



# Creative Futures Strategy (DRAFT)

2008

City of Port Phillip





# A CULTURAL TIMELINE



1840: Liardet records a corroboree at Emerald Hill

William Strutt's Bushrangers on St Kilda Rd (1852, 1857)



1850: Canvas Town, South Melbourne



Emerald Hill Welcomes the Duke of Edinburgh, Year 1867,

1880: Opening of Emerald Hill Town Hall



1920s: Smoky Dawson's early years at St Vincents Orphanage



Palais Theatre: 1927

Carlo Catani: 1910



Alfred Felton at the Esplanade Hotel until his death in 1903



St Moritz, home of Efftee Pictures 1930s

1946: Sth Melbourne Arts Festival

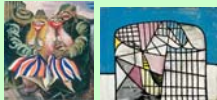


1950s, Port Melbourne: immigration brings new influences.

1965: Tolarno



Early 1940s: Nolan, Hester & Tucker in St Kilda.



Middle Park library: 1960s



St Kilda Festival: 1980



1977: Punk hits St Kilda



St Kilda Library: 1973



1970s :My Bare Lady, at the Ritz



St Kilda Film Festival: 1984



Linden: 1986



Gasworks: 1992

Tony Clark mural, SK Library: 1993

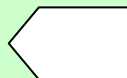


Pride March: 1995

We Iri We Homeborn Indigenous Festival 1996



our creative futures



Poetry Idol: 2008



Port Melbourne Library: 2003

# Scope

The Creative Futures Strategy provides a commitment from the City of Port Phillip to support culture and creativity in all its forms across the municipality. It sets a five year direction for council's library and arts and festivals services, programs and facilities.

This Strategy will be supported by an Implementation Plan that outlines the year-in year-out responses required to fund these goals as part of the annual Council planning and budget cycle.

This Strategy will be supported by an updated committee structure, building on existing functional committees and the forum of industry representatives who have contributed to the Strategy.

This Strategy forms part of an Active and Creative Framework for Port Phillip, which will also include the Sport and Recreation Strategy, Youth Framework and Event Strategy.

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# Creative futures strategy



## Our commitment to a Creative Future

In the City of Port Phillip a Creative Future means greater cultural vitality and a rich experience of life for people and communities. Creative cities don't just happen. They are the result of creative thinking, innovation and commitment through policies and resources.

As custodians of a culturally significant and iconic place, Council acknowledges the importance of its obligation to preserve the City's unique style and identity by connecting to, and building on the cultural heritage of the City. This cultural heritage is well-known both at state and national levels, for celebration and support for the arts, innovation and a diversity of cultural activity.

Council understands that the quality and presence of the arts, artists and arts organisations are key indicators for the cultural vitality of a creative city and that community access to and participation in the arts life of the City is to the mutual benefit of artists and the community.

The City of Port Phillip is committed to promoting individual and collective well-being, and enhancing local community identity by facilitating the community's capacity to develop, appreciate and express creativity and vitality.

The City of Port Phillip aims to build on its heritage as a creative city, a place where the arts and cultural activities are explored, promoted, valued and respected. In doing this, Council recognises the innovative leadership role that local government can play in providing annual investment in critical 'infrastructure', such as exhibition spaces, collections, funding, information, networking and partnership opportunities, digital capacity and fair and equitable payment for artists.

To achieve this Council is committed to providing facilities and programs via its libraries, website, festivals and arts and heritage services. In providing these resources Council understands the potential to achieve the 'wow' factor for the community by meeting opportunities for people to come together, to experience, to celebrate and to remember.

The Council will support and, where appropriate, partner organisations, artists, residents and visitors as they seek to contribute to the creative city. It will strategically encourage the growth of the arts and creative industries in the city's spaces, places and streetscapes where people can gather across the municipality.



# Creative futures strategy

## Why it's important?

*'A creative city is an environment where we can think, plan and act with imagination – where ordinary people can act in extraordinary ways'* (Axel Bruns, Snurblog)

In the City of Port Phillip this means greater cultural vitality and a rich experience of life for people and communities. Creative cities don't just happen. They are the result of creative thinking, innovation and commitment through policies and resources.

## How will we get there?

The Creative Futures Strategy - through its arts, culture, heritage and library services - aspires to make a difference to the City of Port Phillip by implementing three key strategies over the next five years.

- **Community Creating Content**

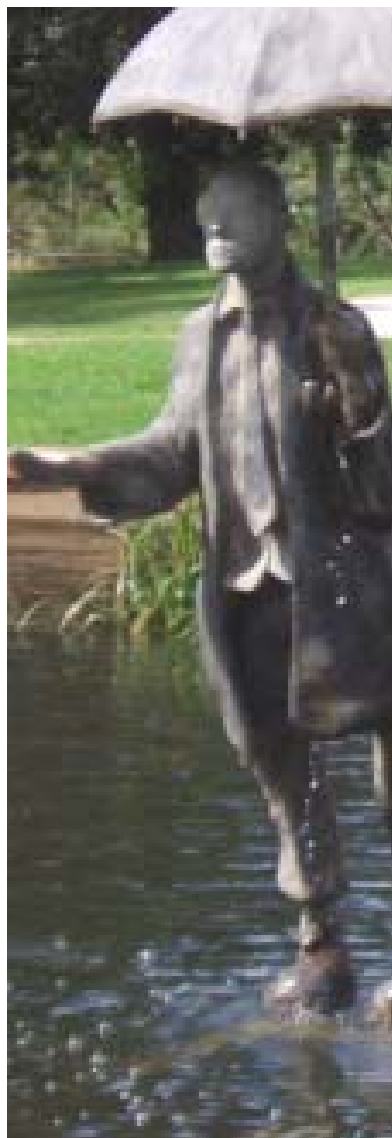
This strategy recognizes the many ways in which community members can be active participants and creators, contributing significantly to the cultural richness of the city and its communities. Participation in creative activities increases self-esteem and connectedness.

- **Attracting Arts and Culture**

This strategy reinforces the positive influence of arts and cultural activities on the local economy, both directly and as an important part of what makes the city an attractive destination. It sets out actions to retain the cultural vitality of the city.

- **Creating Frameworks for Meaning**

This strategy promotes a positive 'sense of place' and the experience of the City as a vibrant and enriching environment that has a positive influence on the whole community. The strategy underpins the ongoing cultural vitality of the city for both active cultural participants and observers.



## What will success look like?

- **New and inclusive cultural experiences**
- A stronger sense of connection and community engagement.(cultural, social + environmental pillars)
  - Increased membership in cultural organisations
  - Minimum of 10 previously unfunded arts organisations funded by the CDF each year.
  - Reduced environmental impact of Libraries and Arts and Festivals services.
  - 85% public awareness of cultural offers within CoPP.
  - 85% participant satisfaction with the experience of cultural events and programs.
  - Increased youth connectedness with arts and cultural pursuits.
- **Cultural hubs in St Kilda and South Melbourne**
- Cultural industries and creative individuals which increase the vitality of these communities. (economic + cultural pillars)
  - Increased economic activity and employment in hubs.
  - No net loss of cultural organisations located in Port Phillip.
- **New and upgraded library spaces and cultural venues**
- Opportunities for people to gather, create and learn in diverse ways. (cultural + social pillars)
  - Increased visitation at cultural venues
  - Increased participation in cultural events.
  - Increased access to cultural (art, library and heritage) collections
  - 100% CoPP managed cultural venues fit for purpose
- **A new interactive digital space** (IT infrastructure/website)
- Access to a seamless web of resources and contribute their local voice within an expanded global context increasing their exposure to diverse thinking and opinions. (social + cultural pillars)
  - Increase in unique hits to library and arts and festivals websites.
  - Increased number of people engaging online.
  - At least one new service added to the suite of online library and cultural services annually.
- **New Technology introduced to Libraries**
- New options for service delivery to meet user expectations and increase capacity for more creative and interactive program development. (cultural + economic pillars)
  - Increase in number of new programs delivered.
  - Reduction in 'cycle' times of returned items back to shelf.
  - Increase in loans.
  - 85% customer satisfaction with Library service.



## Community Creating Content

Support facilities for community content creation and presentation

- **Develop the Urban Studies Centre** as a venue providing authoritative information services and resources to help inform people about local history and the challenges and possibilities for future urban life.
- Create a new flexible **exhibition space at the Urban Studies Centre** as a focal point for individuals and groups across the community to contribute their own experiences, research and stories to explore issue based topics for exhibition. (e.g. theme of water, affordable housing, open public space).
- **Upgrade St Kilda Library** as a key cultural hub and lifelong learning centre in St Kilda, increasing opportunities for people to interact, exchange ideas and connect with council services within a new civic precinct on Carlisle Street.

Develop and support IT infrastructure to cooperatively create, share and distribute creative content on-line

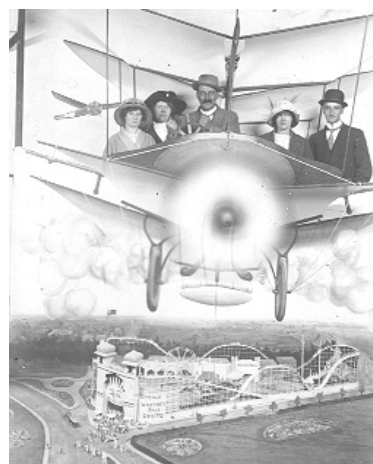
- Introduce new **interactive information technology**: play a leadership role in the redevelopment of web sites and content to increase interactivity and provide seamless access for the community to Council information and services.
- Investigate options for **creative file sharing online** for creative content generated by existing festival and arts program activities – (e.g. short films, Live and Local music, collection images etc) to increase the audience and the customer-base for participating artists.
- Facilitate an **online public domain space** for Port Phillip to enable people to move from users of online information to co-creators in the expanding digital space increasing their confidence, understanding and ability to connect with peers. (e.g. online publishing, blogs).
- **The borderless library** –
  - Investigate options to ‘**future-proof**’ and **maximise output** from software applications to ensure that services match customer needs and expectations for access to statewide resources from a single point within their local area.. (Art +heritage database, Library Link, SWIFT).
  - Participate in statewide library sector discussions to **develop appropriate policy** and procedures related to issues of privacy, licensing, access and distribution.
- Introduce **new technology** (RFID) in libraries to re-focus service delivery to meet customer expectations for secure, seamless and speedy access to resources while re-focusing staff capacity to develop quality,, creative information engagement services and programs to bring people together. (e.g. Poetry idol).

## Support opportunities for people to contribute a diversity of content representing the many different voices of the community

- **Libraries as authoritative filters of information** – continue to facilitate combinations of self-serve and broad-based information research via Libraries and the Urban Studies Centre empowering people to navigate areas of interest that have meaning for them.
- Initiate **Creative youth programs** that build on existing linkages between Libraries, Adventure Playgrounds, Arts and Festivals and Youth Services to increase the opportunities and means by which young people can connect with each other and their community.(e.g. graffiti projects, Solar System launch)
- **‘(sub)culture for adults!’** – investigate new creative (and unexpected) programs for older members of the community so that our local community can benefit from their stories and experiences. (e.g. Poetry Idol, writing workshops)
- Develop a **curatorial program** at new St Kilda Town Hall Access Space reflecting the diversity of the community that increases opportunities for local visual artists to interact with each other and the whole of that community.
- Create new opportunities for online publication of community research to ensure that a **variety of narratives created by, and about the community**, are freely available through Urban Studies Centre and Library programs.
- Ensure that creative dialogue takes a **diversity of forms** via workshops and online to provide a range of opportunities for people to contribute their ideas and opinions.
- Continue to support **local history societies**.

## Target and further develop creative opportunities that reflect the diversity of the community and address issues of equity

- Continue to support the City’s **Access Arts** program providing professional and semi professional opportunities for performing and visual artists with disabilities. Maintain the strengths of the existing program ensuring the quality of experiences for participants and audience alike.
- Create a greater focus for **Indigenous arts** through high quality festival component (Yakulit Wilam Ngargee) and visual arts events (e.g. annual Linden exhibition) capitalising on existing strengths within a new clear Indigenous arts framework creating increased awareness of Indigenous issues and audience understanding.
- Promote the benefits of the project support and advice role of the Arts and Festivals unit in relation to **community cultural development** (‘CCD’) projects generated across council to ensure quality of outcomes and experience for artists, participants and the community.





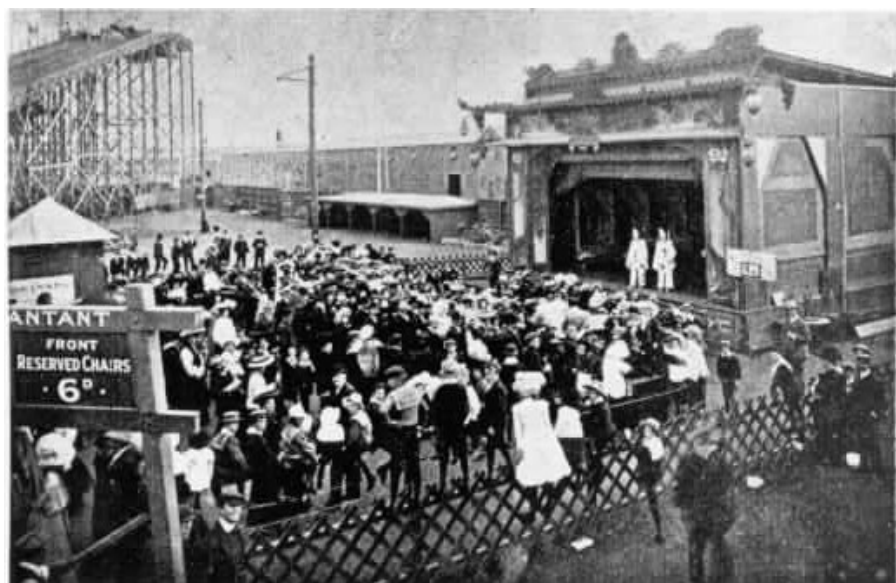
## Attracting Arts and Culture

Continue to be a location of choice for creative individuals, businesses and organisations

- Increase **partnerships between CoPP and cultural organisations**, actively maintained through regular dialogue. This will maximise cross-promotion, sponsorship and other opportunities and increase the capacity to broker relationships that benefit the community.
- **Attract cultural organisations to Port Phillip** –
  - Target use of existing channels (Tourism Strategy, Economic Development etc) to **promote Port Phillip** as a home-base for cultural organisations maximising the economic and cultural contribution of the arts industry to the city.
  - **Actively pursue opportunities** to locate arts organisations in the City (promotion, incentives etc) in order to retain the significance of Port Phillip in the cultural life of greater Melbourne.
- **Facilitate connections** – maximise opportunities for locally based organisations to benefit from closer interaction with neighbouring communities. (e.g. commercial galleries, ANAM Open Day, links to schools)
- **Make it easy** – promote the concept of ‘plug-and-play’ communities to service units across council, where barriers to participation can be lowered via policy and review of local laws etc increasing the attractiveness of Port Phillip to cultural organisations and individuals.
- Increasing the capacity of the Arts and Festivals Team to **respond to the needs of arts companies and creative individuals** by providing information and front of house services.
- **Provide a base for creative individuals** – identify opportunities for providing art making facilities (e.g. residencies, studios, access spaces, rehearsal spaces etc) and **co-sponsor an audit of under-utilised facilities across the city** to identify opportunities for housing creative enterprises.
- Develop and promote an **environmentally responsible arts business model** to reduce the environmental impact of cultural businesses and generate positive interaction between council and cultural organisations based on shared goals.
- Investigate options for **recurrent funding models** for key small arts companies through the Cultural Development Fund or other sources.

## Continue to be a destination of choice for cultural participation

- Initiate a **cultural hubs** model (a conscious focus on identified cultural gathering places—South Melbourne precinct, St Kilda, foreshore etc) linking cultural services to broader strategic objectives (Activity Centres, ‘place management’ etc) at identified hub locations to create economies of scale, efficient delivery and communities of cultural activity.
- Link cultural **programming of public space** to tourism and related strategies (e.g. Esplanade Market, Triangle Site, Princes Pier and cultural hubs) to maximise the attractiveness of Port Phillip as a cultural destination.
- **Promote our successes** – continue to strengthen the role and reputation of our major festivals - **the St Kilda Festival and St Kilda Film Festival** – as key events in the national cultural calendar attracting participants and audiences to our local community and providing a showcase for aspiring artists, musicians and film-makers.
- **Expand opportunities for audience development** – utilize St Kilda Library and Urban Studies Centre as venues to locate and deliver a wider range of creative and relevant programs and activities that acknowledge the different interests and aspirations of target groups within our community. (e.g. adult and childrens, LOTE programs)
- Through collaboration across council, pursue opportunities for **cultural activation** of public gathering places (foreshore etc) so that **local amenity** is valued and protected and disrespectful behaviour is discouraged.
- **Re-position Linden** as a visual arts facility with a national focus and a reputation for innovation to reinforce St Kilda’s position as a cultural hub and a centre of creative excellence.
- Create an environment in which **businesses** throughout the City are encouraged to **include cultural programming** as part of the delivery of services (e.g. live performances in Elwood cafes, book events at bookshops, etc)





## Creating Frameworks for Meaning

### Support creative physical spaces

- **Libraries** – Upgrade St Kilda Library and construct the Urban Studies Centre to provide flexible centres for learning that can respond to the current and future needs and aspirations of our community.
- **Residencies** – Facilitate interaction between artists and the community via residencies for artists and creative professionals (including potential opportunities at St Kilda Triangle site, St Kilda library writer-in-residence, St Vincent’s Orphanage etc, Pickles St Primary School).
- **Studios** – increase the level of interaction between council supported studio activities and the community through open days, exhibitions etc to ensure that the value of creative activity in the community is broadly appreciated.
- **Exhibition Spaces** – Develop the Urban Studies Centre, new St Kilda Town Hall gallery space, library display spaces etc in order to maximise exhibition and display opportunities provided directly by council.
- **Upgrade Gasworks** to strengthen its role as a hub for arts programming and to ensure integration with schools, park and local community precinct and position it to best serve the needs of the arts community.
- Lobby stakeholders for the refurbishment of **Napier St Theatre** as a component of a thriving arts hub in South Melbourne to compliment existing and planned facilities in the area and meet a need for flexible theatrical development and performance venues in the city.

## Support collections as a tool for understanding who we are and where we have come from

- **‘The right stuff at the right time in the right place’** – re-deploy staffing resources to respond to the needs and aspirations of our community by actively engaging with users to develop appropriate tools and expertise to improve both access to **library collections and the quality of their experience of these collections.**
- Investigate available options including resource-sharing (policies, Library management systems, partnerships, SWIFT) to expand customers’ ‘collection horizons’ to access **material held by other institutions nationally** and to achieve potential economies of scale.
- Initiate an **ongoing program of digitization** so as to develop a dedicated online presence for the highly valued Art and Heritage collection that delivers basic research tools into the home of the user. This provides an opportunity for members of the community to also contribute their local experiences and memories so as to enhance the relevance of the database to their needs.
- **Target resources** (via a policy framework, appropriate budget allocation, risk management analysis, storage protocols) to ensure that collections (library and art + heritage) can be maintained at a quality level on an ongoing basis and archive gaps within heritage collection addressed.
- **Program activities at the Urban Studies Centre** which enable people of all ages to interact directly with the city’s art and heritage resources, building on the passionate work and rich legacy of local history groups and individual researchers across the municipality.

## Support creative environments

- Refine the **Urban Art Strategy** to further influence the quality of local streetscapes and strategically commission new civic artworks linked to Council Plan objectives in order to ensure that our shared environments provide inspiration as well as services.
- **Activate public space** via performances and events and contribute to council **place management** agendas (e.g. Triangle site) with emphasis on cultural activation of important public spaces so that civic spaces become cultural and creative places.
- Continue to support major **festivals** that present the best local and Australian music, film making, creative arts and performance and provide an environment of creative energy and opportunities for participation at a range of levels.
- Develop options for the revitalisation of the **Esplanade Sunday Market.**
- Advise council on the provision of **local cultural events** that serve communities at a neighbourhood level.

