

Creating Our Future: economic value and future success

Australia's arts and creativity are among our nation's most powerful assets and will play a critical role in Australia's future success. Results from the National Arts Participation Survey highlight the importance of arts and creativity to child development, education, local businesses and skills for the future. Previous research has shown the arts to be powerful drivers for regional, domestic and international tourism. Australians' strong and growing engagement with arts festivals and events prior to COVID-19 highlights the critical role for arts in reinvigorating tourism and our economy.

Arts and creativity in child development, education and young people's lives

Young Australians value the arts and are highly engaged – four in five of those aged 15–24 attend, two in three creatively participate and four in ten give time or money to the arts. There is a reciprocal relationship between young people and the arts: a connection with the arts sets them up for success and in turn, they play a critical role in the future of the nation.

There is a substantial body of evidence about the value of arts and creativity in education, including the power of arts activities to help students develop personal, social and cognitive skills that transfer to and improve performance in a wide range of academic and social situations.³²

Footnote numbers correspond to those in the full *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participation Survey 2019 Report*.

32 This includes: Australia Council (forthcoming), *Creative Leadership in Learning: Cultivating creativity in schools*; Dunn J, Bundy P, Jones A, Stinson M, Hassall L, Penton J, Lazaroo N, and Le L 2019, *Creating Critical Connections through the Arts: The Y Connect Report. Examining the impact of arts-based pedagogies and artist/teacher partnerships on learning and teaching in one Australian secondary school*, Griffith Institute for Educational Research; A New Approach 2019, *Transformative: Impacts of Cultural and Creativity*, Insight Series, Report No. 2; Ewing R 2010, *The Arts and Australian Education: Realising Potential*; Martin BH and Calvert A 2018, 'Socially Empowered Learning in the Classroom: Effects of Arts Integration and Social Enterprise in Schools', *Journal of Teaching and Learning*, Vol. 11, No. 2; Jefferson M and Anderson M 2017, *Transforming schools: Creativity, critical reflection, communication, collaboration*.

The National Arts Participation Survey results show that Australians increasingly recognise the value of arts and creativity in the lives and education of children and young people. While Australians increasingly recognise positive impacts of arts and creativity in a range of areas, the most substantial increase since 2016 is the proportion of Australians who agree ***the arts and creativity impact child development*** (63%) – up 13 percentage points from 2016.³³ Additionally, the proportion of Australians who agree ***the arts should be an important part of education*** (73%) is up by 12 percentage points.

When it comes to public and private investment in the arts, the priority with the highest level of support among Australians is access to ***arts and creativity in the lives of children and young people to support their learning and development*** – 74% ranked this in their top three investment priorities.

Creative skills for the future workforce

Australians also increasingly agree that ***the arts stimulate our minds*** (64%, up nine percentage points from 55% in 2016) and ***impact our ability to think creatively and develop new ideas*** (62%, up from 54% in 2016). One in two Australians agree that the arts have a big or very big impact on ***building creative skills that will be necessary for the future workforce*** (47%, new in 2019). Further, one in eight Australians are motivated to attend the arts ***to develop skills for education, training or work*** (13%), including more than one in five young Australians aged 15–24 (22%).

This is in line with the growing body of evidence that identifies creative skills as essential to workforces of the future. In recent years, multiple predictions about workforces of the future – both Australian and international studies – have identified increasing need for creative thinking and skills.³⁴ Creativity enables adaptability, experimentation and innovation. Creative skills have been integral to the fast-growing industries in Australia over the past decade³⁵ and prior to COVID-19, the creative economy was growing at a rate nearly twice that of the Australian workforce.³⁶

As well as fuelling our talent pipeline and job growth, investment in arts and creativity can cultivate new ideas, technologies and cutting edge innovation. One in four Australians rank investment in ***art that pushes boundaries and drives innovation*** in their top three priorities for public or private investment in the arts (26%).

33 For consistency with the 2019 methodology, 2016 figures are reported for the online sample only and may differ from those published in the previous National Arts Participation Survey report, *Connecting Australians*.

34 For example: World Economic Forum 2016, *The future of jobs: Employment, skills and workforce strategy for the fourth industrial revolution*, World Economic Forum, Switzerland; Bakshi H, Downing J, Osborne M and Scheider P 2017, *The Future of Skills: Employment in 2030*, Pearson and Nesta, UK; Pratchett L, Hu R, Walsh M and Tuli S 2017, *The Knowledge City Index: A tale of 25 cities in Australia*, University of Canberra, Faculty of Business, Government and Law; Foundation for Young Australians 2017, *The new work smarts: Thriving in the new work order*, Foundation for Young Australians, Melbourne.

35 Australian Bureau of Communications and Arts Research (BCAR) 2019, *Creative skills for the Future Economy*.

36 Cunningham and McCutcheon 2018, *The Creative Economy in Australia: Cultural production, creative services and income*.

The value of arts to local businesses and their vital role in reinvigorating the economy

Arts events boost tourism and hospitality. Australians increasingly recognise the impacts of the arts on **bringing customers to local businesses** (41%, up nine percentage points from 32% in 2016).

Live attendance at arts events and festivals was booming prior to COVID-19, up nearly ten percentage points since 2016 (to 68%). This included 8.7 million Australians who **attended an arts festival** in 2019 (42%, also up by ten percentage points). Attending arts festivals and events is a way of life for many Australians.

Arts festivals and events are powerful drivers for regional, domestic and international tourism.³⁷ For example, the 2019 Adelaide Festival generated an estimated \$76.8 million in associated spending for the state with 19,046 visitors coming from interstate or overseas for 141,258 bed nights.³⁸ Both domestic and international arts tourism were growing prior to COVID-19 and arts tourists are high value tourists who tend to stay longer and spend more. From large scale festivals and events, to visits to artist workshops and studios, the arts draw domestic tourists to both metropolitan and regional locations and to unique offerings in different parts of Australia.³⁹

Arts and creativity will be critical as we seek to bring life back into our cities, regions, culture and economy. Creativity connects us and will be vital to our recovery from this pandemic and our nation's future success.

37 Australia Council 2020, Domestic Arts Tourism: Connecting the country. Australia Council 2018, *International Arts Tourism: Connecting cultures*. Tourism Research Australia 2014, *Events: Drivers of Regional Tourism*. Australian Government: Austrade, Canberra.

38 'Festival stages a big spend,' *Adelaide Advertiser*, 16 May 2019, p.14.

39 Australia Council 2020, Domestic Arts Tourism: Connecting the country. Australia Council 2018, *International Arts Tourism: Connecting cultures*.

Such events are absolutely essential for kids as it provides them a platform to experience different ideas and concepts in a playful manner.

Focus group participant

Arts and creativity provide value to our individual lives and our economy and help to build more cohesive communities. It's important to support the role of the arts and creativity in Australian public life and policy making.

Focus group participant