REGIONAL ARTS NSW
THE YEAR IN REVIEW
2017
The Regional Arts NSW Network

There are 14 Regional Arts Development Organisations in NSW, each providing strategic direction for sustainable arts and cultural development in their region.

01 Arts Northern Rivers 08 South East Arts
02 Arts Mid North Coast 09 Eastern Riverina Arts
03 Arts North West 10 Western Riverina Arts
04 Arts Upper Hunter 11 Murray Arts
05 Orana Arts 12 South West Arts
06 Arts OutWest 13 Outback Arts
07 Southern Tablelands Arts 14 West Darling Arts

Profile

Regional Arts NSW is the peak body and service agency for arts and cultural development in regional NSW. Our vision is for a vibrant, dynamic and engaged creative arts and cultural sector that is valued and integral to the development and vitality of regional communities.

Board of Directors
Stephen Champion — Chair
Ben Roche — Deputy Chair
David Dwyer — Treasurer
Julie Briggs
Gavin Findlay
Sharni Jones
Sandra McMahon
Nicholas Pickard
Paul Scott-Williams

Staff
Elizabeth Rogers — Chief Executive Officer
Prudence Tan — Manager, Grants and Projects (until June)
Lexie Reeves — Manager, Grants and Projects (from June)
Katelyn-Jane Dunn — Manager, Communications and Administration
Dr Jane Kreis — Research and Development (Contract)
Company Prophets — Financial Management (Contract)

We aim to achieve this through:

> Supporting the network of Regional Arts Development Organisations in NSW
> Strengthening, developing and maintaining our grants programs
> Promoting the value of the arts and cultural sector
> Developing the regional NSW Aboriginal arts and cultural sector
> Demonstrating leadership in effective governance
From the Chair

We are at a point in time where regional arts practice and engagement in NSW is making itself seen, heard and appropriately appreciated at an unprecedented level. This creative audacity is backed by inspirational arts practice, imbued with a sense of a rich and nourishing, challenging but always rewarding, counter-urban identity. New and expanded levels of appreciation and recognition clearly lie ahead. While there are still many obstacles and entrenched misconceptions to wrestle with, there is a clear trajectory and confident energy.

Contemporary regional practice in NSW claims a role in the arts landscape as an equal, and sometimes lead partner, alongside urban and international artists and other regional creatives across the nation. In fact our regional setting provides us with many advantages as the base for cultural collaborations with partners from diverse locations. As we listen to and learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, our identity and our practice strengthens. As we embrace new technology and gain improved, albeit compromised, internet access, our relative isolation again becomes an asset, rather than a deficit.

In recent years RANSW has played a vital role in shining the focus on regional NSW artistic practice and assisting regional, metropolitan and international engagement, through ARTLANDS DIBBOO in 2016 and the inaugural Arttata in 2017. These events have been admirably led by Elizabeth Rogers, RANSW CEO and her immensely capable team, and were fully endorsed by the Board and assisted immeasurably by the remarkable network of Regional Arts Development Organisations, their Executive Directors, staff and Boards. Of course the success of these events also relies on many years of developing, strengthening and supporting this unique network.

All of this has transpired at a time when the State Government has reimagined its Arts focus through Create NSW, demonstrating a greatly enhanced commitment to engage with and support practice and infrastructure in the regions. Arttata would not be possible without principal State Government Support, and the recently initiated Regional Capital Infrastructure Program has unearthed a surprising depth of exciting projects in need of additional government support to transform the cultural landscape of the State. We acknowledge the Minister Don Harwin MLC and the staff of Create NSW in this regard.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the following RANSW Board members whose expertise, generosity, valued opinions and commitment to the regional arts community remains a constant inspiration.

Stephen Champion — Chair

From the CEO

We commenced 2017 with a new Premier, a new Minister and our State funding body undergoing an extensive restructure, as well as a massive amount of reporting and grant acquittals following the successful delivery of ARTLANDS DIBBOO the previous year. We also changed our staffing structure by reviewing our needs and combining part-time positions into two full-time positions. Change is the new normal.

With a new core team in place and with the enthusiasm generated by the ARTLANDS program, Lindy Hume’s Platform Paper, Restless Giant, and a partnership with Peter Wood at Arts Northern Rivers, we developed a business case for a smaller, scaled down speakers and arts program to keep the conversation going about regional arts practice and to showcase the best of the arts in four different regions over a four year period. Thus was born Arttata NSW.

RANSW had the event team, the experience and support from the Board, the Network and a key group of Northern Rivers stakeholders. The project fitted within our key objective, ‘Promoting the Value of the Arts’. Lismore City Council were also keen, so we delivered the proposal to Create NSW and the new Arts Minister, the Hon Don Harwin MLC for consideration. By 30 March we had the go-ahead from the Minister and delivered Arttata Lismore from 30 November – 3 December. A separate Arttata Report is in preparation, but this was a major project for RANSW and I want to acknowledge all those who made this event happen: RANSW directors, staff, event team, Arts Northern Rivers team, the Regional Network, volunteers, funders, stakeholders, speakers, artists and audiences. From Lismore we move to Bathurst for 2018. Hope to see you there!

Our new staffing structure finally enabled us to rev up our communications program.Katelyn Jane Dunn was appointed at the beginning of the year as Manager, Administration and Communications and I refer to the communications section in this report to see the growth in this area, especially in our digital messaging. The fabulous Pru Tait left us temporarily in July, she and her husband are now proud parents of a bouncing baby boy, Levi Reeves, who came in as a temp for ARTLANDS, has joined us to look after the grants programs and the Aboriginal Arts Network.

We also had some significant Board changes following the AGM in April. Our Chair, Peter White and ‘legal eagle’, Naomi Messenger had completed their terms. Visual arts aficionado and CASP expert, Stephen Bradley, resigned to take care of family business in New Zealand. I sincerely thank them for their outstanding contribution to RANSW. Stephen Champion stepped up to the role of Chair and Ben Roche became Deputy Chair.

We continued to deliver Network support throughout the year, through workshops and regional travel. We welcomed Alyce Fisher back to the network when she joined Murray Arts as their new Executive Director. Alyce had previously been the Regional Arts Development Officer at South West Arts before she departed for international adventures. Jamie-Lea Hodges and the Outback Arts team were successful in obtaining a grant to purchase their own property in Cooambook. That’s a first for the Network! Congratulations to Outback Arts.

This year RADO boundaries changed due to new local government boundaries and this impacted a number of the regions. The changes were duly celebrated, a party held by South West Arts and Western Rivers Arts in Jerilderie was marked by the consumption of green pea wine – a local specialty. I believe tastes better than it looks! One of the benefits of these changes is that some previously non-contributing councils are now contributing.

We welcomed the Advisory Council in April for their annual networking day and the AGM. These are the regional heroes who volunteer their time and expertise as Chairs of the RADOs. We were delighted that the new Minister, Don Harwin, had the opportunity to meet them at the Annual Dinner.

Elizabeth Rogers — Chief Executive Officer
The current organisational structure of RANSW (as per the diagram below) has been in place since 2009 when a major review of the governance structure led to a revision of the Constitution and shifted the RANSW Board from a representative to a skills-based model. Prior to this time, directors of the Board were delegates (usually the Chair) of each of the Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs) but, as the number of RADOs grew, effective governance was impacted by the subsequent size of the Board, the frequent turnover of Board members, the financial costs of bringing the Board of bringing the Board together and the difficulties in maintaining a spread of skills and knowledge. After the restructure, representation from all the RADOs continued through an Advisory Council that meets annually prior to the AGM. Strategic and operational issues are discussed at the tri-annual two-day meetings of Regional Executive Directors, RADO staff, and RANSW staff.

Regional Arts NSW Ltd Board of Directors
- 9 member board, meets 5 times per year
- 5 regional & 4 co-opted Directors
- Directors appointed for 2 year terms with a maximum of 3 terms
- Appointment of Directors is based on their skills as contained in the Constitution

Regional Arts NSW Advisory Council
- 14 Chairs of Regional Arts Development Organisations representing the ordinary members of the Company
- Meets 1 day per year prior to AGM
- Elects up to 5 Directors depending on vacancies in the cycle from nominations submitted, professional development and workshops, reviews the Company’s strategic directions

RANSW Executive
- 3 members, meet as required

14 RADO Boards
- Body Corporate members of the Company
- Regional Arts NSW Ltd
- Committees of management

14 Regional Arts Development Organisations
- Non-profit regional arts & cultural development entities servicing a group of LGAs
- EDs and staff

Our Services
- Networking meetings
- Professional development
- General information on all arts grants
- Management of devolved funding programs
- Funding / Grant writing workshops
- Online grants management systems
- Research
- Advocacy – regional, state and national level
- Media and publicity
- Publications and resources
- E-bulletin/Social media
- Communications network

Our Skills
- Governance + Funding program knowledge + Grant writing + Grant program management + Media + Communication practices
- Strategic planning + Project management + Event management + Research

Regional Arts Development Organisations are:
- Independent incorporated associations with:
  - Paid professional staff
  - Multiple stakeholders
  - Diverse funding sources
  - Projects and program delivery

Structure
Network support

RANSW hosted 2 face-to-face, two-day meetings in Sydney and a half-day meeting in Lismore prior to Artstate for our network of the Executive Directors (EDs) of Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs). The Aboriginal Arts Officers joined the February meeting and Communications Officers joined the July meeting to access specific professional development and networking opportunities.

- Executive Directors [14] – February, July and November
- Aboriginal Arts Officers (8 officers from 6 regions) – February
- Communications Officers [14] – July

Skills Development

- Training session in Sydney in July on Risk Management attended by 8 EDs and 2 from RANSW

Regional Travel

Field trips and regional travel are an integral support service for the RADOs and EDs undertaken by the CEO. Trips cover an itinerary developed by the ED according to their region’s needs.

The CEO spent 64 days travelling in 2017. Nine regions were visited in this period. As Artstate Lismore was the major event of 2017, 29% of CEO travel was to Lismore and the Northern Rivers. Five trips were made to Lismore for a total of 29 days including travel days scheduled around significant milestones including the local launch of Artstate, meetings with local stakeholders, production and site visits, the opening of the new Lismore Regional Gallery and the event itself.

Eight other regions were visited during the period including Arts North West, Southern Tablelands Arts, Arts Upper Hunter, Murray Arts, West Riverina Arts, Arts Out West, Eastern Riverina Arts and Outback Arts.

Group insurance

- Broadform Liability or ‘Public Liability’ Insurance (RADOs and LAOs)
- Voluntary Workers Personal Accident Insurance (RADOs and LAOs)
- Association Liability Insurance (RADOs)
- Business Package (RADOs)
- Journey Insurance (RADOs)
- Motor Vehicle Insurance (8 RADOs covering 10 vehicles)
- Cyber insurance (10 RADOs, new)

In 2017 there were 109 affiliate members. RANSW can now offer affiliate membership to eligible regional arts organisations throughout Australia. In 2015 RANSW partnered with Fineura to develop an insurance package tailored to insure the risks of individual artists who are not covered by the group insurance policies for Regional Arts NSW, affiliated members and RADOs. The growing number of participants in this new policy is leading to a reduction in premiums. There are currently 83 live policies for individual artists.

Devolved grants programs

Response to funding enquiries

- 1047 phone calls
- 1574 emails

2017 Country Arts Support Program (CASP) on behalf of Create NSW:

- The maximum amount for a CASP grant is $5000. For the 2017 CASP funding round:
  - 131 applications were received, requesting a total of $476,923
  - 79 successful applications were funded a total of $245,747
- Activities took place in 90 localities and 52 local government areas
- Approximately 287 artists were employed with CASP funds on a temporary or contract basis
- An estimated 4,173 people actively participated in projects
- An estimated 38,375 people attended project outcomes such as performances or exhibitions
- Approximately $330,128 in cash contributions and $710,341 in ‘in-kind’ support for projects means that a total of $1,059,469 was leveraged by CASP funding – 4.3 times the amount of CASP funding.

2017 Regional Arts Fund (RAF) on behalf of the Department of Communications and the Arts through Regional Arts Australia

- Community Grants
  - 61 applications were received, requesting a total of $1,050,813
  - 22 successful projects were funded a total of $380,301
- Quick Response Grants
  - 26 applications were received, requesting a total of $32,818
  - 21 successful projects were funded a total of $28,638

Combined RAF and Quick Response Grants:

- An estimated 140 artists were employed with RAF funds on a temporary or contract basis
- An estimated 4,049 people actively participated in projects
- An estimated 123,691 people attended project outcomes such as performances or exhibitions
- Approximate $452,569 in cash contributions and $261,930 in ‘in-kind’ support for projects means that a total of $729,341 was leveraged by RAF funding.
Artstate Lismore

This new initiative received four-year funding from Create NSW to demonstrate regional excellence in the Arts in NSW. The inaugural Artstate was delivered in Lismore from 30 November – 3 December 2017. RANSW was able to work swiftly to re-engage the team of regional contractors that had been developed for ARTLANDS DURBRO, as well as an Arts Program Director from the local area.

The two-day conference addressed the themes of Creative Partnerships and Creative Practice and the accompanying arts festival featured a diverse program of performances, exhibitions and film screenings featuring the artists of the Northern Rivers region. Artstate was presented in partnership with Arts Northern Rivers with funding from Create NSW, Lismore City Council, the Building Better Regions Fund from the Department of Regional Development, and extensive in-kind support from Southern Cross University. Local stakeholders contribution to the program included Northern Rivers Conservatorium, NORPA, Screenworks and Lismore Regional Gallery.

181 delegates attended Artstate Lismore (just short of the 200 target). 85 from regional NSW, 77 from Sydney, 11 from Western Sydney, 11 from interstate and 3 international. Final audience figures and evaluation reports are in progress. Overall the high attendance from Sydney demonstrated the value of the event in bringing metropolitan and regional arts practitioners and administrators together to focus on excellence in regional arts practice.

A separate report will detail this event.
Aboriginal arts development

Aboriginal Arts Development is a major priority for RANSW, however during 2017 it became evident that there were a number of emerging issues that will impact on our delivery in the future. Travel assistance and skills development projects that were funded as part of a four-year National Strategic Project, Building Networks, under the RAF framework were completed 30 June 2016. RAF Strategic Projects under the new RAF agreement are now being managed by RAA and there is no support for further funding for NSW from this program.

RANSW was able to continue this program in 2017 through the administration allocation for managing the network Indigenous Language and Arts (ILA) contract. We were advised mid-year that the centralised contract with RANSW that commenced in 2016 would revert back to applications from the regions by early 2018.

The current funding arrangement with RANSW will end 30 June 2018. An officer from the Department of Communications and the Arts advised the EDs during the meeting in Lismore on 30 November on the new process for applications under this funding program.

The annual joint Network meeting with the regional Aboriginal Arts Officers (AAOs) met in Sydney on 15-16 February. They were given training programs available for Aboriginal artists, advised on the new arrangements for the ILA contract (a number of new positions), discussed the development of a strategy and shared project information from their regions. AOs are appointed by Arts North West, Arts Northern Rivers, Murray Arts, Outback Arts, South East Arts and West Darling Arts. The Saltwater Fringe Festival General Manager is included in this Network for the Mid North Coast region.

Further preparation for the development of a new regional NSW Aboriginal Arts Development Strategy was undertaken by holding a special AAO workshop in Sydney from 29-30 August, facilitated by Peter White. The report from this workshop will inform the development of the strategy. Funding is being sought to complete this project. It is recognised that RANSW needs to review the past 10 years of work and have a clear future vision for NSW in order to meet this priority area in the future.

RANSW developed a strong Aboriginal program as part of Artstate Lismore 2017 and will continue this throughout the four years of the Artstate project.

RANSW communications and marketing

The Regional Arts NSW website (regionalartsnsw.com.au) continues to be the main platform for promoting, informing and communicating the work of the Regional Arts NSW Network. The website is updated on a regular basis with a mix of events, grants, news from regional and kindred organisations, personnel changes and employment opportunities. Case studies of CASP and RAF projects are prioritised and the website is used to broadcast many of the major projects of the RADOs. Throughout 2017 a total of 21 CASP and 26 RAF related news and event items were published, as well as a 6-part How to Write a Grant Application series.

The NSW Government changed with the resignation of the Premier, Mike Baird and the appointment of a new Premier, Gladys Berejiklian on 23 January. Engagement with the new Arts Minister, Don Harwin who replaced Troy Grant, was a priority with the bid for the Regional Excellence Funding pending.

Numerous meetings and briefings about RANSW and Artstate occurred with the NSW Arts Minister and his office and NSW Government funding for Artstate as a four-year project was confirmed by the Arts Minister on 30 March. Don Harwin attended and spoke at the RANSW Annual Dinner 19 April and the Artstate launch in Sydney 9 August. He attended Artstate Lismore 30 November – 3 December, speaking at the opening ceremony and the Artstate dinner. A number of meetings were held with Ben Franklin MLC in his role as Parliamentary Secretary for Northern NSW, who was very supportive of the Artstate project. He spoke at the local Lismore launch of Artstate on 12 May and attended Artstate Lismore.

Meetings with other MPs included Thomas George, Member for Lismore; Darrell Maughan, Member for Wagga Wagga; Bronnie Taylor; Parliamentary Secretary for Southern NSW; and Adam Marshall, NSW Minister for Tourism. Kevin Hogan, Federal Minister for Regional Development at the Artstate opening ceremony.

The RANSW 2016 Year in Review was mailed to all Federal and State regional MPs.
Leadership and effective governance

Board Matters

The board met five times during the year to oversee the governance of the organisation. Following the AGM on 19 April, the Board farewelled Peter White and Naomi Messenger who had completed their third terms and Stephen Bradley who resigned after five years on the Board. The Board thanked all three retiring Directors for their contribution to RANSW and acknowledged Peter White for his outstanding leadership and contribution to Aboriginal Arts Development in NSW. New co-opted Directors, Sharni Jones and Gavin Findlay were welcomed as was Nicholas Pickard who joined the Board at the July meeting. Stephen Champion was elected Chair, Ben Roche Deputy Chair and David Dwyer continued as Treasurer. Additional appointments included Ben Roche as Board representative on the RAF panel and Sharni Jones as Chair of the ESDP panel. Peter White continued to represent RANSW on the RAA Board.

Regional Arts NSW Public Fund

The Public Fund was administered according to the regulations of the Register of Cultural Organisations. Julie Briggs, Ben Roche and David Dwyer were appointed the Trustees of the Public Fund at the Board meeting on 16 April, 2017.

Audit

The annual full-year audit was undertaken in January by Stephen J Miller and Co.

Funding Matters

1. Create NSW

Arts NSW merged with Screen NSW to become a new body, Create NSW, in April 2017 and under a new Minister, moved into the Department of Planning. The restructure did not affect the current funding arrangements for RANSW which entered the second year of its current triennial agreement with Create NSW 2016 – 2018 for core operations including the administration of CASP. Create NSW also funded Artstate NSW as a strategic four-year project in order to present a speakers and arts program in four different regions of NSW and showcase regional excellence. Artstate Lismore was held from 30 November – 3 December, 2017 and moves to Bathurst in 2018.

2. Department of Communications and the Arts (DoCA) – Arts Division

2.1 RAF

From July, 2016 the RAF is administered by RAA on behalf of the Department and managed in NSW through Smarty Grants. RANSW no longer has a direct contract with the Department. The RAF Grants (Community Grants and Quick Response) continued to be administered according to the guidelines (See full report: Section 2, Grants). Over 2017, it became clear that there would be no support for the request for strategic funds that RANSW had used over the previous four years to provide support, professional development and build capacity for the regional Network of Aboriginal Arts Officers in NSW.

2.2 ILA

In 2016, RANSW was requested to submit a multi-year application to the ILA program on behalf of the network for the AAOs positions that were previously funded under the now closed ICS program. We were subsequently advised that only one year of funding was granted and that there was no opportunity to extend the network into those regions currently without a designated AAO position. Following numerous meetings in Canberra, RANSW was asked to re-submit an application in 2017. This resulted in six months funding to end 30 June 2018. Individual RADOs will now apply directly to this fund.

3. Artstate Funding

RANSW was successful in obtaining additional project funding for Artstate Lismore from Department of Regional Development, Building Better Regions Community Investment Stream and from Lismore City Council.

Staffing Matters

A review of the organisation’s needs and a proposed staff restructuring for 2017-18 was ratified by the Board in December 2016 for implementation in January 2017. All part-time positions were abolished and two new full-time positions were created: Manager, Communications and Administration and Manager, Grants and Projects. Kallalyn-Jane Dunn was recruited to fill the new Communications and Administration role, and Pru Tan, previously the Administration Officer, took up the new Grants and Projects role. Pru took 12 months maternity leave in July and her position was filled by Lexie Reeves. The financial management continues to be contracted out to Company Prophets and Dr Jane Kreis is contracted for Research and Development support. All Artstate personnel are contractors brought in as required to deliver the project. All are based regionally. All RANSW IT is now cloud based enabling regional contractors and core staff to operate remotely.

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THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY REGIONAL ARTS NSW IN 2017. FOR THE FULL ANNUAL REPORT AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS VISIT WWW.REGIONALARTSNSW.COM.AU

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