



# Arts n<sup>★</sup>orth west

## ANNUAL REPORT







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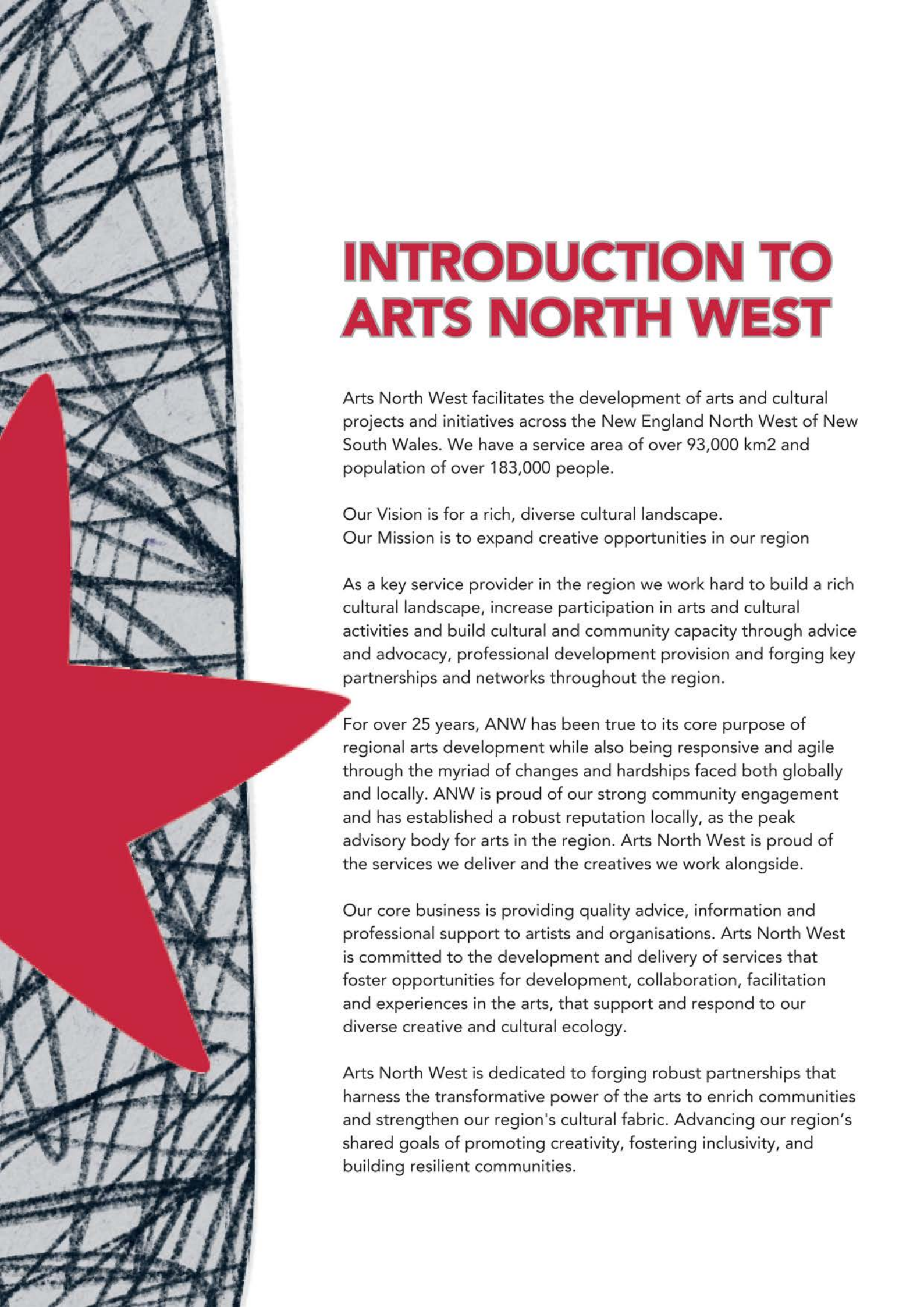




Arts North West acknowledges  
Aboriginal people as the traditional  
custodians of the lands we work on; the  
Country upon which language, arts and  
culture has been shared and practised  
for thousands of years.

We celebrate First Nations people's  
enduring connection to Country, to  
culture, and to community, and respect  
Aboriginal Elders past and present.





# INTRODUCTION TO ARTS NORTH WEST

Arts North West facilitates the development of arts and cultural projects and initiatives across the New England North West of New South Wales. We have a service area of over 93,000 km<sup>2</sup> and population of over 183,000 people.

Our Vision is for a rich, diverse cultural landscape.  
Our Mission is to expand creative opportunities in our region

As a key service provider in the region we work hard to build a rich cultural landscape, increase participation in arts and cultural activities and build cultural and community capacity through advice and advocacy, professional development provision and forging key partnerships and networks throughout the region.

For over 25 years, ANW has been true to its core purpose of regional arts development while also being responsive and agile through the myriad of changes and hardships faced both globally and locally. ANW is proud of our strong community engagement and has established a robust reputation locally, as the peak advisory body for arts in the region. Arts North West is proud of the services we deliver and the creatives we work alongside.

Our core business is providing quality advice, information and professional support to artists and organisations. Arts North West is committed to the development and delivery of services that foster opportunities for development, collaboration, facilitation and experiences in the arts, that support and respond to our diverse creative and cultural ecology.

Arts North West is dedicated to forging robust partnerships that harness the transformative power of the arts to enrich communities and strengthen our region's cultural fabric. Advancing our region's shared goals of promoting creativity, fostering inclusivity, and building resilient communities.



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



As the newly appointed Chair of Arts North West, it is with great pride that I present the 26th Arts North West Annual Report. This comprehensive document encapsulates the vibrant interconnections within communities across the New England North West, as well as the remarkable array of opportunities, events, and achievements realised throughout our region over the past year.

In reflecting upon the period spanning from July 2022 to July 2023, Arts North West extends sincere appreciation to the individuals whose dedication has significantly contributed to our organisation. Specifically, heartfelt gratitude is extended to Steph McIntosh, Michele Jedlicka, Kelly Lye, Emily Page, Jenni Carlin, and our longstanding external contractors, Handmade Computing and Bookkeeper, Hayley Ward, for their invaluable contributions. Furthermore, we extend a warm welcome to our current team members Leah Fontyn, Julia Minors, Penne Fraser, Robbie Hartigan, Hester Fraser, alongside Path Bookkeeping and Cloudwize Computing, who now form an integral part of our operational processes under the leadership of our Executive Director, Lauren Mackley.

The Board of Directors and I extend heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to all individuals involved in Arts North West's projects and programming over the past twelve months, celebrating their collective successes. We eagerly anticipate the continuation of this collaborative journey and extend sincere gratitude to our creative contributors, participants, facilitators, and community champions who have played pivotal roles in our achievements.

Furthermore, I express profound appreciation to my esteemed colleagues on the Board of Directors and the Strategic Advisory Council for their unwavering participation and support throughout the entirety of 2023.

Arts North West remains deeply grateful for the generous support provided by our principal funding body, Create NSW, as well as the contributions made by our participating councils. We eagerly anticipate the continuation and strengthening of these vital relationships, collectively striving to enhance the cultural fabric of our communities.

Professor Alistair Noble  
Arts North West  
Chairperson





# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2023, Arts North West experienced significant success, marked by the delivery of over 120 events, the establishment and maintenance of numerous creative networks and partnerships, and the implementation of a wide array of innovative initiatives that have enriched the cultural ecology of our region.

Throughout the year, our focus remained steadfast on creating accessible and equitable delivery models, fostering capacity building among regional creatives, and facilitating opportunities that fostered robust creative programming and collaboration.

Our projects and programs in 2023 were designed to support creative recovery from natural disasters, activate public spaces through a diverse range of art forms, amplify the voices of First Nations creatives in our service delivery, and provide essential support for live performances and venues amidst the evolving landscape of audience behaviors.

In collaboration with over 600 creatives, we successfully delivered our creative offerings to audiences totaling over 46,000 people. This achievement is a testament to the dedication and passion of our team, whose commitment to excellence continually inspires us. We are deeply grateful for the creativity and support demonstrated by the communities of the New England North West, and we consider it a privilege to serve our region.

Furthermore, we take pride in the progress made towards achieving the ambitious goals outlined in our Strategic Plan, including enhancements to our systems and processes, fortification of our security measures, and the formulation of new projects and priorities. As we move forward into 2024, we remain committed to delivering excellence in the arts and providing pathways and opportunities to nurture creativity and cultural connections throughout the New England North West region.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all who supported us in 2023, and we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to continue our collaborative efforts in the year ahead.

Lauren Mackley  
Arts North West  
Executive Director



# CONTRIBUTING COUNCILS



Arts North West recognises the support of Create NSW and the following local government bodies in the New England North West:

- Armidale Regional
- Glen Innes Severn
- Gunnedah Shire
- Gwydir Shire
- Liverpool Plains Shire
- Moree Plains Shire
- Narrabri Shire
- Tamworth Regional
- Tenterfield Shire
- Uralla Shire
- Walcha Council



Create NSW  
Arts, Screen & Culture





# OBJECTIVE 1: CREATIVITY

Develop and broaden our  
diverse audiences and  
their participation in arts  
and cultural activities



## **'GATHER AND TRADE'**

'Gather and Trade' roaming First Nations Aboriginal Artisans Micro Market that showcases Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Offerings. In 2023 Arts North West delivered five 'Gather and Trade' Market events in Moree with the Blak Markets, Armidale with the Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place, Glen Innes as part of the Celtic Festival, Wallabadah for Reconciliation Week and Narrabri with the Narrabri Rotary Markets. Forty-two First Nations stallholders artists and performers participated in the events featuring paintings, ceramics, weavings, papermaking, screen printing, clothing as well as cultural experiences including boomerang throwing, dance and music. This has been a great opportunity for local Aboriginal creatives to sell their art and products, reaching a wider audience to promote their goods and practices. Funded by the Australian Government IVAIS Program.



## **'THE CITY OF THE LIGHT - NEXT GEN'**

'The City of Lights- Next Gen' was a collaborative project with Tamworth Regional Council as a shared spaces initiative; showcasing large-scale projections from local artists Daniel Stanley and artworks from Gomeri artists Kayleb Waters-Sampson, Ruben Mellor, and Jayden Kitchener-Waters. As well as flipbook animations from the students at the Tamworth Art Academy and TRC After Hours art classes. The Tamworth Film and Sound Archive also developed a short film featuring the changes in Fitzroy Street from the turn of the century to now. This event was accompanied by CBD installations and musical performances from Goldhiest and Jenny Stewart as well as other creative CBD activities on the night. Over 800 people attended the event and was a great opportunity to see a contemporary interpretation of 'The City of Lights' through creative arts practices.



## **'SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT'**

'Something to Talk About' was a CBD activation project funded by Create NSW's Restart and Recovery Fund. This project recreated spaces in regional communities into public galleries across the New England North West, as an opportunity to sample different types of activations through a series of ephemeral pop-up events. Arts North West worked with twelve local mural artists to develop artworks that created the 'Roaming Murals' as well as working with community to deliver Yarn Bombing workshops and installations and light installations. Hinging off these experiences audiences provided crucial cultural tourism feedback as well as insights of different types of CBD activations desired in their communities. The project was launched at The Glen Innes Margarita and Taco Festival and travelled to Gunnedah and Tamworth.



### **'BOGGABRI MURAL PROJECT'**

Arts North West worked with Boggabri Public School to develop and install creative, informative and colourful murals in the school grounds. Arts North West engaged local artist James O'Hanlon and Jack Conlan as well as Newcastle based artists Jordan Lucky. Jack Conlan hosted a cultural development day featuring dance performances from local Aboriginal dance troupe and painting workshops. Jordan provided creative professional development and met with local mural artists; provided tips, ticks and techniques for large scale murals. This project has been enjoyed by the 80 students at the school as well as many local people who love and appreciate the artworks and the stories, learnings and imaginations evoked by the project.



### **'PAVEMENT PERFORMANCES'**

Arts North West, Music Region New England, Tamworth Regional Council and Arts Mid North Coast came together to support the tenth year of Tamworth's Multicultural Festival, Fiesta La Peel and experiment with Music as CBD activation delivering a series of Pavement Performances that brought vibrancy and life to passing crowds in Fitzroy Street Plaza, outside the Fitzroy Milk Bar in Tamworth, and outside the Canberra Greek Café in Manilla. The Arts North West Pavement Performances featured a collection of internationally trained musicians, from the New England North West, Mid North Coast, and the Hunter regions. The audiences were treated to the sounds of Flamenco Guitar, Bossa Nova, Brazilian Choro, Middle-Eastern, Celtic, Greek, and Balkan music flavours. The final cohort of twelve musicians played on the main stage as part of the festival. Tamworth Regional Library also hosted the Jigsaw Cinema, a Literacy and Music performance, featuring musical responses to Alison Lester's book, Isabella's Bed for 300 pre-school and primary school students. These musicians played to audiences of approx. 5000 over the two day events.



### **'HERE, NOW AND ALWAYS'**

'Here, Now and Always' was a state-wide initiative hosted by the Aboriginal Regional Arts Alliance in partnership with the RADO network including Arts North West. This was an online exhibition and market event that celebrated and showcased Aboriginal arts and culture from New South Wales on a global scale. This annual program included an online festival program and art market. Providing a digital platform where presenters, artists, and audiences could unite in their appreciation of Aboriginal art and culture. The initiative not only fostered education but also cultivated meaningful partnerships. It served as a profound reminder and connection between Aboriginal artistry and Country, where tradition intertwines with innovation. Arts North West featured seven First Nations artists as part of the project.





# ARTS NORTH WEST ON TOUR



Arts North West ON TOUR (ANWOT) is regional touring service bespoke to Arts North West. Providing nationally acclaimed to locally produced live theatre offerings to small-to-medium performing arts venues in the New England North West.

ANWOT promotes, supports and negotiates touring productions for venues throughout the region, while also providing touring advice, marketing collateral and resources. In 2023 Arts North West changed from a subscription based model to a fee - for -service model to respond to opportunities for smaller venues, community organisations, galleries, museums and local venues to be part of the tour coordination. This model provides agility to respond to the recovery of touring productions 'post-covid' and also ensures theatre could viably tour regional NSW.

## THE BOX SHOW

*Junkyard Beats & Critical Stages Touring Created by Junkyard Beats*

Arts North West coordinated five shows of 'The Box Show' throughout the New England North West to:

- The Roxy Theatre, Bingara
- TAS Hoskins Centre, Armidale
- Royal Theatre, Quirindi
- The Civic Theatre, Gunnedah by the Gunnedah Conservatorium

This project was assisted with funding from the NSW Government through Create NSW, and the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



## WOMEN LIKE US - BY MANDY NOLAN AND ELLEN BRIGGS

The November 2022 shows for 'Women Like Us' were cancelled in Narrabri and Gunnedah, due to the flood events. In 2023, Arts North West delivered the remaining tour in February to these locations.

- Narrabri Crossing Theatre, Narrabri
- The Civic, Gunnedah

## MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL COMEDY ROADSHOW 2023

*Produced by Melbourne International Comedy Festival Australia*

Arts North West coordinated five shows of 'Melbourne International Comedy Roadshow' throughout the New England North West to:

- The Capital Theatre, Tamworth
- Gunnedah Town Hall, Gunnedah
- Inverell RS Club, Inverell
- The Chapel Theatre, Glen Innes
- Sir Henry Parkes The School of Arts, Tenterfield

This nationally renowned production has become a 'must see' calendar event in many of our regional communities.



## 'HICCUP'

*A Windmill Theatre Company Production By Jude Henshall and Ellen Steele*

Arts North West coordinated four shows of 'Hiccup' throughout the New England North West to:

- The Capitol Theatre, Tamworth
- The Civic Theatre, Gunnedah
- Narrabri Crossing Theatre, Narrabri
- TAS Hoskins Centre, Armidale

## 'A LITTLE BIT OF BLUE'

By Little Wings Puppets

Arts North West coordinated six live theatre shows of 'A Little Bit of Blue' throughout the New England North West to:

- Coonabarabran Town Hall, Coonabarabran
- Royal Theatre, Quirindi
- The Civic Theatre, Gunnedah
- TAS Hoskins Centre, Armidale
- The Roxy Theatre, Bingara
- The Sir Henry Parkes School of Arts Theatre, Tenterfield



## 'THE END OF WINTER'

A Siren Theatre Co and Critical Stages production by Noëlle Janaczewska's

Arts North West coordinated two shows of 'The End of Winter' throughout the New England North West to:

- The Capitol Theatre, Tamworth
- The Roxy Theatre, Bingara

23

Arts North West ON TOUR  
shows delivered to regional  
audiences in 2023

Audience participants for  
Arts North West ON TOUR  
event in 2023!

5000 +



# OBJECTIVE 2: COMMUNITY

Grow and support  
community cultural  
capacity.

## ADVICE AND ADVOCACY

The Arts North West Executive Director, Lauren Mackley continues to work with a number of individuals and organisations throughout the region on funding applications, general enquiries, project development, resource referrals as well as numerous letters of support.

Arts North West provide strategic support, advice and advocacy through numerous State and Local Government committees including the Tamworth Regional Arts and Cultural Inclusive Advisory Committee, Tamworth Public Arts Advisory Group, Walcha Public Arts Advisory Group, Heritage New England North West Group, Tamworth Banksia Arts Working Group, Gunnedah Hospital Development Working Group, Glen Innes Hospital Development Working Group, Narrabri Shire Council Public Art Committee and Glen Innes Public Art Committee

Arts North West has provided advocacy and feedback to all tiers of government, government authorities and peak arts organisations including, but not limited to Create NSW, Music NSW, NAVA and Destination NSW, NSW Department of Health and Education regarding the changing needs and requirements of regional creatives and program and projects in the New England North West. In 2023 the main focus was the Rights of creators, audience engagement, infrastructure investment, funding allocation for creatives and cultural practices as well as a push to see all tiers of government collaborate efficiently and effectively utilise resources and funding.

Music NSW secured a 4-year funding term with the NSW Government to bring Regional Music Officers to NSW, in collaboration with the RADO network. ANW has committed additional funds to ensure contemporary music, musicians, performance and productions are nourished in the New England North West.



Arts North West partnered with Create NSW to organise the 'Town Hall Consultation' sessions in Tamworth for the development of the NSW Government Creative Industries Policy for the arts and cultural sector. We hosted the Hon. John Graham Minister of Roads, Arts, Night Time Economy and Music, Tourism and Jobs and Shadow Minister the Hon. Kevin Andersen Shadow Minister for Gaming, Racing, Arts and Heritage, showing bipartisan support for future of the creative industries in NSW.

Arts North West also conducted consultations with our key partners, Board and SAC to develop and submit a written submissions to the plan on behalf of Arts North West. Arts North West also contributed to submissions alongside the RADO Network and Regional Touring partners, Arts ON TOUR, Eastern Riverina Arts, Music In The Regions and Critical Stages.

These contributions helped shape the NSW Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy 'Creative Communities; The NSW Government's 10-year integrated policy for arts, culture and the creative industries 2024-2033. This was released in December, 2023.



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## BRANDING + MARKETING FOR REGIONAL CREATIVES

Arts North West partnered with Gunnedah creative consultant Taylah Maree to deliver a series of professional development offerings titled 'Branding + Marketing for Regional Creatives'. Together we delivered a series of professional development group mentor workshops in Narrabri, Currabubula, Armidale and Glen Innes. The workshops focused on creating branding and marketing that speaks to our regional identity. Participants discovered the tools to build a brand bespoke to their practice, to create an invigorating marketing strategy and discovered their own superpower as a creative business living and working in a regional area.



## COMMUNITY GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP

Armidale Regional Council, Regional Development Australia, Regional NSW and Arts North West partnered to deliver a grant workshop focused with local not-for-profit organisation finding, applying and delivering grants in an informal setting. The workshop was led by facilitator from OzGREEN, Anna Juodvalkis who focused on how your community can build capacity and resilience and secure vital funding. This workshop is proudly supported by UNE SMART Region Incubator and NSW Reconstruction Authority.



## HOW TO CALCULATE ECONOMIC + SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Arts North West recognises the importance for the creative industries to determine the social and economic impact of their projects and programs to advocate for the arts, obtain funding and continue to offer creative opportunities for communities to increase and maintain vibrancy and liveability in the New England North West. To increase capacity, Arts North West partnered with Margot Davis from Unearthed Prosperity and Min Seto from Social Value Bank to deliver a series of free workshops in Tamworth and Armidale, which focused on providing the tools to confidently communicate the social and economic impact of the arts in regional NSW.



## PRICING FOR CREATIVES' AND 'FREELANCE SKILLS FOR CREATIVES

Creative Plus Business, Arts North West and UNE Smart Regional Incubator partnered to deliver a full day session in Armidale with presentations by Monica Davidson, Australia's first Creative Industries Business Advisor on 'Pricing for Creatives' and 'Freelance Skills for Creatives'. The Professional Development sessions covered skills including financial obligations, understanding and handling money matters, goals and planning the self-employment journey, time management and marketing.



## Introduction to Cultural Tourism

Online Webinar | Monday 22nd May  
Join Here: Book Event ([now.gov.au](https://now.gov.au))

Are you thinking about starting your own Aboriginal Cultural Tourism business? Do you already have an Aboriginal Cultural Tourism business?

Do you live in the New England or North West NSW?

Come along and find out about starting Aboriginal Cultural Tourism business and learn tips and tricks to develop or build your regional Cultural Tourism.



In this event we will look at understanding Cultural Tourism and what makes a successful Cultural Tourism business.



Together we will develop your ideas and plan to build your own Cultural Tourism business.



Sessions are run by the in Business Industry unit.

## CULTURAL TOURISM AND INNOVATIVE BUSINESS START-UP

2Rivers Pty Ltd, Arts North West and ABAI (Aboriginal Business Advisory Initiative) developed and delivered two online workshops to build capacity of First Nations creatives. The 'Innovative Business Start-up' worked towards strategies to build their creative businesses. The 'Cultural Tourism' provided insights to understand strategies, obligations and opportunities for Cultural Tourism in the New England North West.



# PROJECTS



## 'LETTER TO MY RETURNING'

'Letter to My Returning...' was a creative recovery response project aiming to work with communities that were affected by the flood events of 2021/2022. Arts North West engaged local artists from those communities to create artworks and creative documentation that reflect on the flood events that have affected the region. Through the power of letter writing, community members were also invited to address a letter directly to the flood waters as part of a community engagement activity. Artists created a body of work that responded to the letters and/or their own personal experiences. The letters and artworks were curated as part of a touring exhibition at Bank Art Museum Moree, Gunnedah Bicentennial Creative Arts Gallery and the Wee Waa Community and Arts Centre. This creative recovery response project created space to build relationships that reduced feelings of isolation, an outlet for emotional release, increased community cohesiveness, and a sense of shared optimism reflection and commemoration.

## IN OUR HANDS

Arts North West and Outback Arts collaborated to deliver a two-year program that was a First Nations-led curatorial intensive that provided hands-on curatorial skills and cultural support to 10 Aboriginal people currently working within the arts sector (galleries/cultural centres) throughout the New England/North West region of NSW. Learned skills from this program were implemented into workplaces to ensure cultural protection, best practice, and sustainability. Participants learnt skills to develop exhibition themes, artefact and artwork conservation and preservation, legal rights and responsibilities, installation concepts and timelines, developing related text and educational packs and much more.



## REGIONAL FUTURES

Throughout 2022 - 2023, twenty-nine artists from throughout regional NSW, worked across different mediums to respond to the complex question, 'What does the future of the region look like?'. This was a RADO Strategic program funded by Create NSW as research and creative development project that prompted ideas, exhibition thematic and conversations that placed artists at the centre of a dialogue exploring a future vision, for the place where they live and create artworks that responded to the exhibition themes. The exhibition was accompanied by a full day Symposium 'Regional Futures' that featured keynote and panel discussions about the future of regional NSW. The exhibition and symposium, captured a sense of celebration of regional creative practice and our diversity of perspectives. Arts North West supported four regional artists from the New England North West to develop two collaborative projects to be part of the Regional Futures Project.





## THE COOLABAH PROJECT

Arts North West secured funding through the Office of Youth's, Youth Opportunities fund to work with young people in the region to develop Cultural Tourism businesses and offerings. 'The Coolabah' Project works to empower young cultural leaders to develop youth focused and participant led cultural tours within the Gomeroi Nation. The Project focuses on revitalising and promoting culture and creating opportunities for youth empowerment and employment. This two year project has been working with Gomeroi youth from Tamworth, Liverpool Plains and Gunnedah local government areas.

## REFLECTIONS

Arts North West created the 'Reflections' project to explore our regional identities and digitally translate art practices from throughout the New England North West to a larger audience, while providing mentoring and skills development opportunities. Arts North West worked with two digital artists, Suzie Wicks and Mike Terry to mentor two emerging artists Ijumma Stephenson and Shae Duncan. Together they recorded and cultural and creative workshops with The Euraba Papermakers, Tania Hartigan's natural fibres papermaking and flora still life as well as silk screen printing with Suzie Spencer. Collectively mentors, mentees, facilitators and participants created a community exhibition and associated performances, that acknowledged and explored the journey of natural fibres through the numerous creative disciplines in our regional setting.



# FUNDING

## COUNTRY ART SUPPORT PROGRAM GRANT (CASP)

The Country Arts Support Program (CASP) is an annual small grants program funded by Create NSW and managed by Regional Arts Development Organisations. Arts North West administered grants under the Country Arts Support Program of up to \$3,000 for individuals, arts community groups and and arts organisations in the New England North West to support their creative endeavour. In 2023 six organisations from across the New England North West region successfully secured a CASP grant. \$17,000 worth of grant funds have been allocated throughout the region.

## MICRO GRANTS

The first round of Arts North West Micro Grants were announced in 2020 as direct response to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Due to their popularity, Micro Grants have continued to be a regular fixture in Arts North West programming ever since. Seventeen creative endeavours were successfully funded through the fifth round of the Arts North West Micro Grants program. \$17,000 worth of grant funds were allocated throughout the New England North West





# OBJECTIVE 3: CONNECTIONS

Forge strong partnerships  
and networks across the  
region.

## ARTS NORTH WEST CONNECT

Arts North West Connect is an online creative directory and interactive arts trail developed in partnership with arts and cultural workers of the New England North West to better promote their interests in the region's cultural tourism. To date, Arts North West Connect hosts over 250 profiles of artists, artworkers and venues from throughout the New England North West with an increase of 9% in 2023.

## WEBSITE

The Arts North West website provides a central resource for all things arts and culture in the New England North West and includes an integrated Arts and Cultural Events Calendar, where our stakeholders can submit their own events and these events are advertised in our E-News and on our social media platforms. In 2023 This calendar had over 396 submissions of local and regional events held across the New England North West. Our website also hosts a myriad of grant funding opportunities as well as creative development and professional development opportunities.

## MEDIA

Arts North West publishes fortnightly e-news highlighting events around our region, creative opportunities and funding opportunities. We are active on a number of social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The Arts North West social media footprint has increased engagement by 87% in 2023.

## NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

ANW manages a number of networks including Enable Arts, Film NENW, ANW Connect, Museums New England North West and Arts North West ON TOUR.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

ANW is a strong advocate for arts and cultural development in regional NSW, working in partnership with all three levels of government. The Executive Director provides advice and input into strategies and initiatives across a number of portfolios. Lauren has been proactive in the region, presenting to local Councils, proving feedback on strategic plans, developing and delivering opportunities for community consultation as well as judging various community art shows and competitions.

Over 1600 newsletter  
subscribers

4.6k followers  
on social media

22 Newsletters  
in 2023

396 events promoted  
on the calendar

Over 1000 posts to  
social media

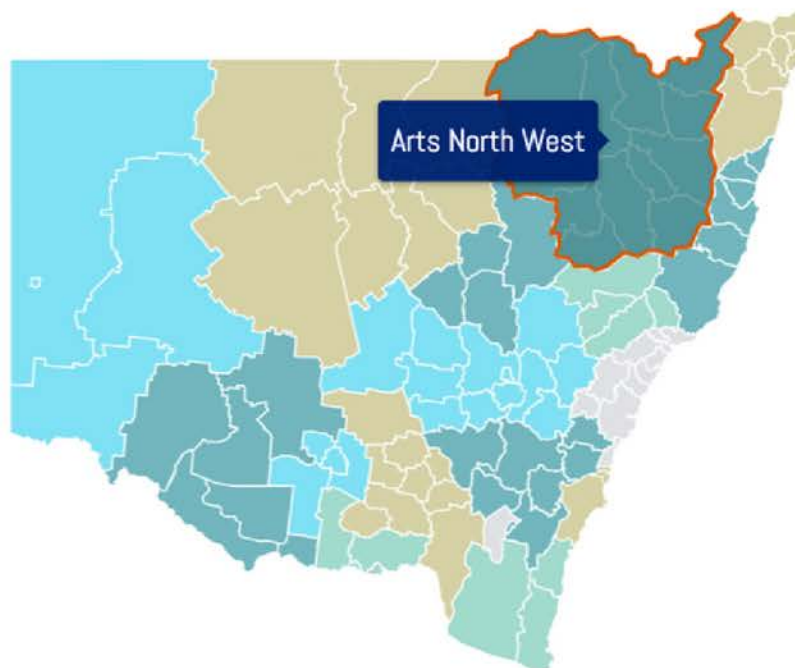


# REGIONAL ARTS NETWORK

Regional Arts NSW has been the overarching for Regional Arts Development in NSW for over 75 years. In recent years this organisation has transitioned to a subscription model.

There are 15 Regional Arts Development Organisations in New South Wales, each providing strategic direction for sustainable arts and cultural development in their region.

Their Boards include representatives from local government, tourism, education, arts councils and other community arts organisations and community members. In 2018 Arts North West moved to a skills based board. Each employs an Executive Director and other staff who coordinate a cultural development program across the contributing local government areas in their region.



## REGIONAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS IN NSW

**ARTS MID  
NORTH COAST  
ARTS NORTH WEST  
ARTS NORTHERN  
RIVERS  
ARTS OUTWEST  
ARTS UPPER HUNTER  
EASTERN RIVERINA  
ARTS  
MURRAY ARTS  
ORANA ARTS  
OUTBACK ARTS  
SOUTH COAST ARTS  
SOUTH EAST ARTS  
SOUTH WEST ARTS  
SOUTHERN  
TABLELANDS ARTS  
WEST DARLING ARTS  
WESTERN RIVERINA  
ARTS**



***"Arts North West is proud of our strong community engagement and has established a robust reputation locally, as the peak advisory body for arts in the region. We know the arts have the power to connect people beyond geographic, social and cultural borders and play a pivotal role in education, health, wellbeing, identity and inclusion in regional areas. Creating partnerships is central to our service provision. We work with other organisations both in and outside the sector, leveraging strategic partnerships to strengthen our creative landscape, and diversifying income for our regional economies. The arts is intrinsic to an engaged, responsive, and resilient society"***

**Arts North West  
Executive Director  
Lauren Mackley**

### **SKYWHALES: EVERY HEART SINGS**



Tamworth Regional Council and Tamworth Regional Gallery presented 'Skywhales: Every Heart Sings' – the Tamworth flight of Patricia Piccinini's Skywhalepapa and Skywhale in Tamworth. 'Skywhales: Every Heart Sings' was a project originally created by Canberra-born artist Patricia Piccinini to mark Canberra's centenary in 2023. Since then, the giant whale-like floating sculptures have generated interest and inspiration throughout their travels across the globe. Arts North West collaborated with the event and conducted community consultation for the Tamworth Public Arts Policy and also delivered a Plein Air/ Life drawing workshop to capture the inflation and release of the 'Skywhales' in motion. The workshops had over 35 participants and were hosted by local artists Sophie Honess, Daniel Stanley and Moral Lackley. Over 3000 people attended the event as an amazing show of support by the Tamworth community for public arts programming.

### **FELTING HANDS ON THE MOREE PLAINS**



Arts North West partnered with Moree Plains Shire Council to develop and deliver the creative flood recovery project 'Felting Hands on the Moree Plains' with artist Joanne Barr and the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP). This project was delivered in the community halls of Mungindi, Boomi, Pallamallawa and Garah. These workshops provided an opportunity for 30 participants to reconnect, check-in with each other and with their mental health as well as learn a range of wet felt-making techniques. Rural Adversity Mental Health Program Coordinator Letitia Cross attended the workshops to provide informal support and a point of contact for information and resources on health and wellbeing. After the one-day workshops over participants went home with a newly created felt hat, new friends, and reinvigorated connections in their community. This project has been made possible with funding from the Boosting Rural Resistance Program, PHN and Create NSW.





### **NGAARR (STRONG) WANDABAA (SPIRIT) THANBARRAN (CONNECTION)**

Was a First Nations pop-up exhibition and partnership between Arts North West and The University of New England, featuring artworks from First Nations creatives that explored stories and cultural knowledge passed down through the generations. This exhibition explored visual arts, dance, song and language. This exhibition was an opportunity for the celebration of culture; for established artists, emerging artists and the audience; to all be part of the journey of a stronger and culturally connected tomorrow.



### **LIVING ON THE EDGE**

The National Museum of Australia developed a community arts project to celebrate the waterways of the Murray Darling River system. Arts North West worked with fourteen artists from the New England North West to reflect on the thriving and interconnected world of unique flora and fauna, deeply entwined with the well-being of local the population and the river systems of the Gwydir and Namoi Rivers. These rivers have been identified as one of the eight critical ecological communities in Australia. The artworks became part of a larger work in the Main Hall of the National Museum of Australia as part of the River Community Day. The River Country Community Day closed with the premiere screening of the documentary "More Than A Fish Kill," followed by a panel discussion hosted by ABC RN's Natasha Mitchell.



### **MUSIC NSW**

Arts North West has partnered with Music NSW to deliver the Regional Partnership program to assist musicians, venues and touring personnel in regional NSW. Music NSW and ANW delivered a series of 1-on-1 sessions and networking events in Tamworth, Tenterfield and Armidale in 2023. Offering advice and creating pathways between local industry, local government and artists, and providing on-the-ground support for regional musicians, venues and live music professionals. Music NSW grows regional touring as well as supports with project management, planning, budget, insurance, promotion and marketing, funding sources and opportunities in relation to individual or organisational arts and cultural practice. This partnership will continue into 2024.



# OBJECTIVE 4: GOVERNANCE

Provide sound and effective  
corporate  
governance to ensure a  
sustainable organisation.

## BOARD MEETINGS

During 2023, Arts North West accepted the resignation of our longstanding Chair, Anna Watt. Anna was the Chair of Arts North West for over six years, during which she was a compassionate, knowledgeable and strong guiding voice for the organisation. Her tenure saw two Executive Directors, a global pandemic, numerous floods, fires, droughts and plagues that have affected our regional communities. Throughout all of this, she maintained absolute integrity and continued to focus on our vision for a rich, diverse cultural landscape, working to expand on creative opportunities in the New England North West.

Arts North West thanks Anna for her dedication & commitment to the organisation and wish her all the best in her future endeavours. In September 2023, ANW welcomed UNE Professor Alistair Noble, to the position of Chair of Arts North West.

Alistair is a highly accomplished pianist, composer and musicologist and is currently the Head of School: Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at the University of New England and has been on the Board of Arts North West for two years. We greatly appreciate Alistair's industry insights, diplomacy, wisdom and analytical nature. ANW warmly welcome Alistair as the new Chair of the Board of Arts North West and are excited to continue to work with him into the future.

In 2023, ANW saw significant changes in the Board. The ANW Board met five times in 2023 in Glen Innes, Bingara and Tamworth as well as via zoom. Providing oversight of the organisation's finances, policies, and strategic direction. We also held three Strategic Advisory Council meetings for delegates to provide feedback and information to inform ANW's programming. The governance structure of Arts North West comprises of a skill-based Board of Governance of nine members with a second tier, the Strategic Advisory Council (SAC), consisting of a delegate from each of our contributing Local Government Authorities as well as four community arts organisation representatives. The SAC met three times in 2023.

## 2023 BOARD MEMBERS

### Chair of Board

Anna Watt / Alistair Noble

### Vice Chair

Peter Ross

### Treasurer

Carolyn Cooper

### Public Officer

Sandy McNaughton

Scott Pollock

Rachel Parsons

Vivien Clyne



## 2023 STRATEGIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC) MEMBERS

Sarah Reddington - Armidale Regional Council

Rachael Parsons - New England Regional Art Museum

Bridget Guthrie - Tamworth Regional Council

Brooke Southwell - Tamworth Regional Council

Scott Pollock - Narrabri Shire Council

Leanne Doran - Uralla Shire Council

Toni Averay - Uralla Shire Council

Susan Frater-Sims - Gunnedah Shire Council

Rebecca Ryan - Gunnedah Conservatorium of Music

Tiffany Galvin - Gwydir Shire Council

Nena Hicks - Walcha Council

Kelly James - Moree Plains Shire Council

Susannah Pearse - Moree Plains Shire Council

Lee Mathers - Tenterfield Shire Council

Kim Rhodes - Tenterfield Shire Council

Ruth Neave - Liverpool Plains Shire Council

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT

A full policy and procedures audit was undertaken with numerous policies updated and amended with endorsement by the Arts North West Board. Many of these policies were changed to align with legislative changes to ensure the organisation remained compliant.

## STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Executive Director, Lauren Mackley attended the Regional Arts NSW network meetings hosted by Regional Arts NSW, which are held three times a year. These meetings provide opportunities to engage with other RADOs from across the state and to meet with Federal and State departments and arts organisations. Once a year, all of the staff from all of the Regional Development Organisation's in New South Wales meet at the Regional Arts NSW Office for the annual meeting. In 2023, all staff from Arts North West attended this meeting and participated in the professional development offerings coordinated by Regional Arts NSW.



# CORE FUNDING

Arts North West is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW and the contributions of 11 Local Government Authorities in the New England North West. Arts North West is thankful for this ongoing support for our organisation and the Arts in the New England North West.



# PROJECT FUNDING

Arts North West projects are made possible by our partnerships and grant funds obtained by the below funding bodies and organisations.



**Australian Government**  
**Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support**



**FRRR**  
Foundation for Rural  
Regional Renewal



**Australian Government**  
**Indigenous Languages and Arts**





## ARTS NORTH WEST STAFF 2023

- **Executive Director** - Lauren Mackley
- **Communications Officer** - Stephanie McIntosh / Emily Page
- **Administration Assistant** - Leah Fontyn
- **Projects Officer** - Michele Jedlicka / Jennifer Carlin / Julia Minors
- **ANWOT Touring Coordinator** - Miranda Heckenberg / Hester Fraser
- **Finance Contractor** - HLC Bookkeeping / Path Bookkeeping
- **IT Contractor** - Handmade Computing / Cloudwize Pty Ltd

In 2023, Arts North West was committed to delivering a program of excellence, collaboration and innovation. The staff at Arts North West's worked hard to achieve these goals and their tireless efforts, and collaborative spirit have not only elevated the quality of our work but have also fostered a sense of unity and camaraderie within our community.

Arts North West would like to thank the New England North West for helping us to deliver our successful Project and Programs in 2023. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones and made a lasting impact on our community. We are excited to see what we will accomplish together in 2024.





# Arts north west

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