

Submission  
No 27

INQUIRY INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTS AND  
CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE OUTSIDE THE SYDNEY  
CBD

Organisation: Eurobodalla Shire Council  
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In Reply Please  
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29<sup>th</sup> August 2008

Catherine Watson  
The Committee Manager  
Public Works Committee  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Watson,

**RE: INQUIRY INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTS & CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE  
OUTSIDE THE SYDNEY CBD**

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The Eurobodalla Shire Council adopted its first Cultural Plan 2006 – 2010 in February 2006. The plan was developed to primarily address policy frameworks, development of cultural infrastructure at a local and regional level, integration of cultural practices across Council and facilitation of increased and inclusive cultural activity in partnership with the community. Council was awarded best plan at the 2007 Local Government Cultural Awards and established their inaugural part-time Community Arts Officer position which commenced in March 2007 to support the implementation of the plan, its ongoing evaluation and review.

Council's financial investment in the cultural life of the Shire may not be considered enormous, I believe that it is comparatively significant and their commitment to cultural development must be recognised as such.

The Community Arts Officer position enables Council to proactively engage with the community in order to continually monitor, assess and respond to the needs of the cultural community. This is achieved through a monthly program called the 'Arts Exchange' that occurs throughout the Shire.

Through the Arts Exchange and ongoing conversations with practitioners, it has been identified there are a number of key areas for further discussion and development;

- Access to professional development opportunities within their own communities. Including access to more visiting professional arts practitioners.
- Development of ongoing programs that are delivered within their own community as transport is a major issue within our Shire.
- Access to more touring exhibitions and in particular performance product at a more affordable rate. There was a real desire to connect with metropolitan centres. Consideration for a greater level of support for major institutions to have a larger capacity to deliver outreach programs and in turn for them to support the presentation and promotion of regional product (visual and performance)
- There are NO community wet workshop spaces in the Shire. Access to 'spaces' for the workshops. This includes the need for wet area workshops, larger spaces at accessible rates.
- Improvement of existing facilities to be more flexible in their capacity to support a wider range of arts practices inclusive of visual arts/performance workshops and presentation of performance.
- Development of purpose built infrastructure specific to each community's distinctive requirements.
- Promotion of the industry, its product and its practitioners. Inclusive of opportunities for selling of original works.

Council aims to;

- lead the way in developing access to opportunities for artists and the broader community to engage with, explore, participate in a broad spectrum of arts practices.
- work with the industry in further developing their practitioner's skills, understanding of and capacity to deliver in a range arts practices.

Council celebrates an integral role in raising the profile of the value of cultural activity to the overall health and wellbeing of a community.

In 2008, Council is commencing its review of its cultural sector support with a vision to ensure that we are being strategic in our investments, am encouraging emerging arts practitioners/ groups and supporting those groups who continue to actively participate and effectively contribute to the cultural health and wealth of the community. We believe there is a need for increased support in enabling councils to be more direct in their ability to grow the arts and cultural sector. This would include the advancement of public art in new developments, the support of emerging artists, groups and business.

Council maintains its strategic partnership (annual contribution of \$20,000 + CPI) with the regional program for community cultural development, South East Arts Region (SEAR). This collaborative approach continues to evolve, strengthen and provide invaluable support in the ongoing evolution of the Shire's Arts and Cultural industries. Council and SEAR operate through a service agreement. This includes an overall regional agreement and one that specifically supports the implementation of our Shire's cultural plan.

The arts/ cultural grants programs have been invaluable in supporting the evolution of regional arts/cultural sector across all art forms. The increased expectation for local councils to deliver at a local level provides an opportunity for the state and local governments to work more collaboratively in how they can grow the infrastructure simultaneously with arts and cultural sector. I would encourage consideration for program support directly in partnership with local government..

I am very happy to discuss this further. Please feel free to contact me directly on 4474 1061 or [monika.mcinerney@eurocoast.nsw.gov.au](mailto:monika.mcinerney@eurocoast.nsw.gov.au) .

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute.

Yours sincerely,

Monika McInerney  
Community Arts Officer  
Community Wellbeing