

The Surf Coast Shire

Creative Places Strategy 2023 – 2031





Acknowledgment of Country

Surf Coast Shire Council Acknowledges the Wadawurrung People, and Gulidjan and Gadubanud Peoples of the Eastern Maar, their Elders and leaders past, present and emerging as the Traditional Owners of the skies, land, waters and sea country across our municipality.

We acknowledge their care and custodianship for more than 60,000 years, which continues today. We walk with them as we respectfully care for and tread lightly on these lands.

We also extend that respect to all First Nations people who are part of the community.

*Winchelsea Entrance Sculptures
(eastern entrance) "Dusk and Dawn"
Artists Matthew Harding and Benjamin Storch, 2019*

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Creative and cultural industries play a starring role on the Surf Coast

Surf Coast Shire is a creative region, home to a diversity of talented people, organisations and communities who engage in a broad range of disciplines. Visual artists, sculptors, writers, poets, playwrights, filmmakers, architects and designers of all types, new media artists, dancers, musicians and performers contribute to our identity and the beauty and uniqueness of our place.

Cr. Libby Stapleton and Cr. Liz Pattison at the Yellow Gums Performance Space, Jan Juc - December 2021



Our creatives provide us with opportunities for expression and storytelling and share their voice and vision with the community.

They activate our townships and highlight the beauty of the environment and fragility of our ecosystem. They delight and invigorate us with their passion.

If culture is the expression of who and what we are as a people, then creativity forms an integral part of its expression.

Surf Coast Shire Council's new strategy, Creative Places 2023 – 2031, quantifies the value of arts and creativity to the shire, foregrounding both the social and health benefits that arts provide our community, as well as the increasing role the creative industries play in the prosperity of our place.

The Surf Coast's creative and cultural industries provide significant employment contributions to our local economy and flow-on economic benefits.

Events such as Lorne Sculpture Biennale, Aireys Inlet Music Festival, Surf Coast Arts Trail and The Sound Doctor Presents bring people from across Victoria and beyond to enjoy unique arts experiences; whilst the many designers, fabricators, homeware designers and renowned public artists send their work out across the world.

This vibrant economic activity is worth celebrating: our place is increasingly recognised as a hub for creative workers with its enviable locations, easy access to major cities such as Geelong and Melbourne, and increasing transport options.

This economic and cultural phenomenon began in the surf in the 1970s as groups of friends innovated ways to surf better and longer on our enviable waves - leading to Torquay and Jan Juc's recognition in 2016 as a national regional creative hotspot for creative industry. The many, many artists and artisans, designers and fabricators that chased the waves to our place never left – and now their children are beginning to inspire us with their own talent and innovation too.

“Creative Places 2023 – 2031 outlines how Council will create opportunities to map this unique phenomenon and how we will support emerging to established artists and creatives with opportunities and career pathways.

Through their work, the shire's creatives engage visitors in the stories of our place: they share its beauty and uniqueness in thought-provoking ways, showcasing the creativity and innovation that is the hallmark of our community.”



Cr Liz Pattison
Mayor, Surf Coast Shire Council

About the Surf Coast

The Surf Coast Shire is located 1.5 hours west of Melbourne, at the start of the Great Ocean Road. One of Victoria's most significant visitor destinations, our shire is home to some of the world's most iconic surf locations such as Bells Beach, and unique landscapes like Anglesea Heath and Great Otway National Park.

The diverse beauty of our place has encouraged a creative and skilled community to take up residence here. Proximity to Melbourne, coupled with the extraordinary natural environment, has long inspired a creative migration from Melbourne and Geelong, now a designated UNESCO City of Design. This migration, which continued apace during the COVID-19 pandemic, has resulted in significant residential growth, enriching the local community talent that has played an important part in defining, connecting and shaping our townships and communities.

These unique geographic and lifestyle aspects have resulted in a deep Surf Coast cultural identity that finds its inspiration in our natural world and the elements that define our every day. Rolling hills, cold mornings, coastal cliffs and beaches; flower-filled heathland, towering trees, rivers and rich wildlife engage our passions and creative curiosity, informing our expression of who we are as individuals and as a community.

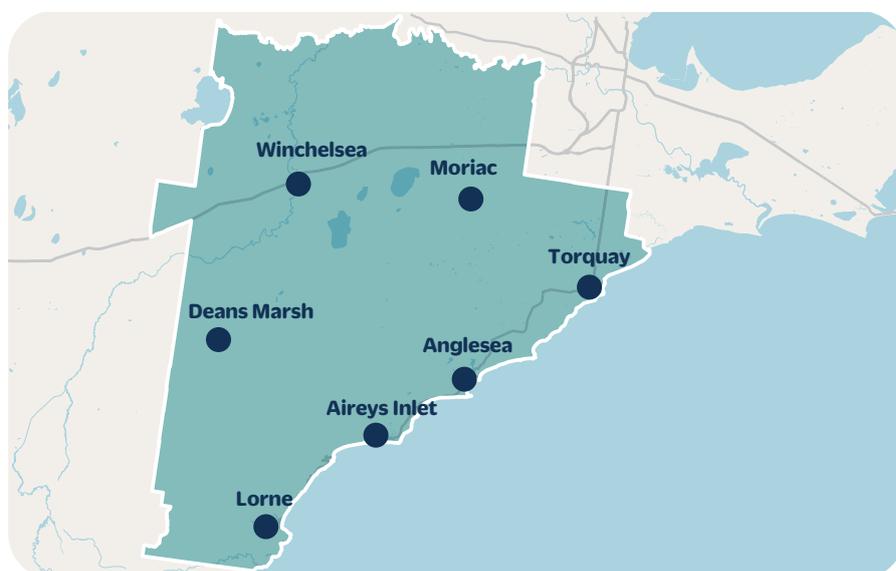
Heritage, both contemporary and ancient, guides our knowledge of place and artistic expression, deepening our sense of belonging and sustaining our values.

Surf Coast Shire spans the traditional lands of the Wadawurrung People and the Gulidjan and Gadubanud Peoples.

Council is committed to a journey towards reconciliation through a commitment to genuine truth-telling, education and support of cultural heritage learning.

We seek to broaden our understanding of Traditional Owners' perspectives and to use this knowledge to make better decisions.

Our commitment to Reconciliation is an underpinning principle in all of the work that we do.







Defining our creative community and economy

Defining the arts and creative community and industry accurately is critical to understanding and appreciating the significance it holds within the Surf Coast, mapping the best pathway forward and providing the right support now and over the next 10 years.

Arts and creativity – an economic perspective

“No standard definition of the Creative Sector exists, either domestically or internationally, although a number of components are common across most definitions.

There is a difference too between the creative economy and creative industries—the concept of the creative economy captures not only the footprint of the creative industrial sector, but also encompasses spill-over effects and creative contributions to other parts of an economic ecosystem.”

- Essential Economics

The creative economy, therefore is defined as industries and occupations that have potential for wealth and job creation through the exploitation of intellectual property.

Creativity and innovation has played a critical role in the economic success of the Surf Coast, and in the process established a deep, contemporary cultural identity.

Much has been written of pioneering surf business Quiksilver and Rip Curl. Established in Torquay in the late 1960s as home-based businesses and evolving into international success stories on the back of cutting edge design-based creativity, both brands speak to the possibilities of a vibrant creative sector. Many creative business throughout the Surf Coast emanated from these trailblazing businesses as skilled-up staff followed their passions, becoming success stories in their own right.

While an integral part of our contemporary culture, the Surf Coast creative sector now reaches far beyond the surf industry.

Creative Industry Sectors

Our creative sector is made up of the following industries.

Some are well known:



Clothing manufacturing



Footwear manufacturing



Polymer product manufacturing



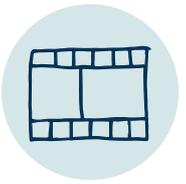
Other manufactured products



Broadcasting (except internet)



Library & other information services



Motion picture & sound recording



Publishing (except internet & music publishing)



Computer systems design & related services



Heritage, creative & performing arts



Internet publishing, broadcast, websearch & data server



Professional Scientific & Technical Services

Others require fine grain definitions.

For example:

Our Creative Economy definition includes the following services from the Professional Scientific and Technical Services sector:

- **architectural services**
- **advertising services**
- **market research and statistical services**
- **management advice and related consulting services**
- **professional photographic services**
- **computer system design and related services**
- **other professional, scientific and technical services (not elsewhere classified).**

Professional Scientific and Technical Services (and their myriad of sub sectors such as lawyers, accountants, veterinarian services and surveyors) are often included in the creative industry definition. For the purposes of this strategy, these do not qualify as areas of focus.

The above subsector services represent 74% of the broader Professional Scientific and Technical Services sector. This representation has been steadily increasing for several years. Although it is possible to identify the correct types of sub sector services, it is not possible to carve out their value within available economic modelling tools. For this reason the full value of Professional, Scientific and Technical services has been included in the Creative Economy definition.

Beyond the economy - benefits of a creative Surf Coast

Not all benefits of a creative community link to an industry sector or contribute to the economy.

Art takes on many forms including visual art (sculpting, painting, photography and other visual media), performing arts (theatre, dance, music, film and performance) and literature (involving the crafting of narrative and sharing of story). Each engages spectators and audiences in a variety of immersive, interactive experiences and discussions, growing our connections, our understanding and our sense of people and place.



Heartspace Mural
Designed and Led by Artist Kathryn Junor
Bellbrae, 2021

Art, culture and creativity bring people and communities together, create inspiration and passion, stimulate conversation, and provide a platform to convey important stories from a diversity of voices. It can transform the mundane into the extraordinary.

According to VicHealth's 2019 – 2023 Arts Strategy, artistic and creative diversity is an important ingredient to community wellbeing.

In the Surf Coast, much of this activity takes place at the community level, with organisations and groups forming around ideas and interests to create the visible cultural expression of our people and townships.

From events of all scale - to public art, murals and ephemeral art outcomes, performance, poetry writing and music - there is ample evidence of the positivity, personal wellbeing and community connectedness that is derived from creative pursuits. It shapes our sense of place in defined buildings such as galleries and performance venues alongside social spaces such as parks, playgrounds and streetscapes in the public realm.

Although it can be difficult to measure, this strategy seeks to recognise and value the positive benefits community-driven creativity produces.

Stages of creativity

Creatives travel through or move between several stages of creative contribution and development and this strategy seeks to honour every stage.

From the experience seeker (such as a passionate theatre goer or exhibition attendee), to a home-based business (making surfboards in the garage or jewellery in a small home studio), to a physical shopfront or web presence (design, manufacturing and selling of creative products).

A shopfront is not the ultimate goal of every creative. Nor should it be. What is important is the recognition of each of these stages, the vital contribution made by our creatives and facilitating the appropriate level of support where required.

Many creative skills practised within the Surf Coast region would be defined as craft and hobbies. They may generate some income for the practitioner but are unlikely to be a full-time pursuit. This strategy seeks to support these creatives where desired, to develop skills, deepen appreciation and move the various creative engagement phases as they see fit.

It will also find balance in supporting those who engage in arts and creativity purely as a passion and source of wellbeing.

Experience Seeker	Hobbyist	Home-based business	Incubator	Professional
Experience seekers find enjoyment participating in creative industry pursuits. This could be via attending events, performances or classes.	The hobbyist has moved beyond receiving an experience and is becoming actively involved in pursuit which could begin to generate small amounts of revenue.	The passion pursuit has increased skills and demands more time. Income generation is more significant. A business is springing to life and is operated from home.	The creative pursuit has continued to grow. The side hustle is becoming the main focus with the business moving from home to a dedicated studio or office space with like-minded businesses.	High level skills have developed. The creative passion is now the main income generator requiring either a physical workspace, shopfront or major web presence and potentially employs others.

At times, Council will take the lead in supporting individuals or collectives in these stages and at times, creatives will be self-guiding and self-sufficient.

Our programs will be targeted to ensure we meet need, providing the right support while ensuring the chance of duplication of effort is minimised.

A key element for the success of this strategy is ensuring that our finite resources are maximised to derive the best possible social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits.

The 2023 – 31 Strategy

Vision

By 2031 the Surf Coast will be a flourishing creative destination. Creatives of all pursuits will be enabled and equipped to enhance our sense of place and identity. Their contribution to the environment, wellbeing and a vibrant economy will be understood and valued.



*Hooded Plover Mural, Aireys Inlet Community Centre
Artist Geoffrey Carran, 2021*

Strategic Areas:

The Strategy comprises three strategic areas being Place, People and Profile. Our key goals and actions will be delivered through these strategic pillars.

The three strategic areas are:

1. Place



Place comes in many forms. From townships to precincts, streets and gathering spaces. Character and identity are critically important to place. Arts, heritage and creatives add immense value to place through their ability to invigorate spaces, create conversation, reinforce character and provide a point of connection.

2. People



Without people who are inspired, talented, experienced, supportive, willing to learn and invest passion and energy Creative Places will not flourish. Our people are the enablers of placemaking and connection. A skilled and empowered community is vital to achieving our aspirations for the arts and creative economy.

3. Profile



Creating greater awareness of the significance of the creative economy is essential in advancing Creative Places. Enabling infrastructure, advocacy and projects designed to showcase the rich depth of talent will help our community to thrive and attract like-minded creatives.

Goals:

Goals have been developed to summarise actions that will be taken under these three strategic areas to support the economy we need.

1.1 Places and Spaces to Enable Arts and Culture

1.2 Cultural Tourism

2.1 Supporting First nations Cultural Expression

2.2 Supporting the Aspirations of our Emerging Artists

2.2 A thriving and connected creative community

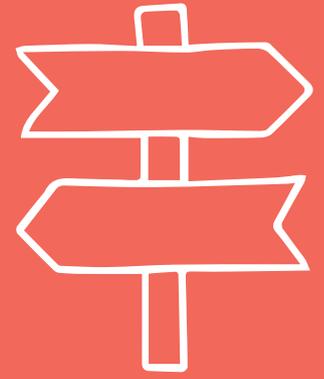
3.1 Showcasing Our Best and Brightest

3.2 Enhancing our Creative Economy



Former Winchelsea Shire Hall

1. Place



Goal 1.1 Places and Spaces to enable arts and culture

Case Study – Creative Hubs

All creative communities are reliant on the availability of appropriate working spaces. Space and appropriate facilities are often the glue for a creative neighbourhood.

In the Surf Coast, Council has played a role in supporting appropriate facilities. However the very nature of creative thinking in the shire drives a bespoke model for the creation of unique creative neighbourhoods which respond to need and are driven by a mixture of commercial, community and individual aspirations.

Examples below illustrate the diversity and drive of our communities, creatives and businesses to establish appropriate spaces. We are mindful of allowing our creatives to lead this process and will both partner and support our creative communities in these endeavours as an investment in our creative future.

Ashmore Arts

Set on the outskirts of Torquay, Ashmore Arts is a creative industry micro-business hub, providing purpose-built studios and workshops for creatives. Artists and artisans come together at all stages of career development in this vibrant and ingenious community – sculptors, potters, painters, illustrators, photographers, leather artisans, print makers, blacksmiths, knife fabricators, concrete and timber furniture makers and designers.

Ashmore currently houses 16 creative micro-businesses and in late 2022, helped enable the delivery of a further 11 artist studios on an adjoining property. At the time of writing, this creative neighbourhood houses about 50 working artists.



Aerial Photo of Ashmore Arts, Torquay



Ashmore Arts Founder, Stewart Guthrie, 2022
Photographer: Pete James



Multi Arts Centre

The newly established Multi Arts Centre (The MAC) in Torquay is a community-led venue that offers the opportunity for multidisciplinary local artists (including visual and performing artists) to develop and present their work to audiences.

Despite capital works on the building and the lingering impacts of COVID-19, over the initial 20 month period (1 March 2021 to 31 October 2022) The MAC was home to the presentation of more than 60 arts events across visual art, performance and music. These included art exhibitions and installations, artist talks and workshops at Hoop Gallery alongside a range of workshops, music and theatre performances at Shoestring Playhouse.

Locals and visitors have supported the diverse program of activity at The MAC, with audiences over 5000 in the period surveyed. This represents an average of 180 visitors to each of the Hoop events, alongside audiences of 480 for each Shoestring Playhouse performance.

Three management organisations collectively draw on almost 70 community volunteers to bring The MAC to life.

This flexible arts space operates as a self-managed community model that provides flexible working space for a diversity of art forms and is an excellent example of our aim to enable the creative community to realise their vision. The facility is utilised by volunteer creatives and visited by the public seven days a week.

SPARK!

In October 2019, we supported creatives from the Deans Marsh community to achieve funding to upgrade existing, underutilised sports infrastructure at Deans Marsh Memorial Reserve to create spaces where artists and art lovers could come together to learn, create and exhibit their work.

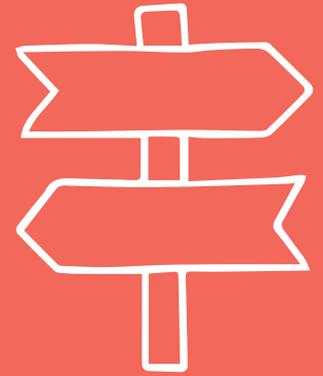
SPARK! Deans Marsh was one of six statewide applicants to receive funding from Creative Victoria's Regional Co-working Spaces and Creative Places program – helping bring to life the Footy Shed Gallery, alongside a dedicated potters space and printing press.



The Surf Coast's creative communities have a track record of establishing flexible working spaces for creatives by taking advantages of opportunities. Via this strategy, we will continue to facilitate access to good working spaces or artists where collaboration, support and cross germination can lead to increased success and career development.



1. Place



Goal 1.1 Places and Spaces to enable arts and culture

Rationale

The community, be they experience seekers, hobbyists or professionals, has a strong and demonstrated desire to ensure our places and spaces are equipped with the capability to enable planned and spontaneous creativity, express artistic talent or tell compelling stories

The right infrastructure in the right locations can act as an incredible community enabler, be it power and water in open spaces or hanging rails, lighting, sound equipment and cabling in community halls.

Continued advocacy to deliver new and improved infrastructure such as the Surf Coast Cultural Centre is also vital to ensure our community has access to contemporary and state of the art facilities.

We will investigate how our community assets can be improved to enable Council and community-led delivery of arts and creative pursuits.

We will continue to advocate for funding towards critical infrastructure and investigate ways to help fund greater outcomes for the arts in our places and spaces.

We will seek to work with key landowners such as Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority and private land owners to ensure integrated outcomes for the community.

We will work with our Historical Societies to capture and communicate stories of significance.

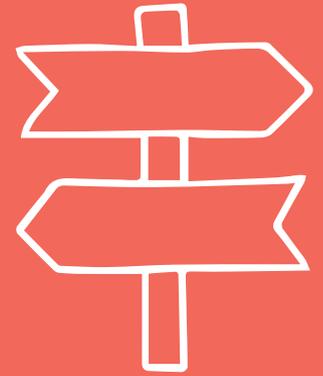
Actions

1. Enhance artistic and creative infrastructure in Council assets (such as halls) to enable more gallery exhibitions, artists in residence, music, performance and other programming outcomes to take place.
2. Implement the Australian National Surfing Museum Master Plan with an intention to tell compelling, diverse stories and increase visitation.
3. Work with Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority to identify opportunities for a permanent, shire-wide public arts trail.
4. Investigate the merits of a Public Art Development scheme to increase artistic focused placemaking outcomes.
5. Complete an audit, asset management plan and supporting policy documentation to ensure the sustainable activation of public spaces with art.
6. Implement ephemeral placemaking activations on suitable high profile sites such as illuminating the Lorne Swing Bridge and other key sites.
7. Collaborate with heritage and historical societies to ensure cultural experiences are maximised



*All Our Exes Live In Texas – Presented by The Sound Doctor
at Anglesea Memorial Hall, 2018 Victoria
Photographer: Patrick Callow*

1. Place



Goal 1.2 Cultural Tourism

Case Study – Lorne Sculpture Biennale

In October 2005 friends of Lorne Arts met to discuss a dream of staging a world-class sculpture exhibition along the dramatic sweep of Lorne's famous foreshore. Now in its eighth iteration, the Biennale is a driving force for cultural tourism in the region.

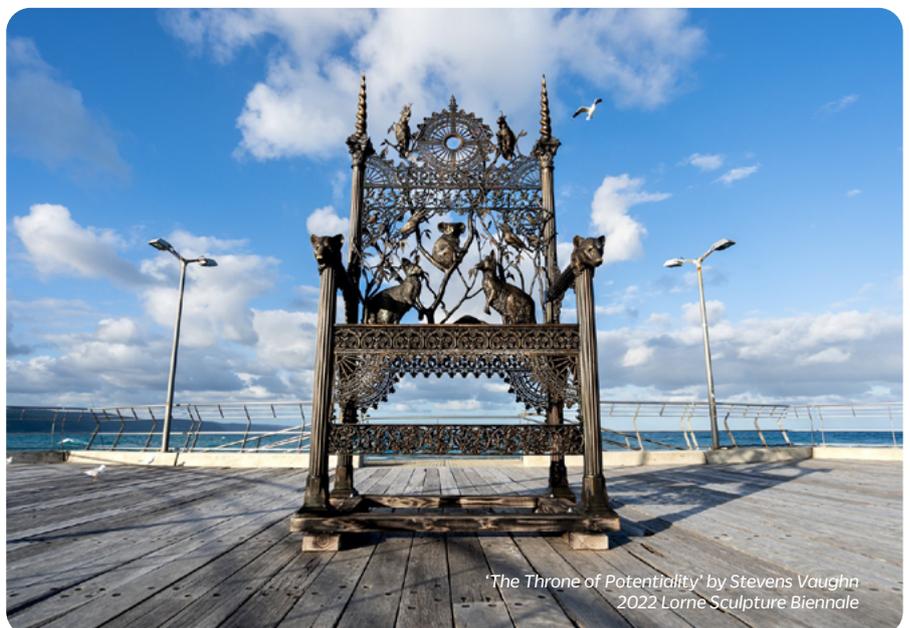
In 2022, 67 artists participated and 16 major sculptural precinct sites were activated along the Lorne foreshore, showcasing a range of national and international artists responding directly to Lorne's history under the theme 'Spirit of Place'.

The 2022 event received approximately 25,000 visitors over a three-week period, many of whom stayed overnight.

Surveys show that 60% of respondents travelled to Lorne specifically for the Biennale, and more than 80% extended their stay because of the event.

This confirms the valuable role cultural events play in driving increased length of stay in the region.

Almost 70 artists took part in the broader program, which included a total of 81 workshops, performances or artistic experiences. The event engaged 100 volunteers over a three-week period.



*'The Throne of Potentiality' by Stevens Vaughn
2022 Lorne Sculpture Biennale*



THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD STORY

Rationale

Cultural tourists are experience seekers. They stay longer and spend more than Surf Coast's typical visitor.

Cultural tourism is less weather dependent than other pursuits, with theatre, gallery exhibitions and performances often taking place indoors. Cultural tourism has the potential to play a key role in boosting off-peak visitation to the Surf Coast.

Our Australian National Surfing Museum (ANSM) and Great Ocean Road Heritage Centre both tell cultural stories of national significance. These stories should continue to be developed and communicated to a broad audience. Our location at the start of the Great Ocean Road and close proximity to airports and ferries positions us well to attract cultural visitors.

Developing our cultural offerings not only aligns with strategies at regional (Making Change G21 Region) and state (Creative State 2025) level, it will also help sustain our economies and townships and create vibrant communities.

We will continue to build on our existing cultural product strengths such as events, ANSM and the Great Ocean Road Heritage Centre.

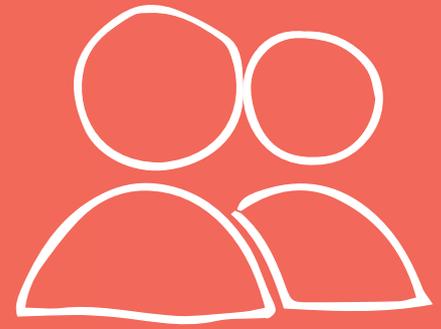
We will work with Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism and the private sector to develop new products, as well as identify opportunities to better promote existing experiences.

We will continue to advocate to Visit Victoria and Creative Victoria for new events, products and infrastructure.

Actions

1. Work with Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism and G21 to advocate for and develop cultural tourism experiences of regional significance, such as the Surf Coast Cultural Centre.
2. Develop new creative and enhance existing industry products that profile the breadth and diversity of our cultural offerings such as:
 - a. gallery experiences
 - b. First Nations interpretive trails
 - c. heritage attractions
 - d. Australian National Surfing Museum
 - e. Great Ocean Road Heritage Centre.
3. Identify and support community-led projects which enhance cultural tourism product.
4. Continue to support cultural tourism events through the Event Grants Program and advocate the Surf Coast Shire's strengths in hosting cultural events to Visit Victoria.
5. Work with Traditional Owners and key stakeholders on appropriate cultural tourism product development opportunities.
6. Continue to develop the Surf Coast Arts Trail into a regionally significant arts and creative event.

2. People



Goal 2.1 Supporting First Nations cultural expression

Council recognises the power of arts and cultural events to influence awareness, attitudes and behaviour. We strive to work in a culturally sensitive and collaborative way to help enable the Surf Coast's Traditional Owners to share their stories, experience, knowledge and culture as the First Peoples of this place.

Case Study – NAIDOC Week Exhibition 2022

In 2022, Council worked with four First Nations artists to create a feature exhibition at Anglesea Arts Space in celebration of NAIDOC Week.

The exhibition titled 'Get Up, Stand Up!' was curated by rising Worimi artist Gerard Black, and included Wadawurrung artists BJ O'Toole, Jenna Oldaker and Wagiman artist Nathan Patterson. The exhibition ran for the duration of NAIDOC Week and was a resounding success, with 662 visitors and \$13,295 in sales.

Most importantly, for some artists such as Jenna Oldaker, the exhibition offered a pathway to reflect upon and speak about their work and exhibit it in a gallery setting for the first time.

Rationale

Australia's First Nations Peoples have expressed their individual cultures through visual art, dance, song and story for tens of thousands of years, both as a tool for sharing knowledge and to honour significant events and occasions.

Supporting emerging First Nations people to achieve their creative ambitions is an investment in our future.

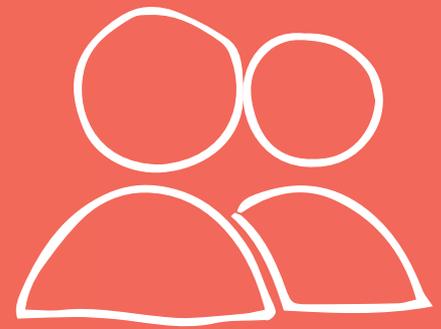
This strategy makes a commitment to showcase our First Nations creatives and supports them to achieve their goals.

Actions

1. In collaboration with Traditional Owners, provide opportunities to build the profile of our First Nations creatives.
2. Support Traditional Owners to share knowledge about Country and Culture through programming and development.
3. Connect with Creative Victoria's First People's Art Design Fair and promote pathways for local First Nations artists to participate.
4. Identify opportunities for and support delivery of First Nations public art.



2. People



Goal 2.2 Supporting the aspirations of emerging artists and creatives

Case Study – Anglesea Art Space

Anglesea Art Space is an artist-led space for Surf Coast creatives. It was established in 2015 to promote local artists' work and events.

In 2019, Council established a co-ordinator position to oversee operations due to the high level of local artist usage and the Surf Coast Art Space Committee was formed (later to become SCAS Inc.). In 2020 and after its abrupt closure due to COVID-19, Art Space quickly transitioned to the digital realm.

The online space was a site of considerable community engagement in 2020-21 with 52 exhibitions showcasing 356 emerging to established artists. Despite real-life closure for much of that time, more than \$86,000 was generated in sales via exhibitions, with all monies going directly back to artists in recognition of the impacts of COVID on the sector.

Since re-opening in late 2021, Anglesea Art Space has enabled more than 300 local artists and creatives to exhibit and promote their work, with sales upwards of \$65,000.



Rationale

We will connect our creatives to external opportunities, enable them to build their profile and develop sustainable skills. Connection and knowledge sharing for our creatives is recognised as a key to our industry's growth and sustainability.

We will nurture the growth of young people in our community through engagement in arts and creative pursuits.

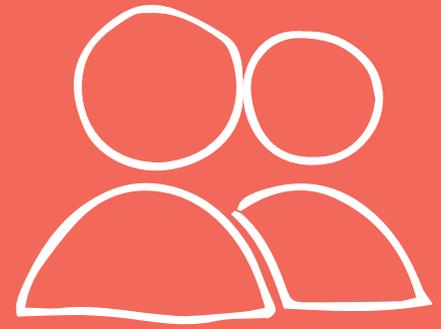
Actions

1. Support the creative development ambitions and needs of aspiring artists. This is achieved through professional development opportunities, workshops and knowledge sharing.
2. Ensure our creative venues such as Australian National Surfing Museum and Great Ocean Road Heritage Centre reflect contemporary stories.
3. Connect mentoring and volunteering opportunities with established creative professionals for young people in line with the Surf Coast Youth Strategy 2022 – 2025.
4. Identify and promote activities that foster wider youth participation within and arts and creative fields.



Anglesea Arts Space, 2020

2. People



Goal 2.3 A thriving and connected creative community

Case Study – Lorne Community Connect

Over recent years, the volunteer team at Lorne Community Connect have transitioned an underutilised community centre to a creative hub that connects the communities of Lorne and district.

By providing a venue to foster creative activities in all artistic areas, the Centre and the community have flourished.

Program highlights from 2020- 2023 include:

- Regular exhibitions by local Artists providing sales opportunities
- A small sculpture exhibition as a satellite to the Lorne Sculpture Biennale in 2022.
- Establishment of an Artist in Residence Program- featuring Meaghan Shelton in 2022 and Natasha Narain in 2023. This program is supported by both public and private funding sources.
- Collaborations with groups such as the Anglesea Players who will stage their annual production at Lorne Community Connect in 2023.
- Partnerships with local community groups to increase our exhibition hardware and which ensure ongoing community ownership of the facility.

In addition, a range of workshops, exhibitions, weekly art and craft group bookings underpin the program and ensure the community feel connected to the facility.



Lorne Community Connect- a new Creative Hub for Lorne Community, 2023

Rationale

Our hobbyists and experience seekers form a passionate backbone in building, connecting and informing our community.

Heritage committees contain immense knowledge, providing valuable input into our contemporary history and ensure key aspects of our past are preserved.

Community groups, broad and diverse in their artistic focus, deliver an array of programs that enrich participants, connect community and stimulate conversation.

We acknowledge the breadth of volunteering in this field and will support community organisations to build capacity.

We achieve this by developing tools and platforms to ensure our community-led arts and heritage groups continue to flourish and connect.

We will support our community groups in continuing to deliver thought provoking, meaningful creative experiences.

Actions

1. Develop an Arts and Creative Economy Communications Strategy.
2. Repurpose the online Arts Portal as a resource to support volunteers in creative and community cultural endeavors.
3. Ensure our grant programs are flexible and responsive and meet the needs of our arts and cultural communities.
4. Work with key creative and heritage community groups to identify skill development needs such as Cultural Awareness workshops.
5. Deliver projects that enable community participation in the arts and creative sector to foster connection and build engagement in the arts.



Lorne Community Connect- a new Creative Hub for Lorne Community, 2023

3. Profile



Goal 3.1 Showcasing our best and brightest

Case Study – Affordable Art Fair

Rowena Martinich is renowned for her use of radiant colour works from her Surf Coast studio.

Her vibrant abstract expressionist paintings can be seen around the world - from a school mural on the streets of New York City, to a 50m work on a sea wall in Turkey. Partner Geoffrey Carran, also a highly accomplished artist, completed his masters in fine art in 2008 and uses his public murals to highlight endangered bird species.

Heavily impacted by COVID-19 and with a need to generate revenue, The Affordable Art Fair in Melbourne was an opportunity to help multiple artists recover, generate awareness, and showcase talent to a national audience. Rowena and Geoffrey organised a group of local artists including Natalie Martin, Tal Lemmens and Kathryn Junor to exhibit at the fair in Melbourne with outstanding results including:

- The sale of 34 artworks during the fair, amounting to over \$100,000 in sales.
- An instant and targeted audience of more than 17,500 attendees, and more than 100,000 online.

Geoffrey Carran's work was awarded Director's Pick at the fair and marketed widely.

Natalie Martin has been picked up by a South Australian gallery that visited the fair. Tal Lemmens sold his entire edition of large format photographs, leading him to feel confident to explore solo exhibitions in Melbourne. And, Kathryn Junor sold an entire series at the fair, exceeding her expectations.

The above results highlight the opportunity that exposure via major art events provides our professional artists. For this reason, targeting opportunities forms part of the strategy to strengthen our creative industry.



Rationale

The Surf Coast is blessed with an incredible array of talented artists and creatives. From painters and performers to designers and developers, our best and brightest can be found in galleries, theatres, studios and outlets nationally and around the world.

The Victorian Government Creative State 2025 strategy seeks to drive Victoria's reputation as a global cultural destination and bold creative lead. With the right structured programs, profiling, connections and industry partnerships, our emerging and established creatives can play a key role in achieving this vision.

We will ensure our funding programs are targeted to meet the skill development needs of our artists and creatives.

We will showcase our best and brightest to build their profile and enhance our reputation as a destination for creatives.

We will identify opportunities for artists to exhibit their works to national and international audiences.

Actions

1. Support creatives to explore new directions, ideas and concepts to advance their practice and/or their careers through targeted grant programs such as DEVELOP, and mentoring and networking opportunities.
2. Profile and promote Surf Coast's creative strengths, and foster opportunities for our creative industry, individuals and practitioners to showcase themselves to a national and international audience by establishing key partnerships.
3. Promote our best and brightest to a broad audience and identify industry champions to advocate the benefits of a stronger creative industry.
4. In partnership with industry, promote participation in industry opportunities such as the Melbourne Affordable Art Fair, Melbourne Design Week and Geelong Design Week.



3. Profile



Goal 3.2 Enhancing our creative economy

Case Study – Surviving Summer mini series

A major 10 part mini-series, Surviving Summer was filmed in Surf Coast coastal areas from Torquay to Lorne in early 2020.

Picked up by Netflix, Surviving Summer achieved 20.3 million hours of viewing in the first week of release and injected \$1.8 million into the local Surf Coast economy and \$11 million into the Victorian economy. Many local cafes were used to cater for the cast and crew of more than 100 people. VicScreen estimates 500 businesses were supported, creating more than 700 jobs in Victoria.

The success of Surviving Summer is a great illustration of the significant economic benefits that the film industry can deliver over an extended period. Combined with an increased appreciation for our spectacular landscape, it brings flow-on effects of increased visitation and job creation.

The full impact of Surviving Summer has been documented by Vic Screen and can be viewed at:

[youtube.com/watch?v=q7gPYtz15Js](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7gPYtz15Js)



The Surviving Summer mini series was filmed on the Great Ocean Road in early 2020



Rationale

Employing approximately 900 people, our creative industries already provide a significant contribution to the broader Surf Coast economy.

Providing a diversity of career opportunities is essential to ensuring continued growth in this sector.

The provision of adequately zoned land to support creative neighborhoods and supportive planning controls will help to ensure our creatives and professional artists can live and work locally.

The attraction of high quality mini-series such as *Surviving Summer* greatly enhance our reputation as a film destination, creates significant short-term employment outcomes and also provides global promotion of the Surf Coast.

We will advocate the significance of the arts and creative industry to key stakeholders with a view to growing the contribution of the sector towards the broader economy.

We will ensure we have the right policy setting to enable our creatives to flourish locally.

Actions

1. Strengthen the Surf Coast's creative neighbourhoods and hubs through supportive planning scheme controls and strategic planning documents, to ensure a sustainable future and continued sector growth.
2. Support the development of high value, innovative, knowledge-based emerging creative economy streams on the Surf Coast such as:
 - a. film industry
 - b. live music
 - c. digital media/ arts
 - d. literary sector (including book illustrators).
3. Build relationships with creative producers such as VicScreen, Creative Victoria, Regional Arts Victoria and the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (Victoria) to raise our profile as a creative hotspot and to secure funding for creative practitioners and projects.
4. Advocate the strengths of the Surf Coast as a filming destination to key stakeholders such as VicScreen, Visit Victoria and Creative Victoria with an ambition of securing at least two national productions by 2026, and review the permit process.
5. Increase the contribution of the creative industry sector to the Surf Coast economy through the delivery of Goal 3.3 A destination of choice for emerging and innovative industries in the Surf Coast Economic Development Strategy.

Measures of success

To help us assess the overall success of this strategy and to track our progress, a number of key measurements have been developed. They are listed below against each strategic pillar.

In 2026 the Creative Places Strategy will be integrated with the Economic Development Strategy, as will the measures detailed below.

Strategic Area	Measures of success		
	2023	2026	2031
Place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MAC open for business Cultural tourism visitation is 191,000 p/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding secured for Surf Coast Cultural Centre stage one Increased investment in creative programming and infrastructure Major projects such as Surf Coast Cultural Centre identified in updated City Deal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surf Coast Cultural Centre stage one delivered Cultural tourism visitation is 220,000 p/a Permanent public arts trail established
People 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of emerging artists at Anglesea Art Space - 240 Audience numbers in council supported arts programs - 12,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater participation in the arts and creative industries by First Nations Peoples and young people Sustainability of space and ongoing usage by new users 10% increase in audience numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our arts community is self-sustaining and enabled 10% increase in audience numbers
Profile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current jobs - 1200 Current creative sector industry contribution = \$360m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs growth to 1,400 jobs Supportive planning controls (zoning) in place 10% growth in creative sector industry contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs growth to 1,600 jobs Increased number of creative neighborhoods 10% growth in creative sector industry contribution

Research and Community Engagement

People Place Future- an arts and creative perspective

In 2021 Council formed a community panel comprising 35 residents to consider the future of the shire and provide input into our Council Plan 2021 – 2025.

As part of hearing from the community, the panel considered more than 1,200 survey responses to produce a Community Panel Report on behalf of the broader community.

After extensive community consultation, our communities' desires were transformed into the Surf Coast Shire Community Vision. Consisting of a vision statement and 10 supporting principles, the report represents a collective aspiration for the Surf Coast region. The principle most relevant to this strategy is:

Principle nine:

A place to nurture, acknowledge and promote innovation, the creative arts and industries.

The arts and creative sector has an important role to play achieving this community vision. The People, Place, Future data has been analysed specifically to inform this strategy. In total, more than 250 comments from that data contained arts, creative or cultural attributes, aligned directly with the Creative Places Strategy Strategic Areas: People, Place and Profile.

It is important to note that responses to the survey overwhelmingly show that protecting and nurturing the natural and built characteristics and identity of the Surf Coast is a key priority. The arts has an important role to play in this.



Winchelsea Entrance Sculptures
(western entrance) "Dusk and Dawn"
Artists: Matthew Harding and Benjamin Storch, 2019

Research and Community Engagement

People Place Future- an arts and creative perspective

The following summarises key results from this engagement through the lens of arts, creativity and culture. Seven key themes arose from the survey data summarised below:

Key Themes	Sub-themes
First Nations and cultural inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging with Traditional Owners to celebrate First Nations heritage and continuing culture Acknowledging First Nations contributions to the Surf Coast Expressing the diverse identities and histories of Surf Coast residents
Structured programs, grants and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased investment in culture, arts and the creative economy Support for organised activities for the community, particularly for teenagers and in schools Grant programs for creative businesses
Creative spaces and cultural facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining support for existing creative facilities across the shire Investing in infrastructure to enable the creative community to thrive Building a new Cultural Centre for the provision of cultural activities, such as performing arts, visual arts and community activities
Expressing town culture and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve and express the distinct identities of individual townships Protect and celebrate the natural characteristics of the Surf Coast Incorporate cultural expression into planning and development of the built environment
Cultural events and tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More cultural events and activities to enhance community connection and vitality Cultural events to attract specific tourism benefits (increased stay and expenditure, year-round visitation) Specific events such as the Arts Trail, festivals, performances and live music at local venues
Celebrate the Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expressing overall, the importance of creative life to the community
Supporting music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desire for more live music performances and general support for local performing artists

Targeted Audience Surveying

In December 2022, targeted surveying was conducted to test the broader themes that emerged in the People, Place, Future data, and examine the strength and relevance for their inclusion in this strategy.

This survey was circulated directly to arts community organisations and individuals, as well as through relevant social media accounts and subscription newsletters for local businesses and those interested in the arts. The survey was also sent directly to all businesses in the Surf Coast Shire who are registered using creative industry Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) codes.

A total of 114 responses were collected and the data broadly supports the analysis provided by the People, Place, Future survey, although with different prioritisation of key themes.

The majority of survey respondents were visual artists from the Torquay area, who identify as emerging or established arts professionals. This is likely a reflection of the survey distribution methodology.

The survey asked respondents to identify their personal and professional priorities, in order to gain an understanding of how this strategy can best support practitioners with their own ambitions. Respondents identified overwhelmingly that their priorities were in skills development and marketing their own ventures.

When asked to identify the most valuable work already undertaken by Council, respondents identified the following:

- strategy and planning
- arts facilities and infrastructure upgrades
- Surf Coast Arts Trail
- DEVELOP grants.

In addition, respondents were asked to prioritise the focus areas for this strategy and they identified the following as being of greatest importance:

- Support for creative spaces and cultural facilities.
- Growing the Surf Coast's creative reputation.
- First Nations culture and cultural inclusivity.
- Structured development programs, such as workshops and classes.
- Network and community building opportunities.
- Grants and support for community groups.

The feedback provided in both the People, Place, Future data and the targeted audience surveying has been used to inform the development of this strategy and the prioritisation of its action plan.



Hoop Gallery
Exhibition launch,
Torquay 2022

Additional informing data and context

The significance of our creative industry

While the creative industry has long existed, recognition of its contribution as a sector is relatively recent.

Often, the various industry sectors creative businesses had been nested in concealed their significance or the actual inspiration behind them. Like tourism, the benefits the creative sector was hidden within traditional industry sector definitions such as manufacturing, retail and professional services.

By using the above economic definition it possible to bring together the various elements of the creative sector to create a picture on just how significant its contribution to the Surf Coast is. It has also been possible to look back in time at historical data, establish benchmarks and from there identify the growth of the sector through a combination of business registration data and economic modelling tools.

In 2005 there were 990 creative sector businesses on the Surf Coast. Even at this stage professional services such as marketing, advertising, architecture dominated the creative sector landscape. The Surf Coast has always been a 'skilled community' when considered in the context of formal education.

The appeal of lifestyle and amenity benefits and connection to the natural environment throughout the Surf Coast has been a constant pull factor for professionals and entrepreneurs producing a skilled and creative community.

This in turn had a considerable influence on the main types of creative sector business calling the Surf Coast home. The top three for 2005 are identified below:

- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (644)
- Heritage, Creative & Performing Arts (164)
- Computer Systems Design & Related Services (88)





Perhaps as a combination of the influence of the surf industry, proximity to Geelong and Melbourne, and being the main population centre, Torquay was home to 654 (66%) of all Surf Coast creative businesses. The Coast economy (Anglesea – Lorne) accounted for 204 or (21%) while the 132 (13%) resided in the Hinterland economy (Winchelsea and surrounds).

Location	No. Creative businesses 2005
Torquay	654
Coast (Anglesea – Lorne)	204
Hinterland (Winchelsea & surrounds)	132

Location	No. Creative businesses 2021
Torquay	1836
Coast (Anglesea – Lorne)	448
Hinterland (Winchelsea & surrounds)	314

Although, the Hinterland area has less creative businesses, as a per capita representation it over performs when compared to other areas in the Surf Coast. There is an opportunity to grow the creative community in the hinterland.

Twenty one percent or 209 creative businesses were registered for GST in 2005 suggesting that many were smaller in size and revenue generating capacity.

Since these early indicators the creative sector has flourished. A continued influx of entrepreneurs and highly skilled and talented people seeking a better lifestyle, new technologies opening up new areas of creativity and improved infrastructure reducing travel times have all played a role.

At the end of 2021 the number of creative businesses increased to 2,599. Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, with its diversity of business types, continues to be a major driver of the creative economy with over 1,730 businesses. Heritage, Creative and Performing Arts (444 businesses) and Computer Systems Design & Related Services (182) also play a major role.

Torquay remains the dominant location for our creative enterprises with over 1,830 businesses (70.6%).

Of significance is the large proportion of businesses not registered for GST (1,806 or 69.5%). Businesses need to earn over \$70,000 to register for GST and the high proportion of non GST registered businesses indicates the potential to support these micro businesses to scale up should they choose to.



INDIGO LUNA
STORE

A Creative Hot Spot

In 2016 the Surf Coast was identified as a top five creative industry hot spot in regional Australia.

A creative industry hot spot is a place where creative employment is a high proportion of local jobs and the Surf Coast is outperforming the national average in this area. Byron Bay has the highest proportion of creative jobs and is well known for its creative community. The Surf Coast is fourth in Australia.

The Queensland University of Technology study found that the Surf Coast Shire has high levels of specialist employment in

Design. In 2016, 490 people earned their primary income in the creative industries, an average increase of 3.47% each year since 2011.

Further to this, it found the Surf Coast is striving for art to be viewed in economic development terms rather than simply an add-on but crucial as a placemaking activity.

The table below identifies Surf Coast's place against other top five creative industry hot spots in regional Australia.

The vision of this strategy is to ensure the relatively unknown status of the Surf Coast as a creative hotspot in 2016 becomes a key part of our identity.

Like the overall growth in creative businesses the research by Queensland University identifies an opportunity to leverage an existing strength as a creative hot spot.

Area LQ	Score
1. Byron Bay, NSW	1.31
2. Hobart, TAS	1.09
3. Anangu Pitjantjatjara, SA	1.05
4. Surf Coast, VIC	1.05
5. Gold Coast, QLD	0.90

Source: *Whose town is the most creative?: Hot spots of creativity in regional Australia* - Regional Australia Institute, 2016. And *Australian Cultural and Creative Activity: A Population and Hotspot Analysis Geelong and Surf Coast*, Queensland University of Technology, 2020.

Creative Industries on the Surf Coast

There is a need to ensure the provision of suitably zoned land to accommodate the growing number of creative enterprises into the future along with provisions that support their operational requirements. The below table identifies the location and type of creative businesses within the Surf Coast

Description	Surf Coast Job Count	Torquay	Lorne - Anglesea	Winchelsea	GST registered	Not GST registered
Clothing manufacturing	21	16	4	1	6	15
Footwear manufacturing	2	2	0	0	1	1
Polymer product manufacturing	11	8	1	2	6	5
Other manufactured products	64	48	9	6	12	52
Publishing (except internet & music publishing)	19	13	5	1	7	12
Motion picture & sound recording	95	67	17	11	25	70
Broadcasting (except internet)	1	1	0	0	1	0
Internet publishing, broadcast, websearch & data serv.	23	17	2	4	8	15
Library and other information services	3	1	1	1	2	1
Professional, scientific & technical services	1734	1233	291	210	601	1133
Computer systems design & related services	182	132	30	20	72	110
Heritage, creative & performing arts	444	298	88	58	52	392
Total	2599	1836	448	314	793	1806

The following sections quantify the output and employment generation of the creative industry for the Surf Coast.



Top 10 sectors- Informing data

Top 10 sectors by output

Output data represents the gross revenue generated by businesses/ organisations in each of the industry sectors in a defined region. Gross revenue is also referred to as total sales or total income. The total output estimate for Surf Coast across all industry sectors is \$3.261 billion.

When considered as an industry sector, the creative economy is the third largest industry in the Surf Coast representing 10.3% or \$335.8 million of GDP (gross domestic product).

A breakdown of the size of industry by sector is below

Output by Industry Sector

Industry Sector	\$M	%
Construction	\$834.279	25.6%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	\$383.960	11.8%
Creative Economy	\$335.751	10.3%
Accommodation & Food Services	\$215.052	6.6%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	\$205.700	6.3%
Manufacturing	\$196.541	6.0%
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$190.095	5.8%
Retail Trade	\$179.675	5.5%
Public Administration & Safety	\$147.815	4.5%
Financial & Insurance Services	\$132.022	4.0%
Sub-Total	\$2,820.890	86.5%
Other	\$439.941	13.5%
Total	\$3,260.831	100%

Source: Remplan

Top 10 sectors of the Surf Coast by employment

There are 12,576 jobs in the Surf Coast. The creative economy represents 1,164 jobs (9.3%), making it the fifth largest employer in the Surf Coast. Our creative businesses are helping drive a new economy for the Surf Coast and providing a significant number of jobs in the process.

This continued growth presents great opportunities for future employment ambitions and requires strategic action to ensure creative jobs continue to play a key role in the economy of the Surf Coast. To do this we must consider the types of support programs available, skills development needs, enabling infrastructure and industry profile building.

This is particularly important when we consider that the creative economy creates the third highest level of worker wages and salaries in the Surf Coast, representing \$96.19 million (12.2%) of all wages.

Industry sectors that have a higher level of wages and salaries have more potential to contribute positively to the local economy in terms of expenditure. These are the type of jobs that we should pursue to grow our economy and increase prosperity.

Selected industry sectors in Surf Coast ranked by Employment

Industry Sector	Jobs	%
Construction	1,881	15.0%
Accommodation & Food Services	1,812	14.4%
Retail Trade	1,616	12.8%
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,537	12.2%
Creative Economy	1,164	9.3%
Education & Training	946	7.5%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	684	5.4%
Public Administration & Safety	606	4.8%
Other Services	514	4.1%
Manufacturing	395	3.1%
Sub-Total	11,155	88.7%
Other	1,421	11.3%
Total	12,576	100.0%

Source: Remplan



Graeme Wilkie, QDOS in Lorne

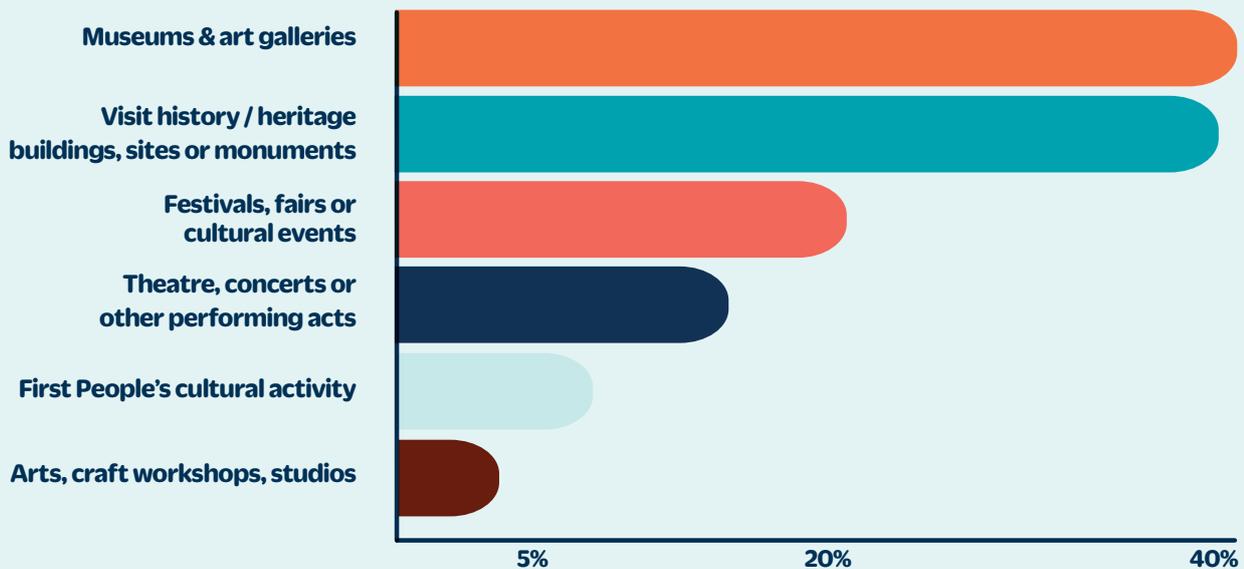
Cultural Tourism

Tourism is a significant force in the Surf Coast. Proximity to major population centres, airports and ferries makes it an easily-accessed destination. Cultural tourism is a growing part of this attraction.

Desire to connect with culture as part of travel is growing. In 2019 approximately 12.3 million visitors participated in cultural tourism activities in Victoria, spending \$2.5 billion. Art galleries and museums formed 39% of activities, with history or heritage buildings, sites or monuments (38%) and festivals, fairs and cultural events (22%) also popular.

Almost 64% stayed overnight (compared to 41% of total overnight visitation) highlighting the role cultural tourism can play in both delivering an immersive product and increasing length of stay and expenditure.

Where do our cultural visitors go?



Source: Creative Victoria, Cultural Visitor Activities, 2020

Between 2017 and 2021, the Surf Coast received an average of 191,000 visitors engaging in cultural tourism.

The top four types of cultural activities undertaken in the Surf Coast.

Visit museums or art galleries	37%
Visit history / heritage buildings, sites or monuments	36%
Attend festivals / fairs or cultural events	25%
Attend theatre, concerts or other performing arts	15%

The Surf Coast's many local galleries, museums and events play a major role in attracting and connecting our visitors. The depth of offering in this context is extensive.

Surf Coast is also home to two facilities which tell nationally significant stories: Australian National Surfing Museum (ANSM) and Great Ocean Road Heritage Centre.

Australian National Surfing Museum in Torquay occupies a unique space in the cultural and tourism landscape of the Surf Coast Shire, within Australia and internationally. The first and leading museum of its kind in Australia, ANSM houses approximately 12,000 items - the most significant collection assembled about Australian surfing and one of the finest surfing collections in the world.

ANSM is recognised for its research and interpretation of the history and culture of surfing and tells stories of identity, place and belonging. The museum sits in Torquay at the start of the Great Ocean Road - one of the world's most spectacular and scenic coastal drives. Combined with its proximity to the iconic Bells Beach, a destination for surfers the world over, the museum's unique location is like no other.

Source: Australian National Surfing Museum Master Plan 2022

Complementing Australian National Surfing Museum, the Great Ocean Road Heritage Centre is a purpose-built permanent exhibition located in Lorne Visitor Centre.



Cultural Tourism

The Great Ocean Road is a memorial to the lost lives and sacrifices of Australian soldiers from World War One. It is the world's longest war memorial.

More than 3,000 returned soldiers built the road from 1919 onwards, conquering steep cliffs, rugged terrain and dangerous weather so that the isolated towns along Victoria's stunning western coastline could be joined together.

Today the Great Ocean Road is recognised as an iconic tourist destination, attracting millions of visitors from around Australia and the globe. The Great Ocean Road Heritage Centre showcases the road's story via a series of galleries featuring historical displays, photo exhibitions and artefacts centred around four themes of People, Community, Workers and architectural features.

(Source: Lorne Historical Centre. Lorne Visitor Information Centre)

Nestled around these nationally significant stories, local galleries - from The MAC's Hoop Gallery to Anglesea Arts Space, Eagles Nest Gallery, In The Skies Art and Music, Qdos, The Footy Shed Gallery, photo galleries and a myriad of home based galleries - all speak to the depth of talent and cultural tourism experience available on the Surf Coast.

The planned Surf Coast Cultural Centre will house a new ANSM, makers spaces, theatre space and library. It presents an opportunity to create a cultural tourism destination to build community and visitor awareness of the Surf Coast region, and to mark the start of the Great Ocean Road. There is also a significant opportunity to leverage galleries' visitation to create off-peak products and explore the creation of a permanent public art trail across the shire.



Memorial Arch



'Memory of Water', Torquay Theatre
Troupe Performance, 2019



Events

Like galleries and museums, Surf Coast's festivals and events are a major cultural tourism drawcard.

The recently adopted Economic Development Strategy 2021 – 2030 provides in-depth analysis on the significance of events to the community and economy of the Surf Coast, and the opportunities they can provide in delivering purposeful, longer staying visitor and community connection outcomes.

Headlining cultural events are the Lorne Sculpture Biennale (March), Surf Coast Arts Trail (August), a number of music festivals including The Sound Doctor Presents (Anglesea), Aireys Inlet Music Festival, Bambra music festival Meadow, and large scale national concerts at Torquay Common. These events often take place over multiple days, bringing significant economic benefits to the region.

There is an opportunity to harness the strong support towards cultural events and seek to develop existing or secure new cultural events in the off-peak season. Some events such as The Sound Doctor in Anglesea have benefitted from upgrades to existing infrastructure which enable high quality performances to take place.



Surf Coast Arts Trail, 2015

Informing strategies

The Surf Coast Shire Economic Development Strategy 2021- 2031

Focuses on growing a more diverse and sustainable economy for the Surf Coast, one that strengthens its vibrant local places and businesses, and nurtures new industries servicing national and global markets.

The strategy improves on already strong foundations to support an economy that can thrive in what will inevitably be a dynamic and challenging future.

The document focuses on People, Place and Business as key strategic areas and clearly identifies the strength and value of the creative economy to our communities.

Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place - A New National Cultural Policy

Was released by the Australian Government on 30 January 2023.

Revive is a five-year plan to renew and revive Australia's arts, entertainment and cultural sector. It delivers new momentum so that Australia's creative workers, organisations and audiences continue to thrive and grow, and so that our arts, culture and heritage are re-positioned as central to Australia's future.

Revive is structured around five interconnected pillars which set out the Government's strategic objectives:

- First Nations First: Recognising and respecting the crucial place of First Nations stories at the centre of Australia's arts and culture.
- A Place for Every Story: Reflecting the breadth of our stories and the contribution of all Australians as the creators of culture.
- Centrality of the Artist: Supporting the artist as worker and celebrating artists as creators.
- Strong Cultural Infrastructure: Providing support across the spectrum of institutions which sustain our arts, culture and heritage.
- Engaging the Audience: Making sure our stories connect with people at home and abroad.

Informing strategies

Creative State 2025

Is the Victorian Government's four-year creative industries strategy, designed to grow jobs and skills, and secure Victoria's reputation as a global cultural destination and bold creative leader.

The strategy comprises 25 actions across five strategic priorities and is designed to support:

- more and better job opportunities and pathways
- innovative creative products and experiences
- industry stability and growth
- equitable access to the creative industries, and
- new audiences and markets.

The success of the strategy relies on the strength of partnerships with industry, community, the private sector and other portfolios and tiers of government.

VicHealth believes that participating in the arts has multiple benefits for health and wellbeing: it reduces social isolation, strengthens community connection and builds self-esteem, as people pursue creative activity alone or in groups.

The VicHealth Arts Strategy 2019 - 2023

Focuses on promoting the health and wellbeing benefits of the arts by:

- increasing participation and diversity in the arts
- embedding the arts and creative industries across all areas of work
- harnessing arts and cultural settings as powerful enablers to influence awareness, attitudes and behaviour.

The Creative Industry Strategy for the G21 region Making Change

Provides a framework and mechanisms to guide innovative and sustainable creative industries practice over a five-year period, to support individual artists, cultural institutions, the education sector, regional local governments and private industry to work together to sustain a unique creative identity for the G21 region.

Collaboration and sustainability are at the heart of this strategy and form its two core principles.

Great Ocean Road Visitor Economy Master Plan 2021-2030

Provides a strategic framework and roadmap to guide the regional visitor economy recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic to 2024.

It also ensures renewed strong sector growth from 2024 to 2030. It does this by emphasising responsible, sustainable and resilient policies that balance social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes.



Surf Coast Creative Place Strategy 2019-21 Highlights

Surf Coast Shire has long recognised the important contribution art and heritage plays in supporting community and individual wellbeing.

Adopted in 2019, Creative Places provided a new vision for arts, culture and heritage with a focus on celebrating our First Nations heritage; enhancing place; showcasing our best and brightest and helping our creative industries to thrive.

The first iteration of Creative Places led Surf Coast into new areas, enhanced awareness of the importance and significance of the sector and created a strong platform for Creative Places 2023 to build from. Key highlights achieved under Creative Places 2019 – 2021 are cited in this document.

Pillar 1: Celebrating our Aboriginal cultural heritage

Strong connections were formed with First Nations Traditional Owners via a host of initiatives including facilitated conversations, artist talks and workshops.

Stemming from this were NAIDOC Week exhibitions: Always Was, Always Will Be (2020), Heal Country (2021) and the outstanding success of Get Up, Stand Up! with emerging First Nations artists Gerard Black, BJ O’Toole, Jenna Oldaker and Nathan Patterson (2022).

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners were also brought in as major stakeholders for the Surf Coast Cultural Centre scoping phase.

Pillar 2: Placemaking

The posthumous delivery of renowned public artist Matthew Harding’s Dawn and Dusk sculptures, in collaboration with Benjamin Storch, occurred in 2019. The sculptures are at the east and western entrances to Winchelsea.

The Winchelsea Cairns – commemorating the contribution the Winchelsea district has made towards Australia’s armed service – were completed in 2021, creating a focal point for the local community and visitors in the heart of Winchelsea.

Significant progress was made on the Surf Coast Cultural Centre concept and business case in Torquay, while the Multi Arts Committee was formed to lead the repurposing of the former sport and recreation centre into theatre, gallery and creative spaces. The \$300,000 project to do the preliminary scoping and fit-out of the new The MAC Torquay facility was also completed.

The locally-led, purpose-built, site-specific Yellow Gums Performance Space in Jan Juc was delivered in 2021 enabling live music performances by and for the vibrant local performing arts community.



Surf Coast Creative Place Strategy 2019-21 Highlights

Pillar 3: Enhancing our creative industry

Anglesea Art Space was first established in 2015 as a space to promote local artists work and events. In 2019 Council established a co-ordinator position to oversee operations due to the high level of local artist usage. This enabled delivery of a program of embedded skills development for artists in areas such as marketing and promotions, exhibition installation, invigilation and sales.

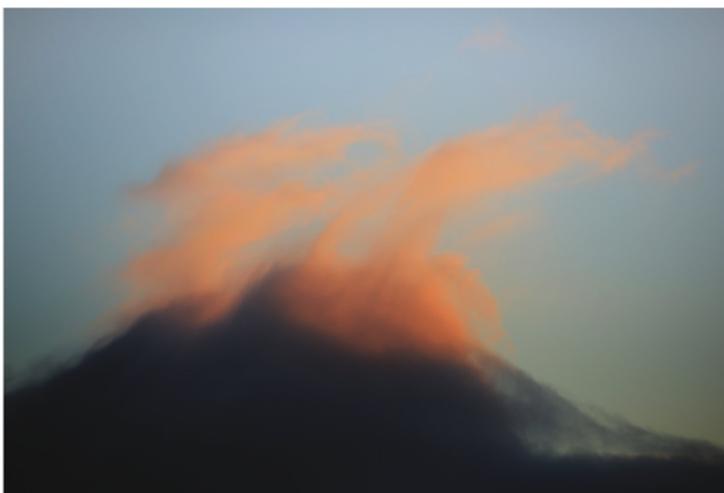
Throughout the pandemic, Art Space provided training to artists in COVIDsafe planning and helped artists build skills in exhibiting and promoting their work via social media and video. While activity was again interrupted due to 2021 lockdowns, reducing activity from 365 days to 220, Art Space adapted the program to enable 240 artists to safely exhibit, promote and sell their work across 20 individual and group exhibitions throughout the year.

In 2022 Anglesea Art Space supported more than 300 artists with their professional development and exhibition aims.

In further response to COVID-19 and as a replacement to the cancelled Surf Coast Arts Trails of 2020-21, PORTAL was launched across the shire. It provided vital skills development to help creatives transition to the digital realm quickly, before rolling out a program made by local creatives for their community.

To support and engage the community, and to showcase our best and brightest, PORTAL hosted live online discussions every Sunday with regional creatives, held digital exhibitions and workshops, launched street initiatives, developed and installed a series of PORTAL artist paste up portraits across the shire to shine a light on the impact of the pandemic on creative workers, launched books and had audiences tuning in to be inspired by Surf Coast creatives from as far away as Belgium and Mumbai.

In 2019 a dedicated Arts Grant program focusing on skill development was created, providing much-needed support for creatives to explore new directions, ideas and concepts to advance their practice and/or their careers. Eleven grants totalling \$45,000 were awarded between 2019 and 2022.



PORTAL
STREET



#portalstreet

Adrift
Rebecca Hosking

'Adrift' by Rebecca Hosking featured on PORTAL 3.0, launched March 2021

Pillar 4: Showcasing our best and brightest

Striking murals including Geoffrey Caran's Hooded Plover (2021) on the Aireys Inlet Community Hall and the Kathryn Junor-led community project at Bellbrae Heartspace (2020) are just two placemaking outcomes that shone a light on just two of the Surf Coast's best professional artists..

Despite COVID-19, the Surf Coast Arts Trail continued to go from strength to strength under the first Creative Places Strategy. It was thanks to a focus on digital and marketing skills development for artists via online workshops, alongside the development of a suite of resources for creatives including tips and tricks sheets, social media design templates and dedicated social media channels.

Dedicated branding was developed and an increased visual presence created for the event and its artists via strategic marketing campaigns and the production of collateral such as large-scale event billboards of local artists by photographer Daniela Rodriguez.

In 2022, the Surf Coast Arts Trail sprang back to life with more than 200 artists across 70+ venues, attracting more than 5,000 attendees with over \$80,000 in weekend sales.

Hoop Gallery and Shoestring Playhouse were established under The MAC. Since commencement in March 2021, The MAC has staged 60+ events and performances from local artists across performance, music, visual arts and literature, showcasing almost 500 artists and attracting more than 5,900 people through its doors.

Each year the Surf Coast Community Arts Calendar continues to provide a unique way to highlight local artists, from aspiring to professional. The annual calendar competition attracts up to 100 entries, inspiring many budding and well-known artists. The 2022 competition exhibited 101 unique works of art.



The Surf Coast Arts Trail is a significant Surf Coast event that generates commissions and income for more than 200 visual artists right across our shire.

In 2020 the Arts Trail was cancelled due to COVID-19. Two weeks prior to the 10th Anniversary - August 6 - 8, 2021 - the Surf Coast Arts Trail had to be cancelled again due to COVID.

Please support our amazing artists by following the QR code to learn more about their work.



Mark Noel



Sue Corbet



Anna McIldowie



Barbara Roe Hebb



Eliza Feely



Cinnamon and Rowan Stephens



Kirsten Walsh



Elise Roberts



Catherine Brennan



Beverly Exell



Kathryn Junor



Mike McLean



Kirsty Manger



Mark Tringham and Fee Crawford



Ferne Millen



Donna Yeatman



Pattie Beerens



Simon Holloway



Sharryn Jenkinson



Rowena Martinich



Roger Brown



Peta Uhmeyer

@danielarodriguez_photos www.surfcoastartstrail.com.au
#SurfCoastArtsTrail #SurfCoastArtMatters #CreativeCoalitions #InspiredBySurfCoast



Arts Trail Paste Ups by Daniela Rodriguez, 2021 The Surf Coast Arts Trail was cancelled due to COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021. As a response, these ephemeral artworks invited community to support our artists regardless

