Establish a demographic profile of those engaged through the research.

Identify ‘gaps’ in the engagement profile enabling these ‘gaps’ to be rectified if required.

Facilitate a process which ensures the voices of key stakeholders are heard in determining the level of community interest in, and support for, a RYPAC

Researchers understand, with confidence, the needs and aspirations of both the distinct cohorts and the geographically proximate communities regarding the RYPAC

Understand financial viability and long-term sustainability factors

Research findings will inform the financial analysis required to gauge the short, medium and long-term sustainability of the RYPAC

Explore and document growth in skills development and employment opportunities based on similar initiatives

Discover existing best practice, pitfalls and successful models to guide the development of RYPAC

Gain community input on the functions, philosophy and practicalities of the RYPAC

Understand the needs and aspirations of key stakeholders regarding the RYPAC – ensure a clear verbal and visual representation of these to support design and development moving forwards

Determine potential market size, the location of potential end users, and longer-term market size projections

Document indicators of short, medium and long term sustainability to support planning and funding applications

Measure the impact of previous projects

Provide an evidence base of the impact of Phunktional’s role and involvement in the Robinvale and surrounding communities

Phunktional’s research study aimed to measure community interest in a new professional youth performing arts centre based in the Mallee for young people aged 9 to 20 from across the Sunraysia and Swan Hill regions and beyond.

The vision for the Centre is for world class training and workshops in dance, theatre, music and film, as well as cultural art forms. Led by expert artists and trainers, activities may include:

- An annual group-devised ensemble show toured across the region, in capital cities and overseas
- Cultural dance and music workshops led by world class Indigenous artists and artists from other cultures
- Opportunities for local artists to connect with the company
- Incursion and excursion workshops for schools linked to curriculum outcomes
- Pathways into tertiary arts training and arts careers

Context - Benefits of the Performing Arts

The performing arts are intrinsically valuable, enabling participants at every stage of life to experience the joy, beauty, and wonder of creating and imagining, of developing attention to detail, of learning ways to express thoughts, knowledge, and feelings beyond words, in fostering openness to novelty, encouraging connections to people, places, things, and concepts, and in promoting the ability to take multiple perspectives (Smithrim and Upitis, 2005 & Menzer, 2015). The arts also present occasions to make the ordinary special, enriching the quality of our lives (Upitis, n.d.).

However, over and above this intrinsic value – which we should not lose sight of – is the power of the performing arts to enable other far-reaching and seemingly unrelated outcomes. The performing arts have been shown to produce positive changes at both individual and community levels. Individuals experiencing the performing arts report improvements in educational outcomes, school attendance, motivation and engagement (academic outcomes); and health and wellbeing, confidence and life satisfaction (non-academic outcomes). Communities with access to arts infrastructure and performance can experience increases in community cohesion, reductions in crime and violence, economic growth through employment and tourism and even positive environmental outcomes. Further to these, the global workforce requires employees to think critically and creatively, solve problems, communicate well, adapt to changing circumstances, and continue to learn throughout their careers. An education rich in the arts nurtures precisely those skills and attitudes. These arenas are discussed in greater detail in Appendix 1.

However, Martin, et. al. (2013) caution against over-reliance on these ‘incidental’ outcomes as a sole basis for justifying the presence of arts in the school curriculum, warning that once the arts relies on a significant connection to academic outcomes to justify its existence, it is immediately rendered vulnerable as a means to an end and not as a defensible curriculum inclusion in its own right. As Winner and Cooper note: *“as soon as we justify arts by their power to affect learning in an academic area, we make the arts vulnerable ... we should not require more of the arts than we do of other subjects. Were we to test whether math learning transfers to other subject areas, we would most likely find that it does not. But no one would use such a finding as a reason to cut mathematics from the curriculum”* (2000, p. 67).

Moral arguments aside, realising the full ‘value’ of the performing arts for children and young people requires what is further detailed in Appendix 1 as the “critical importance of synergy between the RYPAC and the curriculum needs and expectations of participating schools” – the understanding of the performing arts as integral, not extra.

Martin, et. al. (2013) note that whilst historically there has been an uneasy relationship between the arts and education, with the arts facing numerous challenges - competition with other curriculum areas for time and space, the perception that it is less central to educational development, a lack of focus in pre-service teacher education, a lack of confidence on the part of teachers to teach it, the dominance of traditional school subjects as pathways to university, the increasing presence of high stakes testing in literacy and numeracy, and the lack of longitudinal quantitative evidence supporting its association with academic and non-academic outcomes - *“This study provides new and compelling evidence that the arts should be central to schooling and not left on the fringes..... ”*. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and the most recent Gonski review (2018, p. 45) agrees - *“Participation in extra-curricular activities, including creative arts and sports, leadership and culture, has a significant impact on a student’s learning growth in the cognitive, affective and physical domains of learning. Although conventionally called ‘extra-curricular’ because they are not always explicit within the Australian Curriculum, these activities are a very important part of learning and should not be regarded as extra, but rather as integral.....”*

Context - RYPAC Target Area Community Profile

A targeted community profile was compiled to guide formative discussions regarding the feasibility of a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre and to inform later applications for both in-kind and financial support. The community profile responds to, and demonstrates, the need for and value of such a facility to Mallee communities. Note the full RYPAC target area community profile is presented in Appendix 2; below is an abridged version with tables and graphs removed.

The profile draws on 2016 ABS Census of Population and Housing data alongside data collated by the Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU) and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to outline key demographic data related to the region and local population of children and young people. Data is presented at the Local Government Area (LGA) level (including the LGAs of Buloke, Mildura, Swan Hill, Wentworth and Balranald) and the Statistical Area 2 level (a smaller geographical level used by the ABS for reporting). These SA2s include Irymple, Merbein, Mildura Region, Red Cliffs, Mildura - North, Mildura - South, Robinvale, Swan Hill, Swan Hill Region, Wentworth - Buronga, Wentworth-Balranald Region.

The following indicators were selected as a means to both create a 'picture' of the local communities and enable researchers to check they were reaching, in a representative manner, the diversity of the immediate RYPAC communities:

- Population by five-year age cohorts from 0-24 years (SA2)
- Indigenous status by five-year age cohorts from 0-24 years (SA2)
- Population projections (to 2031) by five-year age cohorts from 0-24 years (LGA)
- Birthplace and non-English speaking residents (LGA)
- Full-time participation in secondary school education at age 16 (LGA)
- Learning or Earning at ages 15 to 24 (LGA)
- Young people aged 16 to 24 receiving an unemployment benefit (LGA)
- Children in low income, welfare-dependent families (LGA)
- Single parent families with children aged less than 15 years (LGA)
- Jobless families with children aged less than 15 years (LGA)
- Children aged less than 15 years in jobless families (LGA)
- Children in families where the mother has low educational attainment (LGA)
- Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) and Distribution of Students along the Socio-Educational Advantage Quarters (Robinvale schools only)

The profile shows a current 0-24 year population of more than 26,000 across the study area, and projections indicate this population will remain stable over the next 15 years. More fine-grained analysis of this population demonstrates that despite the strengths of cultural diversity, there are vulnerabilities including disengagement from school, lower levels of school completion and progression to further education, greater welfare dependency, lower income and employment rates, higher proportions of one-parent families and families where mothers have low educational attainment. Taken together, the picture speaks heavily to the role and power of the performing arts in keeping young people socially and emotionally well, engaged in education and connected to their communities.

Population by five-year age cohorts from 0-24 years, by SA2 Based on the 2016 Census of Population and Housing there are a total of 26,182 children and young people aged 0-24 years across the key SA2s within a

130 radius of the town of Robinvale. Of these the current target cohort population, young people aged 10-24 years, sits at 15,381. These figures are further detailed in and displayed in graph form in Appendix 2. Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2016 Table Builder <https://auth.censusdata.abs.gov.au/webapi/jsf/dataCatalogueExplorer.xhtml> Accessed 08/01/2018

Age in Five Year Groups and Indigenous Status by SA2 Across the SA2s the proportionally highest Aboriginal populations amongst 0-24 year olds were in Wentworth-Buronga SA2 (17.3%), Robinvale (12.5%), Wentworth-Balranald Region (10.6%) and Mildura North (10.5%). The SA2 with the lowest proportion of the SA2 population identifying as Aboriginal was Irymple (3.2%). Across the entire area analysed of the 23,981 children and young people aged 0-24 years 91.4% identified as non-Indigenous, 8.2% identified as Aboriginal, and 0.2% each identified as Torres Strait Islander and both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. In actual terms, the largest Aboriginal population aged 0-24 years was in Mildura North (555), Mildura South (302) and Wentworth-Buronga (283). Tables to support all data are shown in Appendix 2. Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2016 Table Builder <https://auth.censusdata.abs.gov.au/webapi/jsf/dataCatalogueExplorer.xhtml> Accessed 08/01/2018



Birthplace & Non-English Speaking Residents, by LGA Across the profiled LGAs, the Buloke LGA has the highest proportion of overall population born in Australia (83.9%) followed by the Wentworth LGA (83.2%) and the Balranald LGA (81.6%). The LGA with the lowest proportion of Australian-born population was Swan Hill (74.6%). Regardless, all Mallee LGAs included in this research had a higher proportion of Australian-born population than their Victorian (64.9%) and NSW (65.5%) counterparts. Similarly the Swan Hill LGA had the highest proportion of population 'born overseas who speak English not well or not at all' (2.6%); by comparison, the Buloke Shire had the lowest proportion (0.2%). As a collective the LGAs of interest had 1.8% of the population 'born overseas who speak English not well or not at all' compared to 3.7% of their Victorian counterparts and 3.8% of their NSW counterparts. The table from which this data is drawn can be found in Appendix 2. Source: Social Health Atlas of Australia, Data by Local Government Area, Published: December 2017. <http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases/data#social-health-atlases-of-australia-local-government-areas> Accessed 20/01/2018

Full-time participation in secondary school education at age 16 In 2016 across Victoria, 86.1% of young people were participating in full-time secondary school education at age 16; by comparison, 84.1% of 16 year olds in NSW were participating in full-time secondary school education. Amongst the LGAs included in this research, the Balranald LGA had the highest 'full-time secondary school education at age 16' participation rate (95.8%), followed by Buloke LGA (95.2%). The lowest rate of participation in full-time secondary school education at age 16 was in Wentworth LGA (72.9%), Swan Hill LGA (77.9%) and Mildura (81.4%) – all below their Victorian and NSW peers. Source: Social Health Atlas of Australia, Data by Local Government Area, Published: December 2017. <http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases/data#social-health-atlases-of-australia-local-government-areas> Accessed 20/01/2018.

Learning or Earning at ages 15 to 24 years, by LGA Amongst the researched LGAs, Buloke LGA had the highest proportion of young people aged 15-24 years 'Learning or Earning' (87.4%) and was the only documented LGA to exceed Victorian proportions (85.0%). The lowest proportion of young people aged 15-24 years 'Learning or Earning' was in Balranald LGA (74.1%), Wentworth LGA (74.8%), Mildura LGA (78.8%) and Swan Hill LGA (79.0%). This compared to 86.2% across Victoria and 85.0% across NSW. Source: Social Health Atlas of Australia, Data by Local Government Area, Published: December 2017. <http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases/data#social-health-atlases-of-australia-local-government-areas> Accessed 20/01/2018.

Young people aged 16 to 24 receiving an unemployment benefit, by LGA Young people across the researched communities were receiving unemployment benefits at higher proportions than their Victorian peers. Local knowledge around this fact attribute this to significantly reduced pathways for young people. In 2016 across Victoria, 2.7% of young people aged 16-24 years were receiving an unemployment benefit; in comparison, 3.0% of 16-24 year olds in NSW were receiving an unemployment benefit. Amongst the documented LGAs Mildura LGA had the highest proportion of young people receiving an unemployment benefit (7.3%) followed by Wentworth LGA (6.0%) and Swan Hill LGA (4.1%). The lowest proportion of young people receiving an unemployment benefit were in the Balranald (2.1%) and Buloke LGA (3.1%). Source: Social Health Atlas of Australia, Data by Local Government Area, Published: December 2017. <http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases/data#social-health-atlases-of-australia-local-government-areas> Accessed 20/01/2018.

Children in low income, welfare-dependent families, June 2016, by LGA Amongst the documented LGAs, Mildura LGA had the highest proportion of children in low income, welfare-dependent families (33.4%) followed by Wentworth LGA (30.2%) and Swan Hill LGA (28.0%). The lowest proportion of children in low income, welfare-dependent families was in the Balranald LGA (20.0%) and Buloke LGA (25.6%). This compared to 21.5% across Victoria and 22.3% across NSW. Source: Social Health Atlas of Australia, Data by Local Government Area, Published: December 2017. <http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases/data#social-health-atlases-of-australia-local-government-areas> Accessed 20/01/2018.

Families with children less than 15 years, by LGA Drawing on 2016 data, 25.1% of documented LGA families with children under 15 years were 'single parent families with children aged less than 15 years', by comparison at the Victorian level 18.3% and at the NSW level 19.9% of families were 'single parent families with children aged less than 15 years'. Amongst the LGAs, this proportion was highest in Mildura (27.0%), Swan Hill (23.3%), Wentworth (23.1%), Balranald (19.1%) and Buloke (17.0%).

Collectively, 16.5% of families with children under 15 years of age in the LGAs of interest were 'jobless families with children aged less than 15 years', compared to their Victorian (11.0%) and NSW (12.0%) counterparts. Amongst the LGAs this proportion was again highest in Mildura (17.5%), Wentworth (16.9%), Swan Hill (15.0%), Buloke (13.1%) and Balranald (11.0%). Drawing on 2016 data, 20.8% of documented LGA children under 15 years of age were 'children in families where the mother has low educational attainment'; compared to their Victorian (12.7%) and NSW (19.6%) counterparts. Amongst the LGAs, this proportion was highest in the Wentworth (23.3%), Mildura (22.3%), Balranald (20.2%), Swan Hill (17.8%) and Buloke (14.7%). The full data table is presented in Appendix 2. Source: Social Health Atlas of Australia, Data by Local Government Area, Published: December 2017. <http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases/data#social-health-atlases-of->

[australia-local-government-areas](#) Accessed 20/01/2018

Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) & distribution of Students along the Socio-Educational Advantage Quarters (Robinvale schools only) The index of community socio-educational advantage (ICSEA) was created by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) specifically to enable meaningful comparisons of National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test achievement by students in schools across Australia. ICSEA provides a scale that numerically represents the relative magnitude of this influence and is constructed taking into account both student-level factors (parents' occupation, school education and non-school education) and school-level factors (a school's geographical location and the proportion of Indigenous students attending the school). ICSEA is set at an average of 1000. The lower the ICSEA value, the lower the level of educational advantage of students who go to this. The 'Distribution' of ICSEA value shows the distribution of students in the school across four socio-educational advantage (SEA) quarters, representing a scale of relative disadvantage (bottom quarter) through to relative advantage (top quarter). SEA quarters give contextual information about the socio-educational composition of students in the school <https://www.myschool.edu.au/glossary/> accessed 30/04/2018

In 2017, Robinvale College had a Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) of 876 with 66% of these students in the bottom quarter of advantage (highest level of disadvantage) compared to only 2% who were in the top quarter (highest level of advantage). In 2017, 25% of the student population identified as Indigenous and 32% identified as having a language background other than English (both of these measures were down slightly from the 2016 data).

In 2017, St Mary's School had a Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) of 974 (close to the national figure of 1,000) with 38% of students in the bottom quarter of advantage compared to only 5% who were in the top quarter. In 2017, 2% of the student population identified as Indigenous and 29% identified as having a language background other than English. In 2010, 3% of the student population identified as Indigenous and 25% identified as having a language background other than English.

The figures are drawn directly from the ACARA My Schools website for Robinvale College (<https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/52377/profile/2017>) and St Mary's School in Robinvale (<https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/45934/profile/2017>) and are shown in more detail in Appendix 2.



Findings - Themed Findings

Presentation of Themed Findings

The scope and scale of data collected and analysed for the purposes of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre Social and Financial Feasibility Study necessitated a highly orchestrated method for the presentation of findings. To best support the requirements of a social feasibility study, the findings of the research are presented according to the parameters of such studies. These parameters are as outlined below:

A **social feasibility study assesses** the impact of an initiative on the lives of those people living and working in the initiative's area of influence, including their:

1. support for and acceptance of that initiative
2. current needs and services (or lack thereof)
3. location, design and implementation of an initiative
4. intended positive impacts
5. unintended positive and negative impacts
6. challenges or barriers and
7. key factors for success.

Theme 1 - Support for & Acceptance of RYPAC

SUMMARY

Support for a RYPAC was beyond all expectations. 87% of surveyed locals said a youth performing arts centre of excellence would be good for the region. Focus groups of local community service providers, leaders, Elders, local artists and young people's interviews corroborated this with near unanimous support.

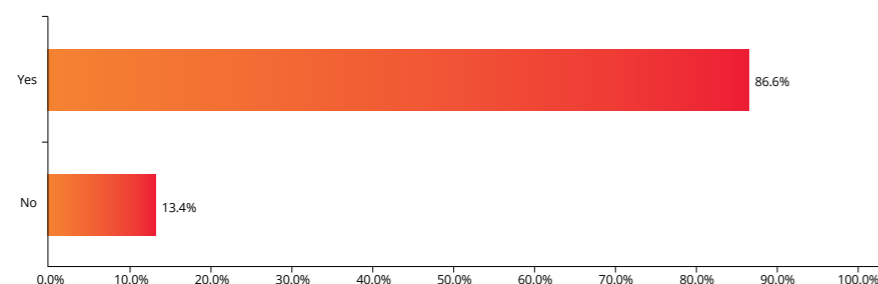
The community felt that a successful RYPAC would enhance existing performing arts services and organisations, rather than duplicating or competing with them. The community also acknowledged a need for affordable and low-cost options to encourage participation in the arts.

73% of young respondents (9-20 years old) were interested in participating in the arts for fun or pursuing a performing arts career. They were positive about their parents and guardians supporting their attendance of a RYPAC, with a rating of 4.3 out of 5.

Overall, survey respondents showed a high level of support for establishment of a Youth Performing Arts Centre of Excellence in the Mallee region. In total 86.6% of respondents, when asked "Would a youth performing arts centre of excellence be good for the region?", thought it would be good for the region (see graph below right), with analysis by cohort revealing:

- Respondent location (Sunraysia, Robinvale and Swan Hill regions) did not substantially affect level of support;
- The 21-or-over age group was most enthusiastic at 98.9% and the 13-to-20 year olds the least at 78.5%. 85.1% of the 9-to-12 year olds thought a centre of excellence would be good for the region;
- Males were substantially more pessimistic than females but support was still good (92.8% versus 77%);
- ATSI and non-ATSI had almost exactly the same level of support (85.6% ATSI versus 86.8% non-ATSI);
- All LGBT+ respondents thought it would be good for the region, whereas an average of 86.4% were supportive in the non-LGBT+ group; and
- Those who had experienced social disadvantages were much more supportive than those who preferred not to answer the social disadvantages question (91% versus 73.2%).

Q21.2 Would a youth performing arts centre of excellence be good for the region?



The tone of verbatim comments was of excitement for establishing the new centre of excellence, indicating it was much needed. Recurring themes included:

- More training opportunities are greatly needed in all three regions
- There is a need for affordable and low-cost options to encourage participation
- Offer a wide variety of performing arts
- The difficulties of distance and transport for all three regions
- It will help grow the community
- It will provide an alternative to the focus on sports and academia in the three regions
- It provide an opportunity to be more diverse and inclusive than existing services
- It will provide much needed health and wellbeing outcomes
- The importance of collaborating with existing services to avoid duplication and maximise resources

"It would be amazing and be a step in the right direction for the whole community and be better for tourism and making this whole place a more liveable town" Male Sunraysia region respondent aged 9 to 12

"I think this would be an amazing opportunity. Most schools have a strong focus on sports excellence which leaves people who aren't interested in this to suffer. Having a place that is all to do with performing arts would be amazing and can give theatre companies a place to rehearse if need be" Female Sunraysia region undergraduate respondent aged 13 to 20

"It would be a great idea. Perhaps bring the community spirit to a high and all young people enjoying themselves and perhaps look at life in a different light, as they are doing something they enjoy and can express themselves through art and music" Female Sunraysia region ATSI respondent aged 21 or over

"Youth Performing Arts Centre would be magnificent, and I hope that families who experience financial difficulties, lack of sense of belonging in the community and transport barriers can still be included somehow" Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

The 46 respondents aged 13 or over who said *no a new centre of excellence would not be good for the region* were asked why not, and could select multiple answers. Those aged 9 to 12 who said no were not asked this follow up question. Only two (of the 46 respondents) were aged 21 or over, and one said there were *already enough performing arts activities in the area* and the other that *performing arts is not a sensible career choice*. The main reason for 13 to 20 year olds answering to the negative was that *sport or other activities are better recreation/development outlets* (45.5%). *Schools already provide this service* was selected by a quarter. *Not a sensible career choice* (15.9%) and *already enough activities in the area* (13.6%) rated low, and only 3 (6.8%) chose the other two options, *lack of transport* and *other types of cultural training are needed more*. While sport or other activities are a better recreation / development outlet was the key reason for almost three quarters of the negative females, almost a third of negative males said schools already provide this service, with performing arts is not a sensible career choice and sport or other activities are a better recreation/development outlet both selected by 22.2% of respondents.

Survey respondents were later asked "What other comments do you have about the idea of a new youth performing arts centre of excellence in the Sunraysia/Robinvale/Swan Hill region?" In total 562 respondents (78.3% of the total) were shown the question (those who said a new youth performing arts centre would not be good for the region or said they are not interested in performing arts were not shown the question). Of these 562 respondents 155 made no comment or were unsure, leaving a subgroup of 407 who provided relevant comments (56.7% of total).

Only 1.7% had negative feedback about the idea of a new youth performing arts centre. Concerns were that existing options were adequate, money was better spent on other areas of need, and that it would be difficult to create a centre that could successfully service the whole region given travel obstacles. In total, 56.5% of respondents had positive general comments, 22.9% offered suggestions for the centre, 14.5% gave feedback on the best location for the centre and 4.9% discussed community development benefits of having the centre. Overall, the tone of comments was of excitement for establishment of the new centre and that it is much needed. Suggestions focussed on styles, formats, philosophy and engagement approaches. Areas of importance included:

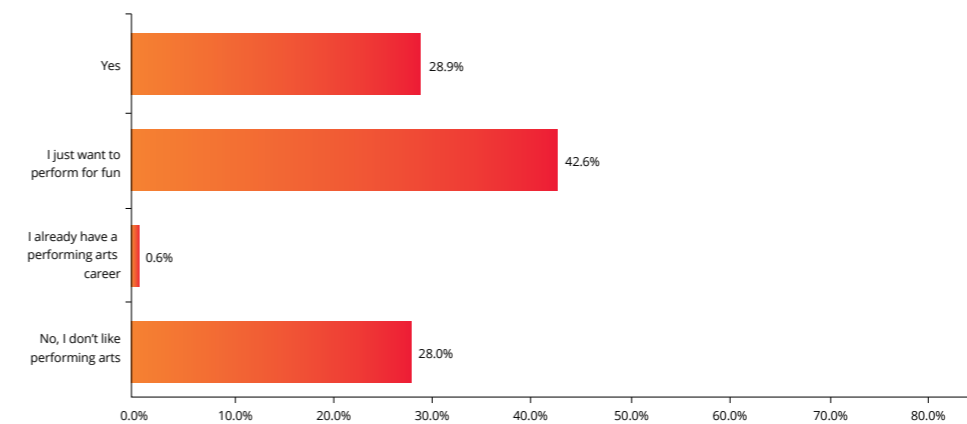
- Offer a wide variety of types of performing arts
- Provide low cost offerings
- Transport accessibility is an impediment
- Inclusion and cultural exchange
- Make use of existing resources wherever possible
- Engage with existing local services to avoid duplication/cannibalisation and to find opportunities for synergies

Certainly, the survey found that students of both ages enjoy performing arts activities outside of school more than they do at school, with a combined rating of 3.9 for 'at school' versus 4.4 for 'outside school', out of 5. However, the older group enjoy the school activities less than the younger group. Parents/guardians with children aged 9 to 20 in the three regions were less happy than students with the performing arts offered at their children's schools, with a rating of 3.2 out of 5.

When survey data was analysed by student interest (in performing arts activities) by education provider location, the Sunraysia region education providers rated student interest in performing arts highest at 3.9 out of 5, compared to 3.3 out of 5 for both the Robinvale and Swan Hill regions. Sunraysia region students were perceived to be most engaged with performing arts with 82.4% very much or extremely interested compared to 45.5% in Robinvale region schools and 47.6% in Swan Hill region schools.

Support for a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre was also gauged through the survey by asking the two youth age groups "If anything was possible, **would you have a performing arts career in the future?**" A similar percentage of each age group was interested in having a performing arts career (29.3% and 28.3% respectively). Almost a quarter of the 9 to 12 year olds and just over a third of the 13 to 20 year olds said no to a career in performing arts because they do not like performing arts. The majority like to perform for fun but do not want to do it for a career (47.2% for 9 to 12 year olds, 35.1% for 13 to 20 year olds). Females were twice as likely to want a performing arts career than males (39.4% versus 17.1%). Interestingly, those aged 13 to 20 who had experienced social disadvantages were more likely to want a career in performing arts than those who preferred not to answer the social disadvantages question (34.6% versus 21.4%). More youths in the Robinvale region do not like performing arts compared to the other two regions (36.1% versus 26.1% for Swan Hill and 22.6% for Sunraysia) and fewer would like a performing arts career (21.5% versus 31.2% for Swan Hill and 32.9% for Sunraysia).

Q6.1 If anything was possible, would you have a performing arts career in the future?



Those who said they do want or already have a performing arts career were asked "What excites you about a performing arts career?" verbatim responses included:

- I like expressing myself through art and acting a different person and character;
- I like creating and showcasing my ideas and talent. I really like being on stage and performing in front of people because it's almost like a different reality;
- Portraying different personalities, costumes, songs, singing, dance, hair, make-up. You are completely transformed into a different part of my own personality. My over dramatic-ness get to shine;
- I love getting to be up on the stage, something just feels, different, like you're in an alternate universe. You get to show a side of yourself that you usually hide away, and it just makes me excited even thinking about it;
- I love music, it is a part of my family history and it has helped me through some tough times, I love music;
- It gives you the chance to be yourself, have a voice and have fun. It's incredibly inclusive, allowing people from anywhere and everywhere to participate. It builds confidence, encourages individuality and fuels creativity;
- It's fun, it can clear your mind after doing normal school work;
- Just being proud of my culture;
- You are given the chance to express yourself and show others your hard work. You can step into other people's shoes as well as surround yourself with people with the same passion; and
- Not all students are good at academics, so it gives all children a chance to be good at something.

"As a volunteer for several years at the Mildura Eisteddfod I witness so much amazing talent, knowing that when they reached a certain level most of these children would either stop going forward or have to move away to pursue their dream. Knowing that they could pursue this dream close to their family and friends would make such a difference to these children. Not every family can afford to move to the city or indeed pay for their child to" Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

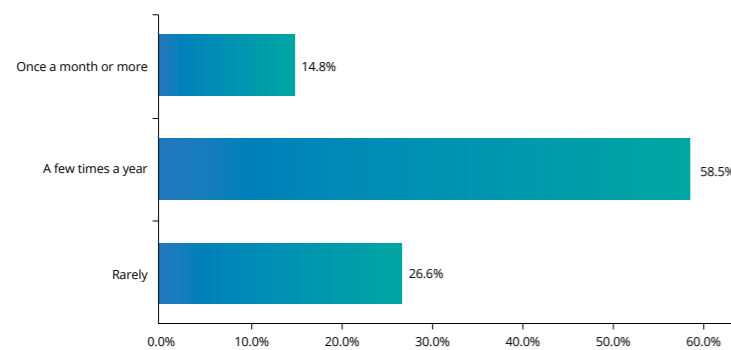
"I believe it's very important, especially in such a multicultural region, that our young people have the opportunity to practice, learn, showcase and be proud of their culture, to help to educate people as well as having an opportunity to learn about other cultures. I believe this will have a roll-on effect of mutual respect for others, pride in themselves and better harmony within the community" Female Robinvale region ATSI respondent aged 21 or over

Respondents in the 13 or over age group were asked "Do you attend performing arts events in the Sunraysia/ Robinvale/Swan Hill region?" Overall only 59.8% said they did. By cohort:

- A much greater percentage of the older group attend than the youth group (83.1% versus 39.5%);
- 69.3% of females attend performing arts events compared 36% of males;
- Employment shows distinct differences in level of performing arts event attendance, stepping down from 82.4% of full-time workers, to 64.6% of part time/casual workers, to 54.2% of those not in the workforce, and a large step down to only 27% of the unemployed;
- ATSI respondents attend performing arts events much less than non-ATSI respondents (42.6% versus 62.2%); and
- Substantially more Sunraysia-based respondents said they attend performing arts events versus the other two regions (84% versus 63% for Swan Hill and 46.8% for Robinvale), which would, in part, be a reflection of availability.

The majority who attend performing arts events do so a few times a year (58.5%) with just over a quarter rarely (26.6%) and 14.8% once a month or more. Respondents indicated this was because: *Nothing or not much available to go to* (39.1%), *Not being interested in performing arts* (30.7%), *Lack of transport and events being too expensive* (9.8%), or *Not being close enough to the region* (8.8%). The main reason for Robinvale and Swan Hill region respondents was *disinterest in performing arts* (29.5% and 23.4% of respondents, respectively). For Sunraysia *too expensive* (21.1%) and *disinterest in performing arts* (15.8%) were most selected. 'Other' reasons offered were primarily related to lack of time.

Q20.2 Frequency of performing arts attendance



Parental support of participation in the performing arts was also gauged through the survey. The two youth age groups were asked "Would your parents/guardian be supportive of you doing a program at the centre of excellence?" Overall, the result was very positive with a rating of 4.3 out of 5. Only 5.2% selected the unhappy and very unhappy smiley options.

- The younger age group were slightly more optimistic about their level of parental support (4.4 versus 4.2 out of 5). The older group had more who were neutral (14% versus 8.4%)
- Females were slightly more optimistic than males about their level of support (4.4 versus 4.2 out of 5). More males chose the very unhappy smiley (3.4% versus 0.4%), unhappy smiley (4.8% versus 2.9%) and neutral smiley (13% versus 8.8%)
- ATSI respondents were slightly more optimistic than non-ATSI respondents (4.4 versus 4.3 out of 5), with more neutral in the non-ATSI group (4.8% versus 11.4%)
- Respondents based in the Robinvale region were less enthusiastic than the other two regions, but were still positive (4.1 versus 4.4 each out of 5). The Robinvale region group had higher proportions of the negative and neutral options.

As a further indication of support for a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre survey respondents aged 13 or over were asked: "In addition to world class training, what should be goals of the centre of excellence?" Multiple responses were permitted amongst a pre-set selection (performing arts career pathways; stimulate tourism, employment and volunteering; a safe and neutral space for all; increase health and wellbeing of participants; exposure to different cultures by participants and local community; and increase community belonging for participants and their families). There was good overall support for all the suggested goals of the new centre of excellence. Performing arts pathways stood out slightly as favoured by 75.6% of respondents. Increase health and wellbeing of participants, exposure to different cultures, increase community belonging and a safe and neutral space for all each were selected by between 62.8% and 67% of respondents. Least supported was stimulate tourism, employment and volunteering for local communities, being chosen by 51.3% of respondents.

A total of 24 respondents provided 'other' comments from which four new goal themes were emerged as: provide fun and enjoyment, provide leadership opportunities, incorporate environment and sustainability aims and increase the age range as there are older people struggling to find opportunities.

A question regarding the Goals of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre was also asked within the service providers' focus groups, with participants 'voting' for the five most important goals from the following list (they were also invited to add any additional goals). The following goals were most to least 'voted':

- Opportunities for young people regardless of disadvantage (34 participants)
- Increase health and well-being of participants (25)
- Increase sense of community belonging for participants (19)
- Performing arts career pathways for participants (14)
- World class performing arts training and performance opportunities (12)
- Increase understanding by local communities of different cultures (10)
- Employment and volunteering opportunities for local communities (10)
- Stimulate tourism and the local economy (9)
- Increase work-ready skills of participants (8)
- Expose participants to different cultures (7)
- Increase sense of community belonging for participants' families (7)
- A neutral space not affected by politics (4)

“The Christie Centre has people with disabilities that do performance, it would be good to be more inclusive of the community with arts” Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

“There are no options to have a career in theatre or music locally. The only options are to travel to the city. Career pathways would be fantastic. A close partnership with schools would also be essential and to work with other existing performing groups” Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

“[Phunktional was] biggest thing I have ever had the privilege of being a part of, and I have worked with kids for a long time, you just gotta have faith in him [Gerard Veltre]” Sunraysia Focus Group participant

Theme 2 - Current Needs & Services

SUMMARY

66% of parents and guardians felt their children’s (9-20 years old) school did not offer enough performing arts. Robinvale parents and guardians were particularly dissatisfied (48% were ‘very unhappy’) with the performing arts offerings of local schools.

48% of youth aged 13-20 felt there were not enough performing arts activities available in their community.

Young people (9-20 years old) preferred performing arts activities offered outside of school over school-based activities. However, 72% of their parents and guardians felt there were not enough performing arts opportunities available outside of school.

The primary reasons for the overall dissatisfaction of performing arts opportunities available were:

- limited access in schools or outside schools (46%)
- lack of trained experts (20%)
- lack of affordable programs (20%)

Survey respondents aged 21 or over were asked to identify “..... the gaps in performing arts training at school and outside of school in Sunraysia/Robinvale/Swan Hill?” The 178 verbatim responses were categorised into general themes. In all, 15.2% of respondents mentioned specific styles as ‘gaps’. The remaining responses are better considered as a further discussion of barriers to the performing arts. For example, limited availability was considered the greatest issue for the region with 46.1% of respondents stating it as an issue in general, in schools, and outside of schools. The next two key themes, of equal weight at 20.2% of respondents each, were lack of trained experts or inability to retain trained experts, and lack of low-cost offerings or the inability to afford existing programs. Physical access was a problem for 12.9% of respondents, with transport and distance from programs resulting in a lack of engagement. Lack of funding was mentioned by 7.3% of respondents, leading to lack of quality service provision or opportunities. Lack of information (6.7% of respondents) including both lack of information about programs available both in schools and externally in the region, partly linked to lack of funding, but also to a lack of understanding within communities about the benefits of performing arts for personal development, health and wellbeing. Finally, 3.9% of respondents mentioned performing arts being under-valued in the community due to an emphasis on sports, or by schools in their curriculum offerings.

“Many young people are limited for choice in relation to their chosen arts activities in school, unable to participate outside of school hours due to many and varied factors including but not limited to transport, geographical location, limited qualified educators in arts, cost, opportunity etc.” Female Swan Hill region respondent aged 21 or over

“Robinvale has an amazing performing arts venue which is currently only used about once per year. There is no training taking place there as it is too expensive to hire. There are dance classes in Robinvale who will hire the PAC out to perform only once per year but hold rehearsals in different community spaces for cost reasons. Robinvale College has a great Drama program and brass band but have recently lost their VET music teacher so no longer have a music program at the school. Students from the SRC surveyed showed that the majority of students would be interested in more music and performing arts opportunities in the community (inside or outside of school) as long as they were cheap and accessible.” Female Robinvale region respondent aged 21 or over

Students who participated in the survey were asked: “How much do you enjoy participating in the performing arts offered at school?” A total of 537 students whose educational institutions offer performing arts answered this question. Of these, 213 students do performing arts activities outside of school (39.7% of all students and 29.7% of the survey’s total respondents). Students enjoy the performing arts activities outside of school more than they do those offered at school (3.9 at school versus 4.4 outside school, out of 5). Substantially fewer chose unhappy and neutral options for outside school activities compared to at school. Every cohort except LGBT+ preferred outside of school performing arts activities more than those at school. By location, Sunraysia region students were happiest with the school performing arts activities (4.3 out of 5), followed by Swan Hill (3.9 out of 5) then Robinvale (3.5 out of 5). For outside of school activities Sunraysia and Swan Hill both scored 4.5 and Robinvale slightly less at 4.2 out of 5.

Students aged 13 to 20 were also asked: “Are there enough performing arts activities available to you (at school and outside of school)?” Overall, the results were the same for at school and outside school – just over half (51.7%) said there were enough. Robinvale region students had almost the same result for enough at school and outside of school (48.2% and 49.4%). Overall Swan Hill region students were more satisfied with the level of availability with 53.3% of respondents indicating there were enough performing arts activities both at school and outside of school.

“The school removing drama as a 9/10 elective is big, as is their removal of VET music. The school does not support performing arts.” Robinvale respondent aged 21 or over

By age, the older youth group liked school performing arts activities less (4.1 for young people aged 9 to 12 years versus 3.5 for young people aged 13 to 20 years) but there was practically no difference for the outside of school activities. Females prefer both school and outside of school activities more than males (female 4.1 at school, 4.6 outside of school versus male 3.7 at school, 4.2 outside of school, out of 5). ATSI respondents enjoy school activities very slightly less than non-ATSI respondents (3.8 versus 3.9 out of 5). However, this difference increased from 0.1 to 0.3 for outside of school activities (4.2 versus 4.5 out of 5). LGBT+ respondents enjoy school activities more than non-LGBT+ (4.6 versus average of 3.6 out of 5). Interestingly, however, this cohort is the only one to enjoy outside of school activities less than the school activities, and also less than the non-LGBT+ group (4 versus an average of 4.4 out of 5). Respondents who have experienced social disadvantages enjoy school activities more than those who haven’t (3.8 versus 3.3 out of 5) but there is no difference for outside of school activities (both 4.4 out of 5).

The survey also gauged the perspectives of parents/guardians with children aged 9 to 20 in the three regions in terms of satisfaction with performing arts activities offered at school. The 61 parents/guardians with children aged 9 to 20 in the regions were asked: “**How happy are you with the performing arts offered by your children’s school?**” Overall, parents/guardians rated performing arts activities offered at their children’s schools 3.2 out of 5. Most were happy (37.7%) and only 11.5% were very happy. There were reasonably large neutral (23%) and unhappy/very unhappy cohorts (27.9%). Parents/guardians in the Robinvale region were far less satisfied with performing arts offered by schools than the other two regions which were similar (2.5 Robinvale, 3.5 Sunraysia and 3.4 Swan Hill out of 5). Robinvale had a substantial proportion of respondents who selected very unhappy (41.7%) whereas the other two regions had none. Although Sunraysia and Swan Hill scored similarly overall and had a similar percentage who selected happy or very happy, Sunraysia had a substantially higher percentage who selected very happy (27.3% Sunraysia versus 5.3% Swan Hill).

In all, only 34.4% of surveyed parents/guardians with children aged 9 to 20 in the regions thought their children’s schools **offer enough performing arts** and only 27.9% thought there are **enough performing arts activities offered outside of school**.

Education sector views - 49 survey respondents teach or work for education providers that offer performing arts. Of these, 71.4% thought their employer offered enough performing arts classroom subjects, but only 46.9% thought the school offered enough extra-curricular performing arts activities. Sunraysia region education providers were the most positive (82.4% classroom / 58.8% extra-curricular), followed by Swan Hill (66.7% classroom / 47.6% extra-curricular), then Robinvale (63.6% classroom / 27.3% extra-curricular). By type of education provider, primary schools were slightly more positive than secondary schools about classroom subjects (81% versus 74.3%), but the opposite was seen for extra-curricular activities (42.9% versus 51.4%). The two respondents teaching or working at trade/vocational/TAFE education providers thought there was enough offered in both classroom subjects and extra-curricular activities.

Respondents aged 21 or over who did not work for education providers or were not parents/guardians of children aged 9 to 20 in the three regions were asked their views about the amount of performing arts offered in schools and outside of schools, across the regions they indicated they have a connection to. In the Sunraysia region, there were 29 respondents (4% of total) with only 10.3% indicating that schools offer enough performing arts and that there were enough outside of schools. In the Robinvale region there were 20 respondents (2.8% of total). Only one respondent thought there was enough performing arts in schools (5%), and no respondents thought enough was offered outside of schools. In the Swan Hill region there were 29 respondents (4% of total); they were the most positive of the three regions but still negative overall, with 13.8% indicating schools offer enough performing arts and twice as many (27.6%) indicating there were enough outside of school.

Through the service provider focus groups in Swan Hill and Mildura, participating service providers were asked: “**How adequate is performing arts training in the local school system (along a scale from 1 [completely inadequate] to 10 [completely adequate])?**”

- Of the nine Swan Hill-based service providers, none selected measure 1 (completely inadequate) or measures 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 (slightly above adequate to completely adequate). Two participants selected ‘2’ (22.2%), Five participants selected ‘3’ (55.5%), one participant selected ‘4’ (11.1%) and one participant selected ‘5’ (11.1%)
- Of the twelve Mildura-based service providers, none selected measures 1 or 2 (completely inadequate) or measures 8, 9 or 10 (completely adequate). Two participants selected ‘3’ (16.6%), five participants selected ‘4’ (41.6%), three participants selected ‘5’ (25.0%) and two participants selected ‘7’ (16.6%)

Through the service provider focus groups in Swan Hill and Mildura, participating service providers were also asked: “**How adequate is performing arts training locally (along a scale from 1 [completely inadequate] to 10 [completely adequate])?**”

- Of the nine Swan Hill-based service providers two elected not to vote, indicating they felt unformed to comment. Of the seven ‘voting’ Swan Hill-based service providers none selected measures 1 or 2 (completely inadequate) or measures 7, 8, 9 or 10 (above adequate to completely adequate). One participant selected ‘3’ (14.3%), 3 participants selected ‘4’ (42.9%), 3 participants selected ‘5’ (42.9%) and 1 participant selected ‘6’ (14.3%)
- Of the twelve Mildura-based service providers none selected measures 1, 2 or 3 (inadequate to completely inadequate) or measures 8, 9 or 10 (adequate to completely adequate). Two participants selected ‘4’ (16.6%), six participants selected ‘5’ (50.0%), two participants selected ‘6’ (16.6%) and two participants selected ‘7’ (16.6%)

In terms of actual **gaps in performing arts training inside and outside the school system**, nine themes were identified by survey respondents aged 21 or over in addition to specific styles, with the top three being limited availability, low cost offerings and access to trained experts. Limited availability was more of an issue for Robinvale and Sunraysia respondents, low cost offerings for Sunraysia respondents, and access to trained experts for Robinvale respondents. Physical access (i.e. transport and distance) also stood out for Robinvale, and these elements are discussed in greater detail in Theme 6 – Challenges and Barriers.

Through the focus groups held with service providers the following region-specific ‘gaps’ were identified:

Mildura	Robinvale	Swan Hill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-mainstream performing arts opportunities • Circus performance / acrobatics • Hip Hop • Acro-yoga • Live music / touring music • Street performing arts • Graffiti art • Painting / drawing classes • Stage craft / backstage (lighting, scenery, make-up) • Film / Photography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music teachers • Loss of REACT • No voice or singing training • Discos • ‘Gangshow’ (like Scouts Mildura) • ELT – Electric Light Theatre • Rock Eisteddfods • CROC Fest (Shepparton ‘took it’) • ‘nothing or serious’ nowhere just to do it for fun • Loss of drama from school curriculum • Dance (outside of Ballet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studio recording facilities • No pathway for developing musical talent (system to support progression from backyard, to small venue to larger venue) • Lack of performing arts professionals limits / inhibits career progression • Drawing and painting • No niche genres – comedy, circus, jazz, classical • There are challenges in even getting a busking permit, so opportunities to experience incidental performances (street performance) are limited

To some extent, these ‘gaps’ are reflected in actual participation in the performing arts. Through the survey, it was identified that currently only 40% of students participate in performing arts activities outside of school, with substantially fewer males participating than females (28% versus 50.4%). The 13-to-20 year-old student group participated in fewer outside of school activities than the 9-to-12 year-old students (35% versus 43.2%). ATSI students participated in performing arts outside of school at a similar rate to non-ATSI students (39.8% compared to 40.1%). More Sunraysia students participated in performing arts activities outside of schools than students in the other two regions. Parents/guardians stated a much higher percentage than youths did for participation in performing arts outside of school (70.5% parents/guardians versus 40% students). In all, 55.6% of ATSI parents/guardians said their children participate in their cultural dance and song, whereas only 21.3% of ATSI youth said they participate in their cultural dance and song.

Educators were asked the same question about their students. The 49 respondents who teach or work at an education provider were asked: “Which of these activities do your students participate in or would like to try?” The top three were music (93.9%), dance (81.8%) and theatre (79.6%), followed by film at 59.2% and ‘their cultural dance and song’ and healthy eating/cooking workshops at roughly half of respondents each. ‘Other cultural dance and song’ was only selected by 34.7% of respondents.

Examples offered by survey respondents of locally provided performing arts programs included:

- Fairfax Festival has always been very cheap and accessible to all schools;
- Gang Show involves a diverse group of young people with strong parent support;
- Richardson Dance Studio they offer amazing tuition and opportunities to be in competition and as part of further education;
- Robinvale Ballet Guild students perform in annual performance watch by whole community. A great sense of pride and admiration through the performance; and
- The Swan Hill Theatre Group is a phenomenal and breathtaking place it is the only place we have experienced in Swan Hill so far because we are new to the area, but are extremely passionate about bringing and supporting performing arts in our local communities. Chitty Chitty Bang Bang the musical has been mind-blowing to be a part of.

This list was both mirrored and extended by service providers participating in the focus groups when asked: “Are there examples of local performing arts programs you think are particularly good?” Of note is the significantly reduced number of opportunities in the Robinvale community.

Mildura service providers noted:	Robinvale service providers noted:	Swan Hill service providers noted:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live / riverside / night shows • Taya Philp (Indigenous Dance instructor) • Electric Light Theatre • Gang Show • The Beat (schools) • Sunraysia Musical Society • Mildura Youth Theatre Production • Sunraysia’s Muso’s Group (Culleraine) • Eisteford • Ballet Guild • Red Cliffs Players • Mildura Theatre Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Hall Variety Night • Church singing • P-4 Grandparents concert • Robinvale College Brass Band • Range of cultural performances • School Roadshow • Robinvale Ballet Guild 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairfax Youth Initiative • School based talent programs i.e. MacKillops Got Talent • Swan Hill Theatre Group • Live on the Lawn • Loud @ The Library • ‘S’ Factor • Youth Arts Festival • NOVO Film Festival

“Fairfax Festival is wonderful and I would like to see this keep going and get more funding to be bigger and better. Provides opportunities for kids in isolated communities who may never get them otherwise.” Female Swan Hill region respondent aged 21 or over

“Phunktional – a great way for young people to interact with industry professionals. The kids have enjoyed it and we’ve seen a growth from them when committing.” Female Robinvale region respondent aged 21 or over

“Swan Hill Theatre Group is a great opportunity for people who want to be involved in performing arts. This group has a youth element as well as a program for younger children. There is a stigma that this program is not for beginners so many people feel intimidated or reluctant to join.” Female Robinvale region respondent aged 21 or over

Theme 3 - Location, Design & Implementation

SUMMARY

Robinvale is the preferred location for a youth performing arts centre of excellence, according to the focus groups of local service providers. Potential business and funding partners also indicated that Robinvale showed the greatest potential of financial and in-kind support. Survey responses showed a preference for Swan Hill (44%) over other regions (Sunraysia 34.8% and Robinvale 30.2%). This was likely due to bias for selecting their home region for reasons of convenience.

Dance and music were clear preferences for activities provided by a RYPAC, particularly among young people (9-20 years old). However, 55% of young people said they were prepared to try new performing arts.

69% of young people (9-20 years old) preferred performing arts activities that were after school and on weekends.

Location

The subgroup of survey respondents who commented on the 'potential format' of the RYPAC was also asked: "Where should the centre of excellence be located?" and could select more than one option. The Swan Hill region was preferred, being chosen by 44% of respondents, which was only 0.3% less than the percentage of respondents with links to the Swan Hill region, so perhaps this was to be expected. The Sunraysia region was the second highest preference (34.8% of respondents), followed by the Robinvale region at 30.2%. This suggests not all respondents were simply choosing their own region, as respondents with links to the Robinvale region were slightly higher in the subgroup than those with links to the Sunraysia region (28.6% versus 26.8%).

When asked why respondents preferred the locations they chose, the top three reasons – 'close to my home', 'close to my school' and 'centrally located' – were the same for all the regions, but in slightly varying proportions of respondents. The other two options – 'better transport links' and 'the area has a strong arts identity' – were not far behind the top three for Sunraysia and Swan Hill. 'Better transport links' was low for Robinvale at only 6.9%. The main 'other' reason noted was regarding the location needing more opportunities. By region, responses were as follows:

- Sunraysia region: 'close to my home', (21.5%), 'close to school' (21.3%) and 'centrally located' (19.8%)
- Robinvale region: 'close to school' (26.7%), 'close to my home', (23.7%) and 'centrally located' (22.6%)
- Swan Hill region: 'close to my home', (27.2%), and 'close to school' and 'centrally located' equal (19.9%)

The very small groups based in Robinvale who thought Sunraysia or Swan Hill would be a good location for the centre of excellence thought Sunraysia or Swan Hill were centrally located, have a strong arts identity, and better transport links (particularly Swan Hill compared to Sunraysia). The very small groups based in Sunraysia who thought Robinvale or Swan Hill would be a good location for the centre of excellence thought Robinvale was close to school and centrally located, and Swan Hill was centrally located with better transport links. The very small groups based in Swan Hill who thought Sunraysia or Robinvale would be a good location for the centre of excellence thought Robinvale was centrally located, and Sunraysia has a strong arts identity, was centrally located and with better transport links.

Each service provider focus group was asked: "Where should the Youth Performing Arts Centre be based - Mildura, Robinvale or Swan Hill?" There was agreement amongst all four groups that the Youth Performing Arts Centre should be based in Robinvale. Provisos and suggestions included:

- If financial feasibility study does not prove Robinvale is a viable location, don't lose the opportunity, consider a larger and more central location like Swan Hill (which can then draw on the more populace areas towards Bendigo)
- Robinvale with outreach and leadership
- Robinvale with transport in
- Extended programs (overnight)
- Deliver a music camp model
- Requires Elders engagement
- If Robinvale is successful a plan for student accommodation would be critical
- Several group members noted use should be made of the existing Robinvale Community Arts Centre

[Where would it be?] *"If we have it at the school we are sort of wasting a facility that we already have in place and could make even better. If we develop that then you could have not only the music performance but you also include the sound technology side of the performance – lighting, sound check etc. Community Centre is the ideal – build on what is already established. The current resource is being wasted and is deteriorating..... Current building is gloomy and feels cold and dark. Need to be able to walk into a place and already feel the warmth and light and the lights aren't even turned on. So use of colours. The less it is used the less it feels like anything 'lives' in there. Then it will exist and be alive."* Robinvale Teacher

[Where would it be?] *"We should utilise the Arts Community Centre [Robinvale], it will work in well with the 'grander plan' for the river front, it is an important community resource, the money spent on a completely new build would be better spent on refurbishment etc.... It [RYPAC] should not be the hub [Robinvale College]. Better to form those partnerships with Council. Robinvale College has its own bus now so getting students to and from the Community Arts Centre is achievable especially if performing arts lessons are scheduled as 'double periods'."* Robinvale Teacher

"Maybe approach local perform arts company's about sharing the centre in order to create a centralized Theatre community. Working together to support and encourage continued participation in theatre activities and programs." Male Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 years or over

"Partnerships with the Department of Education might be an option, particularly if the space could be made accessible to all schools within the region to use as a rehearsal and performance space." Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 years or over

"Please use the existing arts centres and create a group for youth performing arts. We do not need to duplicate establishments we already have. Let's fully utilise what is in existence before we create the need for a new build." Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 years or over

"Having a site away from the school would be ideal, the kids need to get away from school sometimes, clear their heads." Aboriginal Elder, Robinvale

Transport and journey considerations were important - according to the youth age groups, when asked: "How would you usually get to the centre of excellence?" almost three quarters would have to rely on a parent, guardian or friend to drive them (73.6%). A further 12.7% would get themselves there by walking, cycling, skateboarding, rollerblading, etc., and 8.2% would drive themselves, carpool with another participant or use public transport. There were some differences by cohort:

- More of the older youth group would get themselves there (23.4% versus 14%) and carpool (5.6% versus 2.4%)
- More males than females would get themselves there (21.9% versus 14.2%) but fewer males than females would carpool (1.4% versus 5%)
- More ATSI than non-ATSI respondents would get themselves there (25.4% versus 15.7%) but fewer would carpool (3.2% versus 3.7%)
- The small LGBT+ group would have someone drive them (37.5% versus an average of 61.9%) or would get themselves there (40% versus an average of 26.3%). 12.5% would carpool
- More of those who experienced social disadvantage than those who chose 'prefer not to answer' would get themselves there (28.9% versus 15.1%) and carpool (72% versus 3.8%)
- More respondents based in the Robinvale (28.8%) and Swan Hill (22.2%) regions would not need a parent/guardian/friend to drive them compared to those in the Sunraysia region (11.7%).

Those aged 13 and over were then asked: "What is the longest the journey to the centre of excellence could be?" Just over half chose 30 minutes (57.4%), 28.5% chose 70 minutes and 14.1% chose 90 minutes. Two thirds of the 13-to-20 youth group (66.9%) chose 30 minutes, but only half of those 21- or-over. Higher proportions of the 21-or-over group compared to the youth group chose 70 minutes (33% versus 22.8%) or 90 minutes (17% versus 10.3%). Respondents based in the Robinvale region were more disposed to a longer journey with 21.5% selecting 90 minutes compared to 14.3% in Sunraysia and only 10.9% in the Swan Hill region.

Design

Survey respondents were asked to share experiences of and observations about **what 'makes' a good performing arts program**, including through giving examples. The 178 verbatim responses were categorised into general themes. Of these 58.4% of respondents mentioned specific programs, 20.8% were suggestions rather than comments on existing programs, and 7.1% didn't know any programs or were unsure. Where responses included reasons, these were that programs were considered good for skills development and inclusion (11.8% of responses each), closely followed by connection (9%). Health and wellbeing, expression, career pathways and program format were also lesser mentioned reasons.

Youth performing arts activities and participation – through the survey both youth age groups were asked which activities they participate in or would like to try. Overall dance and music were the top-rated options (41.4% and 38.1% of respondents respectively), followed by healthy eating/cooking workshops (30.8%), film (21.3%) and theatre (18.6%). 'My cultural dance and song' and 'other cultural dance and song' were of less interest, at 7.9% and 5.6% respectively. Parents/guardians reported stronger levels of support for all options and selected theatre more than youth did. Education providers report even stronger levels of support for all options, but underestimated the interest in healthy eating/cooking workshops compared to youths. Types of cultural dance and song were of least interest overall and overestimated by education providers.

There were clear differences between females and males. Dance (66.1%), music (40.7%) and healthy eating/cooking workshops (32.5%) dominated for females, whereas music (34.5%), healthy eating/cooking workshops (29.3%) and film (26.4%) were favoured by males. The two non-binary respondents only selected music.

There were also differences between the two youth age groups. The 9-to-12 year-olds were most interested in

dance (42.2%), music (37.2%) and healthy eating/cooking workshops (29.1%). The 13-to-20 year-olds expressed interest in five options: dance (40.1%), music (39.6%), healthy eating/cooking workshops (33.5%), film (26.9%) and theatre (22.3%). Dance (45%) and music (37.5%) were also strongest for ATSI youths. Their own (21.3%) and other (11.3%) cultural dance and song were higher than for non-ATSI Youth (5.5% and 4.6% respectively).

Dance and music were strong for both the Sunraysia and Swan Hill regions but music was of less interest in the Robinvale region. Healthy eating/cooking workshops was the third strongest option for all three regions and of a similar percentage. Theatre was stronger in the Swan Hill region compared to the other two, and 'my cultural dance and song' was stronger in the Robinvale region compared to the other two regions.

Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre – potential format – The section of the survey relating to the potential format of the new centre of excellence was not shown to respondents who said the centre of excellence would not be good for the region. As such, a total of 563 respondents provided feedback about the potential format of the new centre of excellence. Of these, 44.6% were aged 9 to 12, 24.2% were aged 13 to 20 and 31.2% were aged 21 or over. Respondents with links to the Swan Hill region dominated (44%) with almost half as many again as the Robinvale (28.6%) and Sunraysia region (26.8%) respondents.

Of the subgroup that was shown the potential format section, the youth group were then asked: "**If you participated in a program at the centre of excellence would you try performing arts that are new to you?**" Just over half (54.8%) said yes and 45.2% said they would only participate in the types they like.

Scheduling – Respondents were asked: "**When should classes be held?**" with multiple pre-set selections permitted. After school was the leading preference at 68.7% of respondents. Weekends (47.2%) and school holidays (45.5%) were similar followed by during school (38.7%). After school was most important for the two youth groups (55.8% of 9-to-12, 6.2% of 13-to-20) with the other options roughly half as important. Respondents based in the Robinvale and Swan Hill regions had a clear preference for after school (65.4% and 73.3%), whereas Sunraysia-based respondents preferred after school and weekends equally (65.6%).

Activity fees and capacity to pay – The two youth age groups were asked: "**If there was a program/class fee, who would pay it?**" Overall, the majority (83.5%) said their parent/guardian, 6.2% said they would have to pay themselves, 0.8% said another adult (not a parent/guardian) and 9.6% chose 'can't afford to pay a fee'. By cohort:

- Slightly more of the younger group chose 'can't afford to pay a fee' (10% versus 8.8%)
- Slightly more males chose 'me' versus females (7.5% versus 5.4%), but slightly fewer 'can't afford to pay a fee' (8.2% versus 10%)
- A much higher proportion of ATSI respondents can't afford to pay a fee compared to non-ATSI (20.6% versus 7.4%)
- A much higher proportion of those who experienced social disadvantages would pay the fee themselves (13.3% versus 3.8%) or can't afford to pay the fee (12% versus 3.8%)
- More respondents based in the Sunraysia region can't afford to pay a fee compared to the other regions (12.6% versus 9.9% Robinvale and 7% Swan Hill).

The 60 parents/guardians of children aged 9 to 20 were asked: "**If there was a program/class fee, who would pay it?**" A large majority (93.3%) said 'me'. Only one (1.7%) said 'my child' (Robinvale based) and three (5%) said 'can't afford to pay a fee' (one each from Sunraysia, Robinvale and Swan Hill).

Those aged 13 and over were then asked: “**What is a reasonable fee for a one hour class?**” Just over half (55.9%) chose \$10 to \$25 and almost a third (30.3%) chose up to \$10. By cohort:

- Similar proportions of the two age groups thought up to \$10 was reasonable (29% versus 31.2%), but considerably more aged 13 to 20 thought \$25 to \$50 was reasonable (16.9% versus 6.4%), with the older group preferring \$10 to \$25 more (48.4% versus 61.3%)
- ATSI respondents preferred up to \$10 (42.4%) with \$10 to \$25 a close second (36.4%), whereas over half of non-ATSI respondents chose \$10 to \$25 with just over a quarter choosing up to \$10 (28.8%)
- The 10 LGBT+ respondents preferred \$10 to \$25 (58.3%), whereas the non-LGBT+ group preferred up to \$10 and \$10 to \$25 to a similar degree (average of 44.7% and 45% respectively)
- Those who have experienced social disadvantages preferred \$10 to \$25 (63%), whereas the ‘prefer not to answer’ group preferred up to \$10 and \$10 to \$25 to a similar degree (38.4% and 43.8%)
- Respondents based in Sunraysia and the Swan Hill region had a clear preference for \$20 to \$25 (72.3%, 58.1% respectively), however respondents based in the Robinvale region preferred up to \$10 and \$10 to \$25 to a similar degree (36.8% and 43.7% respectively).

Inclusion of local multi-cultural traditions – Those aged 13 and over were asked: “**How important is it that local multicultural traditions are included in programs at the centre of excellence?**” Overall, inclusion of both ATSI culture and other cultures were rated equally at 3.8 out of 5; however, slightly more thought very much or extremely that ATSI cultures be included compared to other cultures. Only small percentages thought cultural traditions should not be included at all (5.8% for ATSI and 4.8% for other cultures). By cohort:

- The youth group was less enthusiastic than the 21-or-over group. They slightly preferred other cultures to ATSI culture, which was the opposite for the older group (3.5 versus 4 out of 5 for ATSI culture, 3.6 versus 3.9 out of 5 for other cultures). The youth group had far higher responses that indicated ‘not at all’ for both culture types
- Males were less enthusiastic than females for both culture types (3.9 versus 3.5 out of 5 for ATSI culture, 3.8 versus 3.7 out of 5 for other cultures)
- Non-ATSI respondents supported inclusion of both ATSI and other cultures equally (3.8 out of 5). ATSI respondents, however, were more supportive of inclusion of ATSI culture (4.1 out of 5) and slightly less for other cultures (3.7 out of 5) compared to the non-ATSI group
- Those who experienced social disadvantages supported both culture types equally (3.7 out of 5). Those who selected ‘prefer not to answer’ however, supported ATSI culture slightly less (3.3 out of 5 for ATSI culture, 3.4 out of 5 for other cultures). A higher percentage in the ‘prefer not to answer’ group chose ‘not at all’ for ATSI culture
- Those based in the Robinvale and Swan Hill regions supported both culture types equally. The Sunraysia region was more supportive of both culture types, and ATSI culture in particular (4.2 out of 5 for ATSI culture, 4 out of 5 for other cultures).

Cultural connection and engagement was further refined through asking ATSI respondents about their level of connection to their cultural traditions including their level of knowledge of culture, culture practice, importance of culture and access to culture teaching. The youth group and those aged 21-and-over were asked in relation to their own connection with their culture. Those 21 and over were also asked in relation to their thoughts about young ATSI people in the Sunraysia/Robinvale/Swan Hill regions. The younger 9-to-12 youth group were asked to respond yes/no, and the older two groups on a 5-point scale of not at all to a great deal.

High levels of the **9-to-12 youth group** have knowledge of their culture (80.7% or 4 out of 5) and said culture is important to them (93% or 4.7 out of 5); however, only 50.9% (2.5 out of 5) practice culture and only slightly more 52.6% (2.6 out of 5) felt there were enough people teaching them culture. In the **13- to-20 youth group**, however, knowledge and importance of culture were substantially lower. Only 57.1% chose very much or a

great deal for having knowledge of their culture (3.5 out of 5), although 78.6% chose very much or a great deal for culture is important to them (3.9 out of 5). In total 21.5% practice culture very much or a great deal (2.6 out of 5) and 35.7% (2.8 out of 5) agreed very much or a great deal that there were enough people teaching them culture. The **21-or-over group** had very different perceptions of the connection of ATSI young people with their culture. Only a third thought young people have moderate knowledge of their culture and 55.6% thought they have only a little (2.2 out of 5). In total 72.2% thought young people only practice culture a little (1.9 out of 5). None thought very much or a great deal that there were enough people teaching young people culture, with 44.4% choosing each of not at all and a little (1.7 out of 5). Hearteningly, however, 55.6% thought very much that culture is important to young people and 16.7% thought so a great deal (3.7 out of 5).

ATSI respondents aged 13 or over were asked “**Is it important for your culture to see culture presented in new ways?**” with a smiley face slider. Overall the group was very positive, scoring 4.2 out of 5. Just over half chose the very happy smiley and 29.8% the happy smiley (83% combined). The 21 or over group was more positive (4.6 out of 5) with most selecting very happy (73.7%) and none choosing the two unhappy options.

The focus group held with Aboriginal Elders provided further detail to the design of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre:

- Need to restart the Aboriginal Dance Group
- The Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre must be welcoming – images of Aunts and Uncles out front to say to our young people ‘you are welcome, you belong here’
- There needs to be a recognised and ongoing Indigenous Arts Program within the RYPAC to give Indigenous young people a ‘safe’ place to start performing arts, they need to start as young children before the shame starts. That gives us pride that our culture is important, that we are recognised and valued
- Do a film program featuring our local Aboriginal Elders telling their stories, especially stories that featured performing arts so that our kids can see that it (performing arts) has been happening for a long time. Sense of belonging – “that’s my nan”.

“The RYPAC needs a ‘keeping place’ where performing arts history can be kept safely and viewed.” Aboriginal Elder, Robinvale

“This is our dream, our whole community dream.” Aboriginal Elder, Robinvale

Implementation

Several questions were asked through the survey to guide the practical implementation of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre. *Theme 7 - Factors for Success* also addresses strategies to support implementation.

Business and funding partners – Ten respondents aged 21 or over were shown the section on business and funding partners. All were currently supporting performing arts in the regions, except for one business/community organisation in the Robinvale region. No representatives of government departments or corporate foundations responded. Seven respondents were from businesses or community organisations in the three regions. One was a philanthropist/individual donor in the Sunraysia region, and one from a community/charity foundation in the Robinvale region. One was from an ‘other’ business or funding organisation described only as ‘business owner/partner’ based in the Robinvale region.

This same group were then asked if they or the organisation they work for would support a new youth performing arts centre of excellence in the region (one-off or ongoing). By type of organisation, 90% would provide in-kind support and half would provide financial support. Analysed by area, the following can be

identified:

- By region, Robinvale had the greatest potential levels of financial support (75%) and in-kind support (100%). Swan Hill had good potential in-kind support (75%) but only one (25%) able to give financial support. Of the two Sunraysia entities, both would provide in-kind support but only one financial support
- Of the five able to give financial support (all up to \$20,000), only one had no requirements to qualify for support. Those offering only in-kind support did not have requirements to qualify
- In-kind support included backstage and fundraising volunteers, expert teachers, sponsorship, and items for raffles.

Education providers –The 49 education providers were asked: “How likely is it that the main education provider you teach or work at would outsource performing arts curriculum to a new youth performing arts centre?” Overall the likelihood was rated 3.1 out of 5, with few choosing extremely likely (14.3%). By cohort:

- Secondary schools were most likely to outsource to a new centre (3.3 secondary versus 2.8 primary out of 5)
- Schools in the Swan Hill region were most likely to outsource to a new centre (3.5 Swan Hill, 3.1 Robinvale, 2.6 Sunraysia out of 5).

Education providers were also asked: “Does the main education provider you teach or work at view external performing arts as competition to their own performing arts activities?” Encouragingly, the majority said not at all (69.4%) with the overall rating a positive 1.6 out of 5. Primary schools were slightly less concerned about external activities as competition than secondary schools (1.4 versus 1.7 out of 5). One of the trade/vocational/TAFE schools did not see external activities as competition but the other one did very much. Schools in the Swan Hill region were more likely to see external activities as competition (1.8 versus 1.5 out of 5 for Sunraysia and Robinvale regions).

Types of venue hire - the 147 respondents who said they or their employer would hire rooms or spaces at the centre of excellence weekly, monthly or rarely were asked: “What types of rooms or spaces would you or your employer hire?” and could select multiple options. There is most interest in rehearsal rooms, performance spaces and conference/meeting rooms. Performance spaces were of most interest for Sunraysia, and conference/meeting rooms for the Robinvale and Swan Hill regions. Overall, office space was of least interest and in more demand in the Robinvale region compared to the other two regions.

Venue hire and capacity to pay - those aged 21 or over were asked: “How often would you or your employer hire rooms or spaces at a new youth performing arts centre of excellence?” Overall, 47.7% said rarely, a quarter monthly and only 10.8% weekly. Important understandings lie in venue hire by location. Overall, respondents based in the Robinvale region would hire the centre most often, followed by Swan Hill then Sunraysia.

- Weekly: Robinvale region 19% versus 6.8% in Sunraysia and 7.4% in the Swan Hill region
- Monthly: Robinvale region 28.6% versus 20.5% in Sunraysia and 28.7% in the Swan Hill region
- Rarely: Sunraysia region 54.5% versus 48.9% in the Swan Hill region and 31% in the Robinvale region
- Never: Robinvale region 21.4% versus 18.2% in Sunraysia and 14.9% in the Swan Hill region.

The 147 respondents who said they or their employer would hire rooms or spaces at the centre of excellence weekly, monthly or rarely were asked “Would a hire fee subsidy or discount be required?” The majority said yes, a hire fee subsidy or discount would be required (73.5%). Respondents based in the Robinvale and Swan Hill regions required assistance substantially more than those in Sunraysia.

Theme 4 - Intended Positive Impacts

SUMMARY

The existing evidence base supporting the intrinsic value of the performing arts was clearly supported by this study. 178 verbatim responses from people aged 21 and over indicated themes of health and wellbeing (49%), connection (28%), skills development (20%) and expression (16%). Similar themes were recorded through focus groups involving local arts and community service providers.

Parents and guardians rated the importance of performing arts a 4 out of 5 for their children’s general development, and a 4 out of 5 for connecting their children with their community.

Of 15 education providers who had had a Phunktional program at their school:

- **13 (87%) said student confidence increased**
- **7 (47%) said student courage increased**
- **7 (47%) said student interest in school increased**
- **6 (40%) said student social life improved**
- **2 (13%) also said student home and family life improved**

A brief review of the national and international evidence base supporting the intrinsic and extended impacts of the performing arts is presented earlier in this report (*Benefits of the Performing Arts – the Evidence Base*) and in more detail in Appendix 1. Localised data collected to inform the social feasibility of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre further supports this evidence base and is presented below.

Benefits of youth performing arts participation – survey respondents aged 21 or over were asked: ‘How has performing arts been a positive influence for you or someone you know?’ In total, 178 verbatim responses were categorised. Leading themes were health and wellbeing (49.2%) and connection (27.7%) followed by skills development (19.8%), positive non-specific responses (17.5%) and expression (15.8%). Career pathways and inclusion were other themes. Verbatim responses included:

- It has saved lives
- I’ve seen a lot of students take ownership for something they have been so proud of. Amazing for self-esteem and growth
- Builds confidence, knowledge and skills, creates social opportunities that build communication skills, health and wellbeing, a sense of inclusion and being a part of
- something bigger, creates career opportunities!
- Drama developed my public speaking confidence and music helped me develop my sense of self
- Increasing confidence. Asserting independence and individuality. Physical and mental health improvements. Making friends. Creating cultural connections
- Our children have benefited immeasurably from their involvement in dance lessons, instrumental instruction in school, the Fairfax festivals and productions at school and the Swan Hill theatre group. They have gained confidence, made lifelong friends and learned many life skills. As parents we have relished any opportunities to share and grow our personal development alongside our children

- It also gives me a sense of connection to the rest of the world which has been important to me growing up in an isolated rural town
- I worked with Indigenous young people who had the opportunity to make films with your company - for many it was the first opportunity to engage in activities which linked culture with their interests and gave many the first real experience of success in school
- Enables anyone to join a community and have shared experiences which creates friendships and networks.
- Drop in creative spaces lead to peers bringing peers into them so they get involved without being told to. Not sure how you will create this for the whole of Mallee. Maybe need to think about a hub and spoke model to deliver outcomes at different place-based locations. We need more theatre and street theatre to bring people together - have seen some great outcomes from that
- I had a choice of sport or music. I chose music. It has been a great release when times have been tough. A great outlet for me
- Red Cliffs Players group... been a positive influence upon my whole family knowing that anyone in the community can take part in performing arts in local communities and local communities will support them and it will thrive over the long-term period
- It is a great way to self-express and receive reward for creating something that is meaningful - even if it's just for you. I think the arts is crucial to our region and our children who excel in it are currently underrated.
- The performing arts has been a wonderful means of exploring the migrant and refugee journeys of our students - this exploration has had therapeutic benefits
- Performing arts interacts with a broad range of essential life skills, like empathy, walking in another's shoes via acting different roles, emotion exploration and changing emotions, controlling emotions, self-expression, new skills in construction, learning new languages as in music notations which links to maths, confidence, social skills and building connections, relationships with others, friendships, and community building
- I loved being involved in performing arts through my formative years and I'm very glad my girls have had similar exposure. It widens your world in so many ways (e.g.) learning lines for a play and having the ability to ad-lib is a great skill to have when undergoing job interviews. Being involved in performing arts is very good food for our souls

"For many students from our school it kept them engaged with their schooling, allowed them to work to their gifts, and was extraordinarily inclusive" Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

"I used to participate in musicals and choirs. These are memories that have stayed with me my whole life and experiences I am incredibly proud of" Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

"Watching a child build their confidence by way of performing and expressing whom they really are - and then using this to mould them into the good person they have become and passing this on to younger students - is a thing I have witnessed. Activities such as football-basketball just didn't fit in the same way!" Parent of a child aged 9 to 20 going to a Robinvale primary school

"Expression of talent and self is always important, if opportunities are limited, stars may be missed but also more purely, an experience is missed" Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

"Performing arts has been crucial with a lot of young people as a self-narrative and the ability to be express themselves in ways they wouldn't normally. The up skilling that a young person can get from performing arts is endless and we need to be doing more in this space as a community" Male Robinvale and Swan Hill region

respondent aged 21 or over

"The enticement into doing something together, that is involved in singing the same song, dancing in sync with others, adhering to a rhythm, all of this disciplines kids effortlessly into teamwork without competition, using language (singing / acting), using counting (rhythm / timing)" Service Provider

"Song making was already my thing, but Phunktional exposed a lot of kids to this who would never get a chance or would even know about it, then they find that they would like to do it, because it was opened up to them. It really helped me to learn new skills, spread my genres" current Phunktional participant

Through the focus groups, service providers were asked to share the positive outcomes they had seen result from involvement in performing arts for the children and young people they had worked with. The list created was long, again mirroring and extending evidence gathered through the survey:

- Increased self-esteem, to test your ability and be proven
- Increased confidence and perseverance, overcoming fears and doubts
- Increased sense of belonging, of feeling accepted
- An opportunity to realise and nurture talent, creative outlet
- An outlet away from other structures (like school, sport and home)
- Sense of accomplishment / achievement
- Community engagement, connection, pride, well-being and identity
- Contribution to community
- Encourages understanding and acceptance of each other and our differences
- Chance to be celebrated, to showcase talents, a point of pride
- Self-discovery, self-development and growth
- Opportunity for self-expression, to feel heard, to be recognised
- Celebrating the unusual
- Performing arts gives you the teamwork of sport without the competition
- A sense of being a part of something bigger than themselves
- Something other than sport to do, especially in smaller communities
- Chance to experience positive 'life-enhancing' challenges in a safe way / place
- Makes participants happy
- Gives young people something else to talk about / to focus on
- Activates the creative side of the brain
- Learning new skills, including Cross curricula skills Builds social connections and decreases social withdrawal
- Chance to meet and make new friends, performing arts mixes different schools and different groups, allows a 'break' from school if bullying is a concern
- Connection to safe adults
- Increases breadth of 'interests'
- Exposure to and learning of culture, connection to culture, Storyline
- Positive impact on home life and provides an opportunity for parents to see their children in a positive light
- Pathways for future employment / study / career opportunities

- Encourages routine, responsibility and discipline development
- Can be a 'soft entry' into support services
- Develops curiosity / playfulness / new ways of thinking
- Emotional in a safe place – allows an outlet to 'perform' it out, and emotional release and to explore social and emotional issues
- Builds emotional / social intelligence, enhances understanding of body language
- Reorients participants from the private and personal towards the community
- Increase connection to / attendance at school and engagement in learning
- Improved communication skills, public speaking skills
- Development of phonological skills, speech related
- Improves skills for relating effectively to a variety of ages and cultures
- Being a part of something bigger
- Learning to appreciate the performing arts
- Introducing young people to performing arts gives them a lifetime opportunity to showcase their talents and connect with their community and culture
- Mental health and wellbeing, the chance to heal and grow, build resilience
- Physical health and wellbeing, energy boosting
- Hobby, something to do after school, prevent boredom
- Gives children and young people positive role models and mentors
- Opportunities to go places, to travel and explore
- Alternative career paths not otherwise even considered
- Whole of community well-being and pride
- Everyone should have something they love to do
- Inspiration, the experience of being an audience to live performance is very powerful
- Incentive to engage with education and career progression

"When I was in year 12 there was not enough interest from year 12 students alone to run a drama class, so they combined years 10, 11 and 12. We were all in the same room but sort of doing our own thing. The great thing was we were all sort of misfits but when we came together it was a great group. It was like a breath of fresh air" Service Provider

"Robinvale does lots of great stuff, we're just not doing it together – this is my hope for the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre. To achieve this we need continuous funding streams and a long-term commitment from key organisations" Robinvale Elder

"I see children doing much better at school if they are doing performing arts, they feel included in their performing arts group, where they might have stood out at school because they were 'different' their 'difference' is their connection in their performing arts group." Service Provider

"at FLO Connect there is 1 teacher with a strong performing arts background, this really shows in the connection his students have to the school (because of their relationship with him). He provides private performing arts tuition for some of these students." Service Provider

"My daughter runs an Aboriginal Dance group. Kids come in walking like this [shoulders slumped] and leave like this [standing tall]. If our kids are occupied, happy and connected everything is OK." Service Provider

"I was part of a youth choir growing up, lots of the girls there were on a negative pathway until choir, they were the girls that were going to end up pregnant, but the choir conductor was someone we all looked up to so we worked hard and travelled the world – there are genuine career pathways from performing arts" Service Provider

"Performing arts is important for their sense of identity, especially if they are not the sporty people – if there is no access to performing arts opportunities then these people can feel like they 'are no good at anything', it's important for growth and sense of identity" Teacher

"there are so many skills developed through the performing arts – with the performing arts you can go anywhere, from anywhere - my son went through choir, onto the stage and is now an author" Service Provider

"It [the performing arts] creates an opportunity to be recognised amongst their peers, families, communities and a greater sense of sense of self and pride" Teacher

"Performing arts programs have helped re-engage young people 'people we would have otherwise lost' being able to offer VET music subjects is what keeps some young people at school it allows them self-expression, tension release" Teacher

"Performing arts offers a completely new industry to the Robinvale landscape, increased diversity in local employment opportunities" Teacher

[The positive of performing arts] *"That it's OK to play the fool, kids are so worried about 'keeping face' but there is so much learning in foolery"* Teacher

"With the performing arts you can go anywhere, from anywhere" Service Provider

"Our youth have very little offered here in Robinvale if they don't do sports, which is seasonal anyway. Our Koori youth are often at risk and we had a youth suicide here in April. Our kids looking for ways for enjoyment and good times in the wrong places, mainly through substance abuse and partying. This Centre would provide a healthier option for raising self-esteem and self-worth." Female Robinvale region ATSI respondent aged 21 years or over

"This is an exciting venture that has the potential to have an extremely positive impact on a large number of students across a significant area of Southern NSW and Northern Victoria. We would be very interested in engaging the talents of those associated with the centre to enhance our creative arts program and provide our students with experiences that may foster a love of performing arts, opening up new and exciting opportunities and possibilities." Female Swan Hill region respondent aged 21 years or over

In addition to the opportunity to take part in the online survey, students at Swan Hill Specialist School were also invited to a focus group held onsite at the school. This was an important opportunity to ensure the voice of these students were heard. When asked: **Has performing arts helped you to become better at other things / learn different skills?** Students participating in the focus group noted:

- Memorising
- Learning
- Being in the 'right spot' / following directions

- Team work
- Supporting each other (through feeling nervous etc)
- Encouraging each other
- Confidence
- Engaging with the community

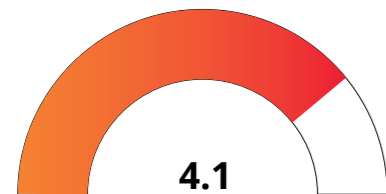
Researcher: "XX when you are on stage, how do you feel?" Senior Student: "Free", Swan Hill Specialist School

Through the survey, 62 parents/guardians with children aged 9 to 20 in the three regions were asked "How important is performing arts for your children's general development?" Overall the group scored importance 4.1 out of 5 (see green graph below). In summary:

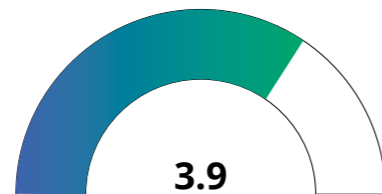
- Robinvale region parents/guardians scored this highest at 4.4 out of 5, followed by the Sunraysia region at 4.1 out of 5 and the Swan Hill region close at 4 out of 5
- Females scored this higher than males (4.1 versus 3.8 out of 5). There were no non-binary respondents
- ATSI parents/guardians felt performing arts is less important for general development than non-ATSI respondents (3.8 versus 4.2 out of 5)
- There was no overall difference between those whose children experienced social disadvantages compared to those who chose 'prefer not to answer', both rating 4.1 out of 5.

Q10.1 About performing arts and your children

How important is performing arts for your children's general development?



How much do performing arts activities connect your children with their community?



The 62 parents with children aged 9 to 20 in the three regions were then asked: "How much do performing arts activities connect your children with their community?" Overall, parents scored this a 3.9 out of 5 (blue graph above). In summary:

- Again, Robinvale region parents/guardians scored this highest at 4.1 out of 5, compared to 3.8 out of 5 for both the Sunraysia and Swan Hill regions
- Females scored this slightly lower than males (3.9 versus 4 out of 5 respectively). There were no non-binary or LGBT+ respondents
- ATSI parents/guardians scored this slightly less than non-ATSI respondents (3.7 versus 3.9 out of 5 respectively)
- Those whose children experienced social disadvantages scored this slightly higher compared to those who chose 'prefer not to answer' (3.9 versus 3.8 out of 5 respectively).

A section of the survey focussed on **past and current participants of Phunktional programs**. In total, 88 respondents were ex-participants (6%) or current participants (6.3%) in Phunktional programs, and eight education providers in the Sunraysia region and 13 in the Robinvale region have or have had a Phunktional program at their school.

Of the ex-participants:

- 44.2% aged 9 to 12, 16.3% aged 13 to 20 and 39.5% aged 21 or over
- 67.4% female, 32.6% male
- A quarter (25.6%) are ATSI
- None are LGBT+
- Of the nine aged 13 or over who answered the social disadvantages question, all but one ('prefer not to answer' 11.1%) had experienced social disadvantages (88.9%)
- Just over half are based in the Robinvale region (55.8%), 27.9% in Sunraysia and 16.3% in the Swan Hill region.

Of the current participants:

- 66.7% aged 9 to 12, 24.4% aged 13 to 20 and 8.9% aged 21 or over
- 53.3% female, 44.4% female, one (2.2%) non-binary
- Just over a quarter are ATSI (26.7%)
- Two (13.3%) are LGBT+
- Of the 12 aged 13 or over who answered the social disadvantages question, two thirds had experienced social disadvantages (66.7%).
- Just under half are based in the Robinvale region (44.4%), a third in Sunraysia and 22.2% in the Swan Hill region.

"Can't even find the right words, but the value [of Phunktional programs] is priceless. Improved my life and outlook on the world so much" Male Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

"Phunktional gives an opportunity to students who would not normally go into that 'space' – it opens up to these young people their own interests and talents" Teacher

"On the brink of throwing in the towel I was taken into the Phunktional program and got closer to my peers than I'd ever thought possible. My confidence in my musical works grew to the point where I could finally show them to others, and I became a part of many great communities I would have missed out on otherwise! To say something like art or a program has "saved" you is nearly always a dramatic over-exaggeration, but in this case I really do feel that my life wouldn't have turned anywhere near as good as it has if it weren't for the fact I was brought into this program. Thank you." Male Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

"I wasn't serious at the start, but then they told me I would play with the Melbourne Orchestra [signals like his head is exploding]" current Phunktional participant

"Phunktional opens doors, it gives an insight to what your future holds – it feels good" current Phunktional participant

“So all the kids finished school and some of them otherwise wouldn't have – they weren't going to finish.... For some of the Phunktional participants there were huge wellbeing issues, bullying etc Gerard didn't look for the kids that wanted to be stars, the social inclusion was significant.” Teacher

“Phunktional's programs have been great for the social and emotional health of students. There is a higher incidence of youth suicide in the Robinvale College – creative outlets have been important for young people facing grief and loss or their own mental health.” Teacher

“I want a career in footy but I love dancing. Before Phunktional I had only ever danced for myself, but then I did it for others and it felt good” current Phunktional participant

Impact on health and wellbeing - Past and current Phunktional participants were asked if the program improved aspects of their health and wellbeing and their interest in performing arts. Respondents could select multiple options and the following statistics are percentages of respondents. Overall, over half (54.5%) said the program improved their confidence and almost a third said it improved their courage (33%). Roughly a quarter experienced improvements in their social life (28.4%), family life (23.9%) and interest in school (23.9%). Just under half (45.5%) said it improved their interest in performing arts. Increased confidence by cohort was as follows:

- Increased confidence was the option selected by most respondents across all three age groups, with small increases as age increases (53.1% 9 to 12, 55.6% 13 to 20, 57.1% 21 or over)
- A third of the 13-to-20 group chose improved social life and 38.1% of those 21 or over chose improved courage. The youngest group did not have a second option that particularly stood out compared to the other options
- Males reported improved confidence slightly more than females (55.9% versus 52.8%)
- Improved confidence was similar for both ATSI and non-ATSI respondents
- Confidence was the key improvement for Robinvale region (59.1%) and Swan Hill region (47.1%) respondents. For Sunraysia region respondents improved courage was highest at 55.6% followed closely by confidence at 51.9%. Improved social life also stood out for Swan Hill region respondents at 35.3%.

The fifteen education providers who have or had a Phunktional program at their school were asked their perceptions of whether their students' participation in the program increased the same health and wellbeing aspects and interest in performing arts as was asked of ex and current participants. Overall, 86.7% said confidence was increased, followed by courage and interest in school both at 46.7%, social life 40% and improved family life only 13.3%. All except for family life were higher than what former and current participants reported. In all 86.7% said students had increased interest in performing arts as a result of the program.

The value former and current students perceive in Phunktional programs are health and wellbeing outcomes, opportunities and skills development and connection and inclusiveness. One respondent said it provided career pathways. Seventeen respondents offered suggestions for improvement, with the key theme being to expand content or activities in the programs. Eighteen respondents provided comments about why Phunktional programs are different to other performing arts training. The main theme was that they are more inclusive, and the secondary theme was they are more collaborative.

“I have a huge amount of respect for the way Phunktional works, and particularly for how they worked in Robinvale. Gerard has been very visionary, completely aspirational about what is possible for the young people there. He has truly helped kids to dream. These kids, all kids, only know their own reality, only know their own experiences so having Gerard come really opened all that up for them, opened up all the possibilities in the world.” School Principal

“A lot of the kids here are exposed to music, but normally only within in the church confines, they practice and perform in front of the church. Phunktional has allowed for kids in that environment to take their music further if they want to. XX is an example of this, she has really grown in confidence thanks to Phunktional involvement, she has taken on more of a leadership role, Phunktional has been integral.” Teacher

Former and current participants and educators **rated their enjoyment of the Phunktional program** 4.1 out of 5 overall, with over half (53.4%) selecting the very happy smiley.

- Those 21 or over enjoyed the program the most (4.5 versus 4 out of 5 for both youth groups)
- Males enjoyed the program less than females (3.8 versus 4.4 out of 5). Nearly two thirds of females enjoyed the program very much (64.2%), however only roughly half as many males did (35.3%). The one non-binary respondent enjoyed it very much
- ATSI respondents enjoyed the program slightly less than the non-ATSI group (4.1 versus 4.2 out of 5)
- The two LGBT+ respondents enjoyed the program very much
- The subset who experienced social disadvantages (does not include 9 to 12 age group) enjoyed the program more than those who selected 'prefer not to answer' (4.2 versus 4 out of 5)
- Those based in Robinvale enjoyed the program most (4.2 out of 5), followed closely by Sunraysia (4.1 out of 5), then Swan Hill at 3.9 out of 5.

“They [Phunktional] were one of those humanitarian organisations whose mission is to transform lives – through the arts - which is a very effective and powerful way to do it because it reaches hearts, it reaches emotions and it reaches minds.” School Principal

“From group work (like the Healthy Kids Rap) came the identification of individuals – like AA. So the difference it has made for individuals? Wow that's hard you could sound cliché.... Phunktional gave them (young people) an authentic pathway for their dreams..... When I first arrived at Robinvale College I remember AA's dream to be in the performing arts – but Phunktional created the pathway, spring-boarding from her experiences and the difficulties of growing up in Robinvale, plus all the wonderful things (about growing up in Robinvale), allowing her to find her voice and self-expression. Those opportunities do not come easily. Phunktional provided the critical connections and networks for individual kids – BB – taking his brass from the Robinvale Brass Band to the Melbourne Orchestra!!” School Principal

“Phunktional played an important part in changing thinking around the importance of practice, that it should happen all the time, not just with urgency..... Well-being has been a big factor as well. Gerard was always having those sorts of conversations as well, about well-being etc.” Teacher

“a lot of the students that Phunktional work with grow, develop character wise, step up, when they previously would not have even tried. Any of them who have stayed on have really reaped the benefits” Teacher

Further to the survey, two focus groups were held with current and past participants of Phunktional programs. Participants noted the following positive outcomes of their involvement:

Friendships, especially with different groups of people

- Being your 'whole-hearted' self or an extended version of yourself
- Permission to be ridiculous, to sing more, to laugh more
- Opportunity, some kids would have never otherwise had the opportunity
- Seeing that some people actually make a full-time career out of the arts
- Showed the full gamut of life (drought, hardships, marriages ending, death etc)
- Brought different cultures together
- Family situations improved, home life improved
- They achieved something they would have never otherwise

Theme 5 - Unintended Impacts

SUMMARY

The study indicates that Robinvale is a favourable location for a youth performing arts centre, and that the development of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre could have some unintended impacts that could be positive or negative.

Positive impacts include strengthening the service delivery and content of existing service providers and an increasingly satisfied and settled regional workforce due to improved amenity value.

There is the potential that a RYPAC could increase strain on and competition for resources already in short supply in the Robinvale community, such as housing. It is recommended that the implementation of a RYPAC addresses resource use and aims to complement and support existing services, rather than compete with them.

Through the interviews and focus groups, several unintended impacts of a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre were identified. Unintended impacts are those that might occur as a result of the RYPAC which would not be expected based on the impacts experienced in similar communities with the advent of a performing arts facility. Unintended impacts can be both positive and negative. Based on the study findings indicating Robinvale as a favourably positioned location for the Youth Performing Arts Centre the following unintended impacts were identified:

1. Negative Impact - Strain on existing services, notably housing

The Robinvale Mapping Project was undertaken by Success Works in 2005 to estimate a more accurate population of the Robinvale and Euston communities in order to better inform service provision. Success Works (2005) found that whilst the 2001 Census estimated a population of 4,003 for the Robinvale SLA their research revealed Robinvale-Euston had an estimated all-year base population of 6,000 to 8,000 and a harvest season influx population of 8,000 to 10,000.

This data indicates a Robinvale-Euston population which is both unknown and potentially unplanned for. It is assumed that the challenge of this has not changed with Swan Hill Rural City Council advertising current tenders for research into both the development of a Robinvale Housing Strategy (to provide solutions to the housing shortage in the Robinvale region) and Robinvale Population Determination (to accurately estimate Robinvale's population numbers and develop a suite of documents that provides a collective approach to resolving the question around accurate population statistics and housing shortfall). The documented housing shortage is of particular concern with this study identifying that a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre located in Robinvale would need to allow for dedicated accommodation for visiting professionals and Centre Management and staff. However also of concern is ensuring that adequacy of mental health and well-being services with the propensity for the performing arts to both release (and resolve) wellbeing issues and concerns.

2. Negative Impact - 'Squeezing out' of private providers

With some established private and not-for-profit performing arts service providers already operating within the Robinvale community (including visiting services), care must be taken to ensure the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre compliments and upholds these services. Current services for the three regions (Sunraysia, Robinvale and Swan Hill) are listed in Theme 2 - Current Needs and Services. Note this list is not exhaustive.

3. Positive Impact - Strengthening of private providers

The Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre also has the capacity to further support and strengthen these existing providers through offering dedicated performing arts venues and an increasingly collegial performing arts 'landscape' for services that are currently solo operators and potentially experiencing isolation.

4. Increasingly satisfied and settled workforce

The Victorian Skills Commission, in its *2017 Regional Skills Demand Profile - The Mallee*, observed that the huge workforce demand and current (and growing) shortfall is, in part, a reflection of “regional centres..... [being] attractive places to live, learn and work.” Certainly current sector leaders indicate that an increased arts and cultural presence and profile within the Robinvale community would help attract and retain the required workforce.

Theme 6 - Challenges and Barriers

SUMMARY

178 adults aged 21 or over identified three primary barriers to young people’s participation in performing arts activities in the local region:

- 7% said lack of opportunities
 - Lack of opportunities was particularly prevalent for Robinvale
- 60% said community preference for sport or other accessible activities
- 57% said they cost too much

Focus groups of local service providers noted several barriers to young people accessing performing arts in the region:

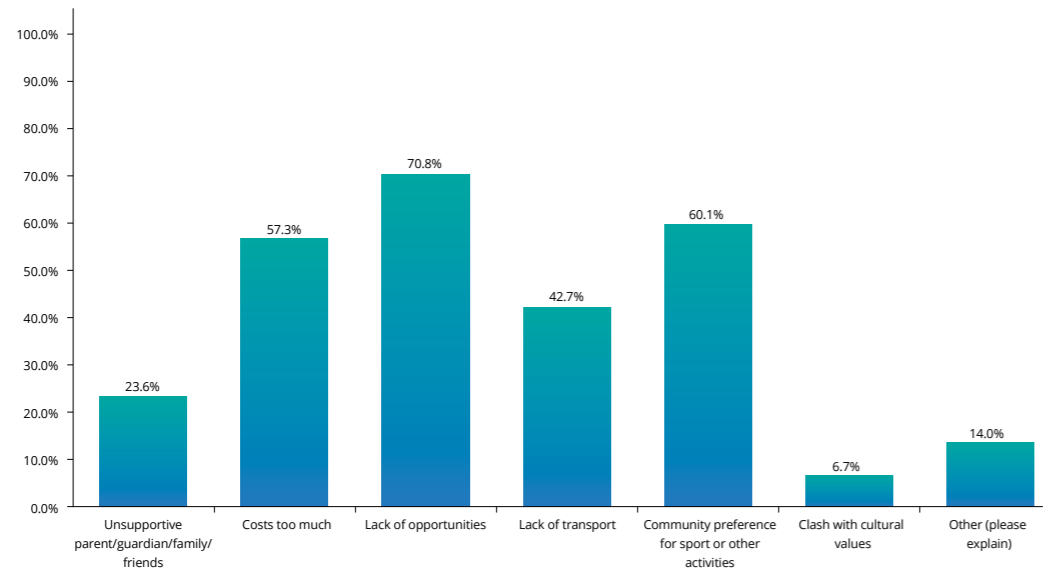
- Finances
- Time and commitment
- Lack of ongoing funding for programs
- Lack of skilled professionals
- Lack of venue
- Lack of promotion and recognition

Blockers or challenges to youth performing arts participation - 178 respondents aged 21 or over were asked: “What are blockers or challenges to participation in performing arts by young people aged 9 to 20 in Sunraysia/Robinvale/Swan Hill?” and could select multiple options. As shown in the graph (right) the top two issues were lack of opportunities (70.8%) and community preference for sport or other activities (60.1%). Lack of opportunities was the key issue for ATSI respondents compared to non-ATSI respondents, for whom cost and community preference for sport or other activities were also key issues.

Other themes identified in comments were narrow minded attitudes which put people off participation, being too busy, lack of information about what is available and benefits, and low self-esteem or confidence.

The five survey respondents who worked or were ex-workers of youth or other types of performing arts centres or services found challenges for centres/services to be: ongoing financial support in all three regions, finding suitable venues for rehearsal or performances in the Sunraysia and Swan Hill regions, and attracting expert teachers in Robinvale.

4.1 What are blockers or challenges to participation in performing arts by young people aged 9 to 20 in Sunraysia/Robinvale/Swan Hill? (% of responses)



Patterns were similar between the three regions; however, lack of opportunities stood out for Robinvale region respondents, and lack of transport was less of an issue for Swan Hill region respondents compared to the other regions. 'Other' comments included themes of narrow-mindedness (40%), cost (28%), distance (24%), being too busy (16%), lack of information and lack of opportunity each at 12% of respondents, and low self-esteem / confidence (8%). Verbatim responses included:

- Use of social media for bullying and put-downs results in a lack of confidence of many young people to participate in any limelight
- Tendency of parochialism between isolated communities across the Mallee
- Lack of whole staff opinion about benefits of the arts in schools
- There is a large "shame" mentality amongst the youth in relation to performing arts. Many student view it as "childish" and avoid participating
- Low aspiration caused by limited opportunity that results in limited imagination for what could be possible

"Need to be very careful to consult all current companies and teachers as they will be more interested in being their students to one off workshops so they don't lose business to a new company." Female Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 years or over

"Performing arts not valued: Within school there seems to be more of a focus simply on "getting the job done" with teachers rather than a genuine passion to get the best out of performing arts students and helping them develop themselves to become the best version of themselves. Personal development goes hand-in-hand with becoming a great performing artist and both parents and teachers seem to be huge road blocks to such development for many students and people with general interests in the area alike. Outside of schools I feel there's a much greater emphasis on the arts themselves being an integral part of the one(s) performing, and a focus on how one can bring those arts out from within to express them to the world in a fulfilling manner." Male Sunraysia region respondent aged 21 or over

"The barriers in schools around these sort of things (performing arts opportunities / programs) are always around timetabling – getting through the curriculum. There can be a mindset that activities that come in from the 'outside' are an interruption to core business. That is where you have to have a clear leadership vision about where this 'fits' for your school. What the opportunity for performing arts is giving your student community. So timetabling - that is a huge barrier – you have to ask what is important for your students and their community." School Principal

"The 'valuing' of performing arts in the school environment is a challenge, despite having the 'numbers' to have a senior level drama class the class folded this year as the drama teacher was required to deliver humanities classes to the middle years." Teacher

"Without a consistent commitment to the school we lose the children and young people committed to the performing arts – whose families can AFFORD to pursue it – because they seek schooling elsewhere, for example in Mildura at St Joseph's because there is a performing arts program. When you lose some of your really passionate students you take some leadership / inspiration away from the remaining students." Teacher

Also through the survey respondents aged 21 or over were asked to identify "..... the gaps in performing arts training at school and outside of school in Sunraysia/Robinvale/Swan Hill?" The 178 verbatim responses were categorised into general themes. In all, 15.2% of respondents mentioned specific styles with the remaining responses better considered as barriers. For example, limited availability was considered the greatest issue for the region, with 46.1% of respondents stating it as an issue in general, in schools, or outside of schools. The next two key themes, of equal weight at 20.2% of respondents each, were lack of trained experts or inability to retain trained experts, and lack of low-cost offerings or the inability to afford existing programs. Physical access was a problem for 12.9% of respondents, with transport and distance from programs resulting in lack of engagement. Lack of funding was mentioned by 7.3% of respondents, leading to lack of quality service provision or opportunities. Lack of information (6.7% of respondents), including lack of information about programs available both in schools and externally in the region, were partly linked to lack of funding, but also to a lack of understanding within communities about the benefits of performing arts for personal development, health and wellbeing. Finally 3.9% of respondents mentioned performing arts as not valued in the community due to an emphasis on sports, or by schools in their curriculum offerings.

The key themes for Robinvale region respondents was access to trained experts, limited availability in general and in schools and physical access. For Sunraysia region respondent's key themes were low-cost offerings, limited availability in general and in schools, and access to trained experts. Levels were more even for Swan Hill region respondents; however, the top three themes were access to trained experts, low-cost offerings and limited availability. Verbatim responses included:

- Performing arts are viewed as "fluff subjects". They are not allocated sufficient funding or resources
- I think that many youth in the this areas think that you only do these things if you started young or if you are good at them - many do not understand the benefits of engagement and exploration
- Hard to comment on what occurs in school, but outside of school the costs associated in accessing classes, and the facilities/teachers can be difficult to access. Depends on what people want - inclusive classes of all skill levels, focussed classes on developing skilled dancers, theatre and performance for the audience, or something that focusses on fostering the cultural traditions in diverse communities
- Staffing is difficult to source, the time restraints of the timetable, no acting pathways, no music classes at school due to costs, radio and film not accessible
- The community needs to be more aware of how amazing performing arts is for child/young adult development and how it slaps a smile and infectious feeling to everyone it touches. The community is too sport focused and needs to open their eyes and hearts to the magic of performing arts
- There is a difficulty getting into lessons for music and it is very expensive. I was sending 3 children to piano lessons 5 years ago and it was \$60 for 30 mins. That is not affordable. My daughters did dance and loved it but it cost in excess of \$1500 a year as they chose 2 disciplines plus there was also a costume and video fee at the end. We struggled to afford it, when football and netball are \$70 a year

- Our students don't have the access to a range of performing arts like city schools do due to the cost of accommodation and transport to bring performers here. Also the cost of transport even to local events. Our school have excellent drama, dance and music teachers who have an arts camp to Melbourne every year but cost is prohibitive for many. They also have a variety night and camp but again cost can mean some can't do. 20% of the school are involved which is excellent. I believe local performing groups do their best to include young people but they are basic.

To further extend the knowledge gleaned from the surveys, focus groups asked service providers: **"To share the challenges or barriers the children / young people your organisation / service reaches have in accessing / participating in performing arts programs?"** Comments included:

- Family financial barriers (especially for lower socio-economic families) where the cost of programs, equipment, costumes, etc., is prohibitive
- Resources more broadly (time, commitment etc.), needs family support to invest time / commitment in performing arts, can be difficult to get parents involved / to see the value, family problems may be a barrier to regular attendance. Transport, location and distance. Skill level of parents (might make parents discourage students from trying out) e.g., ability to sew costumes
- Ongoing funding for programs and services, – there needs to be a systemic commitment to the arts
- Financial feasibility / sustainability, critical mass of numbers locally / regionally, 'we just don't have the numbers' especially across age cohorts and genres
- Lack of skilled, experienced professionals on the ground, specialised skills means services need to bring in facilitators in to enable young people to experience some performing arts
- Lack of venues and resources, for example there is a lack of permanent performance spaces for bands, studios, existing infrastructure is very depleted for example the Robinvale Community Arts Centre needs so much work and maintenance (including the lack of housing to accommodate skilled professionals)
- Lack of promotion and recognition of the value of performing arts from – families, community, school. The transformative power of the performing arts is not understood / broadly realised locally, there needs to be a community commitment to support and value the performing arts. Performing arts needs to be awarded and applauded locally in the same way football is
- Self-doubt / Low Self Confidence - 'I'm not good enough' is a barrier for young people, peer pressure
- Negative stigma of participating in performing arts, especially in heavily sports focussed communities, challenge of 'doing something different'
- Mental Health / ability of young person to actually 'join in' – personal issues may be a barrier, courage to be vulnerable
- Lack of opportunity and range, need a range of performing arts opportunities to suit different interests, skill sets, needs and age groups. There is a lack of classes specific to the needs of disengaged children and youth – structures must support them to get involved, understand their ability to commit may be tenuous, need for flexible program delivery
- Lack of awareness of what is actually available
- Lack of role models, experiences, examples
- Lack of information about a career / future in the arts, lack of employment opportunities in the performing arts locally discourages people from considering it as a career choice, or even seeing models / mentors as they grow up
- A lot of young people don't see the light / future / point
- Young people need the organisational capacity to 'make it happen'
- Organisations / agencies must create and support roles which will facilitate and enable the use of the performing arts as a tool / support mechanism
- Distance of other 'arts' experiences (e.g. Melbourne / Adelaide) no incidental performing arts

opportunities locally (e.g. busking etc)

- Perception of venue as a safe place to be, welcoming of all cultures and diversity
- School exposure to performing arts, how they value it and their commitment to participating in performing arts events
- Schools promoting academic over performing arts – not cemented in the curriculum, first thing to go when curriculum is tight, sends the message that arts is not a 'real job'
- Need adequate numbers to run school-based curriculum, sometimes viewed as the 'bludge' class so this detracts from the truly interested / talented students
- Robinvale College gets lots of graduate teachers who stay for a very limited time, so there can feel like a lack of investment and consistency for students
- Maths, English and Science is core, everything else is an 'add on', and if there is not enough interest from students or not the staff with the right qualifications then these electives don't happen
- Our schools are the biggest silos we have. Hopefully we can get better at engaging them in the future. They struggle to see past their school fence at the bigger community picture.
- Migrant families put a lot of pressure on the children for academic pursuits only
- Cultural misunderstandings
- Lack of respect for young people and the contribution they do and can make
- Perceived lack of like-minded people
- Lack of influential leaders in the performing arts arena
- Gaining community leadership in and ownership of performance choice (so community will commit to attending performances)
- Who sees it as 'core business'
- Too much to ask people to commit to 12 months of programs, need to offer 6 week 'testers'
- The community needs a consistent exposure to culture and dance, we're not building the community 'appetite' for performance, they cannot expect regular exposure to the performing arts, there are no local arts courses available, so 'appetite' is limited
- Opportunities for performing arts are spasmodic so we don't get the opportunity to continually improve – NAIDOC week for example, feels tokenistic
- 'Shame' is a huge barrier for about age 10 years onwards for both boys and girls, personal growth is needed before you can get through shame. Workers (MVAC / MDAS) need to lead, "we need to get up and dance, show them it is OK, then they can feel safe to follow"
- For any performing arts initiative to take off we need young people to engage with and drive it
- Regulations and bureaucracy are barriers as well, Working With Children Checks for example, difficult to get Elders involved in teaching children dance
- Language barriers, we need to promote performing arts more broadly and in different languages
- There is no set space to find out local information, no website for Robinvale advertising performing arts opportunities, groups, shows
- There is a lot of religious based performance but nothing for the general population

The biggest barriers are the put downs" current Phunktional participant

“Challenges were because when teachers come to school they are very protective of their time with their students because they have to teach a certain amount of material in a certain amount of time. When Phunktional would come teachers would become protective of their ‘time’ they didn’t want the disruption in the kids learning.” Teacher

“Working with Phunktional (or any performing arts organisation) to bring these opportunities to school requires a dedicated coordinator and a dedicated space – it is too difficult to manage on top of already busy roles.” Teacher

“Because I was teaching XX at Robinvale College sometimes it was just about getting them through the ‘material’ – so doing Phunktional projects was a great thing.” Teacher

“The challenge in offering VET music subjects is in finding qualified staff and a suitable space – it is essential to have the right person.” Teacher

“Even though culturally performance can be incredibly important and valued most families do not have the resources to enable additional opportunities for their children. Some [Robinvale] families have enrolled their children in St Joseph’s, Mildura so they can access a more comprehensive drama program.” Teacher

What capacity to pay for training does the school community have? *“None, simple, there is no money, but some leverage could be achieved through VET funding for example and this could be relatively consistent..... Working with Phunktional (or any performing arts organisation) to bring these opportunities to school requires a dedicated coordinator and a dedicated space – it is too difficult to manage on top of already busy roles.”* Teacher

“Despite trying to really open up the performing arts experiences to all students the programs have tended to be very Polynesian-centric, this is partly because of their natural talent, and partly because of the level of community and family support for performance (for example through church) – so it is culturally valued. This has resulted in an under-representation from the Indigenous, Italian, Greek, Asian and other cultural communities. This may have ultimately served as a barrier to students feeling – ‘it’s not for us.’” Teacher

“We have trouble getting Indigenous girls engaged in theatre..... Getting the Indigenous community involved continues to be a challenge, working with Clontarf and older community members helps.” Teacher

Given the significance of the proposed Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre in honouring culture, and particularly local Indigenous culture hearing from the local Aboriginal community was considered critical. A focus group with Elders revealed the following potential barriers:

- Age range of the Centre (8-25 years) – need to manage all those different ages and different groups in one setting. Older kids could be role models and mentors to the younger kids
- Culturally kids cannot perform with / participate in adult dance
- What do our kids actually want? We need to hear from them
- A lot of kids will stand back until they learn the basics of dance, they need the chance to learn in a safe setting first
- Short term funding cycles (CROC Fest) means things can’t build in strength and consistency, growing in following and reputation
- Stop / start programs
- Performing arts is not on the agenda for lots of organisations, it’s always been through the schools or through the efforts and investment of families themselves in their own families
- Need the next generation of parents to take over the reins and lead, we might need to mentor them in doing this, you know organising the costumes etc
- Need to network with all of the stakeholders – MDAS, MVAC, SHRCC to lead
- Need to ensure ALL groups feel welcome and included, our kids are shy and can be easily left out

“There are no Aboriginal kids in classical ballet, and only a couple of the younger kids do jazz ballet, only whilst they are really young and don’t feel / pick up on the judgement.” Elder

“Now because there is so much DV these mums are just dropping their kids to school and going home, they don’t want to be out in the community, be involved.” Elder

Theme 7 - Factors for Success

SUMMARY

Six community-informed factors for the success of a RYPAC emerged:

1. School commitment to students experiencing, and participating in, the performing arts
2. Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre being community owned and built on community partnerships
3. Parent and guardian support for their child's involvement in the performing arts
4. Promotion and understanding of the benefits of the performing arts
5. Demand drivers such as high quality and diverse experiences and opportunities
6. Local culture must be core to the performing arts programs on offer

Through the research process and including both the focus groups and interviews several themes which spoke to factors for success of a Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre were identified. It is important to recognise these as early suggestions only, and it is recommended these 'factors for success' are further tested and refined through the steering group purpose-formed for the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre, and more broadly, by the Robinvale and Mallee communities.

The six main early areas for success were identified as:

- The importance of school commitment to students experiencing the performing arts, particularly through managing curriculum demands and prioritising the arts. Through the research literature, this was found to be the most prominently mentioned factor in the success of a RYPAC. It speaks to the inherent valuing of the performing arts – of committing to making time for the arts within curriculum and working, not only to find the right dedicated performing arts teachers, but also in ensuring all teacher value the performing arts and are skilled in teaching for transfer of performing arts knowledge and skills. Implicit in this is the provision of accredited performing arts educational pathways through the RYPAC.

"A key challenge was the clash with curriculum, eventually teachers started to complain about their student's time out of the classroom and away from specific subjects and expectations. Having a facility and program based in Robinvale would eliminate this issue and performing arts would be offered in the curriculum and would be scheduled in accordingly. Another way overcome this has been through offering performing arts programs during the school holiday period." Teacher

"A staff survey is conducted every year, in it is a section called 'shielding and buffering' which asks staff about how they are 'protected' from interruptions so they can 'get on' with the job of teaching. The Principal must provide structures and processes so extra curricula activities can be incorporated harmoniously. You must prioritise the performing arts – or it will not happen." School Principal

"There is far more demand in the school environment for performing arts than the school delivers through the curriculum. There was meant to be a music teacher this year – but there is not. The demand is definitely there, and the school cannot keep up." Teacher

- The centrality of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre being community-owned and built on community partnerships in ensuring local investment in, and commitment to, the Centre. This was supported through industry-based advice, the advice of local performing arts professionals and the expectations of community members themselves.

"Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre needs to be closely linked to each school, and they are key stakeholders." Service Provider

"The Centre needs to influence 'both ways' to be sustainable, feasible, owned by the whole community." Service Provider

"Involve local artists in encouraging local talent." Service Provider

"What happened at Robinvale College was a 'co-created' process, Gerard had an idea then I would add our nuances, our needs, how and where it might work in with an initiative we were already running. Together we were always looking at how our work could be enhanced through the arts – Healthy Kids Rap is a perfect example of this." School Principal

"To ensure we get that critical mass attendance we need to be clever about partnerships. i.e. if we partner with the football/netball club for some program delivery then we get leverage on their incredible community engagement and commitment. Engaging football/netball will 'legitimise' performing arts until people's courage and confidence builds." Service Provider

- The importance of galvanising parent/guardian support for their child's involvement in the performing arts spoke to a number of strategies for overcoming barriers to participation – including raising the profile of the performing arts as a career choice and increasing the local 'appetite' for the performing arts alongside practical challenges such as transport to, and costs of, participating in the arts. Whilst the research demonstrated that parent/guardian support of and for the performing arts was relatively high, there needs to be a committed focus to enabling the involvement of all children and young people in the performing arts.

"If Robinvale can get a performing arts centre with quality trainers people will want to be a part of that. They really would. And parents want to see their child's progress." Teacher

"Parents are key – the biggest thing in helping to encourage parents is being able to communicate with them, so it started as the events coming through the school – that was easier, but once events started outside of school time – then I needed to actually go and talk with parents in person. Communication became much more important. I would visit, leave the information and then go back after they had some time to discuss. That was what I needed to do, and the connection with the parents was really important. If left to the kids to impart this message then all the details were not provided to the parents, then they would have less commitment in getting their children / young people to the program. My kids [students] are not good at explaining – I would say 'what did you tell your parents?' – and they would say 'oh yeah I'm just doing this Phunktional thing'..... Ongoing communication, with students and with their parents, visiting them at their homes was critical." Teacher

"Family expectations are important..... I am a 4th generation performer, my grandfather composed for the Queen in Tonga, my family want me to follow in his footsteps." Phunktional participant

- There needs to be greater promotion and understanding of the benefits of the performing arts through a long-term investment in this promotion and an ongoing awareness-raising campaign committed to increasing the profile of the arts, its intrinsic value and related positive outcomes. This will be critical in creating a sustained and broadening interest in the performing arts across the Mallee region.

“Consider easy to enact current performing arts opportunities – pop up choirs, theatre sports – events to get people thinking and attending performing arts.” Service Provider



“We need to increase understanding of the full range of performing arts roles – sound, lighting, costume, make-up, film.” Service Provider

- The importance of efforts focusing on demand drivers such as high quality and diverse experiences and opportunities. The local research was clear: the performing arts produced through the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre must be of the highest quality in order for people to invest, actively participate and attend.

“Any programs that come need to be mindful of ‘cycling’ through the genres so everyone gets a chance to shine and experience different performing arts.” Teacher

“RYPAC needs paid professionals, it cannot just rely on volunteers, if we do this then we are not valuing the arts and the volunteers will just burnout. But it is also important to have volunteering opportunities.” Service Provider

- The Elders advised that culture must be core to the performing arts program, not a convenient addition. The Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre must hold culture as central to its conduct and operations. This requires true partnerships with the region's Aboriginal communities and broader cultural communities. Infrastructure must reflect local culture including the creation of a dedicated 'Keeping Place' within the Centre, where performing arts history can be kept safely and viewed, and the façade of the Centre being embellished with images of respected local Elders.

“Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre needs to be a place for everyone.” Aboriginal Elder

“Aboriginal performance is always limited to NAIDOC week, it means we don't feel truly honoured or respected.” Aboriginal Elder

“The Youth Performing Arts Centre must be welcoming – images of Aunts and Uncles out front to say to our young people ‘you are welcome, you belong here’” Aboriginal Elder

“There needs to be a recognised and ongoing Indigenous Arts Program within the RYPAC to give Indigenous young people a ‘safe’ place to start performing arts, they need to start as young children before the shame starts. That gives us pride that our culture is important, that we are recognised and valued” Aboriginal Elder

Conclusion

The social feasibility study for the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre occurred over the entire 12 months of 2018. It involved extensive project planning and goal setting; a research and literature review; comprehensive community and other key stakeholder consultations, including an online survey, focus groups and interviews; and following the selection of Robinvale as the preferred site, a review of financial feasibility.

The national and international research and literature review demonstrated a solid evidence base for both the intrinsic and extended value of the performing arts. Community profiling of the Swan Hill, Robinvale and Sunraysia regions identified a profile of under-resourced young people living across the Mallee and unfortunately, for some, high levels of risk and vulnerability. Significantly, the community consultation both confirmed this under-resourcing and risk and endorsed the value of the performing arts in scaffolding and supporting young people who are under-resourced.

In total, more than 800 children, young people, families, service providers and community members informed the social feasibility study revealing:

- Strong support for and acceptance of a RYPAC with 86.6% of survey respondents agreeing a RYPAC would be good for the region, and
- A current situation of insufficient performing arts services with only 51.7% of students aged 13 to 20 indicating *there [were] enough performing arts activities available [at school and outside of school]* and only 34.4% of surveyed parents/guardians believing their children's school *offered enough performing arts* and only 27.9% believing there was *enough performing arts activities offered outside of school*.

With this in mind the following recommendations were made:

1. A centre of excellence in the performing arts is designed and development to serve and support young people across the Victorian and NSW Mallee regions and beyond. The Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre
2. This Centre is located in Robinvale, recognising Robinvale as physically central to the larger Mallee region and as a community with a strong cultural foundation in the performing arts
3. The enduring success the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre is embedded in community ownership. This ownership is scaffolded by government and philanthropic support, ensuring the equality of all stakeholders as partners in the Centre's management
4. Based on the magnitude of complexities experienced by the young people the Mallee region (in comparison to their Victorian peers) the Centre should uphold a youth engagement and wellbeing philosophy, with programs focussing equally on the development of performing arts skills alongside a comprehensive well-being program

Supported by these short to medium term **Next Steps:**

- 1.
2. Form the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre Steering Group
3. Raise awareness
4. Encourage an enduring Phunktional presence
5. Determine the physical location of the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre
6. Develop the Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre service delivery model

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Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre Feasibility Study

Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre (RYPAC)

Financial Report Summary, November 2018

A Robinvale Youth Performing Arts Centre has been the focus of a study on behalf of the broader Mallee region. A recent in-depth Survey was conducted informing a Feasibility Study providing preliminary information on the assessment of the practicality of the proposed Centre.

This document is the Financial component of the study outlining a staged approach to the provision of performing arts in the Robinvale region.

Clarification of the broad assumptions included in this report and as detailed in attached spreadsheets (see Appendix A) will be workshopped with key stakeholders for verification.

The financial report is based on the following assumptions:

- RYPAC to meet short-term financial obligations
- A community governance model is the preferred option via a designated not-for-profit organisation
- Long term financial sustainability will enable the ongoing provision of a range of performing arts for Robinvale and the broader Mallee region building on the initial Year 1 Pilot Performing Arts program
- RYPAC is heavily reliant on government, philanthropic and commercial funds, essential to both the financial establishment and its successful ongoing operations
- RYPAC financial success is reliant on a number of established community partnerships including Robinvale College, local businesses and community organisations
- Asset development staged as follows:
Year 1: RYPAC operates at the Hub (retrofitted) and Staff housing is built
Year 2: RYPAC continues operating at the Hub
Year 3: Works are completed at the Robinvale Community Arts Centre for commencement of operations mid-year
- Housing is a significant issue for a new venture such as RYPAC in Robinvale. Three new 3-bedroom houses will be situated near the hub for staff and guest artists/teachers/Phunktional staff to support the success of RYPAC.
- Any new building/renovation footprint established by RYPAC will demonstrate zero environmental impact
- No in-kind dollar value has been estimated but in-kind contribution is assumed
- Operational expenses are minimised through local input e.g. most costumes etc. made by locals with materials supplied
- RYPAC will provide world class performances through the artistic direction of Phunktional
- Clients (students) age range is from five to eighteen
- A cultural focus is a strong component of the success of RYPAC. This includes the Indigenous culture as the primary focus and multiculturalism as a secondary feature
- RYPAC provides accredited educational pathways for students
- Technical Support training will be provided for locals/students

16. Year 1 Pilot Performing Arts program is conducted as follows:
- A performing arts program is conducted as a pilot at Robinvale College in the HUB that has been purposely retro-fitted;
 - Phunktional has office space at Robinvale College
 - Robinvale College provide in-kind support and commence curriculum development
 - One ten (10) week program is delivered, where twenty-four (24) youth undertake regular classes for local and touring performance opportunities
 - The program has a well-being overlay i.e. supporting kids to engage, be active and healthy through performance
 - Accommodation at Euston Club - 6 Artists - 12 weeks (10-week program)

Recommendation:

This financial report, in particular, key assumptions be considered at a stakeholder workshop for progression to a Business Plan stage in the development of RYPAC.

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