



Culture: The Life Of Our City

City of Adelaide: Cultural Policy 2025-
2036



CITY OF
ADELAIDE



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



ADELAIDE
CITY OF MUSIC

Designated
UNESCO Creative City
in 2015

Background and Purpose

Council is developing a Cultural Policy that promotes and supports **the city's unique cultural identity and opportunities** with the aim of:

- **Positioning Adelaide as a cultural leader** aligned with its UNESCO Creative City of Music status.
- **Celebrating cultural diversity**, including Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and multicultural heritage.
- **Guiding strategic investment** in cultural infrastructure, programs, and partnerships.
- **Encouraging community participation** to strengthen social cohesion.
- **Integrating culture into city development** to drive economic growth and wellbeing.

Discussion Paper and Policy Priorities

A Cultural Policy Discussion Paper was prepared to invite feedback from residents and stakeholders to help shape Council's cultural priorities for 2025–2036. It highlights Council's role, assets, and resources in supporting the city's cultural development.

Draft Priorities

- People are at the centre of our city and its culture
- Honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's continuous culture
- Celebrating multiculturalism and respecting diversity and traditions
- Adelaide is Australia's cultural and creative capital
- The city's culture is connected to our built and natural heritage
- Creativity and culture drive our city's future

The City of Adelaide demonstrates a strong and ongoing commitment to championing Aboriginal culture and communities, particularly the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains, through cultural recognition, reconciliation plans and initiatives, and strategic partnerships.

- **Cultural Mapping:** The Adelaide Park Lands have undergone cultural mapping to strengthen connections with Kaurna heritage with Kaurna history shared through an online interactive trail, videos and personal stories.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Partnerships have been established to promote reconciliation and elevate Kaurna culture and its connection to Country with groups include Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music, Kuma Kaaru, Ochre Dawn, Guildhouse, State Government, U-City, and the Adelaide City of Music Office.
- **Event Growth:** The number of First Nations initiatives supported grew from 22 in 2017/18 to 69 in 2022/23, highlighting increased visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures including a Park Lands Cultural Burn and Kids on Country.
- **Grants and Impact:** First Nations Arts and Cultural Grant projects in 2023/24 have each attracted an average of 787 attendees and provided employment to 14 First Nations creatives.
- **Public Engagement:** Initiatives include the creation of the City Library Aboriginal Cultural Collection, NAIDOC Week activations, and reconciliation programs in libraries and community centres.
- **Public Art:** Investment in Aboriginal-led initiatives and public art commissions to celebrate and share Aboriginal culture and stories, including murals at the Central Market, No Fixed Address City of Music Laneway, Council Chamber portrait of Auntie Shirley Peisley, and the Place of Reflection for the Stolen Generation.

Case Study – Kurna Song Book Revival

The **Kurna Song Book Revival Project** is a cultural initiative led by the **University of Adelaide's Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM)**, in collaboration with **Kurna Warra Pintyanthi**.

The project is supported by the **City of Adelaide** through a **Cultural Strategic Partnership** and a grant from the Indigenous Languages and Arts (ILA) program from the Federal Government.

The project focuses on refreshing the historic Song Books from 1990 (Kurna and Ngarrindjeri songs) and 1999 (Kurna songs) featuring award winning artists Trials (Daniel Rankine), DEM MOB, Tilly Tjala Thomas, Katie Aspel, Marlon Motlop, and Kurna community musicians.

The revised 2025 Song Book will **launch on 3 March 2025 at Adelaide University's Kurna Day with FREE community performances of the new Kurna songs.**

This project supports the Kurna community with their ongoing language maintenance and revival efforts. The new book and songs will be available online enabling community awareness and understanding of the Kurna language and culture.



2025 Kurna Song Book Cover Artwork *Karrawirra Parri* by Gabriel Stengle (Kurna, Ngarrindjeri, Narungga, Wirangu).
Artwork commission supported by City of Adelaide funding

Case Study – Place of Reflection

The **Place of Reflection** is a public artwork in **Murlawirrpurka / Rymill Park (Park 14)**, honouring the **Stolen Generations** and their resilience.

Initiated by the **City of Adelaide** and supported by the **Government of South Australia**, it had a \$265,000 budget.

A key action in the **Stretch Reconciliation Plan (2015–2018)**, it provides a space for gathering, strength, and healing.

Created by **Ngarrindjeri Elder Aunty Yvonne Koolmatrie**, with **Karl Meyer** and **Exhibition Studios**, it features a **sculpture and seating** in a landscaped setting.

Developed with **Aboriginal community consultation and guided by an Advisory Group** of key cultural and reconciliation organisations.

Recognised with two 2024 AILA Awards: **SA Award of Excellence for Small Projects & National Landscape Architecture Award for Small Projects**

A lasting tribute to truth-telling, healing, and Reconciliation in Adelaide.



Culture: The Life Of the City Forum

- On 9 December 2024, *Culture: The Life of the City Forum* brought together 100 leaders, creatives, and policymakers to discuss Adelaide's cultural future. Reconciliation Committee members were invited to add their voices, values and perspectives to the forum.
- Hosted by **Lord Mayor Dr Jane Lomax-Smith AM**, the event featured keynote speakers **Marcus Westbury OAM, Kate Fielding, and Jack Kanya Kudnuitya Buckskin**, who shared insights on Adelaide's cultural evolution, diversity, and strengths.
- Key themes and feedback included:
 - **Cultural Identity:** Adelaide should embrace its uniqueness, valuing shared culture and experiences.
 - **Local Government's Role:** Leadership and investment in culture are vital for a strong, cohesive, and sustainable future.
 - **National Influence:** Adelaide plays a key role in Australia's cultural landscape with global potential.
 - **Future Vision:** Participants envisioned Adelaide as a leading cultural capital in the next decade



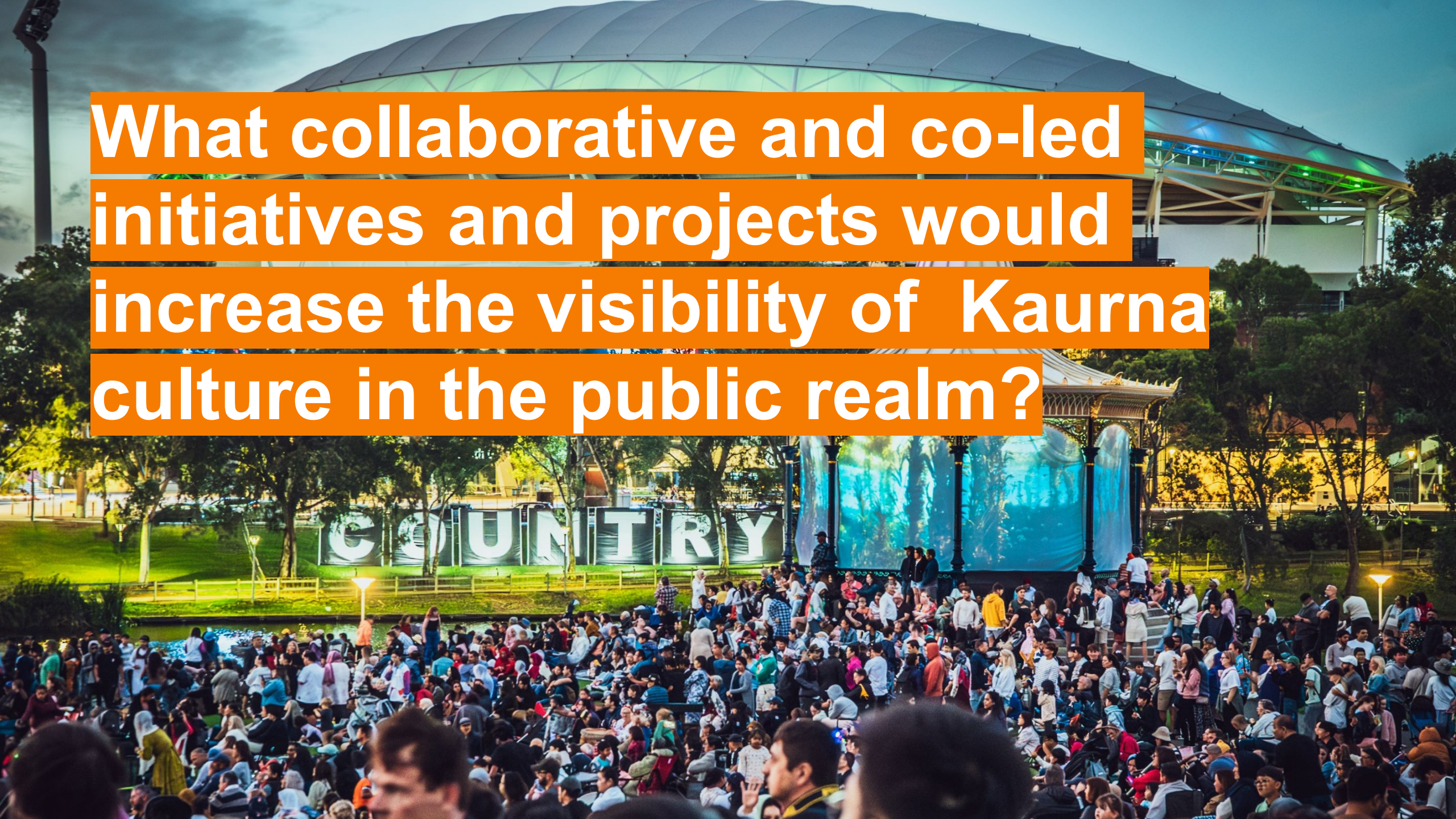
**How can we champion
Kaurana culture in our
shared future in
meaningful ways?**



What steps can we take to ensure that Kaurna and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices influence, and are represented in the city's cultural decisions?



What collaborative and co-led initiatives and projects would increase the visibility of Kaurna culture in the public realm?



Next Steps

Step	Action
#1.	January 2025: Close of public consultation for the Cultural Policy. E-News to Council on the consultation process for the Cultural Policy.
#2.	From February - 2025: Review of the consultation and feedback from community and stakeholders.
#3.	March 2025: Development of a Draft Cultural Policy informed by the consultation and feedback from community, stakeholders and organisation.
#4	April 2025: Report back to Council on the outcomes of consultation. Draft Cultural Policy presented to Council.