

**Submission
No 273**

**INQUIRY INTO THE MUSIC AND ARTS ECONOMY IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: Tweed Shire Council

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The Music and arts economy in New South Wales

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry. Tweed Shire Council (TSC) is particularly appreciative of the inclusion of regional NSW into the terms of reference. Although some issues in the music and arts economy are broadly relevant across geographical areas within NSW, regional areas also have unique characteristics that are distinct from urban contexts.

TSC's submission includes a description of initiatives that Council is currently undertaking regarding the promotion of live music within the shire, as well as some of the issues and opportunities that have been encountered along the way. A number of recommendations have been provided for consideration by the committee. These are offered in the spirit of stimulating discussion over how best to support live music in regional NSW. TSC would welcome to opportunity to continue to engage in dialogue with the NSW government to explore these issues.

Current Context:

In 2017 Tweed Shire Council (TSC) was selected as one of the regional LGAs to participate in the Live & Local Initiative grant from the Live Music Office and CREATE NSW. This project involves holding two 1-day music festivals within the shire in April and May of 2018. Importantly, participation in the Live & Local Initiative has enabled TSC to engage with the live music industry in the shire to a greater extent that had been done previously. A key benefit of the grant has been to provide an opportunity for establishing relationships between TSC and music industry professionals. Thus, in addition to providing two great live music events for the community, planning for the festival has also brought a number of 'side benefits' that contribute to support the arts and live music in the shire. For example, coordinating the grant has served as a catalyst for:

- Inclusion of support for live music as an objective within the TSC Cultural Plan 2018-2021,
- Exploring the opportunity to program live music into public spaces on an ongoing basis after the grant is over,
- Initiating an audit of live music gigs in the shire in the month of March to provide a snapshot of what is happening in the area (using the example of Adelaide's live music audit as model),
- Organising a meeting between the Live Music Office and TSC Planning staff,
- Establishing relationships with regional LGAs participating in the Live & Local Initiative,
- Establishing relationships with Music NSW and APRA/AMCOS,
- Increased knowledge/ capacity within TSC regarding live music policy/ strategies.

The information above provides evidence to support the claim that the Live & Local Initiative is providing tangible benefits to TSC and the music industry within the shire 'above and beyond' the state goals of the program. TSC welcomes to the opportunity for ongoing

collaboration with the Live Music Office, as well as the opportunity for other regional LGAs to participate in future offerings of the program.

Recommendation:

Continued support for the Live Music Office, specifically the Live and Local Initiative in regional NSW. This may include:

- (i) Consideration for expanding the program so that more LGAs can participate,
- (ii) Opportunities for ongoing support for LGAs to collaborate with the Live Music Office,
- (iii) Developing a network of “alumni” with participating LGAs that can support each other through sharing knowledge/ resources within the network as well as to LGAs participating in a future round of the Live and Local Initiative.

Planning reform to support live music in regional NSW

TSC’s participation in the Live & Local Initiative grant from the Live Music Office and CREATE NSW has provided Council with the opportunity to establish relationships with music industry professionals in the shire. One of these organisations is a local music studio that provides a recording space, sound production for gigs, instrument and equipment rentals and repair, as well as workshops/ school holiday programs for musicians. The studio is located in an industrial estate and currently looking at expanding their existing premises in order to enhance the range of services and products they provide.

Initiatives such as the one being proposed by the studio are actually supported through objectives listed in Council’s Cultural Plan 2018-2021, as well as Council’s Economic Development Strategy. Unfortunately, the planning regulations for the industrial estate significantly limit Council in working with the studio to create an outcome that would be beneficial to the community. Thus, despite the interest and will to support live music in the shire, in this case planning legislation constrains what is possible.

Recommendation:

Provide resources and/ or incentives for planning reform to support live music in regional NSW. This could include support for LGA planning units to acquire knowledge/ expertise of best practice in the area of music and arts planning legislation. This could take various forms such as:

- (i) facilitating contact with other LGAs that have more experience in negotiation issues related to planning regulation and support live music and the arts,
- (ii) providing forums for Council staff to participate in acquiring relevant knowledge,
- (iii) initiating a mentoring program for early career planning professionals to undertake a work experience with LGA planning units focused on supporting music and arts,
- (iv) support for the NSW Government to learn from existing models in other states.

One way to support the good work already being undertaken in regional NSW as well as help address some of the planning issues mentioned above would be to consider holding a regional music industry forum in 2019 that would bring together CREATE NSW, Regional LGAs, Music NSW, the Live Music Office, the ATSI Music Office, and APRA AMCOS. This would provide an

opportunity to strengthen the network of organisations and individuals working in this area, as well as to identify regional LGAs with 'high capacity' to develop pilot programs that could help provide a model for other LGAs to follow in the future. It would also provide an opportunity for facilitating collaboration within regional LGAs regarding live music.

The above information provides a qualitative account of the experiences of one LGA within regional NSW currently engaged in the process of supporting the music and arts economy. The intention is to provide a 'snapshot' of issues and opportunities faced by LGAs attempting to further develop capacity/ knowledge in this area that may be useful for the Inquiry to consider. In addition to the issues and recommendations listed above, a number of additional actions could be taken that would support the music and arts economy more broadly across the state. These include:

- (i) Significantly increased investment for the contemporary music sector (funding for artists, venues, and top-notch events),
- (ii) Support for music export,
- (iii) A contemporary music plan for NSW with clearly identified priorities and strategies,
- (iv) Significant support for all-ages activities in NSW – for young bands and young audiences,
- (v) Better regulation policies that support and foster a thriving live music scene across NSW (regional, metro and everything in between),
- (vi) Support and recognition for live music venues as cultural institutions and the backbones of our night-time economy,
- (vii) Policies and initiatives that make festivals and venues safe and welcoming spaces for all,
- (viii) Support for programs that work towards the music industry being representative of NSW people – including specific programs for women and GNC artists, regional artists, artists with disability, western Sydney artists and young artists,
- (ix) Explore promoting/ supporting the June 21st Make Music Day:
(www.makemusicday.org)

Tweed Shire Council would again like to express its appreciation for the opportunity to make a submission for consideration and commend the NSW Government on initiating the Inquiry. This is an important step in a longer process of support the music and art economy; one that will hopefully be looked back upon in the future as having made a significant contribution to this sector.