SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING ARTS AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE 1.7 MILLION PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING IN REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

A response to the Creative Industries Think Tank

Department of Trade and Investment
NSW Government

from

Regional Arts NSW on behalf of the Network of Regional Arts Boards.

20 September, 2012

Contact:
Elizabeth Rogers
Chief Executive Officer
Regional Arts NSW
Pier 5, 15 Hickson Road
Millers Point NSW 2000
Tel 02 9270 2505
INTRODUCTION

Regional Arts NSW is pleased to have been invited to submit a response to the Creative Industry Taskforce, especially in relation to the development and support for sustainable creative industries in regional NSW. In order to develop this response we have consulted broadly with the network of Regional Arts Boards as well as discussed the matter with our own board.

This submission:
- Provides some background to this organisation and the regional arts development network in NSW.
- Examines the issues facing regional Creative Industries (CI).
- Provides some recommendations addressing the immediate, medium term and long key strategies.
- Addresses the absence of any reference to Aboriginal CI in the discussion.

Some examples of successful creative industries operating in regional NSW and some links to existing research are included in the appendices.

It needs to be noted that in the absence of a state cultural policy compounded by the delay in the announcement of the National Cultural Policy, Regional Arts NSW believes that the creative economy is one quadrant of the overall contribution of a vibrant arts and cultural sector to the community. These quadrants are interlinked and overlapping and need to be valued for more than just immediate financial gain.

In a regional context it should be understood that NSW regions vary widely in CI infrastructure, resources, local support organisations, growth patterns and development potential. However, with support and the implementation of at least some of the recommendations following, the regional creative economy can assist in the delivery of NSW 2021 goal to drive economic growth in regional NSW.
Regional Arts NSW & the Regional Arts Board Network
Regional Arts NSW (RANSW) is the peak body and support agency for arts and cultural development in NSW. We work together with the fourteen independent regional arts boards to address the challenge of diversity across the state.

Regional arts development in NSW is decentralised through a network of regional organisations known as the Regional Arts Boards (RABs). Each RAB services an area of the state made up of a group of local government areas. The local councils in each area, together with the State Government, contribute financially to each Board.

RANSW is a non-profit organisation, a company limited by guarantee. Its members are the 14 regional arts boards. The relationship between the regional arts boards and RANSW is a cooperative and collegiate one which is reflected in our strategic directions. We receive funding to deliver our programs from the NSW Government through Arts NSW and the Australian Government through the Regional Arts Fund.

We recognise that the voice of regional communities is at the heart of our cultural identity.

We support regional arts development by:
- Building capacity through our grants programs, training and workshops, and providing information and advice.
- Advocating and acting as a voice for the regional arts boards and their communities.
- Communicating news, stories and information to all our audiences.
- Providing a range of practical services and support for regional arts boards and arts organisations.
- Ensuring that our organisation is well-governed and well-managed.

In addition we have identified the following priority areas for development:
1. To support Aboriginal arts and cultural development in all its different expressions in regional NSW.
2. To encourage creative industry development in regional NSW.
ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN LIMITING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY IN REGIONAL NSW

- One operational model does not suit all and measures of growth and strategies for development need to be tailored to specific regions. It highlights fragmentation of CI within the region and that all regions are very different.
- Research on regional creative industries is dispersed and uneven. Reliable and valid findings and analysis of development of a knowledge bank will assist growth strategies. Data collection and analysis needs to identify economic and cultural data as well as social values. Research is critical to inform consistent and sustainable state wide regional policy.
- ‘Creative industries’ encompasses a set of differently operating disciplinarily-determined industries that work in specific and often unique ways in regional contexts. This offers challenges but also opportunities for innovative practices and could benefit from a clustering approach. (Regional borders must be porous from this perspective.)
- Regions experience change and policy needs to accommodate current situations while planning for the future.
- Technology can be an enabler of growth only if locally embedded and training and support is required. Technology take-up in regions is uneven and constrained by local (sometime geographic) factors.
- Regional creative industries experience and benefit from both stable and mobile populations and movement between regions and metropolitan centres (including but not only Sydney). [Regional transport is still relevant for sharing products, resources, training, skills, etc.]
- Regional funding for creative arts is highly inefficient, short-term and project focused, under-reported and ill-evaluated, inhibiting longer term growth and development.
- Regional creative industries operate in specific contexts and strategies for growth and development need to involve all relevant stakeholders. There is a general lack of understanding of the term CI by local government, RDA boards, business groups and even those engaged in CI.
- Access to TAFE and tertiary education in regional areas is critical for skills development. CI needs to be offered as a career choice, and an opportunity to attract and keep younger people in regional communities.
- Cultural tourism overlaps into CI development and is being done well in some regions and very poorly in others. Needs to be understood as an economic driver in this broader context.
- Local government red tape can be restrictive for CI development and does not receive the same level of support for regional relocations for CI businesses as other more traditional industries. A major film production company with an international market wrangled for 10 years with a regional council to establish its business.
- The removal of small business support programs for regional industries means there is more reliance on project initiated activities for professional development generated by organisations such as the regional arts boards.
- There are two federal government programs that could support CI development in regional NSW but their eligibility criteria do not fit NSW regional needs. The Enterprise Connect program requires a minimum $1 million turnover and the ability to match some of the funding which puts this out of the reach of the majority of regional CIs. The New Enterprise Incentive Scheme requires an applicant to be long term unemployed to be eligible.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Regional infrastructure</strong></th>
<th><strong>Immediate</strong></th>
<th><strong>Medium term</strong></th>
<th><strong>Long term</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leverage emerging and existing infrastructure (eg regional universities, council libraries) supported by a regional lifestyle focus.</td>
<td>Mobilise emerging and existing infrastructure eg NBN with enabling training and support. Expand regional creative activities to incorporate online and interactive components. Evaluate effectiveness of activities.</td>
<td>Strategically resource emerging and existing infrastructure using community partnerships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Events</strong></th>
<th><strong>Immediate</strong></th>
<th><strong>Medium term</strong></th>
<th><strong>Long term</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan for stand-alone and Sydney-linked events to enable local capabilities, roadshows, skills training.</td>
<td>Communicate positive outcomes of events and use knowledge to inform future.</td>
<td>Support both those events that have proven effective while enabling new programs to develop.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Networking and collaboration</strong></th>
<th><strong>Immediate</strong></th>
<th><strong>Medium term</strong></th>
<th><strong>Long term</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Link roadshow and satellite events, including industry-led initiatives.</td>
<td>Use technology and local services to initiate and maintain networking.</td>
<td>Maintain database of effective networking and collaboration activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Funding and finance</strong></th>
<th><strong>Immediate</strong></th>
<th><strong>Medium term</strong></th>
<th><strong>Long term</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Match $ for $ for cultural arts. Develop plan for longer term funding arrangements.</td>
<td>Evaluate and report on funding in consistent form, and communicate results.</td>
<td>Align sources of grants, loans and investment to support growth plans.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Skills exchange</strong></th>
<th><strong>Immediate</strong></th>
<th><strong>Medium term</strong></th>
<th><strong>Long term</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Devise creative regional internships program for Sydney universities, and for regional hubs.</td>
<td>Develop plan for skills exchange between regions &amp; metropolitan centres.</td>
<td>Strategically support program of internships, incubator and other skills exchange activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional research profiling</strong></td>
<td>Align CI stakeholders with regional research and support organisations (eg universities together with RANSW, RDA, etc) to build regional research knowledge banks relevant to regions and regional groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop collaborative partnerships in which researchers deliver reliable findings and analysis for regional stakeholders &amp; relevant organisations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Invest in a continually updated knowledge bank of research that informs regional activities, contributions and opportunities for growth and development.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business Development</strong></td>
<td>Provide seed funding for start ups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish creative business incubators and clusters of co-located start-ups with common administrative services with access to business mentors, book keepers, professional advice technology.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a longer term support program modelled on the Enterprise Connect program for identified businesses emerging from creative business incubators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education and training</strong></td>
<td>Include a unit of business planning in all TAFE and Uni creative arts courses and reverse the current announcement to remove creative arts from all TAFE courses, as these are frequently the only source of training in regional areas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish a state version of the NEIS scheme that not restricted by age or unemployment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undertake research to measure new businesses established by TAFE and Uni creative arts graduates.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marketing</strong></td>
<td>Devise a promotional campaign to inform local govt, RDA board and other business organisations about the value of CI's to their communities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highlight case studies of successful CI's operating in regional areas demonstrating the economic to the regional economy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage and promote investment opportunities in regional CI.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralisation</td>
<td>Provide process to cut local government red tape creating barriers to regional CI development</td>
<td>Provide incentive packages for CI to relocate to regions as infrastructure becomes available and remove barriers created by LG regulations.</td>
<td>Evaluate, revise and renew programs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ABORIGINAL ARTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT**

In regional NSW no discussion on creative industry development can ignore the existence and the growth of Aboriginal creative industries. This sector has been growing and developing in recent years and a number of key organisations have emerged. Most notable are Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Art and Culture Studio (BNAACS) based in Gerringong and the Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance based in Coffs Harbour. In addition, within the regional arts network, Aboriginal arts development officers are based in the New England North West, Northern Rivers, Central West and the Far western regions of NSW. The majority of these positions are funded by the Federal Government. Regional Arts NSW also employs an Aboriginal Arts Development Officer to assist with the delivery of the NSW Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy 2010. This Strategy clearly states that one of its four directions is to support Aboriginal jobs and enterprises within the creative industries. [http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/index.php/news-and-publications/publications/aboriginal-arts-and-cultural-strategy/](http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/index.php/news-and-publications/publications/aboriginal-arts-and-cultural-strategy/)

*Following is the response from Boolarng Nangamai’s Executive Director, Kelli Ryan:*

**General discussion points.**

Current capacity building is happening in isolated pockets across NSW and is driven by community organisations or private enterprise. Bureaucratic processes are hindering growth in communities. Reporting is arduous and more time is spent on accountability rather than on evaluating and achieving actions. Technology could be used wisely to have oral reporting - this would reduce the disadvantage for Aboriginal Australia. Aboriginal communities are caught in the disfunction of duplication of government services that are administratively top heavy.

**Skills Development**

BNAACS recently delivered hands on Weaving Workshops to six Outback NSW communities - Walgett, Coonamble, Lightening Ridge, Bourke, Cobar, Warren. The workshops were very successful with strong attendance. The workshops focused on Old Ways in New Times - as participants yarnd with each and absorbed BN Master Weavers shared traditional knowledge - key capacity building took place. New partnerships formed and broaden networks between government agencies and services in Aboriginal Communities. The workshops are very powerful for healing and bringing awareness to participants about education & employment pathways - setting goals, raising aspirations and ways to achieve self determination. BNAACS formed a strategic partnership with Murdi Paaki and are currently negotiating how BN can continue to work with these communities in partnership to build enterprise both hands on & online.
BNAACS in partnership with BNACorporation supported by Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation are conducting a Possum Skin Cloak Making Workshop in October 2012. This workshop will invigorate traditions and will form part of the strategic positioning of over 18 local Aboriginal organisations taking place as part of The Regional Partnership Agreement. Participants from Nowra and Wreck Bay will also be taking part. This workshop will build cultural pride, connections, aspire Aboriginal people valuing education and make opportunity for community to embrace contemporary ceremony. This project is supported by Australian Red Cross.

BNACorporation in partnership with BNAACS has been working actively with The Smith Family as a partnership broker and St George Bank. In November 2012 a hands on Cultural Workshop Day incorporating weaving, language, tools & technology will be delivered at 2 Catholic Schools at Port Kembla. These workshops will aspire valuing education and empower students to dream and make a positive life. BNAACS Cultural Contractors shall be delivering hands on knowledge sharing with teachers & students from each school and shall also engage with StGeorge Bank staff who will be volunteering to work collaboratively to make a difference in Closing the Gap. BNAACS shall drive a community engagement technology platform as part of the mentoring in the program and short film storytelling will be in 6 local StGeorge Branches. StGeorge Bank have said that given the pilot is a success we could look at a national rollout in partnership with StGeorge Bank Foundation and Westpac Foundation.

BNAACS in partnership with BNACorporation and The Australian Red Cross are working across NSW with a Native Fibre Weaving Project and a 10 Canoes Project. This is a grass roots community capacity building project that is working towards the International 2013 Red Cross Symposium to be held in Sydney for the first time. BNAACS will assist in presenting a Cultural Opening for this event including digital projections and canoeing on Syndey Harbour.

Current actions being undertaken in regions that may need further support. What would that support look like?

BNAACS is currently exploring how to build a franchise arm in remote regional communities. BNAACS has had this request from the grass roots communities and we believe that through this alignment & our partnerships we can honour the individual communities however gain & build strength in sharing resources, branding and knowledge. Trading Old Ways in New Times just as Aboriginal communities have done for hundreds of years. A Together Dreaming Pty Ltd business model has been developed to empower communities and capitalise on their unique skills sets. BNAACS is working strategically with key partners to prevent duplication and utilise shared resources to achieve common goals in strengthening Aboriginal people and their communities. BNAACS is planning to harness the NBN technology as a conduit for increasing employment and access to remote communities. Any support would be greatly appreciated.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR REGIONAL ABORIGINAL CI OPPORTUNITIES
1. Immediate Action: Listen and engage with communities - actions include hands on participation and using film story tell achievements that will aspire future generations - more success stories.
2. Immediate / Medium Term Action: Work with communities hands on to have vision and purpose - actions include education & career pathways coaching / mentoring.
3. Long Term Action: Consistently follow up with communities - actions include genuine commitment to long term planning.

Allow pathways for engagement of Aboriginal communities to become more self-determining and increase opportunities for building leadership skills & projects. Bounce off the ability the arts has as a meaningful engagement tool to assist healing, capacity building and community finding creative solutions they make for themselves.
Following is from the Business Plan for the Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance

Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance approaches community development from a positive perspective and focuses the attention on what gives Aboriginal people an advantage, their culture. The Alliance aims to create more opportunities for Aboriginal people to participate in niche employment opportunities in cultural events, design, visual arts and cultural tourism. Incorporated on 21st June 2010 under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006, Saltwater Freshwater is governed by a Board representing ten Local Aboriginal Land Councils from Karuah to Coffs Harbour on the Mid North Coast of NSW. The Alliance aims to position culture as the foundation for the long-term sustainability of the region’s 12,000 Aboriginal people. With 52% of the region under the age of 19 and only 9% over 55 (ABS 2006), a coordinated and regional approach was essential in ensuring the maintenance of culture as well as the creation of education to employment pathways around the theme of cultural identity.

The Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance and its cultural programs draw a connection between the unique cultural identity of the region and commercial marketing through the development of the saltwater freshwater branding. This provides a platform for a year round program of activities that are grounded in arts and skills development across a range of different art-forms. These projects culminate at the annual Saltwater Freshwater Festival, which attracts crowds of up to 10,000 people each Australia Day.

This Business Plan maps the organisation’s journey from a start-up arts organisation that relies heavily on government grants to deliver projects, to a social enterprise, where the organisation will achieve sustainability through the generation of commercial income. It will achieve this through the development of a National Aboriginal Design Agency, which brokers joint ventures between Aboriginal artists and manufacturers to create design products with an Aboriginal aesthetic.

Appendices:
Appendix 1: Some Examples and Links to Regional NSW Creative Industry Success Stories
Appendix 2: Existing Creative Industry Regional Research
Appendix 3: Acknowledgements
APPENDIX 1

SOME EXAMPLES AND LINKS TO REGIONAL NSW CREATIVE INDUSTRY SUCCESS STORIES

Western Riverina
Sandhills Artefacts and Designs
Curving and Designing Aboriginal Artefacts - We produce Authentic Wiradjuri artefacts

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GspWJwZ5sw4

Arts North West
Photocreate based in Glenn Innes, Northern NSW.
Photo Create Pty Ltd is a company that was established to provide products to the retailer enabling their customers to take advantage of the exciting new products emerging in the digital photographic age.

Orana Arts
The Mudfactory (Mudgee- Mid-Western Council) www.themudfactory.com.au
Fairview Artspace (Mudgee) www.fairviewartspace.com (finalist at this years Inland Toursim Awards and CountryLink Awards (local LGA awards)
And the most enterprising of them all Lewis Burns (Dubbo) www.lewisburns.com

South West Arts
http://www.woollwoolli.com/
Designer womens’ woollen apparel made in Deniliquin for Melbourne and Canberra fashion boutiques.

Arts Mid North Coast
On the individual practitioner front, there are the Coffs Coast based film producers Mark and Megan George who together with locally based director.writer Robert Carter produced the film Thirst (which had a season at the Chauvel in Paddington earlier this year) and received four stars from Margaret on the Movie Show. www.thirstthefilm.com
It was shot in Broken Hill.

On a different note there is Janison, a highly successful e-learning software development company that employs 41 staff in Coffs Harbour including designers and writers (Telstra Australian Regional Business of the Year 2011) but they are slanted toward education/IT end. Janison

Also Short Sharp Digital in general - network of film, television and digital media professionals based in Coffs Harbour
http://www.shortsharppdigital.org/directories/industry/searchresult.asp?MemberID=310

Arts OutWest
Style Magazine: http://www.stylemagazine.net.au/
Eastern Riverina Arts
Crow Crow Productions has been established to shoot a feature film in Wagga written by Wagga playwright/theatre director Directed by ex-Wagga actor/director and starring John Wood and Wagga Legend Lex Marinos. Heavily promoted in Wagga drawing on "community" investment. Can pay to be in the film, can buy shares, Council have bent over backwards to facilitate. May not be sustainable
http://www.backyardashes.com.au

Riverina Millinery Association holds a biennial International Millinery Forum - which attracts hat makers from around the world to take part in workshops with the world's best. Has inspired millinery making around the region. Lots of Riverina hat makers, pop up shops, regular workshops - couple of interesting websites. not so good at converting hobbyists into businesses yet - not taking advantage of potential collective marketing
http://internationalmillineryforum.blogspot.com.au
http://delew.com.au - wagga based milliner and millinery supplier

Some interesting individual designers and makers selling wares online
www.middlemost.com.au
http://www.tractorgirl.com.au

Maker's Space - An initiative from the Museum helping local designers and makers to the next level
http://jeffmccann.com.au
perfect example of a uni graduate deciding to spend a little longer in the town before leaving. has found free lance gigs through Eastern Riverina Arts and received some professional development, now contracted to design an exhibition for the museum, been part of makers space - developed his portfolio, cv, website here - now looking at working with a manufacturer to take some of his designs to a more mass produced level. this is the sort of person that a creative industries hub could support - studio space, collective marketing, business advice/mentoring

Arts Northern Rivers
Examples of successful Creative Industry businesses in the Northern Rivers:
A link to the Hive - the portal for the Creative Industries in the region:

Kate McQuillen from mememe productions - they created and distributed Dirtgirl - with International distribution through ABC / BBC and CBC

Murray Arts
Facing Australia is a nationally acclaimed photographic project working to engage remote, regional and metropolitan communities through a creative community engagement process that photographically transforms ABS census data into visual portraits that represent the ‘typical’ face of a specific community. Underpinned by both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies this project combines demographic statistics with digital photography in a unique and powerful manner.
http://www.facingaustralia.com/
APPENDIX 2

CREATIVE INDUSTRY REGIONAL RESEARCH
Sept 2012

One of the critical recommendations in the submission is the need for high quality ongoing research. Below are links to some of the research in this area, and bears out our argument that the research on regional creative industries is dispersed and uneven.


Research links (to our Creative Industry Strategy and Mapping projects)

Info re Arts Northern Rivers Creative industry projects

CSU IS investigating establishing a Creative Regions Lab that would provide research and more for inland regional areas.


This was a very extensive research project undertaken in regional NSW by a government task force led by Richard Torbay. Although the previous government, no action was taken as Premier Iemma was deposed shortly afterwards, but the information is still very relevant to this topic.


Research into Creative Industries in Broken Hill
APPENDIX 3

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Regional Arts NSW wishes to thank the following people who have contributed to this Creative Industries submission.

**Associate Professor Rebecca Coyle**
Deputy Head of School
School of Arts and Social Sciences
Deputy Chair of Academic Board
Southern Cross University, Lismore.

**Kelli Ryan OAM**
Founder
Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Art & Culture Studio
CEO/ Director
Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Corporation
Unit 5/9 Bergin St, Gerringong NSW 2534

**Alison Page**
Executive Officer
Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance
Aboriginal Corporation
Innovation Centre
Coffs Harbour Education Campus
Hogbin Drive, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

**Regional Arts Development Officers from the regional network**

**Andrew Gray**
South East Arts
Bega

**Scott Howie**
Eastern Riverina Arts
Wagga Wagga

**Tracey Callinan**
Arts OutWest
Bathurst

**Alicia Leggett**
Orana Arts
Dubbo

**Greg Pritchard**
Western Riverina Arts
Leeton

**Rod Howard**
Arts Mid North Coast
Coffs Harbour

**Peter Wood**
Arts Northern Rivers
Alstonville

---

Jane Kreis
Arts North West
Glen Innes

James Giddey
West Darling Arts
Broken Hill

Mark Reedman
Arts Upper Hunter
Dungog

Jamie-Lea Hodges
Outback Arts
Coonamble

Alyce Fisher
South West Arts
Deniliquin

Karen Gardner
Murray Arts
Albury