

A Case for Support: Creating the Opportunity

for Investing in the Creative
Industries across the G21 Region

Making change to foster a culture of collaboration and aspiration, to deliver a region of creative industries leadership and innovation connected to global networks.

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Acknowledgement of Country

Aboriginal people have made and continue to make a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the G21 Region.

We acknowledge and respect First Nations people as the region's first people and nation and recognise Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar people as Traditional Owners and occupants of the G21 lands and waters.

The consultants acknowledge that the spiritual, social, cultural and economic practices of Aboriginal people come from their traditional lands and waters, and that the Aboriginal people maintain cultural and heritage beliefs, languages and laws which are of ongoing importance today.

Acknowledgement of Community

We acknowledge and recognise that the voice and contribution of people and communities with diverse lived experience of disability, both past and present, are essential in realising an inclusive society.

Disclaimer – This Report was developed for the Project Steering Committee formed as a collaboration between the Committee for Geelong (Chair), G21 Geelong Region Alliance, the Geelong Regional Libraries Corporation, Geelong Art Gallery, Back to Back Theatre, Creative Geelong Inc, Geelong Arts Centre and Platform Arts, and undertaken by external consultants. Regional Development Victoria via the Regional Development Australia Barwon South West committee also contributed funds to the Creative sector plan set to inform post-COVID future – Committee for Geelong.

It draws on information, opinions and views provided by many people in the community.

This Report does not necessarily reflect the views of the organisations who commissioned this project or indicate its commitment to a particular course of action.

WHY THIS DOCUMENT?—

An inspiring collaboration of private sector and government representatives, cultural institutions, peak bodies and creative artists have set in motion an ambitious project to spark leadership and innovation for the creative industries.

Spotlighting the creative industries and their potential is a first for the G21 region. This document marks a culmination of a significant period of research, blue sky thinking and realistic ideation. It reflects a progressive and resilient community with a focus on the future.

Three documents work together to build a compelling case in support of the creative industries across the G21 region:

1. a major **Report** on the creative industries in the G21 region
2. a 5-year creative industries **strategy**, *Making Change*, for the creative industries across the G21 region, and
3. this document, a **Case for Support**, *Creating the Opportunity*.

WHAT ARE 'CREATIVE INDUSTRIES'?

The creative industries consist of a powerful mix of people, skills and practices. The G21 region is rich in assets and potential.

Creative industries are an evolving mix of sectors spanning arts, culture, screen, design, publishing and advertising. They cover disciplines as diverse as game development and graphic design, fashion and filmmaking, performing arts and publishing, architecture and advertising, media and music, comedy and craft. They include activities that are commercially-driven and community based, experimental and export-intensive.

The creative industries are a key element to unlocking the G21's identity and future prosperity.

Vision

Making Change

To foster a culture of collaboration and aspiration, to deliver a region of creative industries leadership and innovation connected to global networks.

Mission

- **Grow creative practice connected to place**
- **Nurture community participation and engagement**
- **Enable the development of bold and innovative products, experiences and services across the region**

The vision and mission are underpinned by 2 core principles, 10 goals, 22 recommendations and a range of success measures that are outlined in the Report and Strategy.

This Case for Support demonstrates the power of the creative industries and the collective impact that can be achieved when all facets of communities – including businesses and individuals – collaborate on a truly aspirational vision.

Enabling a thriving creative industries sector is not just the responsibility of government, the sector can draw together their expertise to deliver this vision of a G21 region that is known and applauded for its thriving creative industries.

WHY NOW? —

The timing is right.

The G21 region has adapted with impressive resilience to dramatic changes in the world economy in recent decades. Initially driven by the transformation of manufacturing processes and the service economy, more recently the impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic have been profound.

The G21 region has evolved and responded, focussing on the identification of new opportunities that draw on a raft of unique strengths:

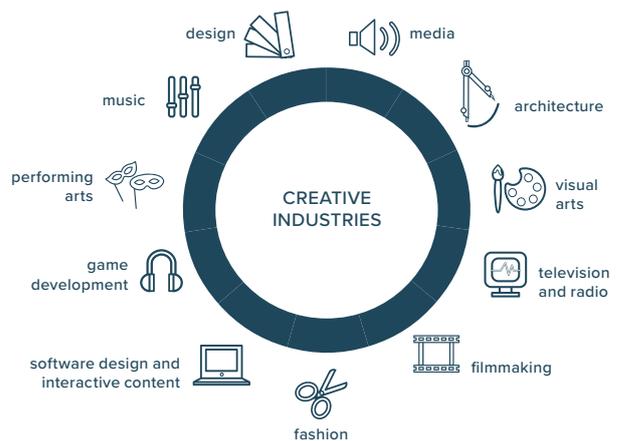
- a skilled and adaptable workforce
- impressive education and training institutions
- a network of respected, cultural and creative institutions
- an innovative research and development framework linked to the tertiary education sector and industry
- all held within an environment that is envied for its liveability and internationally acclaimed for its natural wonders.

Marshalling the unique attributes and characteristics in a holistic way creates exciting opportunities. Identifying and amplifying these opportunities will enable the G21 region to become an internationally recognised, dynamic creative hub.

The term 'creative industries' can be misunderstood. Clarity and education on the huge range in diversity and components that comprise the creative industries across the G21 region is required.

The lines between creative fields are becoming increasingly blurred. Visual artists use interactive and moving images, performers use digital media in site-specific works, designers are at the forefront of creating innovative products that change the way we live and collaborative teams create sophisticated productions that can captivate all of our senses.

The creative industries are constantly evolving with cultural sectors and disciplines as diverse as:



They include activities that are:



Investing in the G21 Creative Industries

The G21 region is home to an extraordinary community of creative industry practitioners and creative hubs. The sector has been recently boosted by an influx of creative migrants, priced out of major city housing and creative space markets. They work across a range of disciplines, to an incredibly high standard. Their passion draws communities together to participate in creative experiences without the need to travel to Melbourne, in turn attracting visitors from Melbourne.

The region is now developing a distinctive quality and reputation that is quickly becoming more visible and valued, both locally and more broadly across Victoria. Internationally, the City of Geelong is recognised as a member of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network with a City of Design designation. Now is the time to seize the potential of the talent that exists throughout the region – at an individual and industry level – to create a competitive market and position the G21 as one of Australia's creative hot spots at the forefront of innovative thinking.



Photo credit: Priscilla Du Preez

WHY INVEST? —

Investment will **ACTIVATE, AMPLIFY, COINTRIBUTE, DEVELOP AND OPTIMISE** the potential for the **G21 region:**

- Activate the existing wealth of current skills
- Bring this sector to life and prominence
- Significantly contribute to economic prosperity and community resilience
- Develop a unique identity for the region and that unique identity will be a crucial element in enhancing tourism across the region, and,
- Fully optimise the potential of the G21 region

Economic prosperity

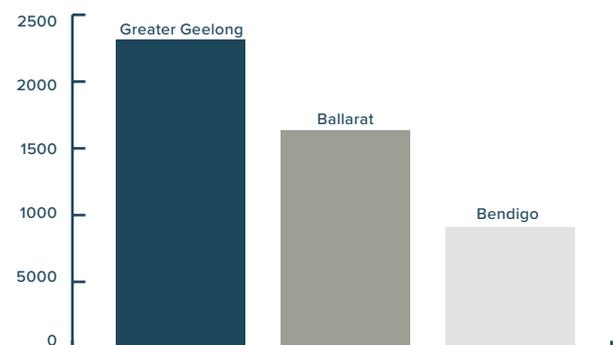
There is a worldwide trend for governments and communities to identify the creative industries sector as a key opportunity to achieve economic prosperity, community wellbeing and a creative ecology. The creative industries are repeatedly proving an important piece of a framework to transition from a reliance on heavy industry and other forms of labour-intensive production. This is particularly relevant, right now, to the G21 region.

The most recent available data provided in the *2020 A New Approach* report, shows the creative industries sector employed 8.1% of the Australian workforce, contributing 6.4% of GDP. For a significant period of the past decade, employment in the creative industries grew at three times the rate of the rest of the Australian workforce.

The G21 region is leading in this area when compared to other key regional centres.

The component parts are present but need coordination, activation and investment to fully realise their potential – to activate and realise the sum of the parts.

Employment in the creative industries sector



Data from Australian Cultural and Creative Activity: A population hotspot analysis. An Australian Research Council Linkage Project using 2016 data.

Resilience

Investment into the G21 region's creative industries will be key to building community resilience following one of the most economically and socially disruptive periods in recent history. The creative industries can bring communities together, which in a post pandemic era, is crucial.

"I'm not sure if I want to go back to how it was... there are new possibilities"

(G21 creative industries strategy survey response)

Identity

The G21 region is currently grappling with the challenge of forming a cohesive identity that wraps three shires, one borough and a city together as one. Now lies the exciting opportunity to redefine the region in a contemporary way.

The true story of this area is still being uncovered, and the creative industries has a key role to play as that identity emerges, by showcasing the breadth and skills and innovation and talent of the creative industries sector.

The future is exciting!

Cultural tourism

The G21's cultural tourism offering is an untapped resource with enormous potential to build the region's cultural brand.

Investment in cultural tourism can dramatically transform perceptions and further enhances the liveability of the region. Cultural tourism provides a powerful vehicle to connect a region as diverse as the G21 – from a city transitioning into a new era, to rural farmlands, heritage towns, stunning coastlines and world heritage listed national parks.

Connecting the elements in a tapestry of storytelling, songlines and strong cultural history is the rich cultural ecology of the region's Traditional Owners – the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar people.

Values

Investment in the G21 creative industries must align with the values that underpin the sector. Values of inclusiveness, sustainability, innovation, critical thinking, diversity and a strong sense of social conscience.



Photo credit: Jose Aljovin

LIVE TEMPLATE FOR REVOLVING LOCAL CASE STUDIES



CASE STUDY 1 Precincts

- Precincts act as destination locations for targeted subgroups of publics. They can be positioned in retail and industry terms like shopping and industrial precincts, or they can connect cohorts of individuals to a centralized location for a shared purpose, as in the case of university or academic precincts. Precincts can act as cultural destination points for tourists and targeted groups as seen locally in Geelong with the Cultural Precinct, and in Melbourne's Arts Precinct which houses institutions including Arts Centre Melbourne, NGV, Melbourne Recital Centre and Hamer Hall.
- They have the ability to connect independent, micro and small/medium-sized organisations through one centralised location, allowing each individual or group to share resources, audience and programs. The recently opened Collingwood Yards in Melbourne generates a cultural economy through its mixed cohort of creative occupants, including retailers, commercial galleries, cafes and bars, industry service providers and public programs. The precinct is funded through State Government, and extensive private and philanthropic trusts and services.
- They can establish community across a diverse range of creative industries and general public, as seen with Footscray Community Arts Centre, which programs across diverse cultural and intergenerational communities. FCAC is evidence of successful funding collaboration across local, state and federal government. The precinct supports major festivals and events, as well as independent artists through residency and artist development programs.



CASE STUDY 2 Artist Run Initiatives/Micro-Orgs

- Artist Run Initiatives (ARIs) are often smaller, less well established entities initially set up by creative practitioners post-tertiary education, and are run in a voluntary capacity. Most ARIs survive for as long as the energy of the participants remains, and occasionally attract administrative and program funding after a few years of sustainable production when they become micro or small organisations. They tend to foster experimental practices and act as incubators for newly emerging artists as well as forming a community around raw and often edgy practice. They offer studio spaces, artist residencies and exhibition and project programs and are early launch pads for artist's careers. They are fundamental to an arts ecology of a city, town or region and provide audiences with new and innovative forms of practice and production.
- Some examples of micro orgs include: The Unconformity (Tasmania), a location and place-based festival/residency, and The Kandos School of Cultural Adaptation using creative practice to examine the environment.
- Examples of ARIs include Blindside, Seventh and Bus Projects. These galleries all act as professional stepping stones for artists to their next level of practice, but also shows established artists on their program.

LIVE TEMPLATE FOR REVOLVING LOCAL CASE STUDIES



CASE STUDY 3 Public Program/ Research Organisations

- Some medium to large creative organisations present a diverse program that goes beyond performance and exhibition contexts. These organisations drive new modes of thinking, research and collaborations, presenting programs that engage with publics beyond the venue and often in the public realm.
- These organisations might partner with universities or academic institutions, and present works that engage in global dialogues around politics, environment and culture and connect with practitioners from around the world. Programs are often multidisciplinary, and combine design, spatial, architectural and other principles with artistic practice.
- Examples of these organisations include Kaldor Public Art in Sydney, Creative Time in New York, and Situations in the UK. Closer to home, programs like MPavilion bring together hundreds of artists, thinkers and academics to generate a three month program in an internationally designed open-air pavilion in the Melbourne Arts Precinct.



CASE STUDY 4 Institutions

- Institutions are key pillars as part of a vibrant arts and cultural sector, and in particular place-based activation. Geelong already has a number of institutions such as the Geelong Gallery, Geelong Library and Heritage Centre, and the National Wool Museum. These institutions already attract cultural tourism, but further work around existing infrastructure can be done as well as providing space and support for new institutions that might contribute to national and international tourism attraction to the G-21 region.
- Institutions contribute considerably to the local economy, including hospitality and accommodation, and as well as primary activity also allow for extended programming across public spheres and in some cases across towns and cities (even states). The Museum of Old and New Art in Tasmania has increased visitation and tourism to Tasmania, as well as created significant employment opportunities for creatives and tourism-based businesses in the region. The National Gallery of Victoria's planned redevelopment and expansion with NGV Contemporary will link existing and new institutions, and create precinct hubs and concentration of arts and culture activities at various levels.



Image courtesy of Deakin University

THE FUTURE. AN EXAMPLE. —

THE ASSETS

- Three Shires. One Borough. One City.
- A region of unparalleled creative and cultural diversity.
- A region of spectacular natural landscapes, from wild coastlines to tranquil bays, ancient forests and rural farmlands.
- Regional creative hotspots fostered by passionate, grassroots community networks.
- First-class, city-based, cultural infrastructure and resources, supporting the emerging identity of a young city centre with a creative heartbeat at its core.

THE NEED

- Space to house creative generation.
- Space to showcase work and service community hunger for creative experiences.
- An integrated network linking an abundance of creative output across a physically and socio-economically diverse region.
- Operational skills support to prevent volunteer burnout and generate greater capacity for creative opportunity.
- A tangible strategy that truly connects the regions of the G21 with the City.

THE SOLUTION

- Investment in five, regional, cultural hubs in the City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire, Golden Plains Shire and the Borough of Queenscliffe.
- Operationally supported by a central, city network of arts and cultural experts in the City of Greater Geelong, drawn from the Geelong Arts Centre, Geelong Gallery, Geelong Heritage and Library Centre, Back to Back Theatre, Platform Arts and Creative Geelong.
- Artistically supported by a central, city network of cultural institutions committed to showcasing regionally created work.
- The hubs could enhance existing projects (i.e., Surf Coast's MAC, the City of Greater Geelong's Potato Shed) or birth new spaces that showcase and integrate with the region's unique natural landscape and leverage Geelong's UNESCO City of Design designation.
- Geelong's proposed Convention and Exhibition Centre could house a city-based hub and should represent an opportunity to showcase world-class design.
- Launched and driven by an ongoing major, annual event that draws the hubs together.



Geelong Arts Centre Summer Session under the big top
Photo credit: Peter Foster Photography.

THE RESULT

- An interconnected region of cultural destinations using innovative design as a drawcard in its own right, simultaneously showcasing local creative excellence.
- Local hubs for local creatives to foster creation – with studio spaces, exhibition spaces, commercial spaces to sell local works, spaces for the creation and presentation of live performance that connect communities with the power of live experiences and draw visitors to the region.
- A connected, cultural tourism strategy – a creative G21 regional trail for visitors and locals to uncover.
- Skills power: enabling grassroots, community organisations to thrive, rather than burn out, in a skills supported, financially viable environment.
- A true connection between the regions and the City. A disintegration of the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ mentality with knowledge sharing and a role for the City to embrace showcasing creative excellence from the regions within the central, creative hub of Little Malop Street.

THE INVESTMENT

- An integrated G21 pitch
- Identification of spaces
- Identification of community organisations
- Funding for, and a commitment by, the City’s existing cultural institutions to knowledge share, provide guided support

**TONY
GRYBOWSKI**
and Associates



PLATFORM



**Geelong
Gallery**