

Art on Bundjalung Country

Arts Northern Rivers

11 Rural Street, Lismore. 02 6621 4433 | info@artsnorthernrivers.com.au

Arts / Health

Introduction

The Art on Bundjalung Country Project is an arts and health project delivered by artists to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living and working on Bundjalung Country. The project aims to improve health and wellbeing by connecting Aboriginal people to culture through creative art activities.

During community consultation and engagement 5 communities were identified during the 2018/19 project delivery. Within these visits, two communities identified a strong need to engage young people who are disadvantaged and at risk.

These community demonstrated that there is a need in the community to build and enhance health and wellbeing not only for the older generation but also for the younger generation. There has been concerns and issues around social inclusion and connection to culture and a feel that the youth are a key concern that reflect these issues.

Partners

Arts Northern Rivers
North Coast Primary Health Network
Lismore Regional Gallery
Department of Communication and the Arts (Indigenous Languages and Arts program)
University Centre for Rural Health (University of Sydney)
The Quad, Lismore
Lismore City Council

Objectives

A key aim of the project was to deliver a market opportunity for Aboriginal artists to sell work that had been created during the workshop program and also for the wider Aboriginal community to participate. In addition, a cultural program was developed to be included as part of the market opportunity – made possible through funding via the Federal Government’s Indigenous Languages and Arts program.

Goal

Provide opportunities for Aboriginal people across Northern NSW to explore better health and wellbeing through connection with cultural arts

Objectives

The Art on Bundjalung Country project established the following objectives to achieve this goal

Methods

Project Planning

- Meet with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stakeholder groups
 - Create co-design opportunities with community and stakeholders
 - Community champions / links to community
 - Engage and hold community meeting to identify community needs and protocols
- Plan Workshop Activity
 - Negotiate time, date and venue for art activity
- Promotion
 - Prepare promotional material and distribute through community via champions and advertising
- Resource
 - Scope workshop resources

Project Implementation

- Facilitators
 - Meet with Facilitators to scope workshop program
 - Orientation with Facilitators / communities
 - Meet with Facilitators to finalise workshop design
 - Identify training and development opportunities
- Workshop Delivery
- Market Opportunity
- Evaluation



Art on Bundjalung Country Weaving Workshop (Evans Head)

Photo: Kate Holmes



Art on Bundjalung Country – Market Event

Photo: Kate Holmes

Lessons Learned

Key Learnings

The project model has delivered some important outcomes for Aboriginal artists in the region – key amongst these are:

- Opportunities for Aboriginal communities to come together to socialise, share culture and learn
- Feedback from participants show these gatherings serve as important opportunities for community members to feel safe, valued and heard
- Skills development amongst Aboriginal participants are optimised when workshops are delivered by peers – based on feedback from participants
- Feedback from facilitators indicate an intuitive understanding of participants needs is key consideration in the delivery of workshops
- Training in the area of workshop preparation and delivery should be an on-going opportunity for those artists who wish to become facilitators
- Initial contact and consultation with targeted communities should be allowed more time to reveal needs of the community – which should then be factored in to workshop development
- It was felt that the time between some workshops and the market/sales opportunity was too long and that other sales opportunities could be explored in the lead up to the market event
- The project would benefit from developing evaluation tools earlier and with increased input from health stakeholders to ensure useful measurement and data collection relating to health outcomes



Art on Bundjalung Country – Market Opening Event

Aunty Dorrie Gordon

Photo: Kate Holmes



Art on Bundjalung Country – Market Event

Photo: Kate Holmes



Art on Bundjalung Country: Weaving workshop (Grafton).

Photo: Supplied

Impact/What's Next?

Impact

To improve connection to Aboriginal culture through community art activities
To develop business acumen and links to economic sustainability through community art activity
To develop knowledge and skills in the practice of art

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made in response to outcomes from the project and feedback and discussion with participants, facilitators, Project Manager and Steering Committee members.

- To present the final report to senior management of North Coast Primary Health Network
- To explore opportunity to extend funding from NCPHN to continue support for the Art on Bundjalung Country Project
- To explore arts funding options for the project to support activity in 2019/20
- To establish a sustainable funding model to support the annual presentation of the Art on Bundjalung Market
- To continue to develop training opportunities for Indigenous artists and arts workers who wish to develop workshop design and presentation skills
- To explore opportunities to market and sell work in the lead up to the market opportunity
- To work closely with University Centre for Rural Health to develop a bespoke evaluation tool for the project

Acknowledgements

The Art on Bundjalung Steering Committee

- Dr Andrew Binns (Jullums Lismore Aboriginal Medical Service)
- Brett Adlington (Lismore Regional Gallery)
- Emma Walke (University Centre for Rural Health)
- Dr Marion Tate & Troy Como (Bulgarr Ngaru Medical Aboriginal Corporation)
- Anne-Maree Parry (NCPHN Community Engagement)