



Create NSW
Arts, Screen & Culture



Pattern
makers

RESOURCES FOR

Supporting arts & cultural tourism in regional NSW





Arts and Cultural Tourism

Arts and cultural tourism refers to travel experiences centred on creative life, heritage and cultural expression. This includes visiting galleries and museums, attending festivals and live performances, engaging in First Nations cultural experiences, exploring heritage places, public art, literature, music, food culture and creative workshops.

Travellers engage in cultural tourism in many ways. Some plan entire trips around events, exhibitions or residencies, while others discover creative experiences by chance during a holiday, work trip or visiting family and friends. These experiences are often strongly place-based, reflecting local stories, landscapes and communities, and they play an important role in NSW's visitor economy.

Arts and cultural tourism connects closely with experience tourism because visitors are increasingly seeking meaningful, memorable experiences rather than passive sightseeing. Cultural experiences invite participation, learning and emotional connection — they offer authenticity, personal enrichment and a sense of connection to place, which are key drivers of experience-led travel.

Cover: *The Living Desert and Sculptures, Broken Hill*
Credit Destination NSW Photographer Jason Ierace

This page: **Tamworth Country Music Festival**
Credit Destination NSW Photographer Anna Warr

Understanding Cultural Travellers

Cultural visitors come in three main categories:

- **Domestic day-trippers** – people travelling more than 50 kilometres in a round trip
- **Domestic overnight travellers** – people travelling more than 40 kilometres and staying one or more nights
- **International visitors** – people travelling from outside Australia

Many travellers explore *within* their own regions — for example, driving an hour to attend a local arts festival or market. These movements count as tourism activity because they involve travel, spending and engagement with creative experiences beyond the everyday. Recognising this helps artists and arts organisations understand how close-to-home visitors contribute to the wider tourism picture.

Arts and Cultural experiences in regional NSW

Arts and cultural tourism provides regional NSW opportunities for sustainable growth. Here are some of things we know about visitors to regional NSW looking for arts and cultural experiences:

- **Most are from NSW** – around 75% of domestic cultural visitors to regional areas are intrastate travellers — your next visitor might live just a couple of hours away
- **Authenticity matters** – visitors want genuine, place-based cultural encounters that reflect local identity
- **They value local products** – travellers seek handmade, authentic souvenirs that connect them to the place
- **Strong demand for First Nations experiences** – interest in Aboriginal arts and cultural experiences continues to grow, especially around storytelling, art and craft

Authentic, place-based arts and cultural experiences help visitors connect meaningfully with NSW communities, transforming creativity into a thriving visitor economy.



For more information on cultural tourism in regional NSW see the **2024 Research Report**

Overview

What is this resource?

A set of tips, examples and opportunities to support arts and cultural tourism in NSW.

The resource has a particular focus on regional NSW.

Who is it for?

This resource is designed to be used by three key groups:

- Artists and cultural organisations
- Tourism operators and event organisers
- Enabling agencies and Councils

These sectors often work in different ‘silos’. This resource is about bringing them together and exploring how to work for mutual benefit.

What can I use it for?

- Get to know more about cultural tourism in section 1
- Skim the ‘quick tips’ in section 2 to get ideas
- Browse the examples in section 3 for inspiration
- Use the templates in workshops or planning days
- Share the resource with colleagues who might find it helpful
- Reference the resources, and the research report, in decision-making and investment

How to use it

- This interactive PDF is designed to help you move around the document, taking you quickly to sections that are most relevant and of interest
- The tabs at the top of each page jump to those main sections of the resource
- The numbers on the following page – [Resource structure](#) – are also links that jump to those sections of the resource

Various links throughout the resources take you to external websites or provide access to relevant resources from the NSW First Program hosted by Destination NSW. You might want to right-click a link to choose **Open new tab** to come back to the same part of the resource.

Resource structure



Quick Tips — links to summary pages

Each Quick Tips section begins with a brief summary, followed by a deeper dive.

Click on the numbered list to link to the summary pages that are most relevant and get a quick overview of the content.

Return to this page via the **ACCESS QUICK TIPS** link in the footer.

ARTISTS & CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

- 2 Identify your tourism role and goals
- 3 Bringing more visitors to cultural experiences
- 4 Creating visitor-friendly cultural experiences
- 5 Deepening connections & building partnerships

TOURISM OPERATORS & EVENT ORGANISERS

- 6 Tapping into arts & culture
- 7 Partnering with artists & cultural organisations

COUNCILS & AGENCIES

- 8 Supporting cultural tourism

Understanding arts & cultural tourism



KISS Arts Festival, Kiama
Credit Destination NSW Photographer Peter Izzard

1 Understanding arts and cultural tourism

What cultural tourism looks like in regional NSW

Arts and cultural tourism is a large and diverse sector. According to RAN report, 'Cultural Tourism in Regional NSW', there were at least 3,200 cultural tourism experiences in regional NSW in 2024, including:

- 155 Indigenous cultural experiences, such as tours, workshops, gatherings and installations.
- 2,570 arts and heritage experiences such as attending a live performance, visiting a museum or gallery, or visiting a heritage building, site or monument.
- 518 cultural experiences embedded within other types of tourism, such as public art (e.g. murals, outdoor sculptures, street art), creative retail (including artisan markets and gift stores) and cultural activities embedded within food, sporting, wine and outdoor events (e.g. a musician performing at a winery or farmer's market).

Some of these are cultural venues open year-round, others are seasonal or even one-off events.

Visitors and the visitor economy

In the tourism industry, a 'visitor' is someone taking a trip to a main destination outside their usual environment. In this resource, we also use the term 'traveller' in some contexts, to avoid confusion with local visitors to a site.

You will also hear the term 'visitor economy', which includes the activities travellers engage in and the businesses that provide goods and services to different visitors. The visitor economy includes international and domestic leisure travellers, business travel, international students studying in Australia, business and major events, people visiting friends and relatives, and those working as part of a short term stay in Australia.

For more information, go to the [NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2035](#)

Signpost: If you're keen to know more about the language and statistics used in tourism, visit the ABS resource '[Concepts of Tourism](#)'.

The size of the market

Here are the facts about each category of traveller in regional NSW:

Figure 1 - Key tourism statistics regional NSW – year ended December 2025 (Source: [DNSW Regional NSW statistics](#))

	Domestic daytrip Travelling 50kms round-trip	Domestic overnight Travelling 40kms for an overnight stay	International Travelling from another country	Total Anyone travelling outside their usual environment
Total travellers in NSW in 2025 (millions)	34.5m	28.3m	0.7m	63.6m
Growth rate from 2024 to 2025	-9%	1.5%	0%	-2%
Expenditure (billions AUD)	\$6.5bn	\$18.5bn	\$1.3bn	\$26.3bn
% participating in arts and cultural experiences *	7%	16%	77%	
Key insights to be aware of	Most common type of traveller, but don't stay as long or spend as much as other types	Average stay is 3 nights Most valuable type, representing 70% of all visitor expenditure	56% travel alone 41% are under 35	

Visit [Destination NSW
Regional Profiles](#) to find the
statistics for your region, so
you know what your local
market looks like.

* Tourism Research Australia
2 year average 2023

8 reasons to look closer at arts & cultural tourism in NSW

You might have been involved in arts and cultural tourism in NSW for a long time, or it might be something you're considering getting involved in.

Either way, here are 8 reasons why it's worth a closer look:

1. Arts and cultural visitors are a valuable source of revenue: Visitors who engaged in cultural activities in regional NSW spent an estimated \$6.2bn in 2023. This confirms it as an economically important market, which is valuable to tap into.

2. Arts and culture attracts people to explore regional NSW: Arts and cultural visitors are particularly important for regional communities because they are known to travel further and stay longer than other visitors. Cultural tourism activities generated around 5.8 million visitors to regional NSW in 2023, more than metro NSW or any other regional area in Australia, according to Tourism Research Australia's (TRA) visitor surveys.

3. Arts and cultural tourism creates a ripple effect: Cultural experiences support local businesses—such as cafes, accommodation, transport and retail—stimulating jobs, and investment. This value of cultural tourism extends to cultural experiences embedded within other types of tourism and in destination marketing.

4. Cultural tourism assists with community cohesion and is socially and culturally important for Australia: Arts experiences enable visitors to learn and engage with Australian communities in a deeper way. Communities strengthen identity by showcasing their unique heritage and culture.

5. Cultural experiences contribute to tourism offerings: They can help to attract visitors to particular destinations ('attractors'), and they can add value for visitors once they have arrived ('value-adders'). Attractions such as museums and galleries tell unique stories and offer year-round experiences, while major events and festivals generate measurable bursts of activity.

6. Coastal areas attract high volumes of visitors. Coastal areas have a relatively smaller number of key cultural experiences relative to the number of visitors and have scope for further product development, but are challenged by higher property prices, staffing shortages and costs.

7. Inland areas are rich with experiences to share. Inland communities have significant numbers of cultural experiences on offer but lack marketing cut-through and need support to overcome the challenges of geographic isolation to grow visitation.

8. Longer stays could drive industry growth. Cultural visitors are known to stay longer and travel further from major cities than other visitors. There are signs that growth of the tourism industry in future will rely on inducing longer stays and higher spending, rather than growing visitor numbers alone.

For artists & cultural organisations



2 Identify your tourism role and goals

The arts and tourism sectors have long been connected, yet many artists and cultural organisations are unsure about how to engage with the visitor market. In reality, many are already reaching visitors through their work and as arts and cultural tourism grows, there are opportunities to build sustainability without compromising values or community focus.

Consider these three approaches and find the one that fits your values and capacity:

1 PROMOTE Community-first approach

Focus: Serve locals first, welcome visitors naturally.

Tactics:

- Keep existing programs; make visitor information more accessible
- Promote to wider audiences while maintaining cultural content
- Enhance your visitor experiences

Best for: Community arts centres, small museums, artist-run initiatives.

2 DEVELOP Selective engagement approach

Focus: Add visitor-friendly activities occasionally.

Tactics:

- Offer bookable experiences (talks, workshops, tours, performances)
- Align events with visitor seasons
- Keep tourism activities distinct from core programming

Best for: Regional galleries, community festivals, small paid-staff organisations.

3 ENGAGE Strategic partnership approach

Focus: Actively collaborate with tourism partners

Tactics:

- Develop formal partnerships with tourism operators for packages or trails
- Collaborate with other cultural and tourism operators for coordinated marketing and destination campaigns
- Use tourism income to fund artistic/ community programs

Best for: Festivals, major galleries, established arts centres.

2 Identify your tourism roles and goals

Understanding your tourism role

The arts and tourism sectors have long been intertwined. However, some arts organisations feel uncomfortable about positioning themselves as tourism attractions. For others there's a resource barrier, with staff and/or volunteers already juggling so much.

There are many ways to engage with tourism that does not impact artistic integrity or take resources away from community focus.

In fact, as an artist or cultural organisation you are probably already reaching and engaging with travellers and creating work for a range of audiences.

As the market for arts and cultural tourism grows, there could be ways to derive more benefits from tourism and sustain your practice or organisation.

Consider the following approaches and find the one that fits your values and capacity:

The community-first approach

Some arts organisations have a primary focus on local audiences whilst recognising that visitors from further afield are (or could be) attracted to parts of their program.

What this looks like:

- Keep doing what you do best, but ensure visitor information and marketing is easily accessible to interested travellers
- Explore ways to reach more people and attract larger audiences to your existing offer
- Welcome visitors warmly, but don't change your programming to accommodate them

Appropriate for: Community arts centres, artist-run initiatives, small regional museums who are sustainable through their local work, relationships and partners – and don't want or need to diverge from their current model.

See Quick Tips section [Bringing more visitors to cultural experiences](#) for more tactics related to this strategy.

The selective engagement approach

Some cultural organisations are comfortable with tourism-focused activities in their programs from time to time. They might program an annual festival or monthly bookable studio visits, whilst maintaining their core community mission. These activities can be timed to coincide with peak visitor periods or to target particular visitor profiles.

What this looks like:

- Designing occasional or semi-regular events with visitors in mind, e.g. artist talks, workshops, studio visits or behind-the-scenes tours
- Create bookable experiences that complement regular programming, such as workshops or masterclasses designed for visitors with varying skill levels and interests
- Keep visitor-centred events separate from your other programming and consider some of the peak visitor periods for your region

Appropriate for: Regional galleries, established studios, community-focused festivals/events and community museums with paid staff who are looking to supplement their business model with income from visitors.

See Quick Tips section [Creating visitor-friendly cultural experiences](#) for more tactics related to this strategy.

The strategic partnership approach

For organisations ready to actively engage with tourism whilst maintaining artistic control and community connections. Many galleries and festivals are actively participating in tourism with a range of strategic tourism partnerships.

What this looks like:

- Develop formal partnerships with tourism operators for packages or trails
- Collaborate with other cultural and tourism operators for coordinated marketing and destination campaigns
- Use visitor revenue strategically to support core artistic and community programming

Appropriate for: Festivals, major regional galleries, established arts centres and independent businesses. Organisations making the strategic choice to reach visitors and build tourism into their business model to grow their revenue.

See Quick Tips section [Deepening connections and building partnerships](#) for more tactics related to this strategy.

Protecting what matters

Whichever approach you choose, it can be helpful to consider boundaries about what aspects of your practice engage with tourism and what remains purely community or artistically focused. Tourism engagement should enhance your mission, not compromise it.

For example:

- **Maintain artistic control:** Consider if and how tourism considerations should influence core creative or curatorial decisions
- **Preserve community access:** Ensure your local audience remains welcome and prioritised, proportionate to the tourism audience
- **Stay authentic:** Present your actual practice rather than creating "tourism versions" of your work
- **Set clear boundaries:** Not every part of your program needs to be visitor-friendly
- **Use tourism revenue strategically:** Let visitor income support your artistic risk-taking and community engagement

Addressing the resource question

Funding structures can create challenges for artists and cultural organisations. Cultural tourism is often funded through tourism budgets and measured against visitor-focused outcomes, while arts organisations and activities are assessed through separate funding streams with creative and artistic criteria.

Strategies:

- **Document your community impact:** Track local engagement alongside visitor numbers
- **Articulate cultural outcomes:** Emphasise how visitor engagement supports rather than undermines community cultural development
- **Share successful examples:** Highlight cases where tourism revenue has enabled greater artistic risk-taking or community programming

Financial sustainability approaches:

- **Use tourism income strategically:** Let visitor revenue cross-subsidise experimental or community-focused work
- **Develop diverse revenue streams:** Tourism becomes one source among many rather than a primary focus
- **Maintain mission alignment:** Ensure any tourism-related activities support your core artistic goals

A relationship-based approach to tourism

The most sustainable approach to cultural tourism engagement involves building genuine relationships rather than extracting short-term value.

Visitors who have meaningful experiences become advocates, returning with friends and spreading word-of-mouth recommendations that money can't buy.

This approach aligns with how artists and cultural organisations naturally operate. You already know how to create meaningful connections through your work. Tourism engagement simply extends these connections to include visitors alongside your local community.



Barraba Silos, Barraba
Credit Destination NSW **Photographer** James Newcombe

3 Bringing more people to cultural experiences

Artists and arts organisations are already creating the kinds of **authentic, place-based** experiences that visitors are seeking. The challenge is often not the work itself, but helping more people discover it, without increasing workload or overheads.

Know your value to visitors

Research experiences that visitors travel to regional areas to engage:

- Local stories and creative practices they can't find elsewhere
- A genuine sense of place and community connection
- Experiences that feel authentic.

Your existing cultural offerings may already have strong tourism appeal. The opportunity lies in making it easier for visitors to find and understand.

Increase your visibility (before visitors leave home)

Most visitors plan their trips online. If your experience is not visible, it's unlikely to be discovered.

Quick wins:

- Check and update your Google listing (hours, photos, reviews)
- List your experience on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) — one listing feeds 250+ tourism websites
- Keep your website up to date with:
 - Opening hours and dates
 - Location and parking
 - Accessibility information
 - Current exhibitions, events or workshops
- Use location-specific language (e.g. "printmaking workshops Lismore")

Tip: ATDW is a key pathway to Tourism Australia and Destination NSW promotion.

Build connections beyond your local audience

Your local community remains essential, but visitors from further afield represent new audiences and income opportunities.

Ways to engage travellers authentically:

- Use clear, descriptive language to explain what visitors will experience
- Share short stories about your practice, history or connection to place
- Photograph your real work and real audiences
- Tag your location on social media and encourage visitors to do the same
- Invite visitors to events you already run, such as openings or festivals
- Offer local recommendations to help visitors plan their day
- Encourage visitors to join your mailing list and share future opportunities
- Collect feedback and testimonials through visitor books or short surveys

3 Bringing more people to cultural experiences

For those already offering cultural experiences, the challenge on your mind probably relates to attracting more visitors, without adding to your overheads.

The good news from research is that visitors travel to regional areas specifically for genuine, place-based experiences they can't find elsewhere. Local stories, creative techniques and community connections are an asset that you can build on to attract more visitors and income, if that's right for you.

The challenging part is being visible to people, ideally before they leave home!

In this section you will find quick tips for people who have an existing creative offer or cultural experience, and want to attract more people. You might also find it useful to browse tips on how to create a **visitor-friendly cultural experience**.

Increase your visibility

If you are not online, you don't exist in the minds of visitors planning their trips. Most visitors turn to the web when choosing a destination and planning their trip, using Google searches, social media and platforms like TripAdvisor and TimeOut. Nearly a third of Australian travellers are increasingly using AI tools to research destinations, find flights and accommodation and plan itineraries.

Quick wins for growing online visibility

- Your Google listing is probably the most important, and if you haven't checked it in a while, it's a good idea to have a look at your ratings and reviews. What photos appear? Is everything up to date and accurate?
- Is your venue, workshop or event listed on the [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse \(ATDW\)](#)? It takes just 30 minutes to create a listing and it feeds 250+ tourism websites.
- Update your online presence. Make a time to do this semi-regularly, so it doesn't blow out to a huge task.

- Ensure your website clearly states opening hours, location and current exhibitions or activities in an easy to find section of your home page. Include practical information such as parking, accessibility, nearby cafes (visitors need to plan their day).
- Use location-specific keywords when describing your work online: "ceramics workshops Mudgee" performs better than abstract descriptions.

Hot tip: The [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse \(ATDW\)](#) might not seem glamorous, but it's your gateway to Tourism Australia's website and over 250 distribution partners reaching five million monthly pageviews.

When visitors Google "public art Dubbo" or "pottery workshops Blue Mountains," your listing needs to appear.

If you are new to ATDW, check out these **webinars** to get an overview of the service and how to create engaging entries.

[An Introduction to ATDW for Arts and Cultural Tourism Experiences](#)

[ATDW Masterclass for Arts and Cultural Tourism Experiences](#)

[Digital Skills Webinars:](#) DNSW have a series of webinars a series providing insights and skills in the areas of digital marketing, AU and tourism technology

Building relationships beyond your local community

For a whole range of reasons, most creative businesses and cultural organisations focus on their local communities. Newsletters, programs and promotion often go first to those people who are front-of-mind and attend regularly.

However, visitors from further afield represent a huge potential market, and may deserve more consideration. Your community focus remains vital, but recognising your tourism potential opens new revenue streams and audiences.

Tips for connecting authentically with travellers

- Use descriptive language: Help visitors understand what they'll experience without dumbing down your artistic content
- Share your story: Brief explanations of your history, mission or connection to place can help visitors understand context
- Photograph authentically: Document your actual work rather than staging tourism shots
- Be social with travellers. Tag your location on social media posts and encourage visitors to do the same
- Community celebration invitations: Welcome visitors who are in town to come along to exhibition openings or festivals you are already organising

- Local knowledge sharing: Offer recommendations for other cultural experiences in your region
- Invite travellers to subscribe to your newsletter, and include a section for them in each issue, with what's coming up and tips for planning their next visit
- Maintain a visitor book and occasionally share snippets in your social media and newsletters
- Use simple surveys (in-person or online) to gather information about your audiences, what they think about your experience and gather testimonials

Creating a visitor-friendly profile description

When visitors are looking for things to do – you want your experience to capture their attention and provide the necessary details without being too wordy.

Word count is key. It's ideal to create descriptions of your experience in different word lengths to suit various formats and uses. Successful tourism operators and cultural organisations often use a tiered model:

- Tagline (≤ 10 words) - eg "Wine, music and sunsets by the Murray."
- Teaser (25–50 words) - For event listings

- Medium description (100 words) - For a website event page
- Long feature (300+ words) - For blog or media release

This way, the same core experience is expressed at multiple depths depending on context and audience attention span

Here are some of the key recommendations from the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) you can consider to optimise a visitor-experience listing.

- Write the first sentence of your product/experience description with your business name, location and what you offer — this helps with clarity and search engine optimisation.
- Use third-person perspective* (e.g., "The attraction offers ..." rather than "We offer ..." or "I offer ...").
- Use short sentences, one idea per sentence, and keep paragraphs concise.
- Include the unique selling propositions (USPs) — what makes your experience different, what the visitor will get out of it.
- Avoid including in the description: direct contact details, pricing, dates/times, links, abbreviations or slang, excessive punctuation or symbols.
- Upload high-quality landscape images, no logos or text overlays. The first image should be your best "hero" image.
- Include the maximum relevant information (complete fields) and keep your listing updated (at least every 12 months) to maximise reach.

**a note on perspective* - while the ATDW guidelines for product descriptions emphasise third person perspective, some tourism promoters suggest writing in second person (“you”, “your”) to engage readers. Certainly, following the requirement of ‘third person’ for ATDW compliance is important, but you may want to consider second person for specific promotional text or campaigns.

Understand changing visitor behaviour

Half of all audiences now book within two weeks of attending, with 12% booking on the actual day according to [Patternmakers' research](#).

If you can encourage early sales, it can really help with resourcing (and your stress levels!). If you can't, be ready and prepared for that last-minute uncertainty.

Adapting to last-minute booking trends:

- Maintain real-time availability information on your website and social media.
- Develop experiences that can accommodate varying group sizes – and encourage people to bring a friend or book for others with a group discount.
- Create "drop-in" options alongside bookable experiences, so people have an option if they haven't booked in advance.

- Develop enticing ‘earlybird’ offers that reward advance booking, whilst resourcing last-minute promotional campaigns.
- Partner with accommodation providers to capture guests seeking immediate activities in the days before the event.
- Create a sense of urgency in your ticketing promotion – eg ‘book early to avoid disappointment’ or ‘tickets selling fast’.

Help your visitors have memorable, shareable experiences

[The Enchanted Forest](#) on the South Coast attracted over 66,000 attendees through innovative sound and light programming that leverages natural settings. Similarly, [Bullanginya Dreaming. Barooga](#) represents groundbreaking collaboration between a sports club, Bangerang Community and Laservision to create NSW's first dedicated First Nations permanent light show.

Elements that enhance shareability without compromising authenticity:

- Create designated spaces where photography is welcomed and encouraged.
- Provide context cards or brief explanations that help visitors understand and describe what they're experiencing.

- Encourage hands-on participation where appropriate (visitors love sharing their own creations).
- Consider how you can incorporate natural beginning, middle, and end moments that feel complete, e.g. through staff interactions and signage.
- Train staff to recognise and enhance special moments (anniversaries, first visits, personal connections).
- Re-post content shared by visitors on social media.
In Victoria, the National Gallery of Victoria do this well through regular [Instagram posts](#) that re-share visitors' own content.
- Consider unique promotional opportunities – the *Write Around the Murray* literature festival in 2025 gave visitors the opportunity to be photographed with an alpaca (a very well behaved one!) connecting to a children's book and author featured in the program.

Make it accessible & inclusive

Ensure your experiences and marketing are accessible and inclusive. Accessible and inclusive tourism creates an environment and visitor experience that is welcoming to people of all ages and abilities. There's lots of potential in this space, with some ideas including:

- Showing access features like ramps, entrances and seating in photos and videos so visitors can plan ahead with confidence.

- Using clear, inclusive language and add an accessibility page with practical details such as parking, toilets and sensory options.
- Training staff in disability awareness and inclusive customer service to ensure all visitors feel welcome and supported.
- Offering flexible, sensory-friendly options such as quiet times, alternative seating or low-stimulation environments.
- Updating your ATDW-Online listing with accurate accessibility features so your experience is easy to find and trust.
- Using respectful terms such as “accessible toilet” instead of “disabled toilet” to reflect inclusive values in your communication.

Useful links:

- [Quick tips for creating accessible and inclusive experiences](#)
- [Accessible and inclusive webinar series](#)

Case in point: Have a look at this '[visual story](#)' created by Tanks Arts Centre, in collaboration with Autism Queensland to help visitors plan and prepare for a visit to the Tanks.

4

Creating visitor-friendly cultural experiences

Many cultural experiences are free or drop-in, and these remain essential. For organisations seeking to grow audiences or income, a **bookable experience** can add value.

A bookable experience:

- Has a **set time, duration and price**
- Can be **booked and paid for in advance**
- Complements (not replaces) core artistic activity

Done well, bookable experiences can:

- Strengthen financial sustainability
- Deepen audience connection
- Attract visitors planning their trip in advance

Independent artists may choose to partner with venues or tour operators to manage administration.

What makes an experience bookable

Successful bookable experiences are:

- Clearly priced and easy to purchase online
- Offered regularly or seasonally
- Consistent in quality (without being formulaic)
- Time-bound and well-hosted
- Aligned with artistic purpose and values

Design tips for arts organisations and artists

- **Start with your strengths:** Build on what makes your work distinctive
- **Know your audience:** Choose visitor groups that genuinely fit
- **Tell your story:** Share context, process and connection to place

- **Set boundaries:** Decide what's shared and what remains private
- **Work within capacity:** Occasional or seasonal offerings are valid
- **Design for the senses:** Invite visitors to see, hear, touch or make
- **Create take-away moments:** A story, object or memory worth sharing

Tailoring experiences

Consider a mix of price points and formats, such as:

- Artist-led studio tours or workshops
- Curator or behind-the-scenes talks
- Backstage or rehearsal experiences
- Heritage or First Nations storytelling (custodian-led)
- Festival previews or small-group encounters

4 Creating visitor-friendly cultural experiences

What do travellers want to experience?

‘Experience’ tourism is on the rise. Here’s what research tells us about traveller motivations, with links to supporting sources in Australian and international travel studies:

Authenticity and meaningful connection

Visitors are increasingly drawn to experiences that feel genuine and offer cultural and local insights. Research from [Destination NSW](#) (and Tourism Research Australia) shows that both domestic and international visitors to NSW consistently value good food and wine, natural environments, culturally significant sites and opportunities to connect with local culture and people.

Novelty-seeking, self-development and personal connection

A classic [travel motivation model](#) by Pearce & Lee (2005) identifies four core drivers across all travellers: novelty seeking, escapism/relaxation, relationship building and self-development.

Affinity experiences and shared values

Tourism Australia’s [Future of Global Demand](#) research emphasises “affinity experiences”, whereby travellers seek complementary activities aligned with a primary interest. For example, those interested in architecture may also engage with First Nations stories, while bird watchers might enjoy nearby trails or wellness stops.

Slow tourism, local taste, and immersion

The slow tourism movement shows that many travellers today prefer fewer, richer experiences, such as tasting local food, engaging with heritage or learning traditional crafts. It emphasises sensory experiences and immersive connection with place.

Safety, friendliness and memorability

International research on [what makes destinations fascinating](#) shows consistent priorities across traveller types: safety, memorable experiences, friendliness, attractiveness and a sense of mystique all matter deeply.

Creating bookable arts and cultural experiences

Across NSW, many cultural sites and venues welcome visitors to walk in and explore, whether it's a regional gallery, a public artwork, a studio open day, a performance or a festival. These are vital parts of the cultural landscape and should always be valued on their own terms.

However, for organisations and artists who wish to grow their appeal and attract more or higher value travellers, one option is to develop a 'bookable' experience. This is a defined activity that has a set price and time, and can be booked and paid for in advance of a visitor's travel.

Done well, a bookable experience can strengthen the sustainability of a cultural organisation, create deeper audience connections, and create new opportunities for people to engage with the arts.

If you're an independent artist, you might consider working with a cultural venue or tour operator who can help administer aspects of the experience.

In this section we adapt some of the advice Destination NSW offers other tourism sectors. In the arts and cultural sector, bookable arts experiences should be designed in a way that they:

- Create an income stream for artists or creative work
- Protect the creative integrity and autonomy of artists
- Uphold and express cultural values

Why create a bookable experience?

Some of the benefits of creating a bookable experience are:

- Add value to the visitor journey by offering a more personal, immersive or behind-the-scenes connection with the arts
- Attract advance bookings and plan with more certainty
- Generate new revenue streams that can support core artistic work
- Access new tourism and distribution channels without compromising artistic vision

What makes an experience bookable? A bookable arts experience is usually:

- Clearly priced and easy to purchase online
- Offered on a regular basis (weekly, monthly or seasonally)
- Consistent in quality and delivery, without being formulaic
- Hosted at a defined time and for a set duration
- Designed to complement, not replace, an organisation's core artistic activity

Tips for designing bookable experiences in the arts

- **Start with your artistic strengths:** Build on what makes your practice, organisation or venue distinctive. Don't try to fit a tourism mould that doesn't feel authentic.
- **Know your audience:** Understand the motivations of different types of visitors, from cultural enthusiasts to families to international travellers, and consider which groups are a good fit for you.
- **Tell your story:** Visitors are drawn to authenticity. Share the narrative behind your work, your place and your people. This does not mean simplifying or packaging your art, it means inviting others into the process in a meaningful way.
- **Balance access and boundaries:** You can invite people behind the scenes without giving away everything. Think about which parts of your process or space you are comfortable sharing, and which should remain private.
- **Work with your capacity:** If you are not open daily, consider offering occasional bookable experiences on select days or seasons. Scarcity can enhance value, and limited runs may suit the rhythm of artistic work.
- **Engage with your team:** If staff or artists are leading experiences, support them with training and ensure the workload is sustainable.

- **Design for the senses:** Think about ways visitors can experience art beyond just looking or listening. Could they try a creative technique, touch materials, hear stories directly from artists?
- **Create memorable moments:** Encourage visitors to take something away, whether it's a photo, a handmade object, or simply a story they'll tell at home.

Tailoring experiences for different audiences

You may wish to create a suite of experiences at different price points, from accessible workshops for families to premium behind-the-scenes tours for cultural travellers. Examples include:

- **Visual arts:** Artist-led studio tour and demonstration, collaborative workshop where participants create their own piece, curator-led tour of an exhibition with insights into artistic choices.
- **Performing arts:** Backstage tour of a theatre, "meet the performer" conversations, rehearsal viewings with Q&A.
- **Heritage and culture:** Storytelling sessions on local history or First Nations culture (always led or approved by custodians), walking tours linking artworks to place.
- **Festivals and events:** Special preview nights, intimate small-group encounters with artists, hands-on creative activities linked to the festival program.

Protecting your integrity

Tourism partnerships can bring pressure to adapt or commercialise. It is important to set clear boundaries. Consider:

- Aligning every bookable experience with your mission and values
- Keeping the focus on authentic artistic exchange, not just entertainment
- Being selective about which tourism partners or platforms you work with
- Ensuring that additional income from experiences strengthens your capacity to create new work

How to collaborate on a bookable experience

Creating a bookable experience doesn't have to mean taking on all the admin yourself. In fact, many successful cultural tourism experiences are built on partnerships. For example:

- **Partner with local tourism operators:** A local accommodation provider, tour guide or visitor centre might handle bookings and customer service, while your organisation provides the content.
- **Bundle experiences:** Collaborate with neighbouring venues or businesses (a gallery, a café, a walking tour) to offer a combined package. Each partner focuses on their own contribution, while a lead partner manages the bookings.
- **Use existing booking platforms:** Platforms like [GetYourGuide](#), Viator or regional tourism booking systems can handle sales, payments and confirmations. The trade-off is commission fees, but they can save significant administration time.
- **Pilot small:** Rather than launching a full program, start with one or two scheduled experiences per season. This lets you test demand without overcommitting.

The key is to design an experience that fits within your existing operations, rather than creating a whole new workload.

Bookable experiences in volunteer-run organisations

Artist and volunteer-run organisations often face limited time and resources. But there are still ways to engage with bookable experiences, if approached carefully:

- **Leverage what you already do:** For example, if you already give occasional tours, you could formalise one of these into a “special bookable tour” offered once a month.
- **Keep it occasional:** Instead of regular weekly sessions, consider seasonal or event-based bookable experiences (for example, a heritage walking tour during a local festival).
- **Work with partners:** Team up with your local tourism office, historical society or a nearby café to offer joint experiences. The partner may handle bookings while the museum contributes the content.
- **Offer premium or exclusive access:** If your volunteers are stretched, position the experience as a “rare behind-the-scenes” tour. This sets clear limits and enhances the value of the opportunity.
- **Use digital tools to reduce admin:** Free or low-cost booking tools like Humanitix, TryBooking or even Eventbrite can streamline ticketing and reduce back-and-forth emails.
- **Protect your people:** Volunteers should feel empowered to say no to additional requests. Bookable experiences should add energy and revenue to the organisation, not drain it.

Partnering outside the arts

Travellers rarely stick to one type of experience - they like to mix and match. Someone who comes for an art exhibition might also enjoy a local food experience, a nature walk or a heritage tour. When we understand these patterns of interest, we can spot natural opportunities to link experiences together.

For arts organisations, this means thinking about **adjacencies**: the experiences that sit comfortably alongside your own. By partnering with others, you can create stronger visitor offers, whether that’s a simple cross-promotion, a themed trail or a ready-made itinerary. Done well, these collaborations not only attract more visitors but also help them stay longer and spend more in your region.

Price for sustainability & respect

When determining the rate for your product, you need to consider operating costs, including both fixed costs, such as rent and insurance, and variable costs, such as wages, electricity, marketing, maintenance and repairs.

Your profit margin is the amount that your revenue exceeds your costs. It will vary from business to business. Be realistic when calculating your costs to ensure your pricing is set to achieve a profit.

Even if you're a **not-for-profit** (NFP) organisation, it doesn't mean you shouldn't make a profit—it means profits aren't distributed to shareholders but reinvested in mission. To be sustainable, NFPs must actively aim to generate surpluses through their activities.

If you're thinking about sales channels such as hotel concierges and travel agents, you will also need to consider distribution costs and commissions.

Before setting your rates you should also consider:

- **Your competitors** — what are they charging?
- **Your ideal customers** — what are they willing to pay?
- **Seasonal variations** — will your rates fluctuate seasonally?
- **Market expectations** — is your rate in line with this?

For more information on pricing your experience, visit: [How to create your product »](#)

Pricing approaches that work

The research shows two successful pricing models: completely free experiences that build goodwill and community (like many regional museums), or clearly market-priced offerings that reflect the true value of your time and expertise.

- Free studio visits with optional donation box and clear retail pricing for works
- Tiered workshop pricing (basic introduction, intermediate skill-building, advanced masterclass)
- "Pay what you feel" for community events, with suggested amounts for different demographics
- Premium pricing for unique experiences (private sessions, commissioned pieces, extended workshops)
- Bundle deals with other local experiences or accommodation providers

Case in point: Check out the bookable [art classes available in country NSW on Class Bento](#). From mosaic lamp design to art techniques, resin décor, silversmithing, macrame, ikebana, upholstery and watercolours – independent artists are offering bookable experiences in private studios, art centres, rented properties and restaurants. Common price points are \$70-\$100 for a 2-3 hour class to \$2,500+ for a four day photography retreat.

5

Deepening tourism connections and collaborating with partners

Build relationships with local tourism operators

You're not starting from scratch. Local accommodation providers, tour operators and visitor information centres are already looking for authentic experiences to recommend to visitors.

Practical actions:

- Attend local tourism association and networking events
- Invite accommodation and visitor centre staff to experience your work firsthand
- Host previews or briefings so tourism staff can confidently recommend you
- Provide high-quality images and short, jargon-free descriptions
- Connect with coach and group tour operators if your venue can host groups

Open the door to tourism collaborations

If you're ready to work more closely with tourism partners:

- Integrate arts experiences into existing tour itineraries
- Create packages with accommodation, food or local attractions
- Offer reciprocal promotion with aligned businesses
- Collaborate on seasonal campaigns or off-peak events

Connect with the broader business community

Engagement and partnerships with local businesses can extend reach and improve the visitor experience.

Ideas include:

- Presenting at Chamber of Commerce or business networking events

- Cross-promoting with hospitality, retail or accommodation businesses
- Seeking sponsorship or corporate partnerships
- Using cafés, hotels or heritage spaces as performance or exhibition venues

Helpful resource: Business NSW supports businesses across eight regions in NSW and offers networking, advocacy and information.

Tourism awards: why apply

Arts and cultural experiences are eligible for tourism awards and benefit by:

- Building credibility and trust with visitors
- Increasing visibility and media exposure
- Strengthening funding and sponsorship applications
- Reflecting on customer experience and sustainability

5 Deepening tourism connections and collaborating with partners

Build connections with local tourism operators

Here's the thing about tourism partnerships: you are not starting from scratch. There's already a network of people in your area whose job it is to welcome visitors and show them around. Think accommodation providers, tour operators, visitor information centres. These aren't just potential customers (though they might become that too), they're your potential collaborators.

The reality is that most of these operators are often looking for authentic, engaging experiences to recommend to their guests. Your arts offering could be exactly what they need to differentiate themselves from the place down the road with identical amenities.

Practical ways to build relationships in tourism:

- Join local tourism association meetings and networking events (the face-to-face connections matter more than you might think).
- Invite local accommodation providers to actually experience what you are offering – there's nothing quite like a staff member who's genuinely excited about your work because they've seen it or experienced it first-hand.
- Invite tourism staff and volunteers to key events and previews – yes, it's extra work, but these people are your unofficial ambassadors.
- Develop a simple training session for tourism sector workers about your current exhibitions or programs – give them the confidence to make genuine recommendations.
- Provide high-quality images and brief, jargon-free descriptions they can easily share on social media or in print materials.
- If your venue can accommodate larger groups, connect with the coach/tour companies that bring busloads of people on organised tours into your region.

Open the door for tourism collaborations

If you're ready to collaborate with new or more tourism partners, you could consider steps such as:

- Approach tour operators to weave arts experiences into broader itineraries (they're already crafting these journeys and looking for depth beyond the standard "see the sights" experience).
- Create package deals that combine your offering with accommodation or dining (everyone wins when visitors stay longer and spend more locally).
- Suggest reciprocal arrangements: promote the services of other tourism businesses to your audiences in exchange for them promoting yours.
- Collaborate on seasonal campaigns or special events that draw visitors during quieter periods.

Case in point: NORPA partnered with The Eltham Hotel to stage an outdoor theatre production, *Love for One Night*, enabling attendees to enjoy dinner before the show. For another production, *Wildskin*, a tender process secured a local Food & Beverage service provider which the company worked with to create a food and bar menu of items sourced from the region's producers, including Jilly Wine Co and Husk Distillery.

Connect with your business community

To extend your connections further, remember that the broader business community should be part of the mix. By building partnerships with local enterprises – such as accommodation providers, hospitality venues and retailers—the arts can extend their reach, attract more visitors and enhance the overall visitor experience.

Here are some practical ways the arts and cultural sector can connect more effectively with the business community:

- **Business networking** – Attend Chamber of Commerce events and tourism industry meetings to present upcoming cultural programs and invite business input.
- **Business Awards** – consider applying for business awards in your local area run by Councils, business chambers and industry associations. Many provide stepping stones to state or regional awards.
- **Cross-promotion** – Feature local businesses in arts programs, brochures and events, while asking businesses to display cultural event flyers or ticket offers in return.
- **Corporate partnerships & sponsorships** – Encourage businesses to support arts events in exchange for brand visibility, visitor hospitality opportunities and association with cultural tourism growth.

- **Venue partnerships** – Use local businesses (cafés, hotels, heritage venues) as performance or exhibition spaces, strengthening their connection to cultural activity.

Check Out:

[Business NSW](#) - an independent, **not-for-profit** organisation focused on the success and wellbeing of the business community across NSW. They have a network of eight regions covering NSW to support and represent local businesses. Subscribe to their newsletter.

Connect with business events

With an eye on visitors who travel for business purposes, artists and cultural organisations should consider opportunities to create memorable, place-based experiences targeting business events.

The easiest way to tap into this market is through [Business Events NSW](#) - a unit of Destination NSW focusing on attracting and supporting conferences, exhibitions, trade shows and corporate meetings in NSW.

Consider a range of ideas to engage in the business event area:

Offer delegate experiences: Create short cultural tourism packages (theatre performances, gallery tours, creative workshops, music or storytelling experiences) that can be marketed as add-ons for conference delegates.

Provide unique venues: Position theatres, galleries, heritage halls or outdoor cultural sites as distinctive event spaces for meetings, dinners or performances.

Partner on bids: When NSW regions are bidding for major conferences, cultural organisations can demonstrate local character and creativity — helping to secure the event.

Showcase regional identity: Arts groups can provide performances, installations or welcome ceremonies at conference openings, highlighting local First Nations culture and community stories.

Leverage marketing channels: Business Events NSW promotes NSW to national and international organisers — being part of their network increases visibility for cultural tourism offers.

Collaborate with local councils & Destination Networks: Councils often feed local cultural experiences into Business Events NSW bids — arts organisations can strengthen these by being proactive.

Partner while upholding cultural values

If you're concerned about where a collaboration might lead, keep these ideas in mind:

- **Collaborate with peers:** Work with like-minded cultural operators to create trails or shared marketing, and build trust over time.
- **Maintain editorial control:** Ensure any marketing materials accurately represent your work and values, and artists and photographers are appropriately credited.
- **Cross-promote selectively:** Recommend experiences and businesses whose values align with yours.
- **Share costs and benefits:** Look for partnerships that reduce individual marketing burden whilst maintaining independence.

Exploring funding opportunities

There are a number of ways to stay connected and be informed about the launch of any new grant programs and other relevant funding opportunities:

Join the Destination NSW grants database. When a new grant opportunity is launched, an email will be sent to all contacts on the database. Email grants.admin@dnsw.com.au if you would like to be added.

Subscribe to the Destination NSW industry bulletin [Insights](#).

To hear about upcoming funding opportunities and to have the latest NSW tourism and events industry news emailed to you each week, subscribe to the industry bulletin. Information on Destination NSW marketing campaigns, events, development opportunities, research and general news within the industry is covered in the bulletin.

Register to receive your regional Destination Network's newsletter. Destination Networks are regional bodies that coordinate destination management, engage local stakeholders. They also promote funding available from all levels of Government that may be of interest to the industry within their region, plus share other tourism business development information relevant to their region. The Destination Network contacts can be found on their websites listed on [Destination Networks | Destination NSW](#).

View grant opportunities offered by other NSW Government agencies. Visit [Grants and funding | NSW Government](#) to find a NSW government initiative, grant or funding program to help support your business, your project or your community.

View grant opportunities offered by the Australian and other State Governments. Visit [Grants and programs finder | business.gov.au](#) to find grants, funding and support programs from across the Australian and other State governments.

Tourism awards

Arts and cultural tourism experiences — from galleries and museums to live performance, festivals, heritage sites, creative trails and First Nations cultural tours — are eligible to apply for tourism awards. While the application process involves plenty of work (and words) tourism awards can help organisations and business to grow, connect and thrive.

Following is a summary of the main advantages of applying for tourism awards:

Gain recognition & credibility

- Independent validation that your experience is professional, high quality, and valued by the visitor economy.
- “Award-winning” status adds trust and prestige when marketing to new audiences.

Boost marketing & visibility

- Awards generate media attention, tourism body promotion and industry recognition.
- Being a finalist or winner provides excellent content for websites, brochures and social media.

Attract new visitors

- visitors are more likely to book experiences that have been recognised as outstanding.

- Helps put arts and cultural tourism experiences on the map alongside food, wine and adventure offerings.

Strengthen funding & partnerships

- Award recognition makes your grant and sponsorship applications stronger.
- Demonstrates impact and reliability to councils, tourism organisations and investors.

Improve your business

- The application process itself is a chance to reflect on your customer journey, sustainability practices, accessibility and community impact.
- Identifies opportunities for growth and professional development.

Celebrate your people

- A chance to recognise and thank staff, artists and volunteers.
- Builds team pride and morale, showing their contribution matters.

Contribute to regional growth

- Awards highlight the role of arts and culture in the wider visitor economy.
- Strengthens the case for ongoing investment in your region’s creative and cultural life.

NSW Tourism Awards

Annual tourism awards in NSW are managed by the [NSW Tourism Association](#), the peak body representing the visitor economy in the State. *NSW Tourism Awards* celebrate the passion and dedication of tourism businesses across the state, while the *Regional Tourism Awards* provide comprehensive support and a smooth transition to state awards. Currently *Regional Tourism Awards* only run in the North Coast area, but other regions in NSW are planning to introduce awards in the coming years.

The *Top Tourism Town* and *Top Tour Guide* awards recognise the vibrant communities and individuals who create unforgettable visitor experiences. Each of these awards programs provide a clear pathway to the Australian Tourism Awards to exemplify excellence and credibility on the national stage.

Case in point: [Port Macquarie Museum](#) was awarded Bronze in the Cultural Tourism category at the 2025 Australian Tourism Awards, recognising it as one of the nation's top cultural attractions

Tourism accreditation

In New South Wales and across Australia, tourism accreditation is a way for tourism businesses and experiences to demonstrate that they meet national and state industry standards. Programs like **Qualmark**, **Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP)**, and **Tourism NSW** accreditation assess operators on areas such as customer service, safety, accessibility and sustainability.

Businesses apply by providing detailed information about their operations and may undergo audits or inspections to verify standards. Once accredited, operators can use the recognition to build credibility, attract more visitors, and access marketing and support resources from Tourism NSW and other tourism bodies.

For tourism operators & event organisers



Palace Hotel, Broken Hill
Credit Destination NSW Photographer Jason Ierace

6

Tapping into arts and culture

The business case for creative partnerships

Arts and cultural experiences add strong value to the visitor economy. Research shows they can support premium pricing, extend visitor stays, encourage repeat visitation and generate highly shareable content that strengthens destination brands.

Artist collaborations are increasingly attractive for tourism operators because they offer:

- Authentic storytelling that can't be easily replicated
- Deep local knowledge and community connections
- Strong creative problem-solving skills
- Established audiences and networks that can grow visitation

Artists and cultural organisations vary widely in practice and scale, but when partnerships are well matched, cultural

programming enhances — rather than competes with — core tourism offerings

Cultural experiences that complement your offer

Arts and culture can be integrated across many tourism settings in ways that feel authentic and brand-aligned, while supporting local creative communities.

Examples include:

- Wineries, breweries and food producers: Live music, exhibitions, artist-designed labels, storytelling tours or harvest festivals
- Farms and agritourism: Artisan workshops, cultural storytelling, seasonal events and farm-gate art
- Accommodation: Artist-in-residence programs, locally commissioned artworks, creative workshops, cultural concierge services or artist retreats
- Pubs, clubs and bars: Live music, murals, fringe festival programming and local artist showcases

- Sporting and recreation venues: Cultural programming linked to events, public art, heritage tours and First Nations collaborations
- Community organisations: Markets, festivals, art prizes, mentoring programs and cultural trails

Collaborating to build destination appeal

Beyond programming, partnerships can extend to destination marketing:

- Promote local cultural experiences through websites, newsletters and social media
- Create informal cultural trails and itineraries
- Share marketing costs and develop joint packages
- Refer visitors between businesses and track shared outcomes
- Partner with festivals and events during peak periods

6 Tapping into arts & culture

The business case for creative partnerships

Earlier in these resources, some of the benefits of cultural tourism were outlined, including aspects such as:

- **Premium pricing:** Authentic experiences command higher rates
- **Extended stays:** Cultural programming increases visitor dwell time
- **Repeat visitation:** Meaningful experiences build loyalty
- **Social amplification:** Unique content drives organic marketing and builds brands

In an increasingly crowded tourism market, artist collaborations are worth your consideration as a tourism operator or event organiser because:

- Authentic storytelling can't be easily replicated
- Artists come with deep community connections and local knowledge
- Creatives have finely honed problem-solving capabilities

- Many artists and cultural organisations come with established audiences and social networks, which can help grow your visitor base

These are general points and it should be noted that artists vary widely in their practices, contexts and specialisms.

Consider cultural experiences that complement your offer

More and more tourism operators are discovering that cultural programming doesn't compete with their core offering, but enhances it, by attracting more visitors and encouraging visitors to stay longer or spend more.

Whether you're a hotel, a sporting organisation or a winery, there are ways to integrate cultural experiences that feel authentic to your brand, create more compelling visitor experiences, and support the regional artists that make your area vibrant year-round.

For wineries and beverage producers: [Hope Estate Winery](#) in the Hunter Valley demonstrates integration of wine tourism with major concert programming, whilst [Winmark Wines](#) operates an [art gallery and sculpture walk](#) alongside wine production. [Firescreek Botanical Winery](#) takes this further by incorporating Aboriginal cultural knowledge into wine production. Breweries can follow similar models—host local musicians during weekend tastings, commission local artists for label designs, or create brewery tours that include stories about local history and culture.

For farms and agricultural businesses: Agricultural tourism operators can enhance visitor experiences through cultural programming that celebrates farming heritage and contemporary rural culture. [Blackwattle Yarn and Fibre](#) demonstrates how farms can offer artisan workshops alongside agricultural experiences.

Consider programming seasonal festivals around harvest times with local musicians, commissioning farm gate art installations from regional artists, offering farm-to-table dining experiences featuring local musicians, or developing storytelling tours that combine agricultural education with local cultural history.

For accommodation providers: [Ace Hotel, Sydney](#) showcases local culture through locally designed furniture and artist-in-residence programmes, actively contributing to the cultural landscape. On a smaller scale, holiday rental property [Boketto](#) at Brooms Head offers an artist in residency program and a space for hire for creative workshops.

Regional accommodation can follow these models by featuring local artists' work in rooms and common areas, hosting regular

"meet the artist" events for guests, partnering with nearby galleries for exhibition openings, offering cultural concierge services that connect guests with local experiences, or developing artist retreat packages that include studio access and local cultural immersion.

For clubs, pubs, and bars: Hospitality venues can support emerging artists whilst attracting music enthusiasts. There will be examples in every region, such as those profiled on the [Music NSW Regional Touring Network Map](#). Venues can host regular open mic nights featuring local artists, commission local artists for venue murals or installations, partner with festivals for fringe programming, develop themed nights celebrating local cultural heritage, or create artist showcases that encourage overnight stays from cultural visitors.

For restaurants and hospitality: Dining venues can integrate cultural experiences by hosting local musicians during dinner service, featuring local artists' work on walls (with clear sales information), partnering with local galleries for progressive dinner and exhibition events, offering cooking classes that include local cultural stories and traditions, or developing themed dining experiences around local festivals and cultural events. Check out the [Gyotaku Printing](#) workshop offered by PIPIT restaurant in Pottsville. They also sell [prints](#) online.

For sporting events and recreational facilities: Sports clubs can learn from [Bullanginya Dreaming](#)'s groundbreaking model, which demonstrates how sporting venues can partner with Indigenous communities for authentic cultural programming. Consider programming cultural entertainment during half-time or between events, commissioning public art installations around sporting facilities, developing sports heritage tours that include local cultural history, partnering with local festivals for cross-promotional events, or creating pre-event cultural programming that encourages early arrival and extended stays.

For community organisations: Community groups can develop regular markets featuring local artists and makers, organise seasonal festivals celebrating local cultural identity, partner with schools for intergenerational cultural programming, create volunteer opportunities that connect visitors with local culture, or develop cultural mentorship programmes that pair visitors with local artists. As an example, the Rotary Club of Singleton established the [Singleton Art Prize](#) 41 years ago, which has matured into one of the largest regional art prizes in NSW.

Collaborate with artists and cultural organisations to build your appeal

Integrating cultural experiences into your event or operation is a key opportunity. Another way to tap into arts and cultural tourism is to collaborate on destination marketing.

For example:

- Feature local arts sites, shops and venues on your website and guest information sheets, like [Owl Head Lodge](#) does on its website
- Promote local cultural events and experiences in newsletters and social media
- Create informal "trails" connecting with complementary businesses (art studios, cafes, accommodation, attractions) and tips for a great day out
- Share marketing costs for joint advertisements or tourism fair participation
- Develop package deals that combine your offerings with complementary experiences
- Refer visitors to each other and track which partnerships generate mutual benefit
- Partner with local festivals for special programming during event periods

7 Partnering with artists & cultural organisations

Finding artists and cultural partners

Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs) are a key starting point. They can:

- Connect tourism operators with local artists
- Provide insight into cultural priorities and sensitivities
- Support professional development and partnerships

Other pathways include arts organisation directories, funding body lists, universities, TAFEs and creative-focused social platforms.

Building trust and sustainable partnerships

Fair, respectful partnerships are essential. Artists often work independently and may face insecure employment or systemic barriers.

Strong partnerships deliver long-term value by:

- Creating reliable, experienced collaborators
- Building community goodwill
- Supporting local creative careers
- Establishing distinctive offers competitors can't replicate

Fair pay is a professional and ethical standard. Use relevant industry guides (such as NAVA, MEAA and Creative Workplaces), budget separately for artist fees and production costs, and meet superannuation and safety obligations.

First Nations cultural partnerships

First Nations arts and culture make a vital contribution to regional development. Successful collaborations:

- Respect cultural authority and protocols

- Support knowledge-sharing and employment
- Strengthen community pride and identity

Early consultation, appropriate cultural advice, clear agreements and respect for Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) are essential.

Getting started

If you're new to creative partnerships:

- Start small with pilot projects
- Document what works
- Invest time in relationship-building
- Scale proven partnerships thoughtfully

Well-designed creative partnerships benefit artists, tourism operators & visitors alike — strengthening destinations through authentic, place-based experiences.

7 Partnering with artists & cultural organisations

Understanding the value that artists and cultural organisations bring

As tourism operators or event organisers, you will be looking for ways to engage with artists and cultural organisations to add value to your event or operation.

Artists create opportunities, establish powerful partnership networks and significantly contribute to local economies by creating jobs, attracting tourism, stimulating related industries and creating liveable, dynamic and resilient communities.

However, relationships with artists need to take into account that they are often working in precarious employment and may be working independently, without support from a team or organisation. Some of them have had bad experiences in the past or been exploited. They might be experiencing systemic disadvantage due to their cultural background or a disability.

This section looks at the business of authentic cultural experiences and artist collaborations that work for both sides, and enable visitors to leave with a sense of connection, meaning and creative inspiration.

Finding an artist to work with

If you're interested in working with artists, you might be wondering about questions like:

- Should I use a local or visiting artist?
- Is it better to go with an emerging artist or established brand?
- How can I share opportunities fairly?

Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs) support artists and arts organisations as essential parts of regional creative communities. They're your first contact for finding local talent.

How RADOs can help:

- Connect you with vetted local artists
- Provide insights into community cultural priorities
- Navigate local cultural sensitivities
- Offer professional development opportunities
- Develop strategic partnerships

There are 15 [Regional Arts Development Organisations](#) in NSW, and similar networks exist across all states.

Other ways you can find artists and get to know their work:

- Arts organisation member directories
- Local arts council databases and registers
- Grant recipient lists from funding bodies like Creative Australia and Create NSW and Regional Arts Australia
- University and TAFE alumni networks
- Social media and in particular platforms favoured for creative communities, like Instagram and Substack

Other tips for strategic sourcing include:

- Start local, expand regionally
- Prioritise artists with public engagement experience
- Consider emerging artists for fresh perspectives, and established artists where more experience is helpful
- Review portfolios for tourism-relevant work

Case in point: Arts Northern Rivers introduced First Nations artist Kyra Togo to the Tweed Regional Gallery. Kyra has since run a range of workshops at the Gallery.



Building trust and sustaining creative careers

Supporting sustainable artist careers isn't just good ethics, it's smart business strategy. When you act fairly and invest in building long-term relationships with creative professionals:

- **You gain reliable partners:** Artists who understand your brand, audience and operational requirements become invaluable collaborators for ongoing projects.
- **You access evolving expertise:** As artists develop their practice, your partnerships benefit from their growing skills, networks and reputation.
- **You build community goodwill:** Supporting local creative careers generates positive community sentiment that extends beyond individual projects.
- **You create competitive barriers:** Strong artist relationships become assets that competitors can't easily replicate.

Fair pay: building professional relationships

Creative Australia expects that artists professionally employed or engaged on funded activities will be paid for their work. Depending on the artform, there are different resources and guidelines for determining rates of pay.

Key resources:

- **[NAVA Code of Practice](#):** Industry standards for visual arts, craft, and design
- **[MEAA Guidelines](#):** Performing arts, entertainment, and media workers
- **[Creative Workplaces](#):** National resource supporting fair, safe and respectful workplaces

What does this mean for your budgeting? Paying artists fairly provides:

- **Predictable costs:** Clear rate structures help accurate budgeting
- **Professional relationships:** Fair compensation attracts reliable, quality artists
- **Positive reputation:** Word spreads quickly in creative communities
- **Legal compliance:** Meeting minimum wage and superannuation requirements

Important note: As contractors, artist can quote their own payment rates – many are flexible when approached professionally with transparent budget discussions.

Some practical payment guidelines for employee artists:

- Must meet minimum wage standards
- Superannuation guarantee was increased to 12% from 1 July 2025
- Casual loading applies where relevant

For independent artist contractors:

- Independent contractors determine their own pricing
- Separate production costs from artist fees
- NAVA recommends budgeting for superannuation separately from artist fees

Budgeting insights

When budgeting, include essential line items like:

- Artist fees (separate from production costs)
- Cultural advisory fees where relevant
- Superannuation contributions
- Public liability insurance
- Documentation and archival costs
- Community consultation expenses

When undergoing risk management, some cultural considerations are:

- Work with appropriate cultural advisors
- Understand and respect intellectual property
- Plan for seasonal or cultural restrictions

Safe workplaces

Safe workplaces allow artists and arts workers to do their best work. Workplace safety is also the law. The Australian Government's Creative Workplaces has everything you need to know about [creating a safe workplace](#).

Working with First Nations artists and cultural protocols

First Nations arts and culture make a significant contribution to regional development, particularly in remote areas. When tourism operators invest in fair, ongoing partnerships with First Nations cultural practitioners in particular:

- **Cultural knowledge is preserved and shared** appropriately
- **Employment opportunities** are created in creative industries
- **Skills development** occurs through professional practice
- **Inter-generational transfer** of knowledge is supported
- **Community pride** and cultural identity are strengthened

Creative Australia's Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts provide pathways for respectful collaboration and creation of new Indigenous work.

This approach builds meaningful, sustainable partnerships.

The Australian government is in the process of developing legislation to protect Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP).

In regional NSW make sure you connect with the [Aboriginal Regional Arts Alliance](#) - a collective of regional Aboriginal Artists and Arts Administrators, brought together by a mission to advocate, support and provide opportunities for Aboriginal Artists, Arts Workers, Aboriginal Organisations and Cultural Practitioners in Regional NSW.

Before beginning:

- Contact relevant First Nations communities early in planning
- Understand whose Country you are working on
- Budget for Community Liaison and Cultural Advisor roles
- Allow time for consultation processes

During collaboration:

- Maintain regular check-ins with cultural advisors
- Respect cultural seasons and protocols
- Ensure appropriate attribution and benefit-sharing
- Document all permissions and agreements

Useful links:

The Arts Law Centre of Australia has an excellent [Fact Sheet on ICIP](#).

NSW Aboriginal Tourism Operators Council [website](#) is a great resource for information to support Aboriginal owned tourism experiences.

Practical considerations & tips

If you're new to collaborating with artists or cultural organisations, these tips for starting strategically can help with success, for instance:

- **Pilot projects:** Begin with small-scale collaborations to build relationships
- **Documentation:** Record successful approaches for future reference
- **Relationship building:** Invest time in understanding artist practice and community context
- **Thoughtful scaling:** Expand proven partnerships rather than constantly seeking new ones

Resources

Other resources you might find helpful in managing business arrangements with artists and arts organisations:

- **Musicians Australia:** recommends minimum fees and conditions for musicians
- **Australian Society of Authors:** has fee guides for a range of talks, panels and workshops
- **Create NSW** has guidelines about [crediting creators](#) in user-generated content (UGC), an important practice that demonstrates respect for creators and their work

For councils & enabling agencies



Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo
Credit Destination NSW Photographer Michael Kubala

8 Supporting cultural tourism

Activate cultural tourism through connection and collaboration

Arts and cultural tourism already exists across NSW. The opportunity lies in better connection — between artists, tourism operators, communities and enabling agencies — to help this activity grow and deliver broader benefits.

Enabling agencies include councils, Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs), Destination Networks, state agencies, peak bodies and sector organisations. Working together, these groups can help align effort, reduce duplication and strengthen outcomes.

Invest in the cultural fabric of communities

Successful cultural tourism grows from strong local cultural communities. Long-term investment in artists, cultural organisations and community-led activity creates the foundations for authentic visitor experiences.

Benefits extend beyond tourism, contributing to liveability, economic resilience and local pride.

The payoff from this approach extends beyond tourism. Strong cultural communities enhance liveability for residents, attract new residents and businesses, and create resilience during economic downturns.

Effective investments include:

- Affordable creative spaces and cultural infrastructure
- Community festivals and celebrations reflecting local identity
- Professional development for artists and cultural workers
- Streamlined approvals for cultural activity
- Ongoing relationships between councils and the cultural sector

Tourism is most sustainable when it emerges as a by-product of cultural vitality, not as an imposed overlay.

Bring arts and tourism together within councils

Cultural tourism often spans multiple council portfolios, including arts, tourism, economic development and asset management. Clear coordination improves impact and efficiency.

Good practice includes:

- Cross-departmental cultural tourism working groups
- Embedding cultural tourism into planning and strategy
- Shared measures of success across portfolios
- Integrated funding and resourcing approaches
- Cross-training staff in arts and tourism contexts

Support small operators without overwhelming them

Many artists and small cultural businesses lack time or resources to engage with tourism systems. Support works best when it is practical, optional and respectful of independence.

Helpful approaches include:

- Hands-on assistance with ATDW listings
- Customisable marketing templates
- Simple photography or storytelling workshops
- Peer mentoring and shared promotion
- Opt-in marketing initiatives rather than mandatory programs
- Adjust policy settings for contemporary cultural tourism

Cultural tourism increasingly values distinctiveness, authenticity and experience quality over scale.

Councils and agencies can support this shift by:

- Recognising indirect benefits such as repeat visitation and reputation-building
- Supporting small-scale, distinctive experiences
- Valuing cultural significance and community engagement alongside economic impact
- Evaluating outcomes over longer timeframes
- Investing in product development, not just promotion

8 Supporting cultural tourism

Activating cultural tourism through connection and collaboration

Arts and cultural tourism already bubbles away in all parts of the State. But it could be supported to grow and benefit more artists, tourism operators and communities.

The key to activating this area lies in connection and collaboration. The ingredients of stronger cultural tourism already exist – it's about connecting the dots and finding ways to work together.

Enabling agencies include:

- Councils, who own and manage venues and sites, including vacant building and public land
- RADOs and Destination Networks throughout the State

- State Government Departments including Create NSW, Destination NSW, Department of Regional NSW and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, who provide funding and support for key sectors and services
- Peak bodies in the cultural sector such as Regional Arts NSW, Museums and Galleries NSW (MGNSW), Aboriginal Culture, Heritage and Arts Association (ACHAA), Australian Festival Association and others which represent and serve the needs of regional artists and cultural organisations
- Other bodies including Local Government NSW (LGNSW), NSW Tourism Association and more

If you're working in an enabling agency, this section has ideas for how you can activate and support arts and cultural tourism in your area.

It's also worth thinking about the quality and frequency of your connections with other enabling agencies. Are there ways to work together to support this space?

Invest in the cultural fabric of a community

Authentic cultural tourism is powered by genuine cultural communities. Effective arts and cultural tourism development starts with community cultural capacity building, rather than promotional campaigns. The most successful regional destinations have invested years in supporting local artists, cultural organisations and community celebrations before leveraging these foundations for tourism purposes.

The payoff from this approach extends beyond tourism. Strong cultural communities enhance liveability for residents, attract new residents and businesses, and create resilience during economic downturns.

Tourism becomes a beneficial by-product of cultural vitality rather than an extractive overlay imposed upon it.

Long-term cultural capacity investments include:

- Support artist studio spaces and affordable creative venues
- Fund community festivals and celebrations that reflect local identity
- Invest in cultural infrastructure (galleries, performance spaces, public art) and continually upgrading it based on creative community needs

- Make it easier for cultural tourism initiatives to obtain approvals and licenses
- Provide professional development opportunities for local cultural workers
- Create relationships and connections between established and emerging artists, between your staff and the sector, and across different artforms.

It's worth noting that the arts and cultural sector emphasises a relationship-based approach, and values authenticity. Many councils have an arts and cultural advisory group that meet regularly to advise council. Some hold regular events that bring the cultural sector together to create connection, and some create Cultural Plans through consultation with their communities. Others maintain databases and promote arts and cultural offerings through newsletters and social media, helping build the profile of local creatives.

Bring arts and tourism together strategically within councils

Cultural tourism sits at the intersection of multiple council portfolios: arts and culture, economic development, asset management, tourism and community services. In many councils, this creates coordination challenges where no single department takes comprehensive ownership.

The research shows that successful cultural tourism development requires deliberate cross-departmental collaboration and shared understanding of how cultural experiences contribute to broader regional development goals. This isn't just about avoiding duplication; it's about creating synergies that multiply the impact of limited resources.

Cross-portfolio coordination strategies:

- Establish regular cultural tourism working groups with representatives from relevant departments
- Include cultural tourism considerations in all major planning processes (destination marketing, cultural facility development, economic development strategies)
- Create shared metrics that demonstrate cultural tourism's contribution to multiple council objectives
- Develop integrated funding approaches that combine resources from different budget areas
- Train tourism staff in arts and cultural sector dynamics, and vice versa

Support independent artists and small businesses without overwhelming them

The Cultural Tourism in Regional NSW report showed that many cultural tourism experiences with fewer than 500 annual visitors aren't listed on major tourism platforms.

This represents enormous untapped potential, but small operators often lack the time, skills or confidence to engage with tourism marketing systems.

Heavy-handed "support" can actually discourage participation by creating bureaucratic burden that overwhelms independent artists and small or new businesses.

The most effective approaches provide practical assistance whilst respecting the autonomy and priorities of creative practitioners.

Tip for supporting small and independent businesses:

- Offer optional "ATDW listing parties" where operators can get hands-on help with online listings
- Create template marketing materials that operators can customise for their own use
- Provide simple photography workshops focused on documenting creative processes and finished works

- Facilitate peer mentoring between operators rather than imposing top-down training
- Develop shared marketing initiatives that operators can opt into rather than mandatory programs

Adjusting policy settings for contemporary realities

Traditional tourism funding models emphasise bed nights and large-scale events, reflecting an era when tourism was primarily about moving large numbers of people efficiently through destinations. Contemporary cultural tourism increasingly values distinctiveness, authenticity and personalised experiences over scale and efficiency.

This shift requires corresponding changes in how councils and agencies evaluate and support cultural tourism initiatives. Small, distinctive experiences often generate more visitor loyalty and word-of-mouth promotion than large generic events, but current funding criteria struggle to recognise this value.

Possible policy adjustments for modern cultural tourism include:

- Recognise indirect economic benefits (extended stays, repeat visitation, word-of-mouth promotion) in impact assessments
- Create funding streams specifically designed for small-scale, distinctive experiences that enhance the diversity of what's on

- Explore cultural significance, community engagement and visitor experience quality in funding criteria alongside economic impact measures
- Evaluate tourism initiatives over longer timeframes that account for relationship-building and reputation development
- Support product development and capacity building, not just marketing and promotion

Address regional differences thoughtfully

The research identifies distinct patterns across NSW's regional areas that require differentiated approaches rather than one-size-fits-all solutions. The 2024 analysis by the Regional Arts Network showed that coastal regions attract substantial cultural tourism and may have room for more experience development, whilst inland regions provide rich cultural offerings but may have room to grow visibility and access.

Understanding and working with regional strengths might look like:

For coastal regions with high visitation:

- Prioritise cultural infrastructure development and artist workspace provision, particularly in areas of housing pressure
- Support new experience development through grants and mentorship programmes

- Address property affordability barriers that prevent artists from establishing practices
- Create cultural precincts that concentrate experiences for visitor convenience
- Develop partnerships with existing tourism operators to embed cultural elements

For inland regions with rich cultural offerings but limited visibility:

- Invest in digital marketing support and online presence development
- Create cultural trails and itineraries that connect multiple experiences
- Identify the unique selling propositions (USPs) of the region's artists and organisations (e.g. a particular theme, topic, style or artform)
- Develop partnerships with coastal regions and Sydney-based tourism operators
- Support transport solutions that make cultural experiences more accessible
- Enhance accommodation options that encourage extended stays

For remote areas with unique cultural opportunities:

- Focus on authentic First Nations cultural tourism development
- Support community-controlled cultural initiatives rather than external impositions

- Address infrastructure barriers (communications, transport, accommodation)
- Create specialist marketing that reaches niche audiences willing to travel for authentic experiences
- Develop sustainable tourism models that benefit local communities without overwhelming them

Considerations for supporting arts and cultural tourism

Start with relationships, not programs

The most successful cultural tourism initiatives begin with genuine relationships between operators, artists and community members rather than formal programmes or funding announcements. These relationships create trust, shared understanding and collaborative momentum that can't be mandated or purchased.

This relationship-first approach takes longer to show results but creates more resilient and sustainable outcomes. It also aligns with how creative communities naturally function, making it more likely that initiatives will continue beyond their initial funding periods.

Measure what matters (beyond bed nights)

Traditional tourism metrics focus on visitor numbers, bed nights and direct economic impact. Whilst these measures remain important, cultural tourism generates additional value that standard metrics often ignore: community cultural capacity, destination distinctiveness, visitor satisfaction and long-term reputation building.

Developing more nuanced measurement approaches helps demonstrate cultural tourism's full contribution whilst guiding programme improvements. The most useful metrics combine quantitative data with qualitative insights from operators and visitors.

Meaningful measurement approaches:

- Track visitor experience quality through surveys and online reviews, not just numbers
- Use tools such as Creative Australia's [Electorate profiles](#) to measure local artist and cultural worker employment and track changes over time
- Monitor destination media coverage and social media sentiment alongside visitor statistics
- Assess community cultural participation rates as an indicator of tourism sustainability
- Document innovation and creative collaborations that emerge from tourism connections

Build incrementally with early wins

Cultural tourism development benefits from incremental approaches that build confidence and capability over time rather than attempting transformational change immediately. Early successes create momentum and demonstrate value, making subsequent initiatives easier to develop and fund.

The most effective programmes identify quick wins that provide immediate benefit whilst establishing foundations for longer-term development. This might involve supporting existing operators to increase their visibility before investing in new infrastructure or facilitating informal collaborations before creating formal partnership structures.

Embrace the long view

Cultural tourism development operates on different timescales than many other economic development initiatives. Building authentic cultural communities, developing distinctive experiences and establishing destination reputations requires patient, sustained investment over years rather than quick interventions.

However, this long-term orientation provides advantages. Cultural tourism assets appreciate over time as artists develop their practices, communities strengthen their cultural identity and destinations build reputations for authentic experiences. Unlike infrastructure investments that depreciate, cultural investments compound their value.

Examples of arts & cultural tourism in NSW



Bundanon Art Museum, Illaroo
Credit Destination NSW Photographer Safari Global

9 Examples of arts & cultural tourism in NSW

In this section, you will find examples of arts and cultural tourism from across NSW.

There are examples from all 15 Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADO) regions and all seven different Destination Networks (DN) covering regional NSW.

The examples are grouped under the following types:

- [Cultural Venues](#)
- [Visitor Centres](#)
- [Aboriginal Cultural Centres](#)
- [Historic Sites](#)
- [Sculpture Gardens and Installations](#)
- [Trails](#)
- [Bookable Experiences](#)
- [Festivals and Events](#)
- [Creative Retail](#)
- [Embedded Culture](#)

Click on any of the above if you want to jump to a particular area of interest.

This resource covers everything from major cultural venues to intimate artist workshops, permanent public art installations to temporary touring programs, free community events to premium experiences. The examples are based on real organisations and initiatives, identified online and through consultation with Destination NSW and the Regional Arts Network.

There are many more cultural organisations engaging with the visitor economy in a strategic way, who are not included here, however this list shows the range and diversity of what's on offer.

Cultural venues

There are hundreds cultural venues in regional NSW welcoming visitors year-round. They range from regional public galleries to artist-run-initiatives, community galleries and sculpture gardens. They include museums, visitor centres, Aboriginal cultural centres, Aboriginal galleries and historic sites.

Regional galleries

[Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre](#) (Arts Northern Rivers RADO, North Coast NSW DN) demonstrates excellence in **council-run** cultural infrastructure that prioritises accessibility and community engagement whilst attracting significant visitation. Housing the Margaret Olley collection, along with touring **visual arts** exhibitions and works of local artists, the gallery attracts over 1,300,000 visitors per annum, making it one of regional NSW's biggest cultural tourism drawcards. The facility's collaboration with independent First Nations artist [Kyra Togo](#) on weaving workshops shows how galleries can complement and extend touring exhibitions to create authentic cultural experiences that honour Indigenous knowledge whilst providing meaningful visitor engagement. The gallery's commitment to accessibility, including lift access from underground parking, wide exhibition spaces, and inclusive programmes, sets standards for universal design in regional cultural facilities.

Quick insight: Gallery Director Ingrid Hedgcock shares how touring exhibitions help a small regional team attract substantial visitation: 'Being on the touring circuit means economy of scales, access to exceptional content that otherwise you wouldn't have the capacity to deliver because you don't have those big teams. We couldn't do without it and neither would we want to too because of the high calibre of work it adds to our program.'

[Wagga Wagga Art Gallery & National Art Glass Gallery](#) (Eastern Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is home to the [National Art Glass Collection](#), a nationally significant **visual arts** collection featuring over 700 contemporary art glass works displayed in a purpose-built gallery. Operating as a **council-run** cultural facility of Wagga Wagga City Council with support from Create NSW, the gallery welcomes over 40,000 visitors annually and presents 20 different exhibitions and displays each year, including touring exhibitions from MGNSW, AGNSW and NGA. This model demonstrates how regional galleries can achieve national significance through strategic specialisation, avoiding competition with other institutions whilst creating unique tourism drawcards. The wedge-shaped contemporary

building housing the National Art Glass Gallery maximises natural light to showcase the glass works, demonstrating how purpose-built cultural infrastructure can enhance visitor experience whilst protecting and presenting collections to international standards.

Quick insight: The gallery's visitor surveys show that 65% of visitors originate outside the Riverina, with 25% from elsewhere in NSW, 34% from interstate and 6% from overseas.

[Ngununggula Southern Highlands Regional Gallery](#) (Southern Tablelands Arts RADO, Sydney Surrounds South DN) focusing on visual arts, education, artistic practice, and cultural voice, with a program representing the region and beyond through significant exhibitions, artist-led projects, events, workshops, artist talks and educational activities for local schools. Recently established through a partnership between NSW Government, Wingecarribee Shire Council, the National Trust and donors, repurposing the Dairy and Veterinary Clinic at Retford Park, a property of the National Trust donated by the late James Fairfax.

Quick insight: 45% of the gallery's income is derived from donations and fundraising activities, attracting 57,900 visitors in 2023/24 with almost 45% from outside the region.

[Bundanon](#) (South Coast Arts RADO, Sydney Surrounds South DN) Bundanon is many things. An art museum embedded in the landscape. A wildlife sanctuary set on 1000 hectares. The vast array of experiences at this South Coast art destination means every visitor's journey here will be different. Embedded in the landscape, the award-winning Art Museum and Bridge for Creative Learning house a changing program of contemporary exhibitions and unique cultural experiences, with events and concerts presented across the site.

Quick insight: Visitors to Bundanon include families, art and nature enthusiasts, school groups and general visitors interested in culture, nature, and history.

Curious to see more art gallery examples? Check out:

[Griffith Regional Art Gallery \(GRAG\)](#) (Western Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is a distinctive pink art-deco arts space. The council-run gallery is known for its two permanent visual arts collections, the National Contemporary Jewellery Award Collection and a Couture Collection.

[Murray Art Museum Albury \(MAMA\)](#) (Murray Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is the heart of art and culture on the Murray. One of the most visited visual arts venues outside of Sydney, the museum has earned a reputation for its innovative, original exhibitions, featuring some of the best contemporary artists in Australia and from around the world. It is transitioning from a council-run facility to a [progressive business model](#) with independent governance.

[New England Regional Art Museum \(NERAM\)](#) (Arts North West RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is a museum of Australian art located in Armidale. It has one of the best collections of Australian impressionist art outside of major cities. It's an independent non-profit organisation, and partners to present events like their Winter Blooming Ball with Tropical Fruits. They use their [website to call out for workshop facilitators](#) and provide guidance for people wanting to run a workshop at the gallery.

Performing arts centres

Regional NSW has a diverse and dynamic network of performing arts centres operating across varied scales, business models and programming philosophies. Venues of different sizes serve different functions, from major regional centres hosting large-scale touring productions to community halls providing intimate performance spaces, all supported by interconnected funding, touring networks and professional development structures.

[Merrigong Theatre Company](#) (Sydney Surrounds South DN) is a **not-for-profit organisation** that operates Wollongong's Council's premier **performing arts** venue, [Illawarra Performing Arts Centre \(IPAC\)](#). Merrigong is a vibrant theatre company in its own right. IPAC sits in Wollongong's arts precinct and is actively promoted as a visitor attraction on the Destination Wollongong site, drawing both local audiences and visiting theatre-goers. Capacity and season programming make it one of the busiest regional venues in NSW.

[Jetty Memorial Theatre](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) is a well-known, heritage **performing arts** venue on the Coffs Coast, situated in the Jetty precinct, a visitor strip with eateries and accommodation. A smaller, high-quality regional theatre with consistent programming and strong local attachment, it features in regional events calendars and is actively referenced by the council's visitor pages. That combination gives it solid visitor numbers for the size of the town.

[Civic Theatre Newcastle](#) (Sydney Surrounds North DN) is a large, heritage and high-profile **performing arts** venue with a large main auditorium (over 1,500 seats). Its size, location in Newcastle CBD and regular touring shows give it strong audience throughput and high visibility and it has achieved 4.7 Google rating from 1.6K reviews. Heritage and regular headline programming attract visitors from the

broader Hunter region and visitors. Evidence of promotion by local hotels like the [Kingsley](#) and destination sites confirm the venue's tourism role.

[Roxy Community Theatre](#) (Western Riverina Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) in Leeton opened its doors in 1930, born from a vision of cinematic grandeur and cultural connection. The Roxy theatre has a full-size concert stage with the original two levels of seating, a foyer and ticket box area and an integrated shop. This venue could have also been listed in the performing arts venue category, with an active annual program of events. Ideal for lovers of Art Deco architectural style and unique heritage buildings.

[The Arts Centre Cootamundra](#) (Eastern Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is a multi-arts space which includes The Tin Shed Theatre, opened in 2011, as the flagship venue and hosts world class performances. The centre also features a large exhibition room, a visual arts Studio, a rehearsal space and a meeting room. While not open on a regular basis for drop in visitors, an active program of performances, workshops, screenings and presentations provide opportunities to experience this unique community space.

Museums

Around NSW, museums offer distinctive local stories, interactive or immersive experiences, and a mix of free and paid offers. Many museums keep admission low, but add value through special exhibitions, family programs or guided tours. Purpose-built centres offer cafés, retail and touring shows, while smaller museums shine through personal storytelling and partnerships with tourism, schools and Indigenous groups.

[Port Macquarie Museum](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) is a **community-run** museum that has achieved exceptional cultural tourism recognition, winning Gold at 2024 NSW Tourism Awards and Bronze at 2024 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards. Housed in an 1836 convict-built **heritage** structure classified by the National Trust, the museum showcases local history from penal colony establishment to contemporary regional development. The museum has a 4.7 star rating on Trip Advisor, with visitors often surprised by the extent of the collection and engaging displays. The facility has also established the Mid North Coast Regional Digitisation Hub, supporting other regional museums in collection digitisation and online sharing. Charging a \$5 entry fee, the museum demonstrates how heritage tourism can serve both visitors and education groups whilst maintaining financial sustainability.

[Eden Killer Whale Museum](#) (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) represents unique maritime **heritage** tourism built around the extraordinary story of [Old Tom and Twofold Bay's killer whales](#). Established in 1931 to house Old Tom's skeleton, the museum showcases over 10,000 artefacts documenting the unique working relationship between whalers and killer whales (early 1800s-1930s). Overlooking Twofold Bay's north arm, visitors can spot contemporary marine wildlife during museum hours, creating integrated historical and environmental experiences. With a \$15 entry fee for adults, the facility includes whaling industry, timber history, and maritime collections, with comprehensive research centre resources. It demonstrates how regional museums can leverage unique local stories to create compelling tourism experiences whilst acknowledging Yuin Nation cultural connections to marine environments.

[Australian Fossil and Mineral Museum](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) is part of Museums Bathurst – a diverse group of **heritage** museums operated by Bathurst Regional Council, each offering very different experiences that complement a broad range of other cultural attractions that Bathurst has to offer. With a 4.7 star rating on Trip Advisor, the Fossil and Mineral Museum features touring exhibitions alongside permanent geological collections, attracting international fossil and geology enthusiasts who extend their stays to explore the broader Central West region. It is an example of how specialised cultural experiences can serve as 'attractors' rather than just 'value-adders', drawing visitors specifically to regional areas.

[Tamworth Regional Astronomy and Science Centre](#) (Arts North West RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is run by the **not-for-profit** Tamworth Regional Astronomy Club Inc (TRAC) through a Tamworth Regional Council Section 355 Committee. The Centre contains a multi-function auditorium accommodating up to 200 people for live presentations with extensive **heritage** displays of meteorites, minerals, megafauna, astronomical images and items of scientific interest. It hosted a 'Night Amongst the Stars' in collaboration with Kamilaroi man Len Waters, involving stars, stories and music.

[Hunter Warbirds](#) (Arts Upper Hunter RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) in Scone has a museum with large planes, with a major event in June which involves a flyover event. The **heritage** facility also includes a good café and giftshop. Bookable experiences offered through the facility include Spitfire Simulator ("Experience the thrill and excitement of piloting a life-sized replica World War 2 Spitfire") and Joy Flights.

[Museum of the Riverina](#) (Eastern Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) tells stories about the people and events which have helped shape the City of Wagga Wagga and the Riverina Region across two sites. The Museum's Botanic Gardens site is a great place to discover the Wagga Wagga story and engage with the Riverina's natural environment, while the Historic Council Chambers site brings an ever-changing roster of major exhibitions, right in the heart of downtown Wagga Wagga.

Visitor centres

Visitor Information Centres (VICs) are often a traveller's first stop, so they can play a powerful role in shaping how visitors experience a region. Beyond providing maps and brochures, VICs can connect visitors to local culture, creativity and community and even draw revenue for local artists. Generally run by Councils, approaches include selling locally made products and artworks, hosting exhibitions or performances, and partnering with cultural groups to create tours and trails.

[Mudgee Visitor Information Centre](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN,) offers a strong example. The **council-run** VIC champions the region's wine, food and artisan products, positioning itself as both a shopfront and cultural hub. It has a Google rating of 4.5/5, with visitors praising friendly, knowledgeable staff, an on-site gallery and cafe and a strong retail offer that turns the VIC into a cultural stop, not just a brochure rack.

[Balranald Discovery Centre](#) (South West Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is a **council-run** facility that has strong community and private business relationships. The Discovery Centre precinct incorporates visitor information centre, three museums (two council run, one community run), cafe (Private Business) and nearby art gallery and community learning centre which focuses on arts practice. The Discovery Centre collaborates with the First Nations communities and private tour operators associated with the World Heritage Mungo National Park. It has a 4.6 star rating on Trip Advisor, with the Café achieving 4.7.

[Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre](#) (Outback Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) blends interactive storytelling, multimedia displays and historical collections to share the rich heritage of Bourke and the Darling River region. By highlighting stories of First Nations people, pastoralists, poets and river trade, it offers visitors an engaging and authentic cultural experience. The Centre enhances Bourke's tourism appeal, extends visitor stays and supports the local economy by positioning the town as a key gateway to Outback NSW.

[Narrandera Destination and Discovery Hub](#) (Western Riverina Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is a modern cultural facility and exhibition space, incorporating Narrandera Shire Council's Visitor Information Centre. Wander through the space and check out the local exhibitions and immersive experiences that bring the area's history to life, along with the famous Big Guitar - a giant, playable instrument ideal for a strum and a selfie.

Aboriginal cultural centres

[Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) north of Coffs Harbour features a Bush Tucker Cafe, an Aboriginal art gallery, cultural programs, accommodation and a conference centre. It offers a range of [bookable cultural tours and activities](#) including **Indigenous culture** experiences, art classes, Gumbaynggirr history and story sessions, dance and music classes, clay modelling, traditional basket weaving, and tours of Aboriginal sites. These are priced from \$22 upwards, with a minimum booking of 10 people.

[Armidale Cultural Centre & Keeping Place](#) (Arts North West RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) provides two art galleries specialising in **Indigenous culture**, a family history centre, conference and learning facilities, a gift shop specialising in Aboriginal merchandise, meeting rooms, an outdoor undercover function and events pavilion and café. Sharing the heritage of the Anaiwan, Kamilaroi, Dainggatti, Ngarabal, Banbai, Gumbainggier, and Bigambul peoples, it offers a range of tours, workshops and cultural education programs, and hires its spaces for events. With a diversified business model, it is an example of how Aboriginal cultural centres can support First Nations cultural tourism whilst maintaining community control over cultural content and presentation.

[Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre](#) (South West Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is a Traditional Owner organisation based in Deniliquin. It was formed in 2003 to ensure **Indigenous culture** and knowledge was preserved in future generations. Yarkuwa have undertaken major building renovations and have included a museum, language centre, arts centre and gallery/meeting spaces. In 2025 the multi-stage development and refurbishment project was completed, with funding from the NSW Government's Creative Capital Fund.

[Brewarrina Aboriginal Cultural Centre](#) (Outback Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is located just a few steps away from the iconic Baiame's Ngunnhu (Brewarrina Fish Traps). Visitors can experience First Nation culture, country and history first-hand from local people, in the very spot where local tribes have gathered for tens of thousands of years. The centre is a great example of how to combine ancient heritage, living culture and community-led storytelling that welcomes visitors and supports local communities.

Historic sites

[Berrima Historic Village](#) (Southern Tablelands Arts RADO, Sydney Surrounds South DN) operates through multiple partnerships between council, private businesses, and community groups to create an integrated heritage experience. The 1830s Georgian architecture provides an authentic backdrop for artisan shops, **heritage** accommodation and cultural events that attract both day visitors from Sydney and overnight visitors exploring the Southern Highlands. This collaborative model shows how diverse operators can work together to create destination-level experiences whilst maintaining audiences and viability for small businesses and **visual arts** galleries such as [Michael Reid Southern Highlands](#).

[Old Dubbo Gaol](#) (Orana Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) attracts over 50,000 visitors annually through innovative **heritage** interpretation that brings convict history to life through theatrical presentations and immersive experiences. The success of this **council-run** historic site demonstrates how regional areas can leverage unique heritage assets to create primary tourism attractions whilst contributing to broader regional cultural tourism strategies and creating work opportunities for local creatives.

[Carcoar](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) historic village combines well-preserved heritage architecture, rich colonial history and immersive visitor experiences. It preserves the past while offering interactive cultural experiences, making it ideal for tourism that blends history, storytelling and community engagement. In 2022, Carcoar was awarded the Top Tourism Town Award for towns with a population of less than 1,500.

[Central Tilba](#) (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) The village of Central Tilba is as beautiful as it is unique. Classified under the National Trust, and named as one of Australia's best heritage sights, the town offers a living snapshot of 19th century Australia. The preserved weatherboard shops of the main street house a charming selection of art and craft, gourmet produce, antiques and curios.

[Up-to-date Store](#) (Eastern Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is one of Coolamon's most treasured buildings. Built in 1909 and now home to a variety of fascinating collections and displays. Once a bustling general store where locals could buy everything from a plough to a piano, the Up-to-Date Store still carries the memories of the community it served. A highlight is the world's only known Ball-Style Cash Railway System, still in its original location in the store.

Sculpture gardens and installations

[Broken Hill Living Desert and Sculptures](#) (West Darling Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is a **visual arts** collection of 12 sandstone sculptures in the desert outside Broken Hill. Now a **council-run** site, it originates from an **artist-run** international sculpture symposium organised by artist Lawrence Beck in 1993 to honour Fred Hollows. The sculptures were created from giant sandstone blocks from the Wilcannia region, each weighing more than 50 tonnes. Today they are surrounded by the Living Desert Reserve, a flora and fauna sanctuary planned and designed carefully to provide visitors with a unique insight into flora, fauna and the **Indigenous culture** of the region. The project demonstrates how artist-driven cultural initiatives can achieve lasting tourism benefits, with Broken Hill City Council now charging an entry fee to ensure an income stream for the region.

[Cobar Sound Chapel](#) (Outback Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is a unique example of cultural tourism, transforming a disused water tank into a world-class contemporary art and sound installation. Created by composer Georges Lentz and architect Glenn Murcutt, it offers visitors a unique immersive experience that combines architecture, music and landscape in regional NSW. The Chapel draws national and international attention, positioning Cobar as a cultural destination, diversifying tourism beyond mining heritage, and generating economic and reputational benefits for the local community.

[Lake Macquarie Sculpture Walk](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) is an outdoor public art trail located along the Warners Bay foreshore at Lake Macquarie. It forms part of the region's growing cultural precinct, integrating large-scale contemporary sculptures with a scenic lakeside setting popular for recreation and tourism.

[Campbelltown Arts Centre Sculpture Garden](#) (Sydney Surround South DN) is an outdoor exhibition space located at the Campbelltown Arts Centre in Campbelltown. The Sculpture Garden integrates contemporary artworks into the landscape, creating an outdoor gallery that can be explored year-round. Sculptures are thoughtfully positioned throughout the grounds, encouraging discovery and offering new perspectives as visitors move through the space.

Trails

In regional NSW, a range of trails connect attractions and events, offering visitors the chance to explore a community or region either on-foot or by self-driving – often traversing multiple Council areas and changing landscapes.

Regional art trails

[Silo Art Trail](#) (across NSW) is Australia's largest outdoor public art gallery, linking multiple councils, community groups and artists. It started as a small community project in Victoria by the Brim Active Community Group, GrainCorp, Juddy Roller and artist, Guido van Helten, and has resulted in widespread international media attention and an influx of visitors. Towns have reported visitor increases of over 200% following silo completion. The Silo Art Trail is an example of community-focused public art that acts as a tourism drawcard, and has been linked with [wellness and restorative travel](#). The Silo Art Trail has enabled a range of other cultural tourism activities, including light projections and tours.

[Sculpture Down the Lachlan](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) represents one of NSW's most ambitious **public art** initiatives, stretching 100 kilometres between Forbes and Condobolin along the meandering Lachlan River. This permanent inland public art trail features over 25 sculptures by renowned Australian artists, designed to showcase the raw, unmanicured beauty of the rural landscape. The project began when Rosie Wingrove Johnston visited Sculpture by the Sea in Sydney and was inspired to create a bush version in her hometown. Over 11 years, the [Forbes Art Society](#) secured various funds through fundraising and grants, including \$5.7 million from the NSW Government in 2019. The trail is a hybrid of a **council-run** and **not-for-profit** model delivered by Forbes Art Society, Forbes Shire Council, Lachlan Shire Council and Central West Local Land Services, demonstrating how community vision, corporate partnership and government support can create transformative cultural tourism.

[Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail](#) (Eastern Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) extends over 150 kilometres and features **public art** works by both Australian and international artists in partnership with multiple councils and the established **not-for-profit** arts organisation [Sculpture by the Sea](#). This collaboration demonstrates how regional councils can leverage partnerships with established cultural brands to create tourism experiences that attract visitors from major metropolitan areas whilst supporting local accommodation and hospitality businesses.

Walkable and local trails

As well as large-scale regional trails, a number of local trails exist in communities around NSW. Some of these are walkable, following the path of a river or coastline. Others are more suitable for self-driving around the key sites of communities, where public art and cultural attractions are more geographically dispersed.

[Yindyamarra Sculpture Walk, Albury](#) (Murray Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is a **council-run, Indigenous culture** initiative featuring a series of contemporary Aboriginal sculptures lining the Wagirra Trail from Kremur Street to Wonga Wetlands. Fifteen **public art** sculptures created by local Aboriginal artists have been installed along the five kilometres of trail. The trail can also be experienced through guided tours by Wiradjuri **independent artist** Ruth Davys from Wiradjuri Storytellers. With [Ngurambangga yanhanha - Walk on Country](#), visitors can experience the wonder of the Milawa bila (Murray River) hear behind-the-scenes stories of how the artists created their work. This council-supported initiative demonstrates how public art can provide platforms for First Nations cultural tourism whilst creating experiences that educate visitors about local Aboriginal heritage and contemporary Indigenous artistic practice.

[Car Door Tours](#) Lightning Ridge (Outback Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) have become an iconic attraction for the visitor-friendly opal mining town. Tour maps are available for free online, or visitors can purchase a paper copy for \$1 at the **council-run** Visitor Information Centre. These quirky journeys linking works of **public art** and cultural attractions are Lightning Ridge's answer to 'self drive' tours and offer visitors a great way to start a visit to 'The Ridge'. Four tours are demarcated by colour coded and numbered car doors: blue, yellow, green and red.

[Mungo self-guided drive tour](#) (West Darling Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) through Mungo National Park in World Heritage Willandra Lakes offers scenic desert views of Walls of China and cycling options in outback NSW. It offers visitors a chance to experience the significant **heritage** sites of Mungo National Park in relative comfort. A virtual tour of the Mungo self-guided drive tour has also been captured with [Google Street View Trekker](#).

[Walcha Open Air Gallery](#) (Arts North West RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) has been initiated by artists and is extensive, with a range of 40+ sculpture works (according to [Walcha Council](#) locals have embraced their artistic reputation, now boasting one public artwork for every 60 of its citizens). Every work has a unique web-page and QR code, with a map available from visitor information or online. Keep an eye out in future for the [New England Sculpture Track \(NEST\)](#), a new trail in development by the Bendemere Arts Society and Tamworth Council to link the Tamworth region to Walcha and Uralla.

Open studio trails

Open studio trails offer a great way for groups of independent artists to collaborate for mutual benefit. Some trails run monthly (Bathurst), while others are seasonal events. Artists describe trails as opportunities for otherwise independent practitioners to share their work and connect with community. Most use distinctive markers (like Bali flags) to identify participating locations and provide maps and websites for planning visits.

[Bathurst Arts Trail](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) is an **artist-run** collective in the Bathurst region. Participating **independent artists** open their galleries to visitors on each Art's Trail Open Weekend, which is the first weekend of each month. Their website offers an interactive map of **visual arts** studios and a list of suggested itineraries, with visitors encouraged to look for the bali flags on open day.

[Open Studios – River of Art Festival](#) (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) is presented every year in late September/early October. It features an open studio program where people can visit artists in their studios, view work, check out techniques and purchase artwork. The 11-day **visual arts** event also features workshops and performances showcasing the talent of the South Coast region.

[North Coast Mud Trail](#) (Arts Northern Rivers RADO, North Coast NSW DN) invites visitors to explore the studio spaces of 33 ceramic artists working across 22 studio locations in the Northern Rivers region. Running for 13 years, the Mud Trail offers studio open days, 'meet the makers' sessions, demonstrations and workshops. It is operated by **not-for-profit** North Coast ceramics, which host also hosts a [NCC Surface Award exhibition \(January\)](#), an Easter Ceramic Market (March/ April) and a [Pre-Christmas Ceramic Market \(November\)](#).

[Queanbeyan-Palerang Arts Trail](#) (Southern Tablelands Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) runs annually in October in Braidwood, Bungendore and Queanbeyan. Visitors can explore the galleries and home studios of local artists and experience the wealth of talent and creativity in the region first hand. An opportunity to meet the artists in their creative environments, ranging from ceramics and glassworks to paintings, textiles, jewellery and much more.

Bookable experiences

Workshops

A range of workshop operators are popping up around NSW, sometimes led by an independent artist, or group of arts workers. Elsewhere, workshops are offered by regional galleries, who administer workshops programs while creating work opportunities for local artists and educators.

[Chelsea Ceramics](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) founded by 18-year-old Chelsea Howarth in Blayney, operates from the heritage-listed Platform Arts Hub. Chelsea offers pottery workshops and wine nights that have quickly gained popularity, especially among younger audiences. Her entrepreneurial approach—leveraging social media, community collaboration, and regional events—demonstrates the potential for small-scale arts businesses to attract visitors and enrich local offerings. With strategic partnerships, such as those with hospitality venues in nearby Millthorpe and cross-disciplinary events like yoga and pottery mornings, Chelsea Ceramics is laying the groundwork for visitor-friendly experiences that could add value to visitor itineraries.

Deeper insight: Chelsea shared three tips as part of a case study for Arts OutWest: “You can start small, see how things go, and build from there. Make the most of skills that family and friends can offer to help you out. Seek out opportunities in the community for collaboration on events and cross-promotion.” Chelsea also explained, “*People are surprised how well their pots turn out, and that makes them happy, achieving something creative that they didn’t expect.*”

Other examples include:

[Bandicoot Pottery](#) (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) in Cobargo have been running workshops alongside making work.

[Seed Arts School](#) in Port Macquarie (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) specialise in private art lessons, creative workshops, after school lessons, NDIS sessions, team building and more.

[Murrurundi Arts Council](#) (Arts Upper Hunter RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) occupy a converted train station, offering workshops on topics like book binding and mosaic making. Murrurundi is a destination for artists, with a wide-range of creative spaces and workshops, following the migration of artists to the area in the 1990s.

First Nations tours

A range of First Nations cultural practitioners and Elders around the State are demonstrating how Indigenous operators can create sustainable tourism businesses that grow cultural awareness whilst supporting community cultural practice and self-determination.

[Explore Byron Bay](#) (Arts Northern Rivers RADO, North Coast NSW DN) with Delta Kay operates as an Aboriginal-owned business providing guided cultural tours that combine traditional knowledge with contemporary Aboriginal perspectives. Aunty Delta also provides tour services to other tour operators in the Northern Rivers.

[Walkabout with Warren](#) (Arts Upper Hunter RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) is a tour operator led by Uncle Warren, offering visitors the chance to visit Baiame Cave, a site of state significance as a rare and representative indigenous rock art painting site in NSW. Tours are bookable through the Visitor Information Centre.

[Wirimbili Cultural Tours](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) the North East Wiradjuri Cultural Centre, and WAYOUT Artspace in Kandos showcase how cultural tourism can support regional goals through authentic, place-based experiences. Led by Dabee-Wiradjuri woman Emma Symes, Wirimbili offers immersive tours in Wollemi National Park that connect visitors with Wiradjuri history, bush tucker, and traditional practices, fostering respect and mindfulness toward Country. Wirimbili cultural tours has recently been listed with [NSW National Parks](#) and are available to book online via [Humanitix](#).

Deeper insight: Emma Symes and Leanne Wicks shared three tips as part of a case study for Arts OutWest: “Authenticity is what visitors really want, so have a yarn with them. Culture, whether it’s ancient or just emerging, is inextricably tied to place and the experience or product you’re offering should reflect that. Don’t be afraid to experiment with something no one else is doing nearby.”

[Sandhills Artefacts](#) (Western Riverina Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) sells authentic First Nations artefacts and demonstrate how they're made. During a tour, visitors will see how artefacts, carvings and artworks are created. During a bush walk, visitor explore bush medicines, animals, the beautiful Murrumbidgee River and sacred Aboriginal sites like the Birthing Rocks and Caves. Upon request, a campfire dinner can be arranged. Sitting around the warm campfire, listening to the stories, is a truly unique experience.

Walking tours

Walking tours are offered in some communities, run by volunteers or small businesses, which provide a ‘bookable’ experience to visitors as well as connecting them to lesser-known public art, open studios, creative retail shops and other attractions.

[Broken Hill Heritage Walking Tours](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, North West NSW DN) operate through volunteer guides, showcasing mining heritage through historic pubs and architecture tours. These community-driven initiatives demonstrate how local knowledge and passion can create compelling tourism experiences whilst supporting local hospitality businesses and building community pride in heritage assets.

[Port Macquarie Heritage Walking Tours](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) led by award-winning heritage consultant Mitch McKay, offer engaging, research-based journeys into the town’s convict, colonial, and Indigenous past. Through two themed tours—*Uncovering Our Past* and *Grave Tales*—visitors explore historical sites and hear compelling stories that bring local heritage to life. These tours exemplify how expert-led interpretation can deepen cultural tourism experiences, making history accessible, memorable and meaningful.

[Local Sauce Tours, Sydney](#) offer walking tours that integrate street art with food experiences, including their popular Newtown Chewtown (food & street art) and Ice Cream & Street Art Adventure tours. With a 5-star Google rating, these experiences demonstrate how independent operators can create unique tourism products that combine multiple interests whilst supporting local businesses and artists.

Creative retreats, residencies and camps

[Camp Creative](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) in Bellingen is a long-running summer program that brings together over 1,000 participants annually for a week of intensive creative workshops across arts, music, writing, performance, and wellbeing. With over 80 courses offered in venues throughout the town, it attracts a broad demographic—particularly adult learners from outside the region—and fosters deep engagement through multi-day formats. For cultural tourism developers, Camp Creative demonstrates the value of combining arts education with community infrastructure and strategic outreach to create meaningful visitor experiences.

[Wendy McDonald Art Camps, Thule Lagoon](#) (South West Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) operates through independent artist enterprise combining working farm operations with cultural tourism programming. Artist and farmer Wendy McDonald offers 5-day/5-night extended art camps on her property near Barham, focusing on Murray River ecosystems and cultural heritage in Barapa Barapa country. The fully catered experiences include guided field trips to local wetland sites, visits to [Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre](#), and local winery meals using regional produce. Limited to four participants for personalised attention, the camps combine studio work among red gums on Thule Lagoon with Hattah Kulkyne National Park off-grid options. Connected to Murray Darling Scenic Flights, this model demonstrates how individual artists can create sustainable cultural tourism businesses that honour place-based storytelling whilst supporting broader regional tourism infrastructure.

[Capertree Plein Air Painting Retreats](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) operate through independent artist Corinne Loxton's structured teaching approach in the spectacular Capertree Valley. These intimate retreats combine accommodation with comprehensive painting instruction, focusing on landscape techniques and confidence building for both beginners and experienced artists. The programme includes en plein air sessions, structured skill development, and personal guidance in spectacular natural surroundings. Participant testimonials highlight the supportive atmosphere, excellent organisation, and individual attention that creates transformative experiences. This model demonstrates how professional artists can develop cultural tourism offerings that provide genuine skill development whilst showcasing regional landscape beauty, creating repeat visitation and strong word-of-mouth promotion through participant satisfaction and artistic growth.

[The Art Shack at Wilgabah](#) (Arts North West RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is a cultural retreat and creative hub in Wallabadah on the Liverpool Plains, run by Gamilaroi artist Tania Hartigan. Set on a heritage-listed property rich in **Indigenous culture** and history, it offers accommodation, studio space, and workshops in painting, printmaking, bush foods, and handmade paper. Tania's practice is deeply connected to Country, and her programs reflect this through immersive, place-based experiences. The Art Shack is often activated during festivals and events, demonstrating how artist-led initiatives can integrate cultural heritage, creative practice, and tourism to support regional development and community engagement.

Festivals and events

First Nations Festivals

First Nations festivals are delivered in regional NSW as Aboriginal-owned and operated entities, typically run through Aboriginal corporations or alliances of local Aboriginal land councils. Revenue models vary from free admission supported by government funding (Yabun, Saltwater Freshwater) to low-cost ticketed events (Warangesda at \$5 per adult), with festivals relying on support from federal and state governments, regional tourism bodies and local. Delivery involves small core festival teams supported by large volunteer workforces.

[Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) is an alliance of 10 local Aboriginal land councils. It's Saltwater Freshwater Festival showcases local culture, skills, music, dance, art, lifestyle and culinary talent. The Festival's mission is to celebrate and share authentic Aboriginal living culture with the wider community and create a positive, inclusive family day for all communities to enjoy. In 2025, it took a break from the large-scale format to deliver an immersive **Micro Festival** event which featured weaving, lino printing and canoe-making alongside a photo booth, DJ set and jumping castle. The SWFW Program Team curated the cultural program, organised site logistics, and coordinated food, entertainment, and stallholders, while the Local Aboriginal Land Council took care of waste management, marquees, generators, and service providers.

[Giiyong Festival](#) (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) is held annually at Jigamy (between Pambula and Eden) on Thaua Country, presented by Twofold Aboriginal Corporation (TAC) in partnership with Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council and South East Arts. Now managed by TAC, the festival features live music, workshops, speakers and cultural demonstrations, remaining true to its vision of community celebration and continuing cultural practices, attracting audiences from across NSW and Victoria.

[Warangesda Festival](#) (Western Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is held at the historic Warangesda Aboriginal Mission Station in Darlington Point on Wiradjuri Country, recognising 100 years since the forced closing of the mission station. The inaugural festival was held in February 2023 as a two-day event, expanding to a three-day format in 2025 featuring music, panels, theatre, dance, food, interactive workshops and a theatre production under the stars. Tickets are \$5 per adult per day with children under 16 free, and it is an alcohol and drug-free event.

Performing arts festivals and events

[Love For One Night](#) (Arts Northern Rivers RADO, North Coast NSW DN) is an innovative, outdoor theatre event conceived by NORPA. Described as ‘a love letter to country pubs and the connections that blossom therein’, Love for One Night includes a series of intersecting love stories told in a playful and theatrical style, presented with the backdrop of a real pub. A series of brief encounters are told through dialogue, movement and song, with visual effects and projections creating a vibrant evening atmosphere.

Quick insight: During its original 2022 season at The Eltham Hotel, near Lismore, it attracted 4,000 attendees and an 89% audience excellence rating. 60% of attendees identified as originating outside the host venue postcode. Executive Director Libby Lincoln says, "We wish we knew earlier how strong the VFR (visiting friends and relative) market is for promoting local arts and culture. Surveys show word of mouth is our strongest audience driver, and we can work with that by returning annually to the same towns at consistent times with new works. It's about building anticipation and enabling our communities and their networks to plan and engage."

[Australian Festival of Chamber Music](#) (Queensland) is a great example of a music festival that partners strongly with the tourism industry. In 2025, it offers a range of holiday packages alongside festival tickets, with Opening Weekend, Closing Weekend or Sunset Series packages available, each including 3 nights accommodation at a Festival preferred hotel, reserved seating at 3 concerts and discounted ticket prices. Concerts are individually ticketed while the AFCM Festival Garden provides a festival hub and free entertainment daily.

Sydney stand outs

[Sydney Festival](#) is one of Australia's premier cultural events, the annual (January) Sydney Festival features a diverse program of theatre, dance, music, and visual arts across various venues, including theatres, parks, galleries, and even hidden gardens.

[Sydney Fringe Festival](#) is an annual (September) multi-arts festival celebrating independent and experimental performance, theatre, music, comedy and visual arts across venues in Sydney, giving emerging and alternative artists a platform to showcase bold, creative work.

[Yellamundie Festival](#) is hosted by Moogahlin Performing Arts, is a biennial celebration of new and distinct voices in Australian performing arts, with a focus on First Peoples talent.

Music festivals

NSW is home to a diverse array of music festivals, from intimate volunteer-run community celebrations to internationally recognised events. Facing challenges like rising costs, extreme weather events and changing audience sentiment, music festivals are finding different ways to balance artistic integrity with community engagement and economic sustainability.

Cobargo Folk Festival (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) exemplifies the intimate community model with around 70 acts featuring almost 200 individual artists performing over three days in March each year in a wholly volunteer-run, independent and non-commercial format. Volunteers are valued at over \$700,000, demonstrating how community investment creates substantial economic value.

Milton Folk, Jazz and Blues Festival (South Coast Arts, Sydney Surrounds South DN) follows a distributed venue model with over 40 free performances across more than 15 venues throughout Milton in 2025, weaving through the town's parks, pubs and establishments. This model spreads economic benefits across the town by using existing venues rather than building festival infrastructure, creating a model that benefits multiple local businesses simultaneously.

Mundi Mundi Bash (West Darling Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) leverages the dramatic outback setting of the Far West. Organised by the producers of the Birdsville Big Red Bash, it is a three-day camping event that's both all-ages and dog-friendly. It has grown from 12,250 in 2022 to 15,000 in 2025.

Orange Chamber Music Festival (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) represents cultural tourism sophistication, combining chamber music performances with gourmet experiences and wines of the Orange region since 2021. The festival breaks traditional classical music stereotypes by integrating with food and wine experiences, positioning chamber music as sophisticated lifestyle entertainment.

Strawberry Fields Festival (South West Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) has evolved from less than 1,000 attending the inaugural event in 2009 to 15,000 patrons 2024. It is a great example of Australia's art, music & camping festivals, successfully blending electronic music with immersive art installations. It has a permanent home "The Wildlands" - a 300ha private property featuring over 1km of direct frontage to the Murray River.

[**Tamworth Country Music Festival**](#) (Arts North West RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) doubles the population of the regional city, drawing people from all over Australia. Unlike other music festivals, its run by Council with ticketed events in venues across town. It now features a wide variety of music, while celebrating the enduring appeal of country music and attracting a new younger audience. After declining in size in the years before COVID, it is now growing again. Tamworth Council, Peter Ross, is prioritising cultural tourism and supporting arts and culture. Was Head of Entertainment Venues, now an entire directorate called creative communities and experiences. With a music theatre background, he also produces the Golden Guitar awards.

[**Wanderer Festival**](#) (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) operates on a biennial model, transforming the Bega Valley into a vibrant hub and injecting more than \$1.6 million into the local visitor economy with over fifty world-class acts from across the globe. Wanderer's 2025 program featured a line-up of First Nations artists from the local Thaua and Djiringanj peoples, as well as multi-generational programming with dedicated spaces for different demographics.

Other notable examples from around NSW include:

[**Wingham Music Festival**](#)

[**Illawarra Folk Festival**](#)

Writers festivals

Regional NSW hosts a vibrant ecosystem of literary festivals that range from intimate salon-style gatherings to major multi-day cultural events. These festivals demonstrate remarkable diversity in scale, programming philosophy, and business models, yet share common threads of community engagement, environmental consciousness, and partnership-driven sustainability.

[**Byron Writers Festival**](#) (Arts Northern Rivers RADO, North Coast NSW DN) attracts approximately 12,000 people (or 70,000 individual attendances) to its annual festival, held during the holiday-town's low season. It uses a festival-pass model, whereby audiences pay for a single day or 3-day pass, enabling access all events within a festival precinct. It presents more than 150 sessions during Festival Week along with a year-round program of events and talks.

[**Bellingen Readers & Writers Festival**](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) celebrates the intersection of literature and

landscape. Operating across the June long weekend, its website makes it clear the festival 'is not just about books, it showcases the magical fusion of nature, history and culture that makes Bellingen truly special'. In addition to ticketed events, the festival offers a Fringe program of free activities, including open mic poetry, Indigenous storytelling, live music, and local author readings, making it accessible to everyone.

Headland Writers Festival (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) serves the far south coast, where the spectacular Tathra Headland serves as a backdrop to events including author in-conversations, panels, workshops, poetry breakfasts, theatre and music performances. It operates across three days in October and maintains an intimate scale, with weekend, day and individual session tickets available. The festival emerged from a partnership between the Tathra Hotel, Candelo Books and South East Arts.

Orange Readers & Writers Festival (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) represents central-west NSW, operating as a more intimate gathering that coincides with other cultural events like the Winter Fire Festival, demonstrating how smaller festivals integrate with broader regional cultural calendars. It's single-day program at the Hotel Canobolas was priced at \$95, including morning tea and lunch.

Newcastle Writers Festival (Sydney Surrounds North DN) occupies a unique position as a major regional city festival, founded in 201, with a reported 7,750 attendees for 95 events in 2024 (Newcastle Herald). It too offers both free and ticketed events across Newcastle's Civic precinct, with strong community engagement, a focus on First Nations voices, and unique creative elements like "Words & Music," where music is inspired by literature.

Multi-arts festivals

Multi-arts festivals operate across regional NSW through diverse funding models that often combine State government support, Council support, corporate partnerships, and earned revenue through ticket sales.

Festival of W, Wagga Wagga (Eastern Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) operates as a two-week arts and culture festival attracting over 160,000 visitors annually. The winter destination event in Wagga Wagga features light installations, pop-up dining, entertainment and an outdoor ice rink. The festival showcases curated programming by local, national, and international artists through immersive light-art experiences, with significant First Nations programming including works that celebrate NAIDOC Week themes. Events include light shows from dusk to late evening, food venues, Saturday night music sessions and temporary road closures to expand the festival precinct for pedestrian access.

Cementa Festival (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) operates as a biennial contemporary arts festival in the post-industrial town of Kandos on Wiradjuri Country in central NSW. The festival features over 40 artists across four days, showcasing video, installation, sound, performance, and visual artworks throughout the town and surrounds. Cementa also operates year-round with residencies, exhibitions and special projects addressing regional challenges including social renewal, land regeneration, and climate resilience, culminating in the flagship biennial festival.

Dragon Dreaming Festival (Southern Tablelands Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) is a multi-arts festival on the banks of the Burrinjuck Dam in Wee Jasper, attracts 4500 festival goers, offering 4 days of electronic, instrumental and live musicians on three stages. This 'leave a positive trace' event also has interactive arts, expression & learning spaces, art gallery, cinema, markets, healing & kids' space, while at same time planting thousands of native plants regenerating the site.

Crank it Up (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) is a free outdoor festival that transforms Batemans Bay into a vibrant celebration of retro-classic and kustom culture. Clyde Street is closed to traffic as the foreshore park festival site comes alive with Australia's best rockabilly bands performing across two stages. The festival features a showcase of classic cars and hotrods, street cruises, retro markets, rock and roll dancing, and delicious food — all set against the stunning Batemans Bay backdrop.

Other examples include:

Narrabright – a street festival with projections and a lantern parade, developed to coincide with the local Create Arts Festival.

Art Walk - run annually by Port Macquarie Council

Visual arts events, festivals and installations

In addition to the galleries and trails shown earlier in this resource, visual arts tourism occurs through art fairs, festivals and temporary installations.

Sculpture in the Vineyards (Sydney Surrounds North DN) represents the longest-running regional sculpture festival in NSW, featuring 180 works from over 100 sculptors across 16 days in 2024. It features a range of sculptures on display and for sale in galleries, wineries and throughout the Wollombi Valley. Festival visitors enjoy food, wine and 'walk and talk tours' featuring Australian and International Sculptors. Previously an annual event, the decision was made to hold the festival every 2 years from 2024 onwards.

The Enchanted Forest (South Coast Arts RADO, Sydney Surrounds South DN) operates as an award-winning light and sound show in Shellharbour's Blackbutt Forest Reserve, created through partnership between Shellharbour City Council and LASERVISION.

The festival won 'Best Small Regional Event' at the 2023 Australian Event Awards, attracting over 66,000 attendees in its inaugural year. Running for three to four weeks annually with nightly performances, the immersive experience features vibrant installations, laser effects, holograms, and interactive projections, with themes changing yearly. The ticketed event offers multiple session times, low-sensory options for accessibility and family-friendly programming with ticket prices starting from \$10.50 for children.

Spirit of the Land Festival (Eastern Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) in Lockhart started in 2006 during the worst drought in Lockhart's recorded history, as a celebration to the resilience of those who live and work on the land. The festival includes the National Farm Art Sculpture Award, fine art, Indigenous and photography exhibitions, open gardens, boutique market stalls, vintage cars, an incredible wool art gallery plus food, wine and some of the friendliest locals you're ever likely to encounter.

Sculpture on the Farm Dungog (Arts Upper Hunter RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) is a biennial acquisitive prize, leading to a new large sculpture being installed in the Dungog Common, with a smaller sculpture in town. In 2025, the event is coordinating with Arts Upper Hunter to include a month-long program of events and workshops. An alternative to a branded festival, the trail model offered lower complexity and insurance considerations.

Other food and hobby festivals

Flavours of Mudgee (Orana Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) operates through local wine industry collaboration with council support, combining wine tourism with live music and cultural programming. This integrated approach demonstrates how established tourism sectors can incorporate cultural elements to create more compelling visitor experiences whilst extending visitor stays and increasing regional expenditure.

Griffith Spring Fest (Western Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN,) centres around spectacular displays of sculptures made from citrus fruit, celebrating the region's agricultural heritage through creative expression. This festival demonstrates how agricultural communities can create distinctive cultural events that attract substantial visitor numbers (86,770 attendees in 2023) whilst celebrating local industry and supporting regional economic development.

[Deni Ute Muster](#) (South West Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) operates through community organisation leadership with unique infrastructure including permanent gates that have become some of the most photographed in NSW. The festival site includes a permanent museum and newly completed First Nations mural, demonstrating how festivals can create year-round cultural tourism assets whilst celebrating distinctive regional culture. General Manager Vicky Lowery has developed a festival model that incorporates multiple partners for sustained cultural tourism practice.

Other examples include:

[Australian Celtic Festival](#) (Arts North West RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) in Glen Innes is presented annually, linked with the Australian Standing Stones National Celtic Monument. It has grown significantly over time, attracting audiences of 5,000 to the 2023 event.

Leveraging event audiences

[West Darling Art Precinct](#) (West Darling Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is an example of a visual arts and crafts event held alongside a major festival. The Broken Hill Mundi Mundi Bash provides space for the market to be installed at the festival, while **not-for-profit** RADO West Darling Arts manage a call-out and administration process. In 2025, 19 **independent artists** were selected for stalls, priced at a fee of \$200 along with a \$300 deposit. Many of the participating artists are repeat participants, attracted to the opportunity to reach a large audience at a low-cost. The market demonstrates how major events can extend the audience experience while supporting the local arts sector.

Creative retail

Regional NSW is home to a wide variety of art and craft markets operating primarily on three main models: community and farmers markets with "make it, bake it, grow it", integrated tourism destination markets that leverage existing attractions like vineyards, beaches or historic towns to create combined experiences; and curated artisan markets with strict handmade/local-only criteria that emphasise meet-the-maker authenticity. Most operate monthly rather than weekly to maintain quality and scarcity value, with the most successful combining strong place-based identity, genuine local provenance requirements, and integration with complementary tourism offerings such as cellar doors, cafes or natural attractions.

Markets

[Bellingen Markets](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) operate through **not-for-profit** association Bellingen Shire Residents Association Inc (BSRA) to celebrate alternative lifestyle culture through handmade crafts, organic produce, and bohemian atmosphere. The monthly market demonstrates how regional communities can leverage distinctive cultural identity to create tourism experiences that attract visitors seeking authentic alternative culture.

[Art on Bundjalung](#) (Arts Northern Rivers RADO, North Coast NSW DN,) is an initiative of **not-for-profit** RADO Arts Northern Rivers, and it's First Nations cultural officers. Held annually in collaboration with a local Council, in 2024 it was held at Dirruwung Evans Head with Richmond Valley Council, generating vital income and business development opportunities for the region's **Indigenous culture** practitioners and creators.

[Mudgee Makers Market](#) (Orana Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is a monthly market showcasing local creatives – everything from hand-crafted, painted, baked, crocheted, bottled, grown or sewn. Run by Mudgee Fine Foods (NFP) with a mission to increase awareness and support the region's local food, fresh produce and creative industries. Come and meet the makers, have a chat about produce, purchase a unique gift and support the local artistic community and traditional handmade arts.

Creative shops

Local maker marketplaces typically operate on consignment arrangements where makers receive a proportion (e.g. 60%) of retail sales and the shop takes a commission (e.g. 40%) with makers retaining ownership until items sell. Successful models use shared retail systems with curated product selection, allowing artisans to sell without full-time staffing whilst maintaining quality and brand alignment. Business structures vary from **not-for-profit** collectives to multi-channel platforms combining retail, events and online sales to corporate-sponsored initiatives.

[Outback Arts Creative Arts Centre & Gallery Shop, Coonamble](#) (Outback Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) operates a gallery and gift shop that showcases regional artists whilst providing visitor information and cultural interpretation. The shop recorded revenue of over \$70,000 in 2023, providing vital income for an outback town's artists. It demonstrates how individual businesses can serve multiple functions in small communities whilst supporting regional artists and providing essential cultural tourism infrastructure.

[Make It Tenterfield](#) (Arts North West RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is a **not-for-profit** makers' collective operating as a live makerspace where visitors can meet artists, watch them work and participate in creative workshops. The heritage building features high ceilings and natural light, creating what visitors describe as a 'whimsical arty wonderland'.

[Seasons of New England](#) (Arts Upper Hunter RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) combines a year-round retail space in Uralla with an annual weekend expo attracting over 160 regional makers, creators and producers. The expo features live music, wine and beer tastings, food vendors and family activities. The event draws 40 per cent of its visitors from outside the region.

[Kaleidoscope](#), (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) a Gowings Bros initiative in Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie, showcases rotating collections from local artists, makers and designers in collaborative retail spaces. Store manager and artist Katy Dee describes the model as empowering artisans through an accessible, professional retail environment.

Community galleries

Community-run galleries typically operate as **not-for-profit** cooperatives or volunteer-staffed spaces, with models ranging from artist-run cooperatives where members share responsibilities to gift shops integrated with visitor information centres.

[**Spiral Gallery**](#) (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) Located in Bega, Spiral Gallery was established in 1997 and is one of the longest operating Artist Run Initiatives (ARIs) in NSW and the only open access gallery in the Bega Valley region. The gallery operates an online shop selling uniquely Australian handmade items. It is wheelchair accessible with step-free main entrance, and operates two spaces - Gallery 1 (main) and Gallery 2 (smaller space behind), hosting solo shows, community exhibitions, and workshops.

[**Hillston Red Gum and Paddy Melons Gallery**](#) (South West Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) is a great example of a small community-run gallery in regional NSW. It includes a Visitor Information Centre run by volunteers and is the home of the Dusty Quilters, selling a range of arts and crafts.

[**Dungog by Design**](#) (Arts Upper Hunter RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) was established in 2014 and now has 27 members with diverse skills, operating from a permanent gallery space selling locally produced handmade and originally designed gifts, art, fashion and homewares. The volunteer-run collective requires exhibiting members to contribute a six-hour day per month in the gallery.

[**Gallery 294**](#) (Murray Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) in Corowa is run by local artists as a productive art space supporting and showcasing local and guest artists' works. Visitors can see displays of art works and hand-crafted pieces created by local artists. Through the efforts of hard-working volunteers, the gallery is open 6 days per week and regularly presents workshops open to all.

Commercial galleries

Commercial galleries combine exhibition spaces with retail operations, often incorporating cafés, concept stores and gift shops selling both artwork and artisan products, with revenue from art sales, commissions and retail. Successful long-term galleries maintain consistent brand identities and community engagement through regular exhibition programmes, artist talks and opening events, regardless of ownership changes.

[**Michael Reid Galleries**](#) (Southern Tablelands Arts RADO, Sydney Surrounds South DN) operate in Murrurundi and the Southern Highlands, combining art exhibitions with food, retail, and gardening. [**Michael Reid Murrurundi**](#) was established in 2006, is housed in the late Georgian Bobadil House (1841-1843) surrounded by botanic gardens. The commercial gallery operates a concept store and kiosk, open Wednesday to Sunday, offering high-end contemporary Australian art alongside homewares, food items and café service.

[John Murray Art Gallery](#) (Outback Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) in Lightning Ridge was established in 1992 as the outlet for original works by outback artist John Murray. The commercial gallery showcases photo-realistic outback landscapes with humour and whimsy, selling original paintings, prints, cards and souvenirs. John Murray has also gained a reputation for murals across the Lightning Ridge and Brewarrina. One feature mural, painted with the assistance of local children and the town's giant emu, named '2 Kool 4 Skool' was shortlisted for the 2021 Australian Street Art Awards' Best External Mural. Another, 'Stanley the Big Bird' was named a finalist in the Best Landmark Sculpture category.

[The Laneway Gallery](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) in Coffs Harbour showcases contemporary art, design and illustration, bridging the creative gap between regional and city arts. The gallery is described as bringing 'Melbourne laneway energy' to the Coffs Coast and hosts 'larger-than-life exhibition openings'.

[Weswal Gallery](#) (Arts North West RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) in Tamworth, originally opened in 1981 by ceramicist Fran West and Marcia Schofield, has maintained its reputation for over 40 years despite different owners. The commercial gallery features a regularly changing exhibition programme showcasing local, regional and national contemporary Australian artists, with a stockroom holding hundreds of artworks and a shop offering Australian-made artisan products including jewellery, ceramics, woodwork and glassware. The gallery holds opening events with artist talks for exhibitions.

[Kerri Weymouth Art Gallery & Studio](#) (Western Riverina Arts RADO, Country and Outback NSW DN) in Coleambally, is a space dedicated to showcasing Australian art and craftsmanship. The gallery celebrates the creativity of regional artists and creatives, focusing on sustainable and nature-inspired works that reflect the character of our local community. More than just a gallery, the space serves as a hub for creativity and community engagement, offering workshops, exhibitions, and events.

[Art Partners](#) (Murray Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is an Albury-based art consultancy which supplies and curates artwork to domestic and commercial spaces in order to inspire, engage and enhance environments. They have a Gallery space featuring a regularly changing program of exhibitions and have original artworks for sale. Art Partners can provide contemporary original artworks for small commercial businesses including accountancy and financial planning groups, legal and medical practitioners, hotels, motor dealerships and private homes.

Embedded culture

Arts in hospitality venues

Storyteller: The Baron's Tasting House, Deniliquin (South West Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) operates as an innovative independent business that combines boutique spirits bar with cultural venue programming. It leans into the purpose of the traditional 'watering hole' as a gathering and sharing space, focusing on what makes people interested, excited, comfortable, curious, and part of a community. [Storyteller hosts regular live music](#) art exhibitions and cultural events, and collaborates with music tutors to host recitals, creating unique experience that attracts people to the town and provides an alternative way to spend an evening. The venue's commitment to storytelling, artistic design, and musical talent creates an atmosphere that connects visitors to place whilst supporting the cultural life of the regional town.

The Tathra Hotel (South East Arts RADO, Southern NSW DN) is a business with a long tradition of live **music** part of the Tathra Hotel, dating as far back as 1905 when the Jellat Jellat band played on the hotel balcony. In the 1980s crowds gathered to hear bands such as Hunters and Collectors, Diesel and Icehouse play. The tradition continues with local and touring musicians playing mostly contemporary original music on weekend afternoons. Tathra Hotel has also plays an integral role in the annual Headland Writers Festival, and is soon to open a 100-seat **performing arts** venue, among other creative endeavours.

PIPIT restaurant (Arts Northern Rivers RADO, North Coast NSW DN) is an interesting example of a restaurant diversifying into premium creative workshops. The seafood-specialty restaurant offers [Gyotaku Printing](#) workshops where participants can access a demonstration or hands-on experience with the ancient Japanese printing method, originally used by fishmongers and fishermen. Visitors can purchase art and dining packages, with an option to add on a local fishing charter from Gold Coast/Ballina with Reveling (tour partners) that allows participants to catch and print a fish. They also sell selected prints online.

Arts in farms and wineries

Dashville (Arts Upper Hunter RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) is a privately owned bushland events venue and campground, located in Wonnarua country, at Belford on the edge of wine country in the Hunter Valley, NSW. It is a unique venue with a number of

undercover spaces and facilities, purpose built for hosting large events such as festivals, markets, corporate events and launches, with lots of space for breakout and outdoor team building activities. Dashville are the hosts for famed **music** and **multi-arts** festivals The Gum Ball and Dashville Skyline which are hallmark events for the region and have been running for nearly 20 years.

[Aboriginal Exhibitions Gallery at De Bortoli Rutherglen Estate](#) (Murray Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is a unique joint venture between the winery and Australian Aboriginal art collector, Hans Sip. Operating as a commercial art gallery housed within the Rutherglen cellar door complex, visitors to Rutherglen have free entry to curated exhibitions, presented quarterly.

[Hope Estate Winery, Hunter Valley](#) (Arts Upper Hunter RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) operates as an independent business that combines premium wine production with major **music** programming, attracting touring acts and creating wedding and event spaces. The venue demonstrates how wine tourism businesses can diversify into cultural programming whilst creating destination-level experiences that justify premium pricing and extended regional stays.

[Winmark Wines](#) (Arts Upper Hunter RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) operates an [art gallery and sculpture walk](#) aligned with its' winery **business**. It also hosts workshops with a featured artist Julianne Ross Allcorn. This integrated approach demonstrates how wine tourism can support **visual arts** whilst creating distinctive visitor experiences that differentiate the business. With a 4.8 Google rating, it won the Hunter Valley Cellar Door of the Year prize, confirming the point of difference in the competitive Hunter Valley wine region.

[Baygo Wine and Maze](#) (Arts Mid North Coast RADO, North Coast NSW DN) is a family-run **business** and farm that has gradually grown through hard work into a spectacular green space that can be shared and enjoyed by visitors. Bago Maze is the first and central element of the planned Bago Gardens, which will be developing and growing over the next few years. With regularly changing treasure hunt experiences, Baygo Wine and Maze won the 2022 NSW Landscape Architecture Award Winners for Tourism. They also create seasonal pop-up mazes in the surrounding fields which adds to the fun activities that can be experienced there.

[Rosby Wines and Gallery](#) (Arts OutWest RADO, Central West NSW DN) is another example of an independent **business** integrating vineyard operations with the **visual arts**. It includes an art gallery, art shop, sculpture garden and [art workshops](#), Rosby also hosts outdoor sculpture exhibition Sculptures in the Garden, showcasing outdoor artists from across Australia. Initiated by artist and owner Kay Norton-Knight, who was passionate about providing a platform for the exhibition and sale of sculptors' works, it is now in its 11th year and attracts around 5,000 visitors to the Mudgee region.

[Piccolo Farm](#) (Western Riverina Arts RADO, Riverina Murray NSW DN) is a fully functional farm using sustainable farming practices across its citrus orchard, fruit, vegetable and herb plantations, and small vineyard. The setting is a perfect environment for creative and artistic inspiration, offering a variety of events that bring in leading national and international artists, including ‘A Day in the Orchard’ arts and music festival, various music events, creative workshops, theatre and spoken word events.

Art and accommodation partnerships

[Wupa at Wanaruah](#) (Upper Hunter Arts RADO, Sydney Surrounds North DN) is part of the **not-for-profit** Ungooroo Aboriginal Corporation, and provides a range of products and services that leverage the talent of WUPA **visual artists**. One example is partnering with accommodation providers to place works for sale in hotels. The **Indigenous culture** organisation also presents the WUPA Art Trail across the Hunter region, featuring works from over 20 contemporary Aboriginal artists. Visitors can download [WUPA Art Trail map](#) and go exploring.

[Ace Hotel](#) (Sydney) is the Australian edition of a global hotel **business**, showcasing local culture through locally designed furniture, artist-in-residence programmes, and local **music** performances. This model demonstrates how accommodation providers can create authentic local cultural experiences whilst supporting emerging artists and contributing to destination cultural identity without requiring additional cultural infrastructure.

[Boketto](#) (Arts Northern Rivers RADO, North Coast NSW DN) is an example of a culturally-oriented boutique accommodation **business**. Located on 7 acres of land adjoining Yuraygir National Park at Brooms Head, it has been designed to honour the Japanese philosophy of Wabi-Sabi. Available for creative content shoots and private stays Boketto also holds [workshops](#) in collaboration with local and interstate artists.

[Art Series Hotels](#) (Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth) operate as independent accommodation **businesses** featuring artist-themed rooms with curated **visual arts** collections throughout. These hotels demonstrate how accommodation providers can differentiate through cultural programming whilst supporting contemporary Australian artists and creating distinctive urban cultural tourism products.

Further resources & templates



Kombi parade, Nimbin Mardi Grass Festival, Northern Rivers
Credit Destination NSW Photographer Richard Whitbread

10 Further resources & templates

Checklist of quick wins

Visibility and discoverability

- ☐ List your experience on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)
- ☐ Review your Google Business profile and check in has accurate hours, high quality photos and contact info
- ☐ Ensure the home page of your website has your address, opening hours and current activities, ideally in an easy to find section
- ☐ Add some keywords to your website that will help travellers find you (e.g. “ceramics workshops in Mudgee”)

Visitor engagement

- ☐ Create a simple flyer or webpage with practical info for visitors (parking, accessibility, facilities and nearby cafes)
- ☐ Publish a high-quality image of what your venue looks like from the street, ideally one featuring friendly faces and people engaging
- ☐ Write a blog post for your website and socials about a great day out for a visitor, that includes your experience along with cafes, restaurants, shops, experiences and routes that your ideal visitor would like (i.e. values-aligned experiences)
- ☐ Add a visitor book or comment wall, and encourage visitors to sign up to your email newsletter to stay in touch
- ☐ Select the best comments from your visitor book or surveys to publish as testimonials on your website and social media

Strategic positioning

- ☐ Set a tourism goal for the period ahead. Is your priority strengthening local community engagement, or are you ready for a deeper level of engagement with tourism?
- ☐ Review your upcoming calendar and consider your capacity to add a new visitor-friendly event, such as an open studio, artist talk, tour, short workshop or networking event
- ☐ Discuss with your team or colleagues what the right amount of visitor-friendly programming is right for you longer term – i.e. could you aim to have at least one visitor-friendly event or experience per season?
- ☐ Consider your target audience – including source market, demographics and visitor types (e.g. holiday makers or VFR – visiting friends and relatives)

Visitor-friendly experiences

- ☐ Consider whether you have capacity to make any experiences bookable in advance and access experience development assistance from Destination NSW via the NSW First Program
- ☐ Is there a hands-on or interactive element that you could develop to enhance visitor connection and attract more people? Is there something for kids and adults?
- ☐ Consider the best locations for visitors to take photos – and whether you could set more up, through public art, murals and/or lighting?

Collaborating

- ☐ Review whether your organisation has any existing relationships with cultural experiences, hospitality, local accommodation providers or tour operators – or whether these could be initiated?
- ☐ Consider whether you could be part of a bundled experience or tour – and what partners you might connect with
- ☐ Invite local tourism operators to preview events or exhibitions, and ensure they are receiving your communications e.g. your newsletters and social media updates
- ☐ Share high-quality images and simple descriptions of your experience for tourism partners to use
- ☐ Join local tourism association meetings or cross-sector working groups
- ☐ Ensure you're signed up for newsletters from tourism bodies such as Destination NSW and your local Destination Network.

Planning template to grow cultural tourism

Featuring artists

- ☐ Feature local artists or cultural experiences in your venue or event
- ☐ Commission local creatives for murals, performances, or storytelling
- ☐ Promote nearby cultural experiences in your guest info or website

Building cultural relationships

- ☐ Contact your local Regional Arts Development Organisation (RADO) to find artists aligned with your brand
- ☐ Ensure fair pay and clear contracts for artist collaborations
- ☐ Pilot a small-scale cultural partnership (e.g. live music at your venue or a pop-up exhibition)

Step 1: Identify your current engagement level

Which of the following best describes your current approach to cultural tourism?

- ☐ Community-first: Focused on local community and audiences, with some incidental visitor engagement
- ☐ Selective engagement: Occasional tourism-focused programming (e.g. workshops, festivals)
- ☐ Strategic partnership: Actively collaborating with tourism operators and planning for growth

Step 2: Define your goals

What are your top priorities for engaging with cultural tourism in the next period?

- ☐ Increase visitor numbers
- ☐ Generate new income streams
- ☐ Strengthen brand and reputation
- ☐ Build partnerships with others involved in cultural tourism
- ☐ Support local artists and creatives
- ☐ Other:

Is there a specific target you have in mind, such as increasing to a particular level or growing a particular segment?

Step 3: Assess your current assets

What do you already have in place?

- ☐ A physical venue or space that is accessible to visitors
- ☐ A website or online presence
- ☐ Listing on ATDW
- ☐ Accessibility and visitor information available online
- ☐ Upcoming events or exhibitions
- ☐ Bookable experiences or workshops
- ☐ Relationships with local tourism operators
- ☐ Marketing materials (flyers, social media, listings)

Step 4: Plan your actions

Use this table to identify quick wins and medium-term actions based on your strategy.

Focus area	Quick wins (1–3 months)	Medium-term actions (3–12 months)
Visibility & discoverability	List on ATDW, update Google profile, tag location online?	Develop SEO strategy, improve website, create photo assets?
Visitor experience	Add signage, visitor book, share local tips?	Create bookable experiences, train staff in visitor care?
Programming	Schedule open studio or artist talk?	Develop seasonal events or premium experiences?
Partnerships	Attend tourism meetings, invite operators to events?	Formalise collaborations, co-market with tourism partners?
Marketing	Share content on social media, use local hashtags?	Develop joint campaigns, bundle offers with other venues?
Revenue & sustainability	Trial donation box or entry fee?	Price experiences for sustainability, explore funding?

Step 5: Monitor and reflect

How will you track progress?

- ☐ Visitor numbers
- ☐ Online engagement (website traffic, social media)
- ☐ Income generated
- ☐ Feedback from visitors and partners
- ☐ Community impact

What does success look like?

Further resources

Helpful arts and cultural tourism links

National

[Tourism Australia](#) - promoting Australia as a destination to markets overseas. Its core role is to attract international visitors, support inbound tourism operators and develop marketing campaigns that position Australia globally.

- [Resources](#) - great site for industry resources and specialist programs, with practical information for developing, marketing and selling Australian tourism experiences.

[Australian Regional Tourism](#) - the peak body that represents regional tourism practitioners, functioning as a hub for collaboration, cooperation, ideas generation, knowledge sharing and networking.

[Cultural Attractions of Australia](#) - website lists the mainly metro-based venues, experiences and institutions across Australia that showcase the nation's arts, heritage and culture. CAO A is one of a number of segments included as part of Tourism Australia's Signature Experiences of Australia program.

[Australian Tourism Industry Council](#) - provides leadership and industry representation, advocating for the industry across important and relevant issues and managing national industry development programs, including the [Quality Tourism Framework \(QTF\)](#) which helps guide tourism operators to consistently deliver exceptional experiences, evolve their business and maintain the competitiveness of the visitor economy.

New South Wales

Destination NSW - the lead agency, champion and voice for the visitor economy within the NSW Government. DNSW has a range of programs and initiatives including:

- **NSW First** - DNSW's program to help visitor economy businesses to develop, promote and sell world-class experiences. NSW First shares practical insights for businesses via face-to-face workshops, webinars and online resources.
- **Content Library** - houses a collection of images, videos and editorial content showcasing destinations and experiences across Sydney and all regions of New South Wales.
- **Destination Networks** - link to the seven Destination Networks of regional NSW who coordinate destination management in their region, working closely with local government, tourism organisations and operators.
- **Business Events NSW** - promotes NSW as a premier destination for business events like conferences, meetings, and conventions. Its work includes marketing the state, targeting and bidding for global and domestic events, and providing support to event organisers.

NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2035 - guides cross-government and industry collaboration in NSW to support the visitor economy.

NSW Tourism Association - the peak body representing the visitor economy in New South Wales. Comprising tourism business members and associations, NSW Tourism Association is dedicated to advancing the interests of the tourism industry in government policy, supporting the industry, promoting excellence and driving economic growth through tourism.

Regional Arts NSW - a non-government, peak body organisation with the goal of creating a strong arts ecosystem across regional NSW. Supporting individual creative practitioners, local communities and arts organisations in regional NSW including the **Regional Arts Network** of RADOs in NSW.

Regional Night-Time Economy Program - aims to encourage local business collaboration and support the development of vibrant night-time economies in Regional NSW. Part of the 24 Hour Economy strategy.

Background to this resource

Since 2024 the NSW Regional Arts Network has strategically invested in cultural tourism

The Regional Arts Network (comprising fifteen Regional Arts Development Organisations) identified cultural tourism as a key focus area for 2024 and 2025. They agreed that cultural tourism is relevant across all areas of NSW, and that it would be timely to develop a state-wide regional strategy.

In 2024, RAN commissioned Patternmakers to collate existing information and data on the current level of cultural tourism activity in Regional NSW and produce a report. Patternmakers was also asked to investigate the extent of cultural tourism experiences not captured by other datasets.

[See the full 2024 research report »](#)

Research by RAN and Patternmakers in 2024 showed that arts and cultural tourism deserves stronger investment and support

In 2024, RAN and research agency Patternmakers conducted a scan of the literature and interviewed stakeholders involved in cultural tourism, including government agencies, industry bodies and operators. It collated available tourism listings from various sources into a new database for analysis.

Sources included the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW), Music NSW regional venue map, National Parks listings, and regional culture maps. Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADO) were invited to manually review the listings and add missing experiences active in their region.

The resulting database of over 3,200 cultural tourism experiences across regional NSW provides the largest picture of cultural tourism to date, and enables analysis of its scale, component parts and direction.

Acknowledgements

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The authors would like to acknowledge the many people and organisations involved in arts and cultural tourism in NSW, past and present.

Patternmakers acknowledges the traditional owners of the regions on which cultural tourism takes place. We recognise the role and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across time.

How was this resource developed?

In 2025, the NSW Regional Arts Network (RAN) commissioned this new set of resources to support arts and cultural tourism in regional NSW.

Working in collaboration with research agency Patternmakers and Destination NSW, and supported by Create NSW, it interviewed a range of stakeholders and gathered examples of how arts and cultural tourism is working in different communities around the State.

The authors also looked at existing resources, and how they could be updated or adapted to support arts and cultural tourism in future. This included:

- Destination NSW '[NSW First](#)' resources
- Arts NSW 'A Cultural Tourism Toolkit' (2016), which is no longer live, however a copy is available via [MGNSW](#)

The authors would like to acknowledge the many contributors to this resource. Thank you.

Questions?

If you have questions about this resource, or if you notice something requiring clarification, please contact:

Regional Arts NSW – www.regionalartsnsw.com.au

About the Regional Arts Network

The Regional Arts Network is a group of fifteen Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs), developed over the past 30 years with core funding from the NSW Government and through local Council support.

The RADOs provide services and leadership for sustainable arts and cultural development in regional NSW, including creating opportunities for creative professionals and strategic projects.

They include:

- Arts Mid North Coast
- Arts North West
- Arts Northern Rivers
- Arts OutWest
- Arts Upper Hunter
- Eastern Riverina Arts
- Murray Arts
- Orana Arts
- Outback Arts
- South Coast Arts
- South East Arts
- South West Arts
- Southern Tablelands Arts
- West Darling Arts
- Western Riverina Arts

About Patternmakers

Patternmakers is a social enterprise using research to bring about positive change. We develop evidence-based programs and strategies to help good causes grow. For any questions, please contact info@thepatternmakers.com.au.

About Regional Futures

Regional Futures encompasses statewide projects from the NSW Regional Arts Network, made up of 15 Regional Arts Development Organisations delivering sustainable arts and cultural development programs. In addition to the Arts and Cultural Tourism project, Regional Futures has also delivered *Artists in Volatile Landscapes* and *Horizons: Creative Industries Career Launchpad*.

For more information visit <https://regionalfutures.net.au/>

About Andrew Gray

Andrew Gray is a cultural leader with 30+ years' experience across Australia's creative industries. Former Executive Director of South East Arts, he has delivered award-winning festivals, led national cultural programs, and mentored hundreds of artists. He specialises in cultural tourism, strategic development, creative industries and strengthening regional creative communities.

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