



2023 - 2033

# Cultural Plan

Mid- Western Regional Council



THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN PREPARED BY TORI CUTAJAR AND KARINA DOOLEY, PROJECTURA . THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT PRODUCED BY PROJECTURA IS FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL. PROJECTURA MAKES EVERY ATTEMPT TO ENSURE THAT ALL MATERIAL IS ACCURATE AND COMPLETE BUT RECOMMENDS THAT READERS EXERCISE THEIR OWN SKILL AND CARE WITH RESPECT TO ITS USE. PROJECTURA HAS PREPARED THIS DOCUMENT IN GOOD FAITH AND ACCEPTS NO LIABILITY OR RESPONSIBILITY WHATSOEVER FOR OR IN RESPECT OF ANY USE OF OR RELIANCE UPON THIS REPORT BY ANY THIRD PARTY. THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS CURRENT AS AT THE DATE OF PUBLICATION. THE CONTENTS OF THIS PAPER SHOULD NOT BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS PERMISSION OF PROJECTURA PTY LTD.

ANY QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO THE CONTENT OF THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:  
COUNCIL@MIDWESTERN.NSW.GOV.AU OR (02) 6378 2850

DATE OF PUBLICATION: MAY 2023

# Table of Contents

Message from the Mayor .....	4
Executive Summary .....	5
1. Introduction .....	7
2. The Plan in context .....	10
3. Where we are now .....	13
4. What we have heard .....	15
5. Our Cultural Plan.....	17
6. Monitoring and evaluation.....	23
References.....	25
Acknowledgments.....	27

## List of tables

Table 1. Action plan (A).....	19
Table 2. Action plan (B).....	20
Table 3. Action plan (C).....	21
Table 4. Action plan (D).....	22
Table 5. Performance indicators.....	23

We acknowledge the Wiradjuri people, the traditional custodians of the Wiradjuri Nation. We acknowledge their Elders past, present and future. We also acknowledge people from other nations and language groups who have now made the Mid-Western Region their home, along with the descendants of the Wiradjuri Nation.

# Message from the Mayor



I am proud to introduce Council's Cultural Plan. It's been a number of years since the previous iteration of this Plan in 2005 and the Mid-Western Region's cultural landscape has come a long way since then:

- Mudgee Arts Precinct formally opened in August 2021 and its accompanying workshop site in February 2023
- The unique, contemporary biennial art festival, Cementa, has been running from and around Kandos since 2013
- Council's public art collection continues to grow with a range of works installed along the Lawson Park Sculpture Walk and at various sites across the region
- The appeal of cultural tourism within our region, where visitors learn, discover, experience and consume cultural attractions has expanded exponentially

These are just a few examples of how arts and culture have gone from strength to strength across the region since 2005. Certainly, opportunities for community engagement in arts and cultural activities on local, national and international scales has also expanded as an unapologetic reaction to pandemic isolation.

Council hopes to build on existing talents within the creative sector and support sustainable cultural development well into the future that respects and encourages cultural participation by the broad range of demographics across the region.

This Cultural Plan outlines actions Council will take to enrich the region's cultural life and activity. This not only involves celebrating our region's heritage, including stories of our First Nations people and early settlers; it also involves expanding our cultural offerings and supporting our creative community to provide arts and cultural engagement for everyone across the region. In order for this Plan to be successful, however, the strategies contained within it require the ongoing support of our community to achieve listed outcomes. By working together, we can continue to make our community an even better place to live, work, invest and visit.

Cr Des Kennedy

Mayor

# Executive Summary

This Cultural Plan (the Plan) has been developed to identify strategies to strengthen the region's cultural sector.

## Overview

Council has made many achievements from the previous Cultural Plan (2005). As arts and culture in the region continues to evolve, now is the time to reimagine the future and prepare a new Cultural Plan.

This Cultural Plan is a community-driven strategy for the next ten years. It aims to strengthen the region's cultural sector, address service gaps, and identify goals for the region's future.

## Developing the Plan

The Cultural Plan was developed between October 2022 and April 2023. Mid-Western Regional Council engaged Projectura to work with the community to create the Plan.

During the development of this plan, 250 people contributed their thoughts and ideas. People participated through stakeholder workshops, community pop-ups, interviews, and an online survey. The community reflected on their participation in cultural activities, what culture means within the region, issues faced, and opportunities for future cultural planning.

This Cultural Plan was developed through a cultural planning approach. This involves identifying current cultural assets and ways to strengthen them and then integrating these actions into Council's planning activity.

## Where are we now

The Mid-Western Region has made a range of developments and achievements since the previous Cultural Plan.

The communities that make up the region bring a diversity of heritage, memories, and stories. These stories are often central to the activities of communities and interest groups. Stories are prevalent in industry practices, museums, commercial and community exhibitions, hospitality venues, public spaces, and digital domains. Local stories are often on exhibition at the award-winning Mudgee Arts Precinct, opened in 2021, and feature throughout the region's public art collection. The region is also dedicated to providing spaces for creative practice, such as through the recently opened Kildallon Education Centre and Cultural Workshops, a multi-purpose collaborative centre.

The region is dedicated to preserving and celebrating its vibrant cultural heritage. Through the dedication of the community and its supporters, the region has 130 National Trust-listed buildings in Gulgong, 450 heritage items, and four heritage conservation areas.

As a result of the investment made by the region into its cultural sector, Mudgee was named NSW Top Tourist Town in 2021 and 2022, attracting record numbers of visitors each year.

With so many large-scale achievements made since the last Cultural Plan, a new direction is needed to ensure continued innovation for years to come. For the new Cultural Plan, the

community would like to see new developments in events and festivals, arts and cultural programming, and creative venues and spaces.

## The Plan

### Vision

In 2033, the Mid-Western Region is:

- A vibrant and world-class creative centre that celebrates the value of arts and culture
- Radiating with inspiration, active participation, and innovation
- Proud, resilient, sustainable, and thriving

Mid-Western Regional Council:

- Supports and invests in local creative excellence
- Commits to maximising opportunities, participation, and enjoyment
- Encourages a diverse and inclusive creative community

### Strategic objectives

The Plan has four broad themes with specific actions identified for each. These are:

A. Celebrate and reflect on our region's heritage, history, memory, and stories

B. Revitalise and expand our cultural spaces.

C. Support our creative community.

D. Provide activities for everyone, everywhere

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

In response to the growing and changing Mid-Western Region, a new Cultural Plan (the Plan) has been developed by Mid-Western Regional Council.

Mid-Western Regional Council proudly presents its Cultural Plan (2023-2033). The Plan is a community-driven strategy that aims to strengthen the region's local cultural sector, address service gaps, and identify goals for the region's future.

This plan aims to achieve a shared vision to benefit our local cultural sector. The Plan considers the many ways that people engage with arts and culture and how it brings fulfilment to people's lives. The many ways that arts and culture have sustained the region are recognised, and Council will continue its commitment to the sector through the development and delivery of this Plan.

Mid-Western Regional Council engaged Projectura to work with the community and stakeholders to develop the Plan.

## 1.2. Drivers

The region and the broader cultural sector have changed since 2005. Through many developments and disruptions that have shaped the region, a new direction is required.

Since the last Cultural Plan was developed, Council has achieved much for the cultural sector. From major infrastructure projects to creating a vibrant program of community events to securing cultural funding, the region is well-positioned for the future.

Since 2005, the cultural sector has faced unexpected events, including the COVID-19 pandemic and remote engagement, increased digitisation, funding uncertainties, and creative innovations. Looking inward, we also know that the Mid-Western Region has also changed. With increased visitation to the region, the population has increased, bringing new stories, ideas, and character.

As the region continues to evolve, it is essential to consider the impacts of these changes and create a new direction that allows us to plan for the future we want to see.

## 1.3. Objectives

The Cultural Plan aims to meet the current and future needs of the community while strengthening its cultural offering.

We know that culture is multi-faceted and means different things to different people. We also understand that the needs of people and groups are different. This Plan is an opportunity to establish a new direction decided by a united community and council voice.

The purpose of the Plan is to:

- Understand the health of the region's arts and culture
- Harness the community's capacity and voice in the planning for their region
- Identify improvements that are needed for greater cultural services within the region

- Explore ways that Council and parties can work together to achieve our shared vision
- Find room for innovation and new direction

## 1.4. Why we need a Cultural Plan

A Cultural Plan ensures we're on the path to becoming the region we want to be.

Culture plays a major role in reflecting who we are, what we value and aspire to be, and how we operate as a region. With a growing population, our lifestyles, needs, expectations, and interests will be met with change. A collective group of people with diverse interests and experiences in the cultural sector has shaped this Plan.

Within the region, we have cultural assets and infrastructure such as museums, libraries, collections, galleries, and programs. They are cultural as they support how we transmit our beliefs, attitudes, and identities. They allow us to learn, explore, and take part in a broader sense of our culture.

Mid-Western Regional Council has a direct role in providing cultural services and infrastructure within the region through its Cultural Services team. Its planning mechanisms, such as this Plan, allow forward-thinking, innovation, and collaboration to shape our region's future.

## 1.5. How we developed the Plan

The aim of cultural planning is to work with the community to identify current cultural assets, ways to strengthen them, and integrate actions into Council's planning activity.

### Pulse check

The last Cultural Plan was developed in 2005. Much about the cultural sector has since changed, and a pulse check of the region's arts and cultural health was required. A review of the strategic landscape was conducted, and a range of documents of key players was analysed for local, regional, state, national, and international contexts.

An analysis of demographic data of the Mid-Western Region was then conducted using an area-specific database. Areas explored include population, diversity characteristics, lifestyle indicators, volunteerism, employment, industry, and gross revenue data.

Cultural mapping was undertaken to develop a snapshot of the region's assets. This included a list of places, services, and groups contributing to the region's cultural success.

The findings of this process were consolidated into a brief Cultural Plan Discussion Paper. This document was distributed to stakeholders and the broad community to spark initial conversations during the engagement process.

### Community engagement

Through the engagement phase, we encouraged the community to express their ideas and aspirations for the future of culture in the region.

Council used a range of communication and engagement activities to inform, consult, and involve participants across the region over six weeks. A total of 250 people were engaged over a series of stakeholder workshops and community pop-ups, interviews, and an online survey.



The engagement approach ensured that the community and stakeholders could have their say at various stages across the project. Community input contributed to Stage 1 of the project to inform the evidence base and unearth issues and opportunities. During Stage 2, broad community engagement contributed to the development of arts and cultural aspirations and priorities.

The Engagement Report provides the process and findings in depth.

## 1.6 Keywords

### Heritage

Heritage is something that we have inherited from the past and is valued enough today to leave for future generations. Heritage can incorporate both the tangible and intangible and is present in many forms, including landscapes, landmarks, places, buildings, objects, languages, customs, and ceremonies.<sup>1</sup>

### Culture

We recognise that culture can mean many different things to different people. For the purposes of this Cultural Plan, culture is the social landscape where we live, work and play. When we talk about culture, we refer to the products of culture, meaning the tools we use to transmit meaning, beliefs, attitudes, and identity. Culture can include the arts (performing arts, visual arts, architecture); heritage conservation (museums, galleries, libraries); cultural industries (including written media, broadcasting, film, recording and tourism); and festivals and events.

These features of culture work together to characterise a community or group and evolves over time.

Please note that throughout this document, sport and recreation and economic development are excluded. These domains are considered within Council's Recreation Strategy (2013) and Regional Economic Development Strategy (2018-2022).

### Cultural services

When we talk about cultural services, we mean the infrastructure, services, projects, and programs that facilitate the production and distribution of cultural exchange. This can include things like libraries, creative and educational programs, events, and activities.

### Cultural planning

Cultural planning is a local government process that involves community consultation to identify how to strategically position a region's cultural resources and service provision for continued improvement.

<sup>1</sup> Definition provided by National Trust Australia.

## 2. The Plan in context

Culture in the Mid-Western Region is heavily shaped by key players within and outside the region. It is important to consider the strategies of these cultural leaders when setting our region's direction.

### International context

Key players: United Nations: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The adoption of the UNESCO 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions created a big turning point for international cultural policy. It signified recognition from the global community of both cultural and economic cultural expressions produced by creatives.

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) acknowledges, for the first time, the roles of culture, creativity, and cultural diversity in solving sustainable development challenges to advance economic growth and foster social inclusion.

### National context

Key players: Australian Government; Australia Council for the Arts (Australia Council) is the Australian government's principal independent advisor for investment and development of the arts and cultural sector.

Launched in 2013, Creative Australia builds on Creative Nation (1994), Australia's previous National Cultural Policy. The Policy describes the essential role of art and culture in individual lives and the nation's economic and social success.

### State context

Key players: Create NSW is the State Government's arts policy and funding body that advises the Ministers for the Arts; Destination NSW is the lead government agency for tourism and events in NSW.

Create NSW launched the 10-year Create in NSW: NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework in February 2015. The framework focuses on increasing access and attendance by 15 per cent, excelling in the arts and business, and promoting organisational strength. The framework emphasises regional New South Wales, Western Sydney, and metropolitan Sydney.

Other Create NSW strategies include the Arts 2025 Strategic Framework and the Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+.

Destination NSW formulated the state-wide Destination Management Plan (DMP) to provide a high-level framework for coordinated delivery for the visitor economy across the state. The document is a reference tool for developing the state's visitor economy and responding to market changes.

Other relevant Destination NSW strategies and plans include the: Visitor Economic Strategy 2030; NSW Food and Wine Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2022; Aboriginal Tourism Action

Plan 2017-2020; the NSW Regional Conferencing Strategy and Action Plan; and Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

## Regional context

**Key players:** Established in 2001, Mudgee Region Tourism is an independent body funded by Mid-Western Regional Council and funded by members and sponsors to promote assets in the region.

Arts OutWest, the regional representative of Create NSW, is a not for profit incorporated organisation representing 12 Local Government Areas, including the Mid-Western region. It aims to promote, educate, facilitate, and advocate for arts and cultural development across the NSW Central West. The organisation forms part of the state network of 14 Regional Arts Development Organisations.

The State Government established six Destination Networks in 2016 following a review of regional tourism. Destination Central West (DCW) NSW is the regional representative for Destination NSW, covering the same regional boundaries as Arts Out West. The network advocates for the visitor economy of West NSW.

Mudgee Region Tourism's (MRT) Destination Management Plan 2020-2025 provides an Action Plan to enhance the region's promotion, strengthen the experience offered, and identify infrastructure projects, opportunities for growth, and development. The Plan uses MRT's Reset Your Senses to identify priorities, including wine and food; health and wellbeing; the arts; music and creativity; heritage; and events.

The Arts OutWest Strategic Plan 2021-2024 has identified six goals: leadership, promotion, facilitation, education, advocacy, and management. These are aimed to be achieved by 2024, marking Art OutWest's 50th year of delivery across the NSW Central West.

Destination Central West has recently developed its Destination Management Plan 2022-2030.

## Local context

**Key players:** Mid-Western Regional Council.

The new Cultural Plan is part of Council's commitment to supporting arts and cultural development across the region. Council policies, strategies, and plans have informed the development of this plan.

The Mudgee Arts Precinct Strategic Plan 2022-2028 outlines a community vision and targeted objectives for managing the Mudgee Arts Precinct. The Precinct aims to be a cultural hub that facilitates artistic excellence in regional NSW. Priorities include the local arts community; excellence in programming; Aboriginal art and culture; public art; education; creative collaboration; and arts for young people.

The Community Strategic Plan: Towards 2040 outlines the vision for the future: A prosperous and progressive community we proudly call home. The Plan sets out five focus areas: ensuring a safe and healthy community; protecting the natural environment; building a stable economy; connecting the region; and fostering good government.

The Public Art Plan (2018) outlines how Council will collaborate to develop a public art program to enrich the life of public spaces and inspire communal activities.

The region's most recent Cultural Plan (2005) addressed the need for a consistent vision for cultural development. The vision emphasises the economic role of cultural activities in the region

and the need for financial sustainability of services and facilities. Related to this is the focus on culture as a critical drawcard for crucial skills and professions in the region. Developed by a Cultural Plan Working Group, the document aims to promote cultural inclusivity, focusing primarily on community culture and people, facilities, and networks.

Other relevant Council documents include the Youth Strategy; Community Engagement Strategy; Community Participation Plan; and Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026.

### 3. Where we are now

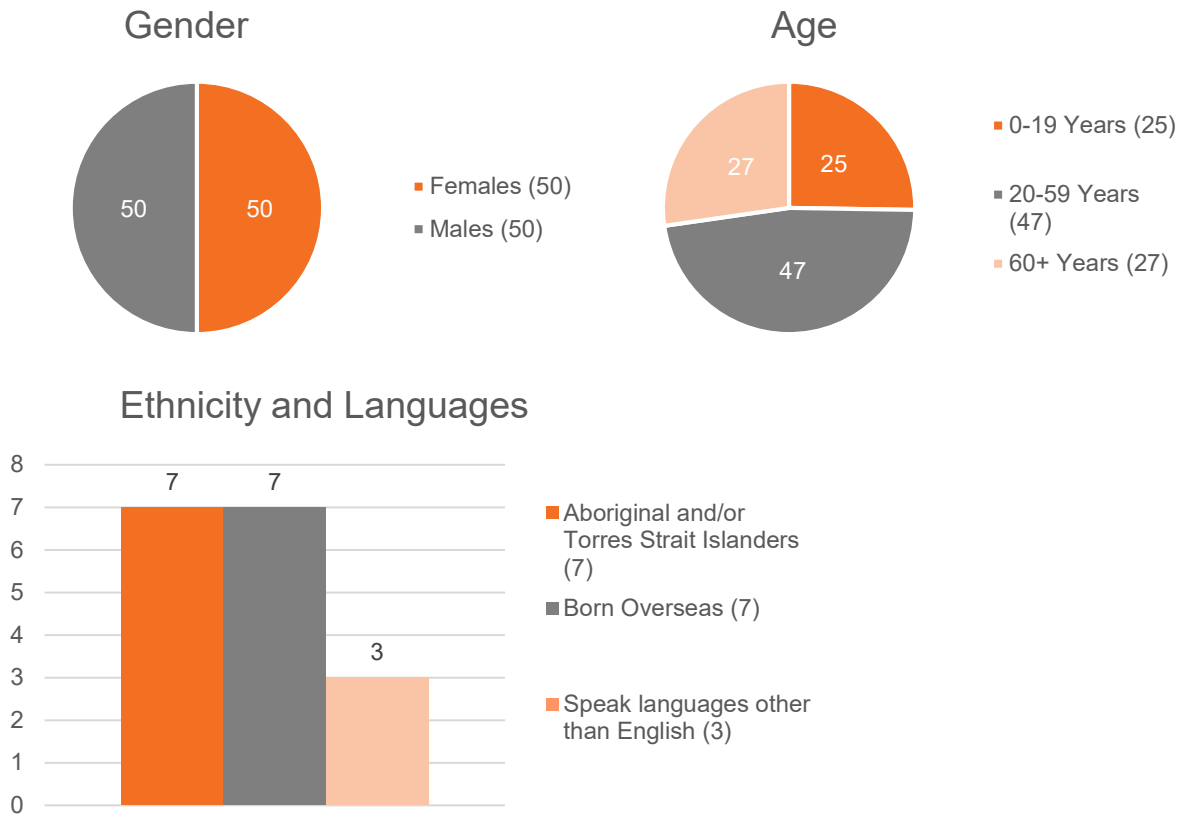
Mid-Western Region is on the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri people, is a famed New South Wales wine country and brimming with gold mining history.

#### 3.1. Our place

- The Mid-Western Region is in the Central Tablelands of New South Wales. It is approximately three and a half hours drive northwest of Sydney, and west of Newcastle
- The region covers more than 8,700 square kilometres and is enveloped between the Wollemi National Park, Lake Burrendong, Goulburn River National Park, and the Macquarie and Turon Rivers
- The community ranked the natural environment as the second greatest strength within the region
- The Mid-Western Region attracts roughly 691,000 visitors each year (Source: Tourism Research Australia, 2019)

#### 3.2. Our people<sup>2</sup>

The Mid-Western Region is home to 25,760 people. If the Mid-Western Region consisted of 100 people, there would be:



<sup>2</sup> Profile.ID. ABS Census 2021.

### 3.3. Our economy<sup>3</sup>

- The region supports 11,716 local jobs. 685 are tourism jobs, 460 in accommodation and food services, and 104 in arts and recreation jobs
- The region supports 2,856 local businesses
- Mid-Western Region's Gross Regional Product is approximately \$3.436 billion

### 3.4. Our investment in culture

The Mid-Western Region is home to a wide range of community assets, people, places, and organisations that contribute to our community culture, and shape the region's art and cultural identity. To name a few:

- The award-winning Mudgee Arts Precinct opened in 2021
- The Cultural Workshops, a multi-purpose collaborative centre, opened in Mudgee in 2023
- An established sculpture walk along the Cudgegong River in Mudgee and public art works also installed across the region
- Mudgee was named Australia's Top Tourism Town in 2021 and 2022
- Our region's wine-making history dates as far back as the 1850s
- Historic Gulgong featured on Australia's former ten-dollar note
- Secured arts and cultural funding through Create NSW
- More than 450 heritage items and four heritage conservation areas
- 130 National Trust-listed buildings in Gulgong

<sup>3</sup> Source: Economy. Id. ABS Census 2021.

## 4. What we have heard

Council has captured a range of cultural planning issues and opportunities, which have been grouped thematically to unearth the greatest needs.

### 4.1. Participation

We asked the community to reflect on their participation in arts and cultural activities over the last 12 months. Markets, festivals and community events, and food and wine events were the most popular activities in the region. The Mudgee Arts Precinct, libraries, and the Mudgee Town Hall Theatre were the most visited facilities within the region. 57 percent of participants identified an activity they want to participate in or a place they want to visit with but have yet to be able to.

The most common barriers to participating reported are a need for more information and cultural activities available, needing more time to partake, and events delivered at short notice. People participate in cultural activities mainly for entertainment, to support local artisans, and for happiness and wellbeing.

People prefer to find out what's happening in the region through social media, physical materials like posters and noticeboards, and word of mouth.

We spoke to 34 creatives who are primarily involved in visual arts (35.3%), performing arts (14.7%), and history and heritage (8.8%). Their practices are mainly self-funded (55.9%); some receive government funding or sell goods and services.

### 4.2. What culture looks like

We know that culture is complex and that interpretations vary. We also know that culture responds to the fusion of local identities and settings.

We asked the community what a point of pride in their community is and the strengths of arts and culture in the region. We also asked this so that we could take a strengths-based approach to future planning and get clear on what we need to protect and retain.

The community recognise the importance of the social fabric of the region and its villages. With a diversity of interest and participation in arts and culture across the region, villages have been shaped into distinct, vibrant, and inspiring places. Community values are heavily embedded into the region's culture, and the Mid-Western Region is friendly and welcoming to visitors and locals.

The significance of the natural environment was highlighted for its picturesque, rural landscapes. Located in the Central Tablelands of New South Wales, the region is enveloped by UNESCO World Heritage wilderness and various landscapes. With the beauty of four seasons, natural attractions are sought after and appreciated throughout the year.

The value of history and heritage across the region is felt and is visually strong. Historical collections are preserved and celebrated by interest groups, and visitors and locals feel the presence of history within built assets and public spaces. With over 450 listed heritage items and four heritage conservation areas across the major centres, the region truly appreciates its social history. Diverse local stories distinguish the region's townships and villages and tell a strong regional story of many identities.

## 4.3. Issues and opportunities

In developing this plan, several issues for consideration emerged.

### Emerging issues for consideration

The Mid-Western Region face a range of issues relating to arts and culture. The most reported challenge is arts and cultural programming. As the region's population steadily increases, we become more diverse, and our needs develop and change. The community want to see more activities available to young people, families, and people with disability. There is also a need to increase multidisciplinary activities and their regularity.

The community is also concerned about ensuring financial sustainability within the sector. Challenges were identified for attracting income opportunities, navigating grant programs and requirements, and securing funding through external bodies.

Infrastructure supports industry bodies, creatives, and participants across the region to participate in arts and culture. The community has identified gaps in transport options, housing availability, road conditions, planning controls, and visitor amenities and services.

Other emerging issues include the need for more creative spaces and venues, establishing shared priorities and common goals, and advocating for greater support and appreciation of arts and culture in the Mid-Western Region.

### Assets and opportunities

Over the next ten years, the community would like to prioritise new developments in events and festivals, arts and cultural programming, and creative venues and spaces.



## 5. Our Cultural Plan

### 5.1. Guiding principles

We have developed a set of guiding principles to guide our collective behaviour, approach, and decision-making of parties involved in the delivery of the Cultural Plan.

The Framework that underpins the Plan complements Council's other activities, values, and principles to ensure a holistic approach to planning. Four key principles will underpin Council's decision-making for the Cultural Plan:

#### Engaging and inspirational

Activities and ideas that bring joy, wonderment, innovation, and new possibilities, and education is underpinned.

#### Community and connection

Diversity, inclusiveness, humanistic, reflects and celebrates community. Creates and sustains connections between communities, the creative world, and ideas.

#### Enterprise and creativity

Opportunities for creatives and community members to learn and inspire curiosity.

#### Sustainability

Decisions that consider a balance of economic, environmental, cultural, and social elements.

### 5.2. Vision

In 2033, the Mid-Western Region is:

- A vibrant creative centre that celebrates the value of arts and culture
- Radiating with inspiration, participation, and innovation
- Proud, resilient, sustainable, and thriving

Mid-Western Regional Council:

- Supports and invests in local creative excellence
- Commits to maximising opportunities, participation, and enjoyment
- Encourages a diverse and inclusive creative community

### 5.3. Strategic framework

The Cultural Plan consists of four themes and strategic objectives.

Each of the themes has a series of actions that are detailed in separate Plans. The Plan for each theme outlines a strategic objective based on community feedback, envisages where we want to be, how we will get there, Council's role, and important partners and collaborators and measures to consider for the delivery of actions.

A. Celebrate and reflect on our region's heritage, history, memory, and stories

B. Revitalise and expand our cultural spaces.

C. Support our creative community.

D. Provide activities for everyone, everywhere

## 5.4. Council's role

Council is committed to understanding the community's priorities, concerns and needs in terms of key services, facilities, and programs.

To achieve the planning, implementation and delivery of this Cultural Plan, some strategic goals are short-term, and some are long-term.

Council, organisations, groups, and individuals will need to work together to achieve cultural impact through these goals. Community organisations may independently drive some actions, and Council may resource some to create the right environment for cultural development to flourish.

We recognise that Council plays multiple roles in the region's cultural development. The Plan outlines the Council's role in the delivery of each priority, described using the following terms

### Leader

We are a thought-provoking and leading player in developing our region's creative community, cultural brand, and distinct personality. Delivering and encouraging the use of infrastructure to drive local innovation and activity.

### Partner

We partner with key stakeholders to enable, acknowledge, and celebrate local innovation and cultural development.

### Supporter

We connect private, government and other parties to inspire innovation and maximise investment and return. A welcoming, open, and dedicated approach creates significant collaborations and partnership opportunities.

### Host

We are enhancing the region's reputation, improving mutual understanding, and building mutual respect by creating and maintaining the right conditions for our arts and cultural sector to flourish.

## Action Plan

This Plan documents the goals and actions prioritised by the community during engagement activities. These actions align with the guiding principles and the vision of the Cultural Plan.

To achieve the planning, implementation and delivery of this Cultural Plan, some strategic goals will take longer than others to achieve. Within this Action Plan, actions are given a timeline for completion. These are:

- Short-term: less than 2 years
- Medium-term: between 2-5 years
- Long-term: between 5-10 years

### A. Celebrate and reflect on our region’s heritage, history, memory, and stories

#### T 1. ACTION PLAN (A)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL’S ROLE	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE
First Nations arts, culture, and voice are acknowledged, honoured, and celebrated.	Leader Partner Steward	Develop procedures to ensure that programs designed to experience, engage with, and learn from First Nations cultures are developed in consultation with First Nations people.	Short-term
		Develop and adopt a Reconciliation Action Plan.	Medium-term
Historic assets that shape the identity of our townships and villages are protected, shared, and accessible.	Supporter	Support community projects that seek to document, preserve, and educate the community about heritage assets.	Short-term
		Explore funding opportunities for developing online platforms and digitising historical assets and collections across the region.	Medium-term
Experience and engage with diverse identities, cultures, and experiences across the Mid-Western Region.	Partner Supporter Host	Support the development of programs that encourage cross-cultural engagement, storytelling, and celebrations of diversity.	Medium-term
		Host township and village-themed exhibitions at the Mudgee Arts Precinct in collaboration with local artists.	Medium-term

## B. Revitalise and expand our cultural spaces

**TABLE 2. ACTION PLAN (B)**

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE
Activate the region's streetscapes and public spaces.	Leader Supporter Host	Continue to develop the Mid-Western Regional Council's public sculpture collection.	Short-term
Continue to develop and ensure equitable access to a range of places and spaces for all.	Leader Supporter Host	Identify and promote locations for community exhibitions and creative practices that are affordable to hire.	Short-term
		Audit the conditions and accessibility of Council's current cultural facilities.	Short-term
		Continue to develop the role of the region's libraries as a place of curiosity, inspiration, and stimulation, providing resources across both physical and digital formats.	Ongoing
Establish and maximise the use of Council's facilities to promote creative participation.	Leader Supporter Partner Host	Assess options to construct a multipurpose entertainment precinct for hosting events and providing opportunities such as regional touring partnerships.	Long-term
		Explore and investigate options for facilities that can exhibit and celebrate our natural history.	Medium-term
		Support a dedicated First Nations cultural centre as a business and First Nations employment initiative.	Long-term
		Improve facilities and spaces for hire at Kildallon Education Centre.	Medium-term

### C. Support our creative community

**TABLE 3. ACTION PLAN (C)**

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE
Develop and centralise resources to assist creative practitioners.	Leader Supporter	Support a central platform for funding opportunities to reduce some administrative burden for creatives.	Short-term
		Support an online creative community forum to disburse information, share knowledge and needs, generate ideas, and grow agency through community-led programming.	Short-term
Encourage and promote opportunities for networking, partnerships and collaborations that support our creative community and economy.	Leader Partner Host	Collaborate and deepen relationships with organisations to increase regional programs and creative participation.	Medium-term
		Explore options to develop a formal volunteering program that provides mutual benefits through Council and cultural programs and activities.	Medium-term
		Develop a guide or resource pack to encourage creatives to maximise the Cultural Workshops for creative practice, knowledge sharing, and educational workshops or lessons.	Medium-term
		Explore the viability of establishing a Creative Residency program to stimulate ideas and collaborations between creatives.	Medium-term
Operationally resource arts and cultural development.	Leader Partner Supporter	Fund a Community Arts Development role to provide sufficient resourcing for community engagement and continuous improvement.	Medium-term

D. Provide activities for everyone, everywhere.

**TABLE 4. ACTION PLAN (D)**

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE
Support the delivery of programs that reflect the evolving needs of our communities.	Leader Partner Supporter Host	Support the delivery of a dynamic program of arts and cultural events that intersect with other community interests.	Ongoing
		Support community groups seeking to produce regional events and programs.	Ongoing
		Inspire the community with various school and educational programs delivered through the Mudgee Arts Precinct.	Ongoing
		Work with the Youth Council to identify opportunities for young people to drive creative projects in the local community.	Medium-term
Ensure that inclusiveness and connection are at the heart of our arts and cultural activities.	Leader Partner	Leverage promotional platforms to ensure cultural information is available in multiple formats and accessible for community members and visitors.	Short-term
		Review existing cultural events and programs to ensure the inclusiveness of target markets, including children and young people, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, people with disability, and low-income families.	Medium-term
Ensure that the value of arts and culture is felt across the region and drives continuous improvement.	Leader	Explore methods of measuring participation, interest, impact, and investment in regional arts and culture to understand audience trends.	Medium-term
		Demonstrate the impact of arts and culture on the region's economic development to enhance our region's value proposition and attract more significant investment.	Long-term

## 6. Monitoring and evaluation

This Plan will be implemented and evaluated over ten years.

### Governance

For the implementation of the Plan to be successful, clear governance and executive oversight are required.

Council's Community and Cultural Services Department and Community Directorate lead this Plan and will facilitate, monitor, and report on its implementation.

Council, organisations and groups, and the broader community will need to work together in various capacities to achieve the Plan's vision.

### Implementation

The Cultural Services Team will develop an annual delivery plan for implementing the actions in the Cultural Plan. The yearly plan will outline projects and steps for implementation, the timelines for activities to be conducted, and any budgetary considerations for these actions.

### Measuring success

The implementation of actions will be reviewed annually to determine the status of progress. Evaluations must be data-driven and objective. Progress will be reported to Council to assist with future community planning and budget development.

A formal review and evaluation of the Cultural Plan will be undertaken every four years, in line with the Council term.

**TABLE 5. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

PRIORITY	OUTCOME	DATA SOURCE
Celebrate our region's heritage, history, memory, and stories.	First Nations' culture and stories are embraced, recognised, and honoured. Increased profile of the region's distinct and diverse identities.	First Nations' community feedback. Event participant and visitor data. Visitor and community feedback.
Revitalise and expand our cultural spaces.	The region's arts and culture are visible and alive throughout the region. Increased quantity and quality of cultural spaces throughout the region.	Visitor and community feedback. Facilities booking space data.
Support our creative community.	The creative community feels connected and supported because of Council's Cultural Services Team and resources. More opportunities for participation and employment are provided.	Community satisfaction survey. Employment, volunteering, and event participation data.

PRIORITY	OUTCOME	DATA SOURCE
Provide activities for everyone, everywhere.	Increased participation in public programs. Accessible status reports of the region's cultural sector health.	Community and visitor participation data. Cultural Services Team and community feedback.



# References

- Arts OutWest. (2021). *Strategic Plan 2021-2024*.
- Australian Unlimited. (2013). *Creative Australia: National Cultural Policy 2013*. Commonwealth of Australia.
- Community Engagement Strategy*. (2022). Economic Development, Mid-Western Regional Council.
- Community Participation Plan: Amendment 1*. (2019). Mid-Western Regional Council.
- Create NSW. (n.d.-a). *Arts 2025 Strategic Framework*. NSW Government.
- Create NSW. (n.d.-b). *Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+*. NSW Government.
- Create NSW. (2015). *NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework*. Arts NSW Trade & Investment.
- Creative Nation: Commonwealth cultural policy*. (1994). Commonwealth of Australia.
- Destination Marketing Store. (2022). *Central West NSW Destination Management Plan 2022-2030*. Destination Central West NSW.
- Destination NSW. (n.d.). *NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030*. NSW Government.
- Destination NSW. (2013). *Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan 2017-2020*. NSW Government.
- Destination NSW. (2017). *The NSW Regional Conference Strategy & Action Plan 2017-2021*. NSW Government.
- Destination NSW. (2018). *New South Wales Food & Wine Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2018-2022*. NSW Government.
- Destination NSW. (2019). *NSW Government Statewide Destination Management Plan*. NSW Government.
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022–2026*. (2022). Community Services, Mid-Western Regional Council.
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan: January 2019-2021*. (2020). Destination NSW.
- Heritage Policies*. (2023). National Trust of Australia. <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/heritage-policies-wa/>
- Mid-Western Region Community Plan: Towards 2040*. (n.d.). Mid-Western Regional Council.
- Mudgee Region Tourism. (2020). *Destination Management Plan 2020-2025*.
- Public Art Plan*. (2018). Community, Mid-Western Regional Council.
- REMPPLAN. (2021). *Community Profile. Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census of Population and Housing*.  
<https://app.remplplan.com.au/midwestern/community/summary?state=m56yuaMD9TdQ4NOSvkoXKujtWtnk0>

REMPPLAN. (2021). **Economic Profile. Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census of Population and Housing.**

<https://app.rempplan.com.au/midwestern/community/summary?state=m56yuaMD9TdQ4NOSvkoXKujtWtnk0>.

**Strategic Plan 2022-2028.** (2022). Mudgee Arts Precinct, Mid-Western Regional Council.

Trethowan, M., & Cultural Plan Working Party. (2005). **Cultural Plan.** Mid-Western Regional Council.

UNESCO. (2005). **The 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.**

UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development. (n.d.). **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.** United Nations System Staff College.

**Youth Strategy.** (2017). Community Services, Mid-Western Regional Council.

# Acknowledgments

The Mid-Western Cultural Plan has been shaped by many people who have made meaningful contributions over several months.

Council wishes to acknowledge them for their time and contributions to shaping the region's cultural future.

- Representatives from local community groups, organisations, and businesses
- Representatives from key partners, industry and funding bodies, peak organisations, and creative professionals
- Individuals who participated in the many workshops and community pop-ups
- Contributors to the online survey
- The Elected Members of Mid-Western Regional Council
- Management and staff from the services provided by Mid-Western Regional Council

Thank you.