



South
Coast
Arts



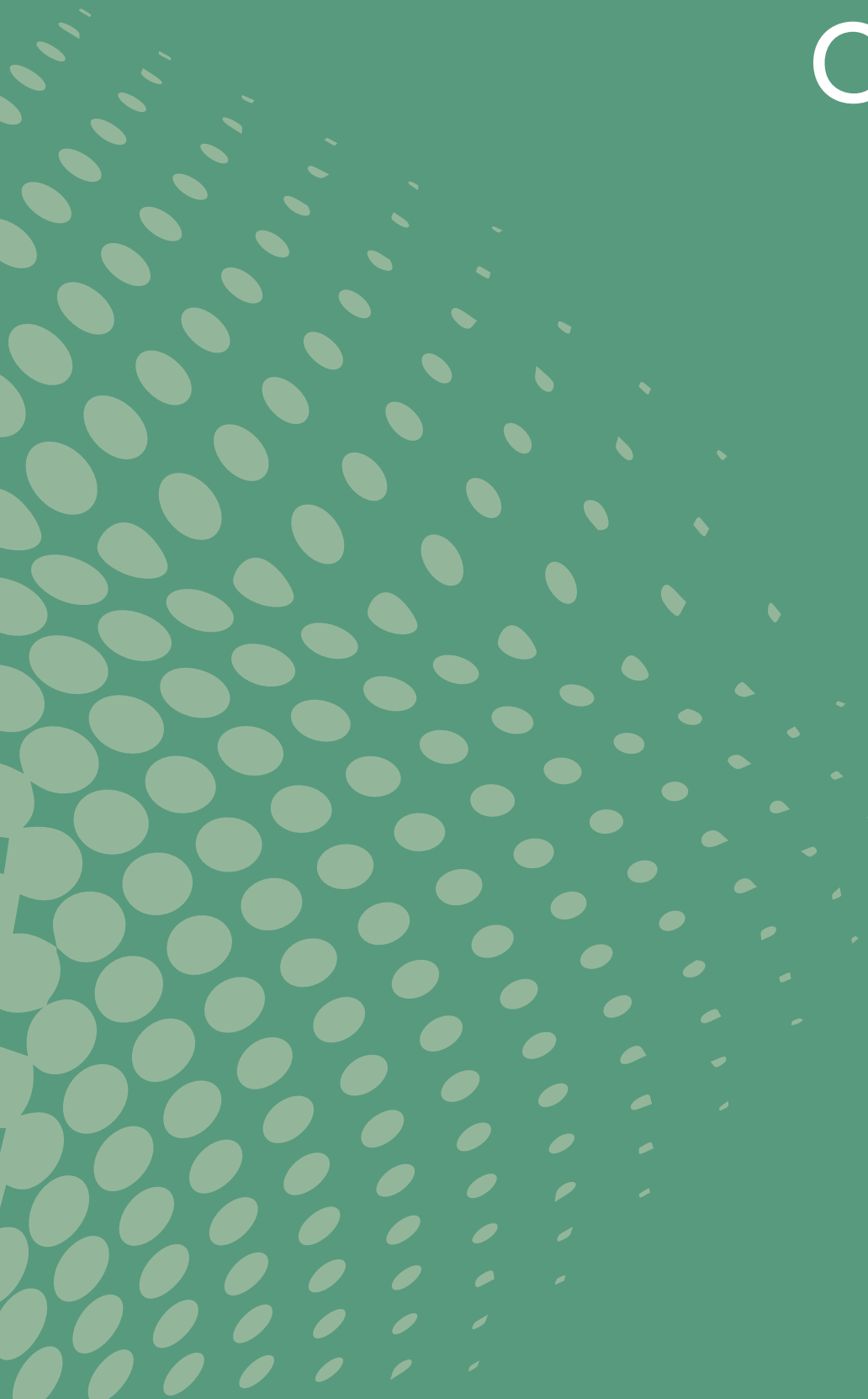
Annual
Report
2023-24

Back Cover: Stephanie Quirk, Incubator Artist Residency, 2024,
The Imaginarium, Shellharbour (detail).
Photograph by Amanda Mellor, Waymark Productions.

Contents

About South Coast Arts	2
Chair's Report	5
Executive Director's Report	7
Board Members	8
Staff	10
Program Report	12
Evaluation	19
Operational Overview	20
Our Impact	22

About South Coast Arts



South Coast Arts is an Incorporated (not-for-profit) Association and registered charity, governed by a volunteer Board of Management. The Board is made up of skills-based creative community and Council representatives. The South Coast Arts Board serves as the custodian of our strategic vision and oversees the governance of our organisation, enabling us to fulfil our mission.

Funded through Create NSW, we are also a Regional Arts Development Organisation (RADO), one of a network of fifteen RADO's across the state of NSW. As a network, we are supported by our peak body Regional Arts NSW.

The region covered by South Coast Arts includes the local government areas of Shellharbour, Kiama, and Shoalhaven councils, from whom we also receive annual funding.

South Coast Arts was formally incorporated in 2022 and embarked on its inaugural year of operations in 2023.

Our Artistic Vision is fuelled by the desire for creativity to be acknowledged, valued, and harnessed for its ability to shape extraordinary communities. We work alongside our regional creatives to support them in telling stories, sharing melodies, showcasing beauty, creating experiences, fostering resilience, broadening perspectives, cultivating connections, and nurturing well-being.

We offer opportunities for creatives to venture beyond their usual boundaries, engage in collaborative partnerships, and establish meaningful connections with their audiences. We actively collaborate with those traditionally on the periphery of the arts sector, exploring how creativity can enhance existing frameworks, infrastructure, methodologies, and concepts.

We envision a future where creativity serves as the linchpin that unites the communities of the South Coast, invigorates our localities, narrates our collective stories, and supports our populace.

Our mission is to contribute to the vibrancy and diversity of South Coast culture and inspire community through shared and inclusive creative experiences, connection and belonging.

By respecting First Nations cultural foundations, grassroots participation, professional development and innovative practices we celebrate and amplify the creative voices and identity of our region.

Chair's Report

In 2024 South Coast Arts completes the second year of our operation as the newest Regional Arts Development Organisation in NSW. The intensive process of establishment has been achieved and SCA is now firmly in the business of supporting regional artists and cultural development. This year has seen South Coast Arts gain purpose and momentum. Arts sector led strategic planning, advocacy, resourcing and program delivery are shaping a remit which will see us supporting our region now and into the future.

Our RADO covers Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven local government areas with an overall population of over 200,000 people. Local government is at the core of our funding. Council commitment to regional culture and the willingness of staff and councillors to assist our emerging organisation has been much appreciated. Equally important is our funding from Create NSW which forms part of state government support for the arts in regional NSW. We look forward to continued productive partnerships in the years ahead.

At the heart of effective organisations is the capacity for strong, responsive planning. We have sought first to understand the culture of our region, its needs and aspirations.

The last year has seen an energetic consultation process to develop our initial Strategic Plan. The enthusiasm of regional artists and cultural organisations has been central to this process. So too has been the vision of people across the region who believe in the potential of culture to drive change and strengthen communities.

Resourcing artists and the sector keeps both individuals and groups current, successful and resilient. We are proud to have been able to provide programs including the Country Arts Support Program, the Creative Pulse business enhancement, and First Nations Arts Law workshops to increase the skills base of local creatives. Weave Directory and Creative South Coast Branding will extend the ability to access regional culture and creative industries and support effective regional branding. Thanks must go to Create NSW for the very well targeted Rescue and Restart funding, an injection of arts funding much needed in a region that has experienced real challenges in the past years.

SCA's staff enact our purpose. Our inaugural Executive Director Louise Croker has approached her work with much skill, cultural knowledge and business acumen. She has successfully guided the Strategic Plan, developed productive partnerships across the sector and expertly managed programs and the day-to-day functions of SCA. Her excellent leadership has been creative and inspirational. We couldn't be in better hands.

The creative input our Communications and Fundraising Officer Paul Ducco provides is already shaping our organisation. Paul's understanding of contemporary marketing, brand development and communication are informed by his active involvement in the sector and we're delighted to have him on the team. Thanks also to our capable bookkeeper Fiona Wilson and accountants Booth Partners who support good financial management.

South Coast Arts is managed by a hardworking Board with Council representation by Cr Robert Petreski (Shellharbour), Cr Imogen Draisma (Kiama) and Cr Tonya Gray (Shoalhaven) and regional arts and creative industries representation by members Joni Braham, Amanda Reynolds, Claire Chapman, Lisa Anthony, Paul Ducco and Ros Moffatt. Council staff provide additional expertise. The work of establishment was time-consuming and demanding and as Chair I would like to thank all for their commitment over the last two years. This AGM sees significant change to the Board as members who have guided the establishment phase step aside. I would particularly like to thank Joni Braham, Claire Chapman, Amanda Reynolds and Lisa Anthony for their excellent work. Thanks are also due to Paul Ducco who stood down from SCA Board to apply for and take up his position on staff. And we welcomed the very capable Ros Moffatt back from maternity leave.

Over the last months SCA called for applicants to the Board and I'm pleased to report that an extremely skilled group of regional creatives are eager join us to guide the organisation for the next two years and beyond.

Regional culture is at the heart of what we do. The South Coast is a place of creativity, imagination and innovation.

We believe a strong culture changes lives and enables us to respond to the increasingly challenging times in which we live. We look forward to supporting a creative future for our region and its people into the future.

Marla Guppy
Chair, South Coast Arts Board

Executive Director's Report

The year 2023 marked a period of active engagement, network expansion, consultative processes, and strengthened connections. As our organisation sought to establish a firm footing, we embarked on a journey of both continued internal structuring and external outreach.

On the internal front, we developed and solidified our processes, policies, and protocols. We navigated the delineation of duties and responsibilities shared between the Executive Director and the Board, all with a shared vision of constructing a resilient and fitting organisational framework.

This year brought a series of inaugural experiences, ranging from staff recruitment and performance assessments to fine-tuning our financial, marketing, and social media protocols.

As an organisation we are in a state of continuous improvement, our journey is just beginning. We remain committed to adapting and expanding our capabilities, and thanks to our efforts thus far, we stand on a foundation of stability.

Externally, the year was filled with novel introductions, including fresh faces, new locales, and innovative programs. Notably, we began three major initiatives funded by Create NSW's Rescue and Restart program:

- the Creative Pulse business enhancement program,
- the Creative South Coast Branding initiative, and
- the Weave Directory upgrade.

Additionally, we conducted a series of First Nations Arts Law Workshops and embarked on the development of our inaugural Strategic Plan.

In terms of staffing, we welcomed Paul Ducco as our Communications and Fundraising Officer. Paul has confidently assumed control of our communication strategies, marketing efforts, and the Brand and Weave projects, all while steering us towards attaining charitable status.

Our strategic planning process involved extensive consultations, where we sought to engage with the broad spectrum of our creative community, from board members to artisans, from creatives to government officials, ensuring a diverse range of voices were heard and considered.

Throughout the year, the Board has been a pillar of strength and support, and I extend my deepest gratitude for their dedication and contributions to our achievements this year.

I would like to express special thanks to Marla Guppy, whose leadership as Chair has been instrumental in both supporting me and steering us towards a creative vision that is both challenging and inspiring, seeking always to secure a bright future for the arts on the South Coast.

My appreciation also goes to Clarie Chapman, who embraced the role of Treasurer with energy and resolve, Joni Braham, whose role as Deputy Chair ensured our adherence to strong governance, and Amanda Reynolds as Secretary who consistently brought invaluable insight, guidance and wisdom to our direction.

I look forward to what the future holds as we grow into 2024.

Louise Croker
Executive Director

Board Members

Community

Marla Guppy – Chair

Marla Guppy is an artist, cultural planner and public art strategist. As a strong advocate for cultural sustainability in urban Australia, Marla received the Ros Bower Memorial Award from Paul Keating for her work in community cultural development. Over the last thirty years, Marla has directed Guppy Art Management, a Shoalhaven-based creative consultancy.

Joni Braham – Deputy Chair

A musician, artist and writer, Joni has extensive qualifications, professional experience and skills in governance, planning, quality assurance, organisational and staff management, contract management, policy development, community development, and education. Joni is also the founding member of 'Which Witch', formed in 1989 and still playing, making it one of the country's longest-running women's rock bands.

Amanda Reynolds – Secretary

Amanda is a Guringai curator, cloak-maker, storyteller and multimedia artist passionate about cultural healing and connection; community-based collaborations; exhibitions, public art and publications. Her heart and spirit are devoted to the flourishing of south-eastern cultures, knowledge and histories and to transforming public and institutional spaces of colonial dominance by holding space for community voices, collaborations and creativity.

Claire Chapman – Treasurer

Claire is a theatre maker and producer interested in audience participation and interactivity. Claire has been mentored and worked with renowned contemporary theatre-makers and performers and performed across locations in Australia, the UK and Spain. Shifting her practice from performance

to facilitation, Claire is now Co-Director of The Deadly South, a not-for-profit performing arts organisation helping regional artists establish and maintain their careers here on the South Coast.

Rosalind Moffatt

Rosalind is a small business owner and proactive solicitor in technology contracts, intellectual property, privacy, commercial and consumer law. She has in-house legal experience across the health, entertainment, arts and insurance sectors. Rosalind also offers pro-bono work with Arts Law and has advised Nyngan Local Land Council and Bangarra Dance Theatre.

Paul Ducco (Jan to Jul)

Paul is a multidisciplinary Creative Director, designer, and strategist with over 25 years experience in the creative, tech and film industries. Passionate about connecting culture, education, and the environment, Paul has become a sought-after collaborator in various fields. As the Director of Supernaut, a designed and future-thinking studio, he has established ongoing relationships with culturally significant institutions such as Carriageworks, the Art Gallery of NSW, State Library of NSW, and Bundanon Trust.

Lisa Anthony

Lisa has a long international and Australian journalism career and has written for, edited and published award-winning media across numerous platforms. She has many years of professional experience in the creative industries and cultural communication, having worked for major arts organisations, including Sydney Writers Festival. Lisa manages cultural events on the South Coast, working from her base in Kangaroo Valley. She is passionate about supporting artists in their work and connecting them with the wider community.

Councillor Representatives

Cr Imogen Draisma (Kiama)

Imogen Draisma is Deputy Mayor of Kiama Municipal Council and has lived in the Kiama area since a young age. She completed her education at Wollongong High School of the Performing Arts and is currently completing a double degree, Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Laws, at the University of Wollongong. She has worked for members of both NSW and Australian parliaments and, as one of the youngest politicians in Australia, sees diversity as a core value of public life.

Cr Robert Petreski (Shellharbour)

Robert Petreski is a Shellharbour City Councillor who was born in the Illawarra and has lived in Shellharbour for over 30 years. Robert works as a High School Teacher. He has an Honours Degree in Design & Technology plus qualifications in Training & Assessment, Information Technology and Electrotechnology. Robert established, built and sold a thriving local Electronics business in the region. His formal qualification in Design and Technology gives him a genuine insight and appreciation for a well-functioning, aesthetic design where form meets function.

Cr Tonia Gray (Shoalhaven)

Tonia Gray is a Shoalhaven Councillor with an enduring interest in the Arts. Inspired by her mother, a landscape artist and potter, Tonia continues infusing arts-based practice and creative teaching methods in her University lecturing. With a Masters in Community Health and a PhD in Education, Tonia's research explores human-nature relationships and their impact on health and well-being. As an academic, she has worked closely with Bundanon to evaluate their highly successful 'Touched by the Earth' Arts program and has presented the findings at multiple EcoArts and Environmental Education conferences, both nationally and internationally.

Staff

Louise Croker

Executive Director

Louise is a seasoned community and cultural development expert, holding a Bachelor of Arts and over three decades of experience engaging with diverse populations. For 14 years, Louise served as Kiama Council's Cultural Development Officer, showcasing her dedication to nurturing the growth of creative arts communities and industries in the region. With a diverse background in both leadership and grassroots roles, Louise has been committed to supporting, nurturing, and inspiring communities through creativity across South West Sydney and the Illawarra. She is well-prepared to excel in her role as the inaugural Executive Director of South Coast Arts, continuing her commitment to regional cultural development.

Fiona Wilson

Bookkeeper

Fiona has been working as the bookkeeper for her family's company for the past 10 years whilst improving her skills with online courses during this time. Early work experience was accounts-based work then after having children she completed her Diploma in Community Services where she went on to work in home care and aged care sector for over 20 years. Fiona has recently moved to the south coast from Sydney to enjoy a slower pace to life as well as expanding her clientele as a way of getting to know the community she has moved into. She is enjoying exploring all this beautiful area has to offer while making new friends and co-workers.

Paul Ducco

Communications and Fundraising Officer

Paul is a multidisciplinary designer, director strategist with over 25 years' experience in the creative, tech and film industries. Passionate about connecting culture, education, and the environment, Paul has become a sought-after collaborator in various fields. As the Director of Supernaut, a design-led and future-thinking studio, he has established ongoing relationships with culturally significant institutions such as Carriageworks, the Art Gallery of NSW, State Library of NSW, and Bundanon Trust. Paul's dedication to improving access to the arts in regional areas is reflected in his role as Vice Chair and co-founder of Southland Creative Inc (Shoalhaven). He also serves as Editor-in-Chief at Manta Publishing, an independent print and new media publisher based on the South Coast. Furthermore, Paul has played a significant role in bringing culturally significant Australian stories and discussions to the big screen through documentaries like 'The Final Quarter' and 'Araatika'.

Right: Anna Glynn (Regional Futures representative),
Eurotipodes—Colonial Capsize, 2022,
archival photomontage on cotton rag paper,
no. 1 in edition of 5, 50cm X 38cm (detail).



Program Report

CASP 2023

In 2023 our 2022 CASP funding round was resolved with a presentation event held in May to hear the outcomes of the successfully funded projects. The event was attended by approximately 40 people from across the region.

This event held at The Pavilion, Kiama highlighted the depth of talent and creative energy we have within our region.



CASP 2022

Hein Cooper, Musician/composer

facilitated a song-writing process and recorded songs with locals from Milton/Ulladulla in response to live changing events (fire, flood, Covid)

Greer Taylor, Jillian O’Dowd & Harry Kielly,

Multi-arts collaborators developed a storyboard based on Greer’s poetic concept ‘co-evolution: a chronicle of decay and infinity’.

Jacob Peterson, Poet and Rapper

developed a new concept album, ‘Green and Keen’ with artists from the local music scene

Jodi Edwards, First Nations Academic and

Language holder facilitated a consultative process with Shellharbour Elders and community for the development of an ‘arts precinct’ for First Nations young people.

Nigel Helyer, Sound artist

collaborated with communities living in Jervis Bay and St Georges Basin, to investigate their relationship with water-ways through an arts/science prism

Peter Lavelle, Theatre director

worked with local actors to launch the ‘Shoalhaven Shakespeare Company’ and developed scenes from ‘Much Ado about Nothing’.

Left (top to bottom): Claire Chapman, Hein Cooper and Jacob Peterson, CASP Presentation, 2022, Kiama Pavillion, Kiama; Jodi Edwards and Cr Rob Petreski (Shellharbour). Photograph by South Coast Arts.

Right: CASP Presentation, 2022, Kiama Pavillion, Kiama. Photograph by South Coast Arts.

CASP 2023

Our 2023 CASP funding round distributed \$18 000 to six projects throughout the region, activating a diversity of projects and target audiences.

Gerringong & District Historical Society, Lloyd Rees Revisited An exhibition of paintings, prints and drawings, biographical text and photos illustrating Lloyd Rees' life in Warri Beach at the Gerringong Library and Museum Gallery.

Gemma Hart, TeenTours A series of audio stories focussed on the history and culture of regional towns - as told by its resident young people of the Shoalhaven.

Melissa Mylchreest, Rewilding Life: Draw and Explore Based on concepts from the applicants art-based nature books, community walks is about encouraging discovery, mindfulness and creativity. Exploring the local environment and drawing on what is found, learning techniques and creating art.

Shoalhaven Health and Arts, Developing a performance making model for Older People The development of an ongoing skills-development and performance-making program for older people. The program is underpinned by an ethos of 'care' and provides a platform that challenges 'ageist' stereotypical views.

Soul Clay Studios, Perpetual Pottery Project Repurposing, reusing and upcycling discarded, forgotten, unfinished pottery projects from yesteryear to create joy today and every day.

Michelle Springett, Expressive Art Wall Trail Building an independent website for the Expressive Art Wall Trail, a multi-location exhibition that changes regularly. Encouraging locals and visitors to view and purchase regional Artist's work in our local venues.



Creative Pulse

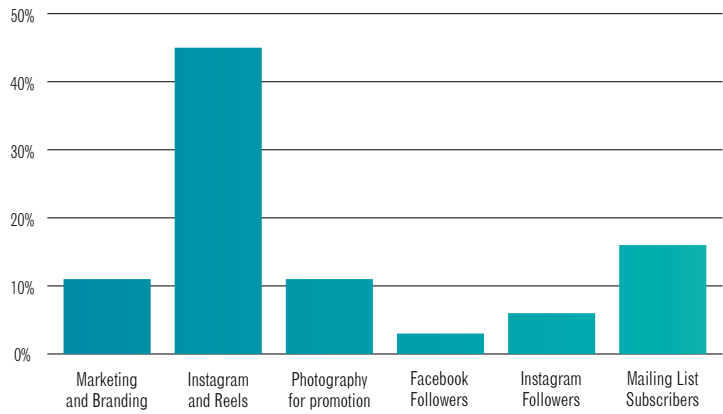
Creative Pulse: The Art of Business Growth is a business learning initiative, funded by Create NSW's Rescue and Restart program.

The program spans August 2023 to May 2024 and offers a comprehensive blend of skill development workshops and personalised business coaching over six months.

Ten carefully chosen participants, hailing from diverse backgrounds, including each of our three local government areas, visual and multidisciplinary arts, disability, and First Nations arts, are actively engaged in this journey.

Evaluation processes have been undertaken throughout the project, culminating in a mid-project review that highlights significant skill enhancements across various domains and a slight increase in participant monthly income/sales.

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN SKILLS CONFIDENCE



AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME/SALES

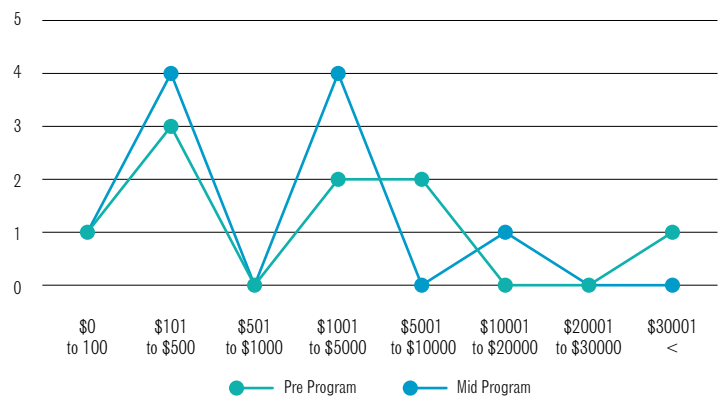


Image: Creative Pulse participants and coaches, 2023, Berry School of Arts, Berry. Photograph by Louise Croker.

Arts Law Workshops

This series of workshops was designed by Arts Law for First Nations artists and individuals collaborating with them.

The program included an online workshop for workers within organisations contracting First Nations artists, along with three face-to-face workshops specifically for First Nations Artists held in Ulladulla, Nowra, and Albion Park Rail.

During these workshops, participants delved into critical topics, including:

- Navigating and negotiating contracts
- Accessing legal assistance and optimising contract terms
- Understanding copyright and moral rights
- Safeguarding Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP), preserving First Nations knowledge and culture within contracts.

Feedback from the artist workshops was overwhelmingly positive, with participants actively engaging in interactive sessions. Written evaluations from the contractor session revealed a high level of satisfaction, with 65% of respondents rating the training as very useful and 25% as extremely useful.

Branding Project

Supported by the Create NSW Rescue and Restart audience development fund, this branding initiative seeks to unveil a brand/campaign for our creative South Coast.

Its purpose is to both acknowledge individual creatives and to spotlight the wider creative sector and community within our region. This distinctive marker will enable audiences to directly engage with authentic South Coast creativity.

A diverse Advisory Group, consisting of creatives spanning our region, has played an active role in shaping the project. Their insights, gathered during face-to-face workshops and through written feedback, have been exceptionally valuable.

Mission

To illuminate the Creative Spirit of the South Coast by spotlighting our unique offering,

through creativity and shared stories—ensuring a welcoming and exciting space where everyone can feel a sense of belonging.

Our goal is to create a region where creative experiences thrive, where barriers to entry and engagement are dismantled, and a collective energy can ignite the region, inspiring a future rich in creativity, culture, and innovation.

Vision

Creativity and Cultural Depth - We see the South Coast being celebrated, not only for its natural beauty but its cultural and creative vibrance.

Fostering a culture of inquisitive exploration, we aim to unveil creativity as the hidden gem, and untapped narrative that shapes our regional identity. We aim to nurture an ecosystem that caters to diverse tastes, awakens all the senses, and inspires endless curiosity. Where each creative expression inspires more of the same.

Work continues on this project into 2024, with the brand being unveiled later in the year.

Weave Directory

The Weave Artists Directory, initially conceived and launched in 2016 by the Kiama and Shellharbour Council, has now been officially transferred to South Coast Arts in 2023.

Thanks to Create NSW's Rescue and Restart audience development fund, we secured funding to revamp the site, transforming it into a South Coast Arts product. Additionally, we're expanding the platform to include an events calendar and a community forum, fostering collaboration among creatives across the region. The new site is expected to launch in 2024.

Promotion and Communication

South Coast Arts started our bi-monthly newsletter for our region's creative community in late 2023. Subscribers now number 337, with a further 617 followers on Facebook and 550 on Instagram.

Our newsletter provides updates on South Coast Arts initiatives, promotes regionally significant events and creative opportunities, and upcoming funding.

Collaborative Regional Projects

MOSA

South Coast Arts was invited to join a Destination Sydney South Surrounds Working Group for the development of a business case for a Museum of Saltwater Art project for our south coast. This project was undertaken by a consultant supported by advice from the Working Group across the November to January period.

Shoalhaven and Shellharbour Hospital Developments

South Coast Arts was also invited in 2023 to join the Department of Health, Art Working Groups for each of the Shellharbour and Shoalhaven hospital developments.

These collaborative groups have worked closely with consultants throughout 2023 to develop Arts in Health Strategies tailored to each development site. These strategies will guide decisions on what, where, when, and how art will be integrated into the new site developments. Expressions of Interest and Tenders for artists will roll out in 2024.

Collaborative Cross-Regional Projects

Creative South Cultural Tourism Map

Creative South is a partnership project with South East Arts (SEA) and Southern Tablelands Arts (STA) RADOs. Developed in 2022-23 this online platform was built with South Coast Arts in mind as a project partner and offers an interactive cultural tourism mapping platform. South Coast Arts has been working towards its data inclusion in the online map with this work extending in 2024.

creativesouth.com.au

Collaborative Statewide Projects

Regional Futures Project

Regional Futures was a RADO network, statewide, program of creative development and conversations. Placing artists at the centre of a dialogue, exploring a future vision for where they live and create. The project culminated in an exhibition of artists from across the state at the Casula Powerhouse from June to September 2023 and a Symposium. Our south coast region was represented by Shoalhaven multidisciplinary artist, Anna Glynn.

Work of Art

Work of Art is a creative women's business development program spanning 12 months from 2023 to 2024. The project, facilitated by Regional Arts NSW, works with each of the RADOs in NSW to coordinate training sessions, networking and mentoring opportunities. The South Coast has three artists from across our region participating in this program.

Horizons

Horizons is a RADO network, statewide project, providing a 12-month program of creative mentoring for creative young people from across NSW. Three young people from the South Coast are currently participating in this program. Expert mentors are teamed with young people around their particular area of creativity and will work with them to support their entry into their art form as a career.

The Horizons and Works of Art projects will culminate in a showcase exhibition in Orange, NSW in November 2024.

Creative Support and Advice

In 2023 South Coast Arts provided five hours of formal one-on-one support to creatives within the performing arts sector and facilitated two meetings of the Local Government Cultural Development Officers Network, providing support and collaborative discussion with Shoalhaven, Shellharbour, Kiama and Wollongong Council cultural arts officers.

Advocacy and Networking

2023 brought several opportunities for South Coast Arts to engage in advocacy work that helped to highlight the creative needs of our region.

RADO Network Meetings

NSW RADO Network meetings are held bi-monthly, both online and face to face (quarterly) South Coast Arts has committed to attending these meetings throughout 2023 and 2024 and has consequently been involved in discussions with:

- Create NSW
- Sound NSW
- Music NSW
- Shadow Minister for the Arts
- Department of Regional NSW
- Department of Education and Training (DET)–Arts Unit

2024 has seen South Coast Arts additional consultation with Create NSW on the development of the new creative spaces strategy following the development of our NSW Arts Policy. Additionally, a discussion has been undertaken in consultation with the Office of the 24hr Economy regarding First Nations involvement in this evolving state government strategy.

NSW State Arts Policy

South Coast Arts Executive Director attended the Wollongong Townhall consultation for the development of the NSW State Arts Policy. South Coast Arts also submitted written submissions to the NSW Government consultation both independently and in collaboration with the NSW RADO network.

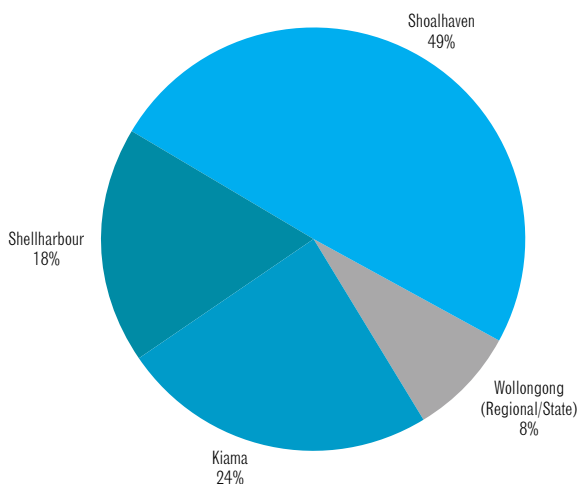


Evaluation

In 2023, engagement spanned the entire region, with a significant turnout from the Shoalhaven local government area contributing nearly half of the participants. While Shellharbour and Kiama accounted for 18% and 24%, respectively. Additionally, regional arts organisations and state government representatives made up 8% of total participation.

Of the participants who identified as being a part of a community minority group 44% of the respondents identified as First Nations. People with a disability and those identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse each made up 21% with young people making up 15%.

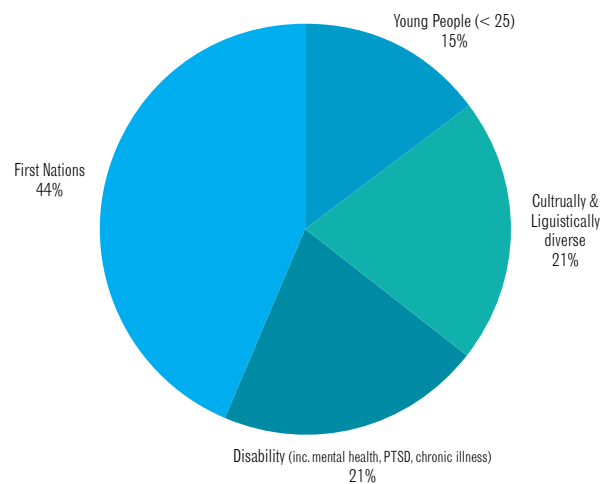
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA



Left: Stephanie Quirk (*Creative Pulse* participant), Incubator Artist Residency, 2024, *The Imaginarium*, Shellharbour. Photograph by Amanda Mellor, Waymark Productions.

Each project and program undertaken by South Coast Arts (SCA) incorporates a comprehensive evaluation process that includes data relating to the satisfaction levels of participants. Data is gathered on a program-by-program basis across all projects.

DEMOGRAPHIC



Project satisfaction results for South Coast Arts projects throughout the year:

- **Usefulness of program or activity:** An impressive 72% of participants found our programs and activities to be Very to Extremely useful.
- **Relevance of program or activity:** A substantial 76% rated the relevance of the programs and activities as Very to Extremely relevant.
- **Overall Satisfaction:** 80% expressed being Very to Extremely satisfied.
- **Likelihood to recommend:** An encouraging 84% would recommend these initiatives to others.
- **Increase in feelings of connection and/or a sense of community:** A significant 80% reported a Moderate to Big increase in their sense of connection and community.
- **Enhanced connection with artists and creatives:** 56% experienced a Moderate to Big increase in their connections with fellow artists and creatives.

Operational Overview

Strategic Planning

The second half of 2023 was predominated by consultation for the development of our first Strategic Plan. Our approach to consulting with the creative community aimed to offer diverse channels for engagement and dialogue. Our engagement processes provided over 52 hours of direct face-to-face consultation with our creative community.

Café Chats

An informal connection and conversation point where creatives could discuss issues over a cuppa in a local cafe. This style of consultation facilitated mobility and broader geographic coverage with sessions held in Kiama, Gerringong, Shellharbour, Albion Park, Ulladulla, and Nowra.

Workshops

Four formal face-to-face Workshops, lasting 2-3 hours, took place in each local government area, complemented by an additional online Workshop. An additional consultation was held with young creatives through Beyond Empathy.

Survey

A comprehensive online survey provided participants with the opportunity to carefully respond to a series of questions, seeking individual insights into the experiences of the creative sector in the region.

Creative Sector Interviews

One-on-one interviews were conducted with representatives from arts organisations, groups, and festival organisers across the region.

Non-Arts Sector

Sharpe Advisory was engaged to undertake one on one interviews with regional stakeholders and stakeholders from sectors outside the arts. These interviews discussed the intersection between the creative sector and the non-arts sector and the potential relationship between these organisations and departments and South Coast Arts.

Review Workshop

A Stakeholder Review Workshop, facilitated by Creative Plus Business, garnered feedback from a group of creative sector stakeholders in a comprehensive review of the draft Strategic Plan in April 2024.

The Strategic Plan was formally approved by the South Coast Arts Board in May 2024.

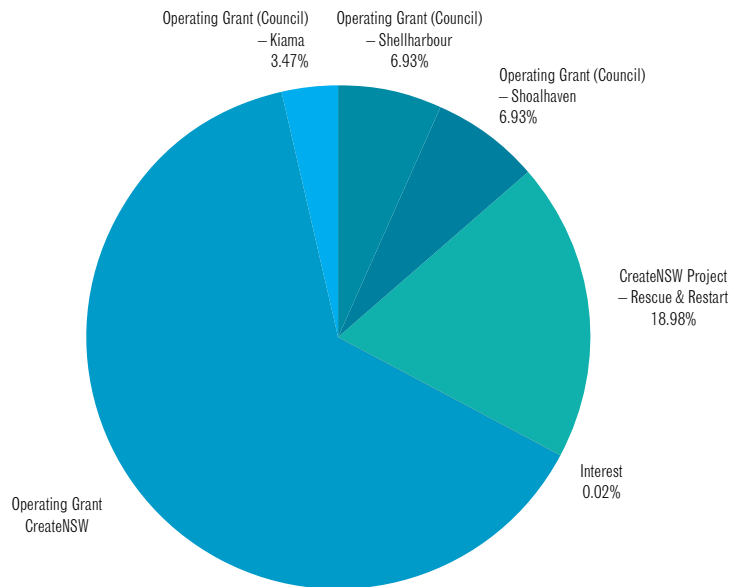
Key findings and themes from the consultation are summarised in comprehensive Demographic and Consultation Reports, these will be available to each of our three member councils, and to our creative community via our website.

Financial Overview

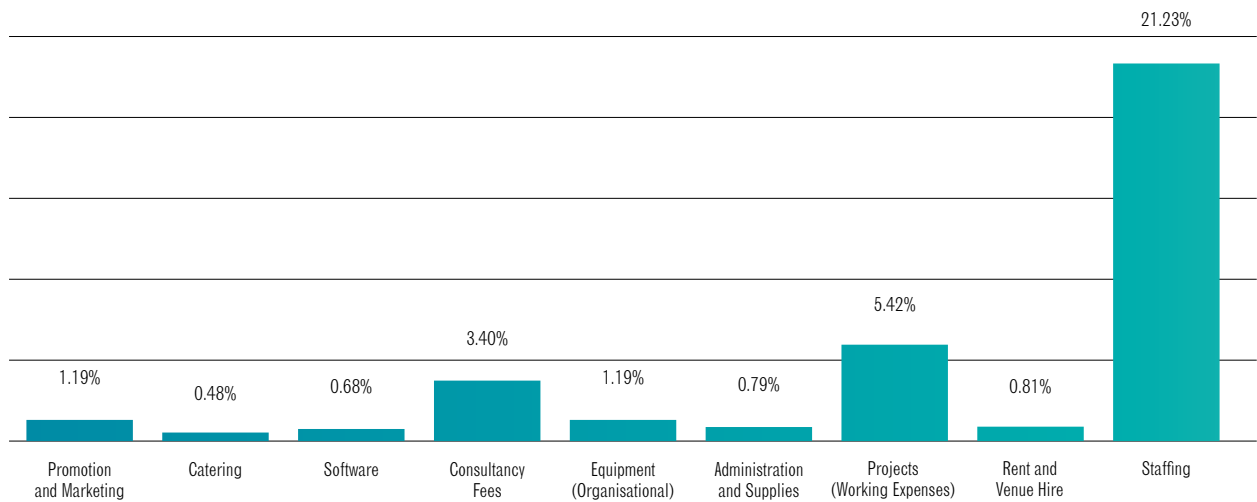
With the employment of South Coast Art's first Executive Director in March and Communications and Fundraising Officer in August, the end of 2023 is yet to see SCA experience a full year of financial operations.

The Rescue and Restart funding, being received in July 2023 will fully be expended by June 2024.

TRADING INCOME 2023 (JAN-DEC)



EXPENDITURE 2023 (JAN-DEC)



Our Impact

Creatives and Creative Organisations Supported

By providing grants and resources to a diverse range of creatives and arts organisations, South Coast Arts fosters a vibrant creative ecosystem.

Economic Growth

Supporting creatives and arts organisations stimulates economic activity. Artists contribute to local economies through their work, exhibitions, and events. Increased financial support translates to more jobs, higher income, and a thriving creative sector.

Cultural Diversity

Grants and resources empower artists from various backgrounds, ensuring a rich tapestry of artistic expression. This diversity enriches the community's cultural fabric, promoting understanding and tolerance.

Community Pride

When local artists receive recognition and support, community members take pride in their achievements. This sense of ownership strengthens community bonds.

Innovation

Creatives often push boundaries, experimenting with new ideas and techniques. Their work inspires innovation across disciplines, benefiting not only the arts but also other sectors.

Community Engagement

Through our community engagement and by supporting and encouraging creatives to engage with their communities we help increase participation in arts-related activities, contributing to the cultural enrichment of our community.

Social Cohesion

Arts events bring people together, fostering connections and friendships. Shared experiences create a sense of belonging.

Well-Being

Engaging in artistic pursuits improves mental health and overall well-being. Whether attending a concert, visiting an art gallery, or participating in workshops, community members find joy and fulfilment.

Education

Arts activities educate and broaden horizons. Exposure to different art forms enhances creativity, critical thinking, and empathy.

Local Identity

Active participation in creative events strengthens the community's identity. It becomes known for its cultural vibrancy, attracting visitors and boosting tourism.

Opposite (left to right): Community Consultation workshop, 2023, Berry School of Arts, Berry. Photograph by Harry Kielly, Drummerboy Pictures; First Nations ArtsLaw workshop, 2023, Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, Nowra. Photograph by Jo-anne Driessens; ArtsLaw workshop, 2023, Ulladulla Civic Centre, Ulladulla. Photograph by Elyshia Hopkinson;



Strategic Planning

Our vision and direction for the coming years.

Direction: Clear goals guide decision-making. They ensure that efforts align with our organisation's purpose and community needs.

Accountability: Regular reporting demonstrates progress. Tracking achievements ensures transparency and accountability.

Mobilisation: A shared vision rallies stakeholders – creatives, patrons, and community members – to work collaboratively. It creates momentum for positive change.

Continued Commitment

Our ongoing dedication to advancing creativity and enriching lives.

Legacy: Consistent commitment builds a legacy. Creatives and creative organisations thrive when they know their work is valued over the long term.

Inspiration: Ongoing support inspires others. When the community witnesses sustained dedication, it encourages individuals to contribute their time, resources, and creativity.

Resilience: Challenges arise, but commitment ensures resilience. Even during tough times, creativity continues to flourish because of unwavering support.

South Coast Arts' initiatives ripple through the community, shaping its cultural landscape, fostering connections, and leaving a lasting impact.





Left: Lissa de Sailles (Creative Pulse participant),
The Tracks We Leave, 2020, jacaranda, paper and linen.
Photograph by Greg Piper.

We offer a heartfelt thank you to our dedicated staff, volunteers, and board members, along with gratitude for the generous support from our funders, partners and collaborators.

The year 2023 has been a time of connection, building and discovery for South Coast Arts. As we reflect on our achievements, we are filled with anticipation for the opportunities that lie ahead.



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