

# Culture. The life of our city.

Discussion paper to inform a cultural  
policy and strategy 2025-2036

OUR ADELAIDE.  
**BOLD.**  
**ASPIRATIONAL.**  
**INNOVATIVE.**

## Acknowledgement of Country

City of Adelaide acknowledges that we are meeting on the traditional Country of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains and pays respect to Elders past and present. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land, water and seas. We acknowledge that they are of continuing importance to the Kaurna people living today. And we also extend that respect to other Aboriginal Language Groups and other First Nations.

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## Background

### Why a Discussion Paper?

This Discussion Paper has been developed to engage with the community and expert stakeholders on the development of a Cultural Policy for Adelaide.

It is designed to stimulate critical thinking and debate, encourage and guide conversations with residents, community and cultural organisations and groups, creative practitioners, organisations and businesses. We encourage all readers to engage with the topic and share with us your considered opinions and unique perspectives.

It outlines focus areas and opportunities to further enrich community life through the creation and expression of culture and creativity in the City of Adelaide. The City of Adelaide has identified the following focus areas to frame engagement:

- Demonstrating bold, aspirational, innovative leadership, setting a cultural agenda and leaving a legacy for the City and South Australia
- Investing in our cultural infrastructure, assets and partnerships
- Increasing community participation and fostering connections through cultural events and programs
- Supporting creatives, venues and institutes to make, showcase and sustain our music, culture and heritage.

To develop the Discussion Paper we have undertaken an assessment to better understand our strengths, opportunities and focus areas for development, including:

- A review of local, state, federal, and international policies, plans and reports
- An audit of Council's arts and culture investment, grants, programs, collections, infrastructure and regulations
- Analysis of our community profile, needs, participation and satisfaction levels
- Consultations and conversations with key stakeholders including Council employees, arts and culture organisations, local business operators and owners, cultural consultants and leaders

We recognise that we need your input to refine the City of Adelaide's cultural priorities and focus our resources and efforts over the next decade. We intend that the engagement that supports the development of the Cultural Policy will be collaborative, ongoing, and representative, so that it may serve, support and belong to the people of Adelaide.

We will use responses to the Discussion Paper to develop a draft Cultural Policy, as part of Council's commitment in the City of Adelaide Strategic Plan 2024-2028 to develop a Cultural Policy that promotes and strengthens the City's unique cultural identity and opportunities.

## Role of Local Government and Strategic Framework

One of the principal roles of a council is to encourage and develop initiatives within its community for improving the quality of life of the community. Local government, as the level of government closest to community, plays a crucial role in bringing richness and meaning to individuals' lives and strengthening community through its investment in culture and creativity.

Local government has the ability to develop policy that can strengthen culture and the creative sector, by being constantly engaged in discourse seeking engagement, and by holding and representing multiple perspectives of community. Local government has the proximity to the community and sectors, the agility to adapt policy activity as needs change, and to facilitate partnerships that support the production of culture as a sustainable activity.

### International

International cultural policy is driven by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which stands for cultural diversity as a source of enrichment for all of humanity. Adelaide is designated as a UNESCO Creative City of Music. The Creative Cities Network is at its core a program of UNESCO which aims to foster mutual international cooperation with and between member cities committed to invest in creativity as a driver for sustainable urban development, social inclusion and cultural vibrancy.

### National

The Australian Federal Government's national Cultural Policy, *Revive: A Place for Every Story, a Story for Every Place*, highlights the following benefits of culture:

- Cultural Heritage and Identity
- Social Cohesion and Wellbeing
- Economic Growth
- Global Engagement and Recognition
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Mental Health and Healing.

### Local

The State Government's Cultural Policy is currently in development.

The City of Adelaide will align its Cultural Policy with the national vision for Australian society, outlined in *Revive*, and will intersect with the State's Cultural Policy document and with UNESCO commitments through its City of Music designation. These alignments recognise the importance and benefits of working in partnership for the social and cultural vitality of South Australia.

### City of Adelaide Strategic Plan 2024-2028

The City of Adelaide's Cultural Policy will sit under Council's Strategic Plan 2024-2028 and alongside the following documents:

- City Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan
- Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

- Heritage Strategy and Action Plan
- Homelessness Strategy
- Integrated Climate Strategy
- Adelaide Central Market Authority Strategic Plan
- Adelaide Economic Development Agency Strategic Plan
- Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy

## Defining Culture

*People are not aware of this, but in every language, it is like a gift. In language, there is always knowledge that no one else possesses that people are not aware of. Everyone wants to think that one culture is greater than the other, which is nonsense. What it is, is that every language has knowledge in it that no one else has - Dr Lewis Yarlupurka O'Brien AO.  
Kurna Elder, Kurna Voices project*

Culture is an integral part of our universal and indivisible human rights. In its breadth and depth, it enriches our lives and expands our horizons, fosters creative expression and innovation, and celebrates who we are. Culture, in its broadest sense incorporates social meaning, values and aspirations of the community through empowerment, intercultural appreciation and understanding, enrichment and joy.

Culture is our way of living together, our beliefs and value systems, traditions, the spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of our society, and our art, literature, languages and creativity. Culture also means the arts, cultural, creative and heritage industries, institutions, facilities, organisations and individuals who protect, produce, and present culture. It is expressed through music, song, visual arts, craft and design, performing arts, film and video, radio and television, gaming and digital arts, architecture and publishing, languages, literature, festivals and events, live and experimental art, built environment and more.

In Adelaide, culture is created, protected and experienced in many places and spaces, through galleries, museums, archives, libraries, heritage places and collections, in cafés, markets, pubs and churches, in our City Squares, Adelaide Park Lands, precincts and neighbourhoods. For the purposes of its Cultural Policy, it is proposed that the City of Adelaide's definition of culture includes:

- Adelaide's arts, cultural, creative and heritage sectors
- The knowledge and cultural practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- The expressions of identity, shared experience and aspirations of our diverse, multicultural communities.

## How Culture Contributes to the Life of a City

- *Identity and Character*

A city's unique identity is shaped by culture, which is an integral and inseparable part of our lives. The traditions, festivals, languages, expressions, artworks and historical landmarks of the community contribute to a sense of place and belonging for city residents and visitors.

- *Community and Social Cohesion*

Cultural activities bring people together, fostering a sense of community, connection and tolerance. Public spaces, museums, theatres, and cultural festivals are often places where diverse groups interact, share experiences, and build social bonds.

- *Quality of Life*

Access to cultural venues and facilities such as theatres, museums, galleries, and live performances enhances the quality of life for residents. It provides opportunities for leisure, learning, social connection and personal growth.

- *Urban Regeneration*

Cultural initiatives can lead to the enhancement of creative neighbourhoods within a city. Investments in cultural infrastructure often breathe new life into neighbourhoods and precincts, enhancing strong community identity and making them more attractive to residents and visitors alike.

- *Attracting Talent*

Cities known for their vibrant cultural life often attract creative and talented individuals, which can drive innovation and contribute to the city's reputation, cultural participation and economic growth.













- *Economic Impact*

Cultural industries, including tourism, arts, entertainment, and heritage sites, are significant contributors to a city's economy. They create jobs, attract investment, and boost local businesses.



## Who We Are

# Our Community

			
<b>390,000 Daily visitors</b>	<b>26,120 residents</b>	<b>projected 50,000 residents by 2036</b>	
			
<b>47% aged between 18 and 34</b>	<b>20% aged 60 and over</b>	<b>1.4% of the population identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander</b>	
 <b>45% born overseas</b>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>12% born in China - our largest population group</b></li> <li><b>5% born in the UK</b></li> <li><b>3% born in India - our fastest growing population group</b></li> </ul>		
			
<b>36% speak a language other than English at home</b>	<b>26% of CoA residents study at TAFE or University</b>	<b>50%+ of the population have no religion</b>	<b>50%renting</b>

Adelaide is diverse, young and growing, with 50,000 people projected to call our city home by 2036. Our future population is expected to be substantially located within the city of Adelaide.

Currently, the City of Adelaide has two distinct demographic areas with North Adelaide and the southeast corner of Adelaide polarised in age structure with the young and old. In Central Adelaide twenty somethings are double the proportion of that demographic in Greater Adelaide.

Statistics suggests the City of Adelaide acts as a demographic entrepot, importing people from overseas and distributing people overseas, interstate and to the inner suburbs of metropolitan Adelaide. Between 2016 and 2021, 73.9% of the City of Adelaide’s population turned over with one in four migrating from overseas and 4 in 10 migrating from elsewhere in Australia.

People migrating to Adelaide bring with them personal possessions and intangible cultural heritage which connects them to their countries of birth within the context of their new home in Australia, socially and culturally.

This presents an opportunity for those people travelling through Adelaide to become cultural ambassadors for our city, and if their experience of the cultural life of the city is positive, are likely to consider returning to and settling in Adelaide.

Of all South Australia local governments, the City of Adelaide has the highest percentage of population born overseas (45%). Multiculturalism, interculturalism and diversity support our open, cohesive and equitable city, where cultural, linguistic and religious diversity is understood and valued.

Adelaide is a place that embraces its multiple histories whilst developing the new. Here, culture and creativity are nurtured in a culturally rich and diverse community. Adelaide's cultural uniqueness lies in its complexities and constraints which often present as contrasting factors:

- Adelaide is ancient and new
- Adelaide is innovative and traditional
- Adelaide is diverse and distinctive.

## Our Capital City Setting

Located on the Traditional Country of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains, Adelaide / Tarntanya is centrally positioned between the hills and sea, with the Karrawirra Pari / River Torrens winding through it.

Adelaide is the Capital City of South Australia and the cultural heart of our State.

Adelaide is the world's only city surrounded by Park Lands, thanks to the vision of Colonel William Light, for a city that enriches its people's wellbeing and quality of life. His vision has been described as genius of place and plan, from a theory dating back to Roman Times, *Genius Loci*, in which the spirit of place combines with the built urban form in order for people to live authentically and in balance with nature.

Adelaide's cultural vision, history of social reform, and its thriving arts sector and festivals are regarded as some of South Australia's strengths. The state enjoys an impressive reputation for creative achievement and vibrant artistic activities.

Consistently ranked as one of the most liveable cities in the world and named the world's most beautiful city in 2024 by *Architectural Digest*, Adelaide is a safe, open and democratic society, and an official Refugee Welcoming Zone.

Our renown as a creative city is sustained by a diversity of cultural venues and collections, live music pubs, bars and dining experiences that enliven city laneways. Our world class architecture and public art adds vibrancy to the city and reflects local histories. Our places, including our National Heritage Listed Adelaide Park Lands and Squares, provide gathering places for people to celebrate festive events and to practice and exchange cultural traditions.

The Adelaide Town Hall has been the city's premier venue for concerts, civic receptions and public gatherings since 1866. The Adelaide Central Market has been a lively site of exchange for diverse cultures and culinary traditions since the late 1800s when North Terrace became the home of the heritage listed Mortlock Wing and Adelaide's first public sculpture, *Veneri di Canova* (Pugi Brothers, 1892). Today, North Terrace, or the 'Cultural Boulevard' houses Adelaide's most prominent cultural institutions and collections, including the Art Gallery of South Australia, the South Australian Museum, the State Library of South Australia, the Migration Museum, and the Adelaide Botanic Gardens that have been growing since 1857, featuring some of Australia's finest plant collections. It is also home to Adelaide University and Lot 14 – an innovation district which will soon support over 6,000 workers and researchers.

The Adelaide Festival Centre, Australia's first multi-purpose arts centre, celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023, and remains an icon of Adelaide's contemporary culture. The JamFactory, singular in its support and promotion of innovative and outstanding craft and design through its studios, galleries and shops, also celebrated its 'golden' anniversary last year. In 2024, the Helpmann Academy celebrates 30 years of supporting creative practitioners at the start of their careers. The only organisation of its kind in Australia, it is a unique collaborative partnership that unifies the skills and resources of South Australia's universities.

Adelaide is home to the second largest Fringe Festival in the world and is one of just a few cities worldwide to host WOMAD festival sharing music, arts, dance and ideas from around

the world. Rundle Mall and its open-air public art gallery continue to enhance the city's shopping experience. Across Adelaide's nightlife hub on Hindley Street, the Lion Arts Centre is the West End's creative heart housing several music and multi-arts organisations.

In North Adelaide, Carclew, Australia's largest multi-artform cultural institution dedicated to children and young people can be found, as well as the David Roche Foundation House Museum - one of the greatest decorative arts collections in a private institution in Australia.

Adelaide's designation as Australia's only UNESCO Creative City of Music since 2015 is testament to the city's proud live music heritage and cultural leadership on the global stage, which are celebrated through the renaming of city laneways to honour some of Adelaide's most iconic musicians and bands.

As a site of cultural production, presentation and maintenance, we recognise the need for an enabling environment where arts and creativity are evident everywhere in the City of Adelaide, both within institutional buildings, community spaces, neighbourhoods and the public realm.

## A Cultural Policy for Adelaide

Adelaide's cultural identity is built on generations, millennia of humanity, who have made Tarntanya their home. Culture and creativity are fundamental to this place and its people. We are the beneficiaries of cultural leaders who have come before us, and we have an opportunity to shape the future, to tell a richer and fuller story of who we are.

Culture and creativity are critical to Adelaide's future growth and success, and the City of Adelaide is a custodian of this future.

Adelaide's arts, cultural, creative practitioners make vital contributions to the fabric of our society, they drive passion, resilience and connectivity. In this city, culture creates a dynamic and distinctive urban environment that all residents are proud to call home and tourists from around the globe are eager to visit. Arts, culture and creativity strengthen vibrancy and the economic growth of our city, creating jobs, providing employment, and driving innovation and collaboration, which underpins the sustainable development of our city.

The City of Adelaide's Cultural Policy will be aligned with the four pillars of Council's Strategic Plan 2024-2028:

- *OUR COMMUNITY - Vibrant, connected and inclusive*
- *OUR ENVIRONMENT - Resilient, protected and sustainable*
- *OUR ECONOMY – Growing, innovative and responsive*
- *OUR PLACES - Interesting, purposeful and safe*
- *OUR CORPORATION – high performing, customer-centric and bold*

A Cultural Policy for Adelaide might include:

- Shifting the dial on existing focus areas to target key outcomes over the next decade
- An integrated vision for culture and creativity in the City of Adelaide
- A clear set of objectives and priority areas
- A comprehensive strategic plan to deliver on Council's vision in partnership with cultural, creative and community stakeholders
- A proposed governance model to ensure that the policy is responsive to major developments and community needs.

The development of a Cultural Policy must have at its core the community it serves, its creativity, participation in social and economic life, and its ambition. The Cultural Policy will be developed through stages of consultation and planning. It will enable a long-term vision for culture as a key factor underpinning Adelaide's future prosperity, sustainability and wellbeing, enabling a vibrant, connected and inclusive community.

A central objective of this Discussion Paper is to engage in conversation with the community and expert stakeholders, seeking multiple perspectives and understanding conflicting values in order to broaden and deepen the engagement informing the Cultural Policy. It aims to provide contextual information and prompting questions to empower the reader to make determinations about cultural value, the ways in which it is measured and the impact it should have, when and where.

## City of Adelaide's Role in Cultural Life

The City of Adelaide is responsible to its local community, plays a leadership role as a Capital City in supporting the cultural epicentre for South Australia, and as a designated UNESCO Creative City commits to placing culture and creativity at the heart of its planning for sustainable development.

The City of Adelaide fosters Adelaide's cultural life by creating an interesting and lively place where people want to live, work and visit, and by facilitating opportunities for the community to participate and practice cultural and creative activity. This is achieved through policy setting, strategic planning, strategic partnerships, advocacy, provision of cultural and community facilities, placemaking, production of and support for major events and festivals, programming, capacity building, public art, heritage preservation, collections, promotion, storytelling, and grants.

In recent years, the Council's investment in culture has largely been led and delivered through the Cultural Strategy 2017-2023, supported by a Public Art Action Plan (2019-22) and a Live Music Action Plan (2017-2020), Stretch Reconciliation Action Plans, the Heritage Strategy 2021-2026, and the Adelaide Economic Development Agency's Strategic Plans (since Jan 2021).

Many other areas of the organisation support people to participate in the city's cultural life by delivering services, incentivising and leveraging investment, and facilitating cultural, heritage and creative initiatives and supporting activities that support the development and maintenance of culture and cultural practice.

The spread of this activity means that the total volume and value of Council's investment in culture is not straightforward to quantify. To date, City of Adelaide has invested broadly across the cultural sector. Future investment might continue a broad approach, or it may approach key challenges with targeted investment, for example in cultural infrastructure.

The development of Council's Cultural Policy will clarify culture's place and priority in our planning processes. It will reflect that cultural participation and creativity are central to our community's social and economic life. It will ensure that responsibility for the Cultural Policy is shared across the organisation and embedded across operational decision making. As a result, Council's resources will effectively focused to maximise benefit for all.

To achieve this, the City of Adelaide will need to take a long-term perspective and a sustainable, partnered, approach to cultural development. This means that its roles in the future will include:

### **Lead**

Lead the integration of creativity and culture in all aspects of the city's sustainable development to ensure Adelaide is a diverse, inclusive, resilient and joyful society.

### **Advocate**

Use our influence as a creative capital to advocate for the role of culture in enriching the life of the city, our community and our economy, leveraging opportunities, and uplifting others.

### **Safeguard**

Protect our tangible and intangible cultural heritage through enabling policy and regulation, and by investing in our cultural infrastructure and assets including our city collections.

**Engage**

Empower people to engage in democratic, local decision making and action supporting social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing.

**Enable**

Enable all people to contribute to and participate in the cultural life of the city by funding and facilitating inclusive programs at our venues and in our Adelaide Park Lands.

**Facilitate**

Facilitate street closures, safety, traffic and busking to support community events, festivals, activations and other forms of cultural expression across the city's public spaces and Adelaide Park Lands.

**Partner**

Partner with government, non-government organisations, the private sector and the community to leverage expertise, attract new resources and sustain the city's cultural development into the future.

**Champion**

Celebrate what makes Adelaide distinctive and promote its abundant and creative cultures to enhance our city's appeal and profile.

## City of Adelaide's Cultural Assets and Infrastructure

### *Collections*

#### **Civic, Archives and Oral History Collections**

Adelaide's heritage is preserved through the City of Adelaide collection, which encompasses the Civic Collection, Oral History Collection, and City Archives. The Civic Collection, featuring over 2800 items gathered since 1853, includes significant relics such as those related to Queen Adelaide and Colonel Light, along with public statues, memorials, silverware, historic photographs, and maps. The Oral History Collection, including 140 interviews conducted between 1978 and 2014, captures the personal memories and experiences of former Lord Mayors, Councillors, long-serving employees, and community leaders. The Contemporary Art Collection of 60+ artworks by 40 artists who are South Australian or associated with the City of Adelaide through work or study, reflects the dynamic evolution of artistic practice in Adelaide. Additionally, the City Archives holds records dating back to 1840, documents Adelaide's municipal governance through files, maps, plans, and photographs. Together, these collections ensure that Adelaide's cultural heritage and history are preserved and accessible to future generations.

#### **Public Art Collection**

Adelaide's public art collection is valued at over \$40 million and features nearly 150 sculptures, installations, and monuments that enrich public spaces and reflect the diverse stories and identities of its people. Our public art collection is a vital part of the city's cultural landscape, fosters community connection and celebrates Kaurna and First Nations heritage and the contributions of various cultural groups. The public art collection plays a crucial role in positioning Adelaide as a vibrant cultural destination, attracting tourists and contributing to the local economy.

### *Spaces*

#### **Park Lands**

The national heritage listed Adelaide Park Lands are a vital part of the city's cultural infrastructure, offering a unique network of interconnected public spaces and natural areas that encircle the city. These spaces play a significant role in Adelaide's cultural life, hosting over 600 events annually, including major festivals like the Adelaide Fringe and WOMAD. The Park Lands are classified into various event sites, with premium locations such as Rundle Park / Kaditpina and Elder Park / Tarntanya heavily utilised for large-scale cultural activities, including the Adelaide Fringe, which sold over 1 million tickets in 2023, contributing approximately \$50.1 million in new money to the state's economy. This commitment to cultural vibrancy has established Adelaide as a global leader in festivals, with the 2022 Tourism Sentiment Index ranking it the 4th best city worldwide for such events.

#### **Adelaide Central Market**

Since 1869, the Adelaide Central Market has been Adelaide's premier destination for world leading food and produce, celebrating cultural diversity year-round, and connecting community. It is one of the largest undercover fresh produce markets in the Southern Hemisphere, and a key space for cultural immersion and exchange in the city, regularly hosting live music, food demonstrations and cultural celebrations. The Market precinct attracts more than 8.5 million visitors each year.



## **Adelaide Community Centres**

The City of Adelaide's three Community Centres support our communities to thrive by creating welcoming and inclusive spaces and engaging and enriching experiences that build community capacity and celebrate diverse cultures and community spirit. During 2023/24 our Centres welcomed 42,231 people and hosted 1,418 centre-led programs that engaged nearly 8,200 participants, including health and fitness sessions, language classes, gardening and cooking workshops, exhibitions, social clubs and more.

## **Adelaide Town Hall**

Since 1866 the Adelaide Town Hall has been the civic and cultural heart of the city. It is where community gathers and history is made, from Council meetings, Civic Events, Citizenship Ceremonies, to royal visits, weddings, high school graduations, and corporate launches.

In 2023/24, Adelaide Town Hall hosted 98 concerts, 75 conferences, and attracted over 7,700 attendees to its free lunchtime community performances. The Adelaide Town Hall is proud to partner with major music organisations, including Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Music Viva, Adelaide Festival and Australian Chamber Orchestra, to present inspiring and uplifting performances.

## **Libraries**

The City of Adelaide's three libraries are essential to the cultural and social wellbeing of its 25,507 residents and our daily visitors. Libraries are recognised by UNESCO as vital for education, culture, and inclusion, these facilities generate significant community benefits. A 2018-19 study found that public libraries in South Australia contributed \$252 million in benefits, with a net welfare impact of \$162 million.

The City of Adelaide Libraries are celebrated for supporting diverse and multicultural communities through extensive resources, programs, and partnerships that foster literacy, creativity, and cultural understanding. In 2023/24, the libraries saw nearly 340,000 visitors, a 11.5% increase from the previous year, and a 4% rise in active memberships. Our libraries are places of creative production, curation and display. They promote cultural diversity and reconciliation, through events like Multicultural Storytime and exhibitions for Refugee Week, and maintain a strong commitment to Aboriginal culture through engaging programs and collections.

## **Cultural Experiences**

The City of Adelaide [Dynamic City: Arts and Culture Dashboard](#) monitored and reported on the collective achievements and the important contributions of Adelaide's cultural sector to the life of the city between 2017 and 2023. The dashboard included Council led, facilitated and financially supported activity, alongside information drawn from published external sources. A snapshot of Council's cultural programs and participation outcomes is included below.



**Participation In Adelaide’s Cultural Experiences 2017-2023 Trends**

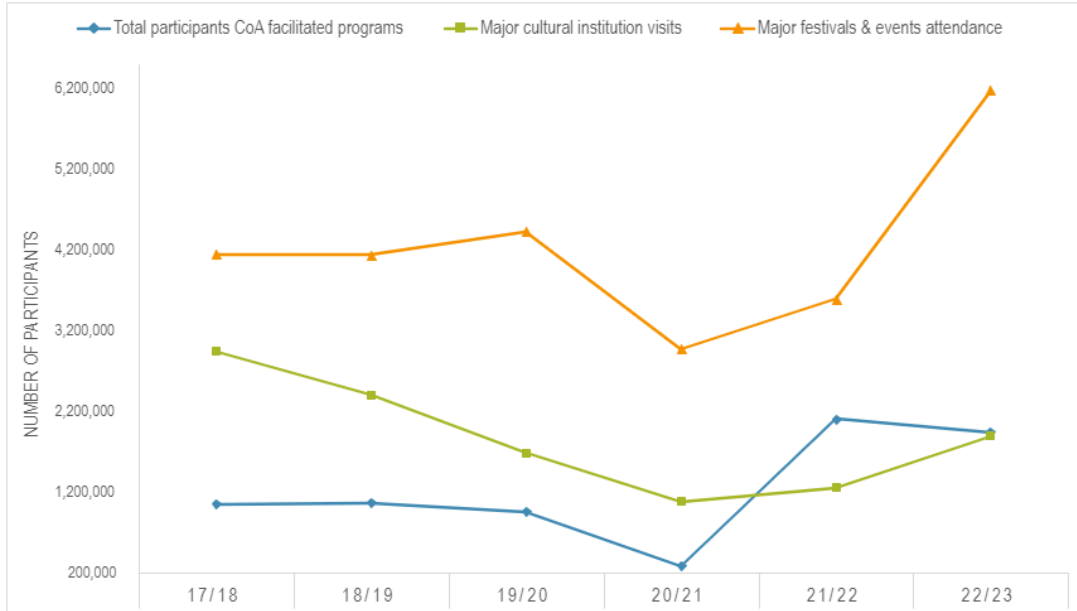


Figure 1. Participation in Adelaide’s cultural experiences 2017-2023 trends, as reported in the City of Adelaide Dynamic City: Arts and Culture Dashboard.

## What Our Community Is Saying About Culture

The Creative Australia National Arts Participation Survey (2022) evidenced that culture is central to the lives of South Australians with 96% of residents engaging with culture in some form. Figure 2 presents a breakdown of the creative and artistic activities in most demand in our State.

### South Australian Residents' Overall Engagement in Creative and Artistic Activities and Events

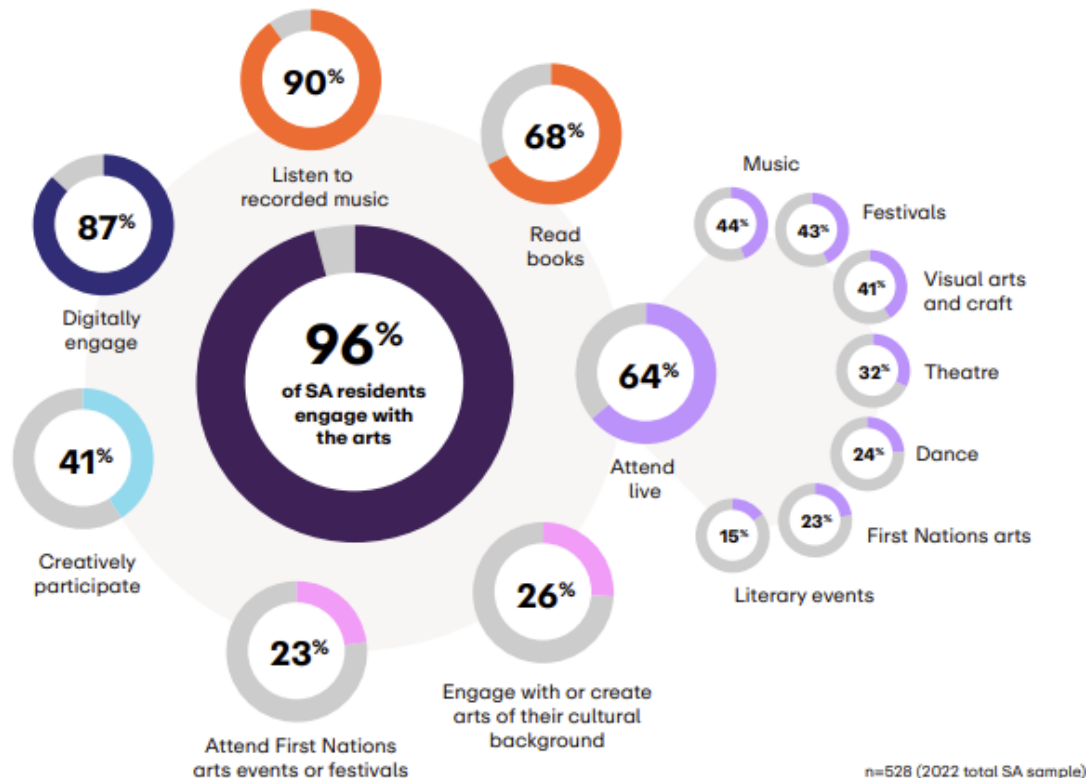


Figure 2. South Australian residents' overall engagement in creative and artistic activities and events. Source: Creative Australia, *Creating Value: Results of the National Arts Participation Survey (South Australia Snapshot)*

For those living in South Australia, as revealed by the same survey, priorities for public arts funding in order of importance are:

1. Ensuring free or low-cost events are available
2. Ensuring children and young people have access to art and creative experiences to support learning and development
3. Ensuring art and creative experiences are available to support people's health and wellbeing
4. Funding art in public spaces
5. Investing in making of art so it can be widely shared and experienced
6. Ensuring there is more access to creative activities and experiences online
7. Supporting art that pushes boundaries and drives innovation.

According to the survey results 20% of South Australian residents give time and money to support artists, arts organisations and arts projects, a contribution that has remained steady over time, and is slightly lower than the national average.

In the City of Adelaide, the importance of culture is strongly emphasised by our residents, who see it as a key element in creating a vibrant and engaging city. The Resident Survey 2022 results revealed that:

- A significant majority of residents (84%) believe that arts, culture, and events bring energy and interest to the city.
- Live music is valued by 76% of residents as an essential part of city life, underscoring the cultural activities' role in enhancing the overall liveliness of the city.
- Residents also consider culture crucial for making the city a welcoming place. 73% agree that the city is welcoming to people from diverse cultural backgrounds, highlighting the role of cultural diversity in fostering a sense of community and inclusivity.

Moreover, culture is not only important for community wellbeing, it is also vital to the city's identity. Many residents express a desire to preserve the city's cultural vibrancy for future generations, with 18% emphasising the importance of activities, events, and entertainment as critical elements they want to see maintained. This suggests that cultural activities are not only enjoyed by the current population, they are also seen as integral to the city's future prosperity.

The 2023 City User Profile highlights that both residents and visitors value Council's arts, culture, and events services with residents providing an 88% rating and visitors a 92% rating. Despite Council meeting the expectations of city users, the perceptions of the City of Adelaide as a welcoming and dynamic city with rich and diverse experiences remain modest. Although the overall mean rating is 7.5, only 57% of respondents gave a high-level agreement which is consistent with 2022, however slightly below 2021. Our residents view the city most positively, with a mean rating of 7.7 and 61% giving high ratings, while workers are less enthusiastic, with a mean of 7.3 and only 50% rating it highly.

Between 2017-2023, the City of Adelaide tracked the benefits of cultural participation using the national Cultural Outcomes framework. As reported in the [Dynamic City: Arts and Culture Dashboard](#) residents and visitors highly value their participation in cultural activities, recognising that cultural participation plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of life, and wellbeing by:

- Stimulating creativity, spark imagination, curiosity and original ideas
- Experiencing pleasure, challenge, captivation, feelings of being moved, awe, joy or wonder
- Gaining new knowledge through critical reflection, creative thinking and intellectual stimulation
- Appreciate the diversity of cultural expression including from peoples from diverse cultural backgrounds, life experiences and interests.
- Build a sense of belonging to one's cultural history, heritage and experience of cultural identity and values that is shared with others.

Cultural Outcome scores have rated 9 out of 10 annually since surveying commenced in 2018.

## Opportunities and Insights on Culture in Our City

The following list of observations about Adelaide reflects research insights, and some of the views, perspectives and experiences of our cultural community, shared through

conversations, policy workshops and advocacy submissions, and in public discourse across the media.

It presents insights into the city's cultural landscape, where people, imagination, ideas and creativity come together.

We want to know what you think about these observations, and what you value most?

- Adelaide is a city of people, first nations, colonial settlers, home to an evolving multicultural diaspora and a demographic diversity that provides great opportunity for exploration and inclusion
- Adelaide is a city filled with a diversity of expression and experience. More accessible and inclusive practice and opportunities to participate, could lead to new opportunities
- Adelaide is a place of cultural legacy and heritage as a leader, catalyst, incubator and presenter of culture throughout its history. There is opportunity to grow our legacy through targeted investment and strategy
- Adelaide can better understand and protect our cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, through planning and heritage laws, policy and strategy
- Adelaide is a leader in the presentation of cultural products and could strengthen its role as a city of resilient makers, creatives and producers whose businesses and practice are sustained and embraced as innovative energy
- Adelaide is a collegial cultural capital and could find deeper connectivity through fostering collaboration, partnerships and engagement to drive social and cultural outcomes
- Adelaide is a city of year-round culture with festivals, events and activations, and the internationally recognised and celebrated Park Lands host and enable culture at all levels for our community
- Adelaide is a city of living culture and diverse collections with a wealth of interesting stories, spaces and people
- Opportunity exists to reimagine and target investment in the city's Night Time Entertainment Economy
- Adelaide controls the enabling environment for cultural activity in the city, so opportunities for reduction in red tape, enhancement of accessibility, investment in flexible cultural infrastructure and third spaces, and strategies to drive participation can be developed with community
- Adelaide can lead and advocate to strike, shape and streamline regulations to protect tangible and intangible heritage and to support culture makers and businesses
- Adelaide can demonstrate cultural leadership by facilitating robust discussions, collaboration, and thinking with the community and industry that will guide the cultural agenda for the city
- Improvements to cultural accessibility and inclusivity for families, youth, older people, and international students from all backgrounds will enhance cultural participation and benefit the community.

## Strategic Tensions and Challenges Facing the Cultural Sector in Adelaide

The cultural sector in Adelaide and across South Australia is facing significant challenges, exacerbated by both long-standing issues and recent developments. Constraints can fuel innovation and drive resilience and may present opportunities for leadership by the City of Adelaide. The following themes are shaping the local discourse<sup>1</sup> on culture and cultural investment in Adelaide:

**Sustained Support of Culture:** South Australia has seen reductions in arts funding, and overall investment in culture being outpaced by population growth, resulting in a loss of cultural infrastructure (organisations, spaces, initiatives and creators). Our Cultural assets (venues, collections, institutions) require investment so they can continue to serve our communities to a high quality. Local government has historically increased its financial investment in culture to provide enabling support for the creation and showcasing of culture.

**Retention of Creatives and Culture:** Adelaide has experienced a loss of cultural workers and artists, who are moving to other cities due to better opportunities. The local cultural sector has shrunk, with fewer employment opportunities, leading to a decline in the vibrancy and diversity of expression. The Creative Australia National Cultural Policy provides an opportunity for policy setting changes to elevate the centrality of the artist and arts worker, and local policy can consider opportunities to retain talent in Adelaide.

**Cost of Living:** The cost-of-living crisis is increasingly sidelining the arts, which are often framed as a luxury rather than a vital part of life. This impacts both the accessibility of art to the community and the ability of artists and organisations to produce and present culture. There is evidence that attendance at cultural events and engaging in creative experiences is vital to a thriving, cohesive and connected community, particularly in the face of cost-of-living pressures.

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> *InDaily*. "Dire Straits: Culture, Value and the State of South Australia's Institutions." Accessed [date].

<sup>2</sup> *The Conversation*. "The Arts Are Being Sidelined in the Cost of Living Crisis. It's Time We Stopped Framing Them as a Luxury." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InReview*. "Why Australia Urgently Needs an Arts and Culture Reset." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InDaily*. "Hanging on to Hope: SA Cultural Policy Puts Sector on Edge." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InReview*. "South Australia Wants a Creative Future - but We're Going About It the Wrong Way." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InDaily*. "Without Homemade Culture, SA Can't Understand Its Past or Plan Its Future." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InReview*. "The Decline of Arts Support in South Australia." Accessed August 2024.

<https://inreview.com.au>.

<sup>2</sup> *The Conversation*. "Cuts in the State Budget, a Gallery on Hold and Millions on Sports: The Decline of Arts Support in South Australia." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InDaily*. "Premier Urged to Address the 'Dire State of the Arts' in SA." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InDaily*. "South Australia's Slow-Moving Cultural Crisis." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InDaily*. "Libraries Warn of Service Cuts as Funding Rise Overdue." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InDaily*. "The Real Value of Adelaide's Live Music Venues." Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *The Conversation*. "Australia's Live Music Crisis Is Essentially a Crisis of Confidence. How Could We Bring It Back?" Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *CityMag*. "'Do or Die' for West End Venues as Six Close in Two Months." *InDaily*. Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *CityMag*. "'Once They're Gone, They're Gone': Adelaide Alternative Venues Fight to Survive." *InDaily*. Accessed August 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *InDaily*. "Crown & Anchor Threat Prompts Cultural Heritage Debate." Accessed August 2024.

**Perceptions about Culture:** Investment largely focused on the presentation of culture with guaranteed return on investment economic benefits. There is a strong focus and support for peak festival seasons and major events to drive participation and visitation, which impacts smaller, grassroots and enduring cultural activities, makers, spaces and groups. Culture has intrinsic value and meaning to makers and audiences and takes time and resources to develop. All levels of government have the opportunity to strategically collaborate on a long-term plan for investment in the cultural and creative economy and effective and relevant policy settings.

**Strategic Cultural Leadership:** Recent media coverage regarding cultural policy development engagement for South Australia has been critical, citing a lack of depth and practical focus. Much public discourse has focused on prioritising market-driven outcomes and tourism over the intrinsic value of culture, which is considered essential for community identity and the long-term sustainability of the sector. This highlights the need for platforms for considered and focused discourse regarding the whole-of-cultural-and-creative-industries agenda for both the community, city and state.

**Precarious Night Time Entertainment Economy:** Adelaide's night time entertainment economy is currently facing significant challenges, including rising operational costs, changes in consumer behavior, and economic pressures such as cost of living increases and escalating liquor excise duties. These issues have contributed to the closure of several night time entertainment venues in the city. The complexities and challenges faced by the night time entertainment economy impact the number of diverse and safe spaces available to our community. There is opportunity to make policy decisions and invest in projects that centre community and culture as key drivers for local businesses.

## Draft Cultural Policy Objectives and Priorities

The following draft objectives and priorities build on Adelaide’s strengths, incorporate research insights and respond to local strategic tensions, and global trends relevant to capital cities.

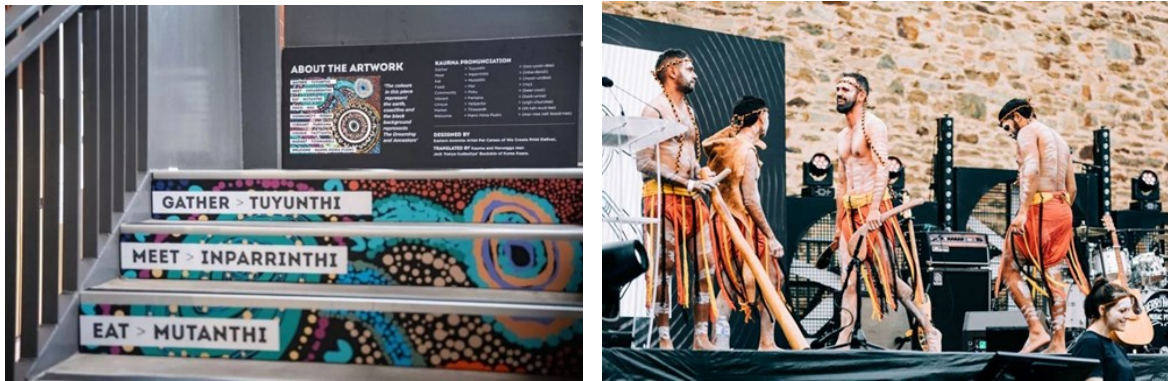
<b>A City that Welcomes the World</b>	<b>Australia’s Cultural and Creative Capital</b>	<b>Adelaide is a City for People</b>	<b>Connected to our Built and Natural Heritage</b>	<b>Creativity and Culture Driving our City’s Future</b>
<b>Continuous Culture: Honouring First Nations Peoples</b>				

<b>Objective 1 Continuous Culture: Honouring First Nations Peoples</b>	<b>Objective 2 A City that Welcomes the World</b>	<b>Objective 3 Australia’s Cultural and Creative Capital</b>
Honour and strengthen awareness of Kaurna culture and connection to Country as central to Adelaide’s identity and future	Celebrate Adelaide’s cultural diversity and global connections to attract more residents and visitors, increase social cohesion, resilience, and build a sense of belonging	Amplify Adelaide’s UNESCO City of Music designation and our leadership as Australia’s creative and cultural capital
Consult Kaurna communities and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure decision making reflects and strengthens these communities	Provide inclusive and respectful opportunities for people of all cultures, backgrounds, ages and abilities to participate in the cultural life of the city	Keep Adelaide buzzing with a city-wide approach to embed music, culture and heritage preservation in policy, place and community
Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to practice cultural traditions, heritage, languages and artistic expressions in Adelaide	Fund and facilitate community-led free and low-cost festivals, events and initiatives for cultural sharing, creative development and connection	Support the institutions, venues and creatives that sustain our music, culture, and heritage
Deepen ties with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and increase understanding to continue our community’s respectful journey towards Reconciliation and truth-telling	Preserve Adelaide’s cultural diversity through living heritage including festive events and other social practices and traditions.	Improve employment opportunities and foster an enabling environment that supports sustainable careers in the creative and cultural sectors



<b>Objective 4</b> <b>Adelaide is a City for People</b>	<b>Objective 5</b> <b>Connected to our Built and Natural Heritage</b>	<b>Objective 6</b> <b>Creativity and Culture Driving our City's Future</b>
Nurture creative culture to improve our city's appeal, liveability and global profile	Respect, protect and strengthen our world class architecture, cultural assets, collections, and environment	Advance the role of culture in enriching the life of the city, our people and the environment
Uplift the city, its residents and visitors and reduce barriers to access to high quality cultural experiences, including public art, events and festivals that reflect Adelaide's unique heritage and stories	Ensure our cultural identity is easily accessible by the community through engaging and discoverable interpretation and digital resources	Develop new and deepen existing, inter-sector collaborations and partnerships that attract new resources to sustain the city's cultural development into the future
Activate key and emerging precincts, vacant and underutilised buildings, Adelaide Park Lands, city squares and laneways with cultural experiences and creative communities to stimulate visitation to the city and the growth of the local economy	Prioritise access to public spaces, the Adelaide Central Market, the Adelaide Park Lands, City Libraries, Community Centres and the Adelaide Town Hall as spaces of cultural creation, celebration, learning and connection	Promote Adelaide's unique cultural offerings through a range of channels to increase participation and raise our profile as a creative and cultural capital
Provide a network of complementary affordable, accessible, and fit for-purpose cultural facilities and spaces including Adelaide Town Hall, City Libraries and Community Centres	Invest in cultural infrastructure improvements to support diverse cultural uses of public and natural spaces, including city squares and Adelaide Park Lands	Evaluate and share the social, cultural, economic and environmental value of culture for the life of the city and the wellbeing of local communities

## Draft Objective 1. Continuous Culture: Honouring First Nations Peoples



Images: (Left) Adelaide Central Market Southwest staircase artwork by Eastern Arrernte artist Pat Caruso of We Create Print Deliver. Translated by Kaurna and Narungga Man Jack Buckskin of Kuma Kaaru. (Right) Kuma Kaaru performing at the South Australian Music Awards 2021. Photographer: Samuel Graves.

This is Kaurna Country. Kaurna people have cared for and nurtured this place for thousands of generations. Their stories are Adelaide's first stories told through music, dance and ceremony. Today First Nations stories are also a mechanism for truth telling and self-determination. These stories are complimented by the stories of many diverse peoples that call Adelaide home. Together, these stories promote a shared understanding and respect and connect us to a global community of stories about our past and our futures.

The City of Adelaide is home to Victoria Square / Tarntanyangga, where the Aboriginal flag was first flown in 1971 as a symbol of unity and national identity. The City of Adelaide has a long-standing commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, particularly the Kaurna people. This is reflected in the Reconciliation Statement signed in 1997 and subsequent initiatives, including the Reconciliation Vision Statement and National Sorry Day acknowledgment in 2012.

Kaurna art and culture, alongside those of other Aboriginal language groups, is celebrated throughout Adelaide allowing our community to connect with their living culture of the Kaurna people. These stories, symbols, and expressions of Kaurna and Aboriginal cultures are integral to the City of Adelaide's identity, promoting a spirit of unity and respect as the city continues to evolve.

### Questions

- How can we champion Kaurna culture in our shared future in a meaningful way?
- What steps can we take to ensure that Kaurna and other First Nations voices influence, and are represented in the city's cultural decisions?
- What initiatives and projects can we collaborate on with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to increase visibility of Kaurna culture in the public realm?

### Where we are

- Cultural Mapping of the Adelaide Park Lands
- Cultural Strategic Partnerships to champion Reconciliation and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture and elevate Kaurna culture and connection to country
- Targeted support to increase the representation of Kaurna, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the life of the city saw the number of First Nations initiatives supported increase from 22 events in 17/18 to 69 events in 22/23

- Each First Nations Arts and Cultural Grant project funded has on average attracted 787 attendees and provided paid employment to 14 First Nations creatives
- NAIDOC Week activations, artwork commission and activations at Rundle Mall and Art Pod
- City Library Aboriginal Cultural Collection created in consultation with Kurna community representatives
- City Libraries and Community Centres Reconciliation programs.  
*Figures from 2023/24*

### **Current and Ongoing Commitments**

- Delivery of the Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2024/2027
- First Nations Arts and Cultural Grants to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led initiatives in the city
- Public Art commissions that celebrate and share Kurna and First Nations culture such as the Place of Reflection and Central Market murals
- Community Cultural Awareness training and Community Connections Programs
- Mankurri-api Kuu / Reconciliation Room.

### **Priorities**

- Consult Kurna communities and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure decision making reflects and strengthens these communities
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to practice cultural traditions, heritage, languages and artistic expressions in Adelaide
- Deepen ties with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and increase understanding to continue our community's respectful journey towards Reconciliation and truth-telling.

## Draft Objective 2. A City that Welcomes the World



Images: (Left) OZAsia Festival Lucky Dumpling Market, 2021. Image courtesy of Xplorer Studio. (Right) Grote Wishing Grove event, City of Adelaide Christmas Festival 2020. Photo: Danny Howe

*"Libraries are such incredible spaces that are open and accessible to everyone. You can be there using the space for research, self-development, learning purposes and to have visual arts as part of your experience; it is something that we are just so lucky to have right at our fingertips here. It's a community space that is available to all, and bringing in the arts into this learning environment it's just such a pleasure!"*

- Stavroula Adameitis, aka Frida Las Vegas, 2024 City of Adelaide SALA Emerging Curator

Multiculturalism and inclusivity are central to the identity of Adelaide. The contributions and cultural expressions of our diverse communities are part of what makes our city distinctive and support the social, cultural, and economic fabric of our city.

The 2021 Australian census confirmed that we are more culturally diverse than ever before. Around 52% of Australian residents have one or both parents born overseas. 3 in 10 Australians were born overseas, and 25% of Australians speak a language other than English at home. In Adelaide, 46% of our city residents were born overseas, and 36% speak a language other than English at home. Australia's Cultural Policy [Revive: A Place for Every Story](#) highlights the importance of, "...ensuring that all Australians, regardless of background, can participate in cultural life." This principle is vital for Adelaide as it ensures that diverse communities shape a distinct image for the city, making it a thriving and appealing destination, a place that people are proud to call home.

### Questions

- How can we attract more people to improve community bonds and embrace our cultural diversity, and global connections?
- What can we do to ensure everyone can take part in the city's cultural life?
- How can we better connect to and with diverse communities and amplify more community voices?
- How can we better support community events that celebrate cultural diversity and encourage cultural sharing?

### **Where We Are**

- 973K+ attendances at community-led cultural projects (2022/23)
- Cultural Strategic Partnerships driving social change and strengthening communities through new intercultural collaborations celebrating local stories and communities
- Nearly 340,000 visitors at the Adelaide City Libraries, an increase of 11.5% on the previous year
- 82% of Christmas Festivals attendees found that it creates a sense of inclusiveness and community (2022/23)
- Adelaide City Libraries offer nearly 5,000 titles in languages other than English including: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese. In 2023/24 the community languages collection saw 12,488 items borrowed by library users across SA
- 474 community-led projects supported through the Arts and Cultural Grants program since 2017, with an average annual investment of \$260,000
- 850,000 people attended projects supported through the Arts and Cultural Grants Program in with projects employing over 2,000 creatives (2022/23)
- 13% (\$164,950) of the combined budget of the Arts and Cultural Grants and Community Impact Grants and Strategic Partnerships was allocated to multicultural projects (2023/24)
- Multicultural festivals funded by City of Adelaide in 2023/24 include: Asia Street Food Festival, Holi Festival, Hongdae in Adelaide and Bastille Festival, as well as Adelaide Fringe and Adelaide Festival which feature a broad range of events led by people of many cultures
- In 2023 a Youth Led Grants round was created with funding up to \$5000 to support ongoing activities such as youth targeted art, dance classes, public music performances and programs that address youth mental health issues and that provide up-skilling or employment skills
- Demand for funding to support the community led cultural activities is outpacing supply and growing exponentially. In 2017/18, only 63% of the 101 applications were funded. In 2023/24, only 39% of a total of 178 applications were funded
- Sensory Kits available at the Adelaide City Libraries
- 2,000+ items delivered through Home Library in 2023/24
- 16 Neighbour Day events in 2024 including eight held within apartments, total attendance approximately 600 people.

*Figures from 2023/24*

### **Current and Ongoing Commitments**

- Delivery of the Diversity, Access and Inclusion Plan
- Maintain and improve disability, LGBTQIA+ and vulnerable or minority group access and inclusion
- Arts, culture and events partnerships, grants and sponsorship opportunities
- Arts and Cultural Grants including First Nations Arts and Cultural Grants (\$260,000)
- Community Impact Grants (\$372,000)
- Accessible and inclusive services for all to encourage full participation of people from diverse backgrounds in the cultural and social life of the city
- Adelaide Central Markets Cultural Programs

- Adelaide New Year's Eve
- Anzac Day Service
- Christmas Festival
- International Students Services
- Library and Community Centres Services and Creative Programs
- Civic Events and Citizenship Ceremonies
- Lighting of Adelaide Town Hall and other city infrastructure
- Flags and Street Banners
- Bilingual Mandarin/English Community Engagement Officer.

**Priorities**

- Provide inclusive and respectful opportunities for people of all cultures, backgrounds, ages and abilities to participate in the cultural life of the city
- Fund and facilitate community-led free and low-cost festivals, events and initiatives for cultural sharing, creative development and connection
- Preserve Adelaide's cultural diversity through living heritage including festive events and other social practices and traditions.

## Draft Objective 3. Australia's Cultural and Creative Capital

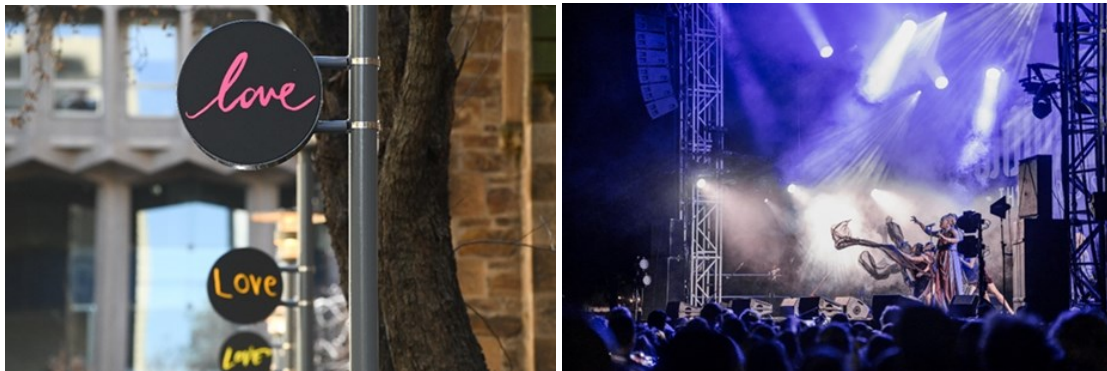


Photo: (Left) Heidi Kenyon, Street of Love (2022). Paul Kelly Laneway. Cath Leo. (Right) Electric Fields, WOMADelaide 2022. Photo: Sage Prime.

*"I think when you look back at what we actually have here, there are lots of successful people that have come from here. So it's really important that we maintain and increase the access and ability of music and arts in Adelaide because we've actually got it all here. I think it's interesting that Adelaide is a UNESCO city. When people won't think of Adelaide first. But it reminds everyone nationally what we do have and what we have produced."*

- Jasmine Crisp, Sia Furler Lane artist.

Adelaide's cultural landscape is rich and diverse. A Festival City and the Wine Capital of Australia, its arts and cultural community punches above its weight and pushes the boundaries of creative expression, especially in areas of live music, performance, visual arts, media and design. Famously known as both a City of Churches and a City of Pubs, live music can be found in both, with Adelaide home to some of the world's finest pipe organs and choirs and its most progressive and popular artists. There's something to entertain and engage audiences all year round, in our pubs, bars, iconic cultural venues and Park Lands, and our City Streets and Squares.

### Questions

- How can we strengthen our reputation as Australia's creative and cultural capital as a UNESCO Creative City and City of Live Music status?
- What steps can we take to ensure music, culture, and heritage are deeply integrated into city policies, our everyday experiences and the community life of the city?
- How can we better support creative and culture professionals and venues to boost employment and create sustainable careers in the arts?

### Where we are

- 6 million+ attendances at major festivals and events supported by AEDA 2022/23
- 8 million+ attendances at major events and festivals including live music supported by City of Adelaide
- 23% Increase hotel occupancy in 2022/23 with major festivals and events playing an important part in the visitor economy
- 7,000+ free live music experiences provided by City of Adelaide (2020 -2024)
- 129 venues in Adelaide and North Adelaide presented live music with the support of City of Adelaide (2020-2024).

*Figures from 2023/24*

### Current and Ongoing Commitments

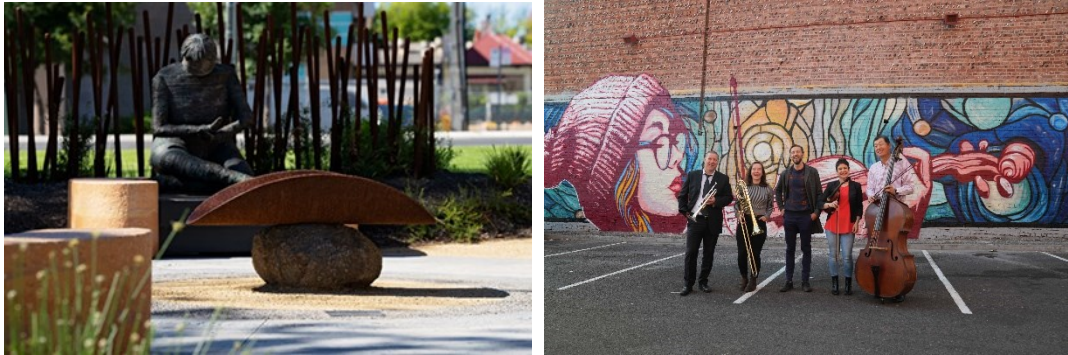
- Adelaide City of Music Laneways honour Adelaide's legendary musicians and music heritage, inviting locals and visitors to explore and support the city's vibrant live music scene
- Provision of Events and Festivals Sponsorship Funding (AEDA)
- AEDA \$100,000 Adelaide Rundle Mall Music Program
- Busking in the City
- Adelaide Central Market Music Program
- National and State partnerships to amplify Adelaide's UNESCO City of Music designation
- Create partnerships to grow and develop current and emerging sectors including the creative sector
- \$54,000 Partnership with the Adelaide UNESCO City of Music Office
- UNESCO City of Music Program
- \$58,000 Live Music Industry and Venues Support
- Music Creation Resources at the Library of Things
- UNESCO City of Music Toy Library
- East End Unleashed, Winter Weekends
- UNESCO City of Music Loading Zones
- UNESCO City of Music Street Banners
- Music in the Square.

**Priorities**

- Keep Adelaide buzzing with a city-wide approach to embed music, culture and heritage preservation in policy, place and community
- Support the institutions, venues and creatives that sustain our music, culture, and heritage
- Improve employment opportunities and foster an environment that supports sustainable careers in the creative sector.



## Draft Objective 4. Adelaide is A City for People



Images: (Left) Auntie Yvonne Koolmatrie and Karl Meyer, *Empty Arms* as part of A Place of Reflection (2023). Photo: Brad Griffin. (Right) Muralist Simeon Jones with members of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in front of *The Violinist*, 2024, Rosina Street, West End. Project supported by the City of Adelaide Arts and Cultural Grants.

*“Public art is really important to a city because it can engage with people on a lot of different levels. You know, sometimes, there’s that sense of things that look cool, that, you know, people might stop and notice and take interest in. But there’s also placemaking that happens on a bit of a deeper level that gives you know, the kind of characteristics of the city.”*

- Heidi Kenyon, artist, Paul Kelly Lane.

Adelaide is a City for People. Our city thrives on creativity and expression, making it a hub for cultural expression all year round that resonates with both our residents and visitors from all ages and backgrounds.

Public art invites everyone to engage with their surroundings, adding vibrancy and reflecting the unique identity of Adelaide and its people. Adelaide's creative economy is central to activating spaces and enhancing the visitor experience, contributing to the city's vibrancy, boosting business activity, and attracting international visitors. The city's streets, squares, and Park Lands are curated with diverse, celebratory experiences that promote creativity and support wellbeing. These places strive to offer fun, lively, and engaging experiences for everyone who lives, works, or visits Adelaide.

The City of Adelaide actively removes barriers to cultural participation by investing in public art, providing platforms for local artists and ensuring that our communities are enriched by the arts.

### Questions

- How can we enhance our city’s appeal and global profile by offering high-quality cultural experiences that reflect the city’s unique identity, and heritage?
- What strategies can we use to activate key areas and underutilised spaces in the City of Adelaide with cultural activities to boost visitation, community engagement and our local economy?
- How can we ensure our affordable and accessible cultural spaces, like our Town Hall, community centres and libraries, better support creative communities?

### Where we are

- Estimated 20,000 attendances through Cultural Strategic Partnerships
- 7,700 Attendance at free Adelaide Town Hall concerts
- 640 Public artworks including fountains
- 120+ Street art and murals
- 230K Library loans
- 180K+ Digital loans
- Over 1500 interactions with Library Out and About program.

*Figures from 2023/24*

### **Current and Ongoing Commitments**

- A minimum of 1.3% of Council's total Capital Works Program budget available on an annual basis for public art. City Activation West End, East End, Gouger Street, Hutt Street and North Adelaide Precincts
- Provision of funding to precinct groups through the Mainstreet Development Program
- Delivery of investment attraction program (AEDA Business Plan)
- Opportunities for sustained activation in the city through outdoor dining, parking, leases and licences
- Encourage interesting and unique experiences in public spaces through permit management
- Community led memorials, monuments and street art
- Free live music programs at City of Adelaide cultural facilities including Adelaide Central Market, Adelaide Town Hall, City Libraries and Community Centres and in the public realm
- Library collections
- Continued support for Renew Adelaide (AEDA Strategic Partnership Program)
- Achieve Disability Access compliance in all new and upgraded infrastructure.

### **Priorities**

- Uplift the city, its residents and visitors and remove barriers to access high quality cultural experiences including public art, events and festivals that reflect Adelaide's unique heritage and stories
- Activate key and emerging precincts, vacant and underutilised buildings, Adelaide Park Lands, city squares and laneways with cultural experiences and creative communities to stimulate visitation to the city and the growth of the local economy
- Provide a network of complementary affordable, accessible, and fit for-purpose cultural facilities and spaces including Adelaide Town Hall, City Libraries and Community Centres.

## Draft Objective 5. Connected to our Built and Natural Heritage



Image: (Left) Teen protest art workshop delivered as part of Tikari Rigney's First Nations curatorial residence at Adelaide Contemporary Experimental (ACE) supported through the City of Adelaide and Arts South Australia pilot First Nations Grants. Photo: Thomas McCammon, courtesy of ACE. (Right) Tutti Art's Thank God It's Friday Choir performing at the Adelaide Town Hall Christmas Concert 2022 presented through a Cultural Strategic Partnership with the Adelaide Choral Network. Photo: Shaun Li for Capture the Present.

*"It is worth noting that Adelaide has been a heavy hitter in terms of its contribution to Australian music in general. Many successful artists cut their teeth in pubs and bars. You don't learn how to be in a band and work with an audience by doing a course. You learn on the job. Venues such as the Cranker are our universities. I strongly support the Crown and Anchor continuing as a music venue. To see it go would be to lose our history."*

- Paul Kelly, singer-songwriter

Cultural infrastructure, assets and our collections help to sustain and promote a diverse range of cultural practices and are essential for the preservation, expression and promotion of cultural heritage. Our collections and spaces also play a key role in shaping the cultural experiences of individuals and communities and can contribute to social cohesion and economic growth.

Adelaide is a city deeply connected to its built and natural heritage, valuing its rich cultural legacy, and the stories that have shaped it. The City of Adelaide's investment complements the State cultural institutions that safeguard, translate, and celebrate the stories that shape our city's identity.

### Questions

- How can we best protect and showcase our city's built architecture, cultural assets, and natural environment?
- What can we do to ensure that the City of Adelaide's cultural identity is more accessible and engaging for our community?

- How can we improve our public spaces to better support cultural activities and community connections?

### **Where we are**

- \$40 Million value of Public Art Collection
- 71K+ Items Library Collection
- 15,000 City Archives historic photographs
- 4,500 City of Adelaide Civic Collection historic and cultural artefacts and artworks
- 140 Oral history interviews
- 60+ artworks in the City of Adelaide Contemporary Art Collection
- 6,000 Shelf meters of Council's archival documents
- \$1M+ Heritage funding
- Partnerships including History Festival, SALA, Adelaide Festival
- Exhibitions at City Libraries, Community Centres, Adelaide Town Hall, ART POD
- 717 Events held in the Adelaide Park Lands and city streets 2023.  
*Figures from 2023/24*

### **Current and Ongoing Commitments**

- Protect, share and elevate our heritage and culturally significant places, maintaining the character while encouraging adaptive reuse, repurposing and upgrading buildings
- No loss of heritage places and consider options to increase the 1,850 places
- Review the heritage overlays to ensure our heritage places are known and accommodated during development by 2025
- City Streets, Squares and Adelaide Park Lands naming
- Event infrastructure improvements as part of city squares and streets re-development
- Support and program community and major events and festivals in the Adelaide Park Lands
- Create and advocate for multiuse green spaces such as open space, community gardens and pocket parks that enable shared use and community connection
- Enable an annual Cultural Burn and be guided by Kaurna community on issues of cultural maintenance
- Library History Hub and resources
- ART POD exhibitions and artist residencies
- Art in Adelaide Public Art database to be expanded
- Refresh the way in which information is provided to visitors in the city.

### **Priorities**

- Ensure our cultural identity is easily accessible by the community through engaging and discoverable interpretation and digital resources
- Prioritise access to public spaces, the Adelaide Central Markets, the Adelaide Park Lands, City Libraries, Community Centres and the Adelaide Town Hall as spaces of cultural creation, celebration, learning and connection
- Invest in cultural infrastructure improvements to support diverse cultural uses of public and natural spaces, including city squares and Adelaide Park Lands.

## Draft Objective 6. Creativity and Culture Driving our City's Future



Images: (Left) Atlantic Street Band's second line parade through Rundle Mall, Adelaide Jazz Festival, 2024. Photo: Dave Baun Photography. (Right) Stuart Anderson at *See me Through my Hands*, a performance featuring emerging writers from the Deaf community telling stories in Auslan at Adelaide Writers Week 2021. Presented by Writers SA. Projects supported by the City of Adelaide Arts and Cultural Grants and Cultural Strategic Partnerships Programs.

Culture is a pivotal driver of future growth and prosperity for the City of Adelaide, serving as both a catalyst for social cohesion, and an economic engine. As Australia's Festival and Cultural Capital and a recognised hub for creative industries such as visual effects, film post-production, and gaming.

South Australia is home to more than 10,000 creative businesses employing more than 15,000 people and contributing more than \$1.8 billion to the state's economy. In 2018-19 creative businesses in South Australia contributed an estimated \$1.45 billion in value added, employing nearly 16,000 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs). This cultural vibrancy, underpinned by established major events like the Adelaide Fringe and Illuminate Adelaide, not only boosts local business and tourism however also enhances the city's global reputation.

Creativity and culture are not just embellishments to Adelaide's future growth—they are foundational elements that can drive the city's economic, social, and urban development.

### Questions

- How can culture improve the City of Adelaide experience, our quality of life and environment?
- What new and different types of partnerships can help sustain and improve the City of Adelaide's cultural growth in the future?

- How can we better promote the City of Adelaide's cultural strengths to boost participation and enhance its reputation as a cultural capital?

#### **Where we are**

- 1 million visits to ExperienceAdelaide.com.au last financial year
- 160,000 City of Adelaide *What's On* eDM subscribers, a weekly snapshot of events and festivals in the city
- 800,000+ City of Adelaide creative content social media impressions (City of Adelaide, Libraries and Community Centres social media channels)
- 25,000+ City of Adelaide cultural eDM subscribers (*Art in the City*, *POP* and *Your Community*)
- 46% Open rate *Art in the City* eDM (4% over industry benchmark)
- 16,000+ Libraries and Community Centres social media followers (Facebook, Instagram and X formerly known as Twitter)
- Friday Flashback posts sharing stories of our built heritage reached almost 1 million people
- \$1,059,213 through Cultural Strategic Partnerships  
*Figures from 2023/24*

#### **Current and Ongoing Commitments**

- Promote multicultural events and activities in our city
- Collaboration with government departments and agencies to develop a consistent approach to capital city and state promotion (AEDA Business Plan)
- Develop Experience Adelaide as a known destination digitally or physically to plan and navigate a memorable visitor experience in the city.

#### **Priorities**

- Develop new inter-sector collaborations and partnerships that attract new resources to sustain the city's cultural development into the future
- Promote Adelaide's unique cultural offerings through a range of channels to increase participation and raise our profile as a creative and cultural capital
- Evaluate and share the social, cultural, economic and environmental value of culture for the life of the city and the wellbeing of local communities.

## How Will We Do It?

### *Long Term Plan*

Sustained and adaptive action is driven by long-term thinking and the implementation plan is proposed to operate in three key phases designed to enable Council to evaluate its services, programs, partnerships and infrastructure and to identify gaps, effectively focus its resources, develop strategic partnerships, respond to opportunities, and ensure the relevance of its long-term strategy.

1-3 years: Consolidate and Catalyse

4-8 years: Amplification and Growth

9+ years: Evaluation and Transformation

### *Strategies and Key Initiatives*

Council has already committed to a range of initiatives, targets and measures to support community, cultural and creative life in Adelaide through its Strategic Plan 2024-2028 and related strategies and plans.

Through the consultation process, additional strategies and key initiatives will be identified in conversations with the community, the cultural sector, government, and the private sector.

These will be presented to Council as costed initiatives for consideration and adoption.

### *Leadership and Governance*

With a long lifespan and a vision to engage the whole community in our city's cultural life, it is vital that the Cultural Policy becomes a continuous, community-led policy that makes Council's investment more visible and its services, programs, and infrastructure more accessible.

Through the consultation process, the City of Adelaide will seek suggestions about a future governance model and community-engaged practice that is meaningful, considered, and beneficial to all.

### *Investment and Partnership*

As the Capital City Council for all South Australians, the City of Adelaide will initiate and be open to investments and partnerships to enhance the quality, profile and accessibility of our cultural life in Adelaide.

As a partner with community, Council will make facilities, funds and resources available to create an environment that protects, stimulates and celebrates a diversity of cultural expression, including community-led arts, creative and heritage initiatives.

Through partnerships, we will create new opportunities, make best use of existing budgets, and add value to our society and our economy. We will leverage expertise and strengths, attract new resources, align strategic outcomes and services, and sustain the city's cultural development into the future.

Council will partner with Federal, State and Local Governments, cultural and heritage institutions, universities and other education providers, non-government organisations, the private sector (commercial, business and collectors), cultural and creative businesses and practitioners, media and the community.

Adelaide is part of a global network of UNESCO Creative Cities and has Sister City relationships that present partnership opportunities, including knowledge sharing, extending networks, and cultural exchange.

## What Does Success Look Like?

The City of Adelaide aims to shift the dial from the current state to a future state for enhanced cultural, social, civic, economic and environmental outcomes. We seek your advice and suggestions on the best spread of investment and resourcing to ensure we succeed. Success factors for the Cultural Policy may include:

- Depth and quantum of engagement input, discourse and feedback
- Diversity of community members, sector workers and leaders participating in the engagement activities
- Positive feedback on the engagement approach and activities that they demonstrate inclusivity, transparency and respect for the individuals and organisations and the communities and sectors they belong to and represent
- Council endorses the Cultural Policy and commits to fund its implementation
- The objectives and priorities of the Cultural Policy are embedded across operational decision making that will be applicable to all areas of Council and its subsidiaries
- Alignment with State and Federal government policy for maximum impact and to leverage resources and investment
- A mechanism to facilitate more meaningful conversations with community for a continuous community-engaged policy conversation and opportunities for collaboration implemented
- Development and implementation of an organisation wide dashboard to better measure and assess Council's investment and performance
- Improvement in key metrics including satisfaction, wellbeing and participation indicators for residents and city users.

## How Will We Know We Have Made an Impact?

The City of Adelaide will refresh its performance measures to align with the objectives and priorities that resonate with and support our community and are adopted by Council.

It is proposed that:

- A progress report including implementation actions is provided to Council each year
- A review of the Cultural Policy is conducted every four years. This offers an opportunity to respond to any major external environmental factors and reflect any changes to operational and funding considerations
- Final review, measure and evaluation of the Cultural Policy is undertaken at the end of its lifespan (2025-2036) with the results reported to Council and to the community.

## Engagement Strategy

The Cultural Policy will be developed in conversation and in partnership with our community so that it reflects, serves, supports and belongs to the people of Adelaide.

This will include a Culture Roundtable hosted by the Lord Mayor, a Live Music Industry Forum, and additional workshops with key stakeholders from our creative community including representatives of cultural and creative sectors and community groups.



To strengthen engagement and leadership of community-level cultural policy, Administration will engage with community in Council venues and on our streets to seek perspectives from people from diverse cultural backgrounds, life experiences, and connections with the city and its cultural life.

We will widely promote the availability of an online survey through *Our Adelaide* - a collective space where every member of our community can contribute to the conversation about our city's cultural future. This will assist us to understand the needs of the arts, culture and heritage sectors in the City of Adelaide.

We intend to invite, listen to and deeply consider all ideas, proposals and feedback offered, respecting the generosity with which they are shared. The Cultural Policy of the City of Adelaide will be refined and improved through this process and a Cultural Strategy developed and costed for Council's review and decision. A summary of this feedback will be presented to Council to ensure that the voices and views of our community are heard.

### General Consultation Questions

- What is the best thing about living in Adelaide?
- What strengths and values do you observe in Adelaide's diverse cultural communities?
- When you describe Adelaide to friends who live interstate or overseas, is there an image, story, song or artwork that you think of first that best captures this place?
- If you could change something about Adelaide what would it be?
- Can you describe what kind of place you hope Adelaide will be in 10 years' time?
- What are the most pressing obstacles to achieving this vision?
- How would you like to continue to be engaged in community-led policy development?

## Questions on the Draft Objectives

### **Objective 1. Continuous Culture: Honouring First Nations Peoples**

How can we champion Kurna culture in our shared future in a meaningful way?

What steps can we take to ensure that Kurna and other First Nations voices influence, and are represented in the city's cultural decisions?

What initiatives and projects can we collaborate on with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to increase visibility of Kurna culture in the public realm?

### **Objective 2. A City that Welcomes the World**

How can we attract more people to improve community bonds and embrace our cultural diversity, and global connections?

What can we do to ensure everyone can take part in the city's cultural life?

How can we better connect to and with diverse communities and amplify more community voices?

How can we better support community events that celebrate cultural diversity and encourage cultural sharing?

### **Objective 3. Australia's Cultural and Creative Capital**

How can we strengthen our reputation as Australia's creative and cultural capital as a UNESCO Creative City and City of Live Music status?

What steps can we take to ensure music, culture, and heritage are deeply integrated into city policies, our everyday experiences and the community life of the city?

How can we better support creative and culture professionals and venues to boost employment and create sustainable careers in the arts?

### **Objective 4. Adelaide is A City for People**

How can we enhance our city's appeal and global profile by offering high-quality cultural experiences that reflect the city's unique identity, and heritage?

What strategies can we use to activate key areas and underutilised spaces in the City of Adelaide with cultural activities to boost visitation, community engagement and our local economy?

How can we ensure our affordable and accessible cultural spaces, like our Town Hall, community centres and libraries, better support creative communities?

### **Objective 5. Connected to our Built and Natural Heritage**

How can we best protect and showcase our city's built architecture, cultural assets, and natural environment?

What can we do to ensure that the City of Adelaide's cultural identity is more accessible and engaging for our community?

How can we improve our public spaces to better support cultural activities and community connections?

**Objective 6. Creativity and Culture Driving our City's Future**

How can culture improve the City of Adelaide experience, our quality of life and environment?

What new and different types of partnerships can help sustain and improve the City of Adelaide's cultural growth in the future?

How can we better promote the City of Adelaide's cultural strengths to boost participation and enhance its reputation as a cultural capital?

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19. [Festivals Adelaide & Deloitte. \(2022\). \*Economic Impact of Growing Adelaide's Festivals.\*](#)
20. [Local Government Association of South Australia. \(2021\). \*Submission on the South Australian Arts and Cultural Tourism Strategy.\*](#)

21. [National Association for the Visual Arts \(NAVA\). \(2023\). \*Love your local: How visual artists, makers and designers can engage with local government.\*](#)
23. [Reset Arts and Culture Collective. \(2022\). \*Submission to the National Cultural Policy consultation.\*](#)
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25. [South Australian Government. \(2022\). \*Creative Industries South Australia Report. Retrieved from Creative Industries SA.\*](#)
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