Cultivating Creativity:
A study of the Sydney Opera House’s Creative Leadership in Learning program in schools
Acknowledgements

The Australia Council for the Arts proudly acknowledges all First Nations Peoples and their rich culture of the country we now call Australia. We pay respect to Elders past and present. We acknowledge First Nations Peoples as Australia’s First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands and waters on which we live.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of First Nations Peoples and communities to Australian life, and how this continuation of 75,000 years of unbroken storytelling enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards ensuring an equal voice and the equality of outcomes in all aspects of our society.

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“this is what the program teaches you, we are all creative.”

School principal

“We’ve become very mindful of the need to be ready for this future world, this unknown future world ... and so creativity is such a key skill.”

School principal

“It was great to just spark a new love of learning in them, and not stick to our old ways of teaching and find those creative paths that we can take with them.”

Teacher

“I have seen the program take giant risks, and I have seen it change young people’s lives.”

Artist
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive summary</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A partnership between the Australia Council for the Arts and Sydney Opera House</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why it matters</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The report</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part One: About the program</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The overall structure of the program and its core components</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has the program delivered?</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part Two: Impacts of the program</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts for teachers</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts for students</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts for families and community</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on creativity capabilities within schools</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts for artists</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The changing relationship between schools and the Opera House</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part Three: Navigating challenges and factors for success

Navigating the inflexibility of the school system 48
Ensuring buy-in and understanding the broader relevance of creativity 49
Building the sustainability and reach of the program 51
The intentional ambiguity and flexibility of the program 52
School culture and leadership 55
Connecting to wider school objectives 56
Future focused skills for tomorrow’s workforces 57

Part Four: The strategic context

How the program developed 62
The Creative Leadership in Learning story 62

The financial structure of the program 68
Financial structure from the Opera House perspective 68
Financial structure from the schools’ perspectives 69

The future for the program 72
Future considerations for schools 72
Future considerations for the Opera House 73

Methodology 76

Appendices 78

Appendix One: Summary of school involvement with the Creative Leadership in Learning program 78
Appendix Two: Artists involved in the Creative Leadership in Learning Program 83
Appendix Three: Other examples of school-focussed arts and creativity programs 83
Foreword

Creativity is innate to humanity and is the wellspring of culture. We are all connected through arts and creativity. Our arts embody individual and collective stories, histories, identities and help us understand what it means to be human.

We are living in a time of great disruption and change. This year, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, our theatres, galleries, museums and venues closed for the health and safety of artists, audiences and the community. The same public health requirements compelled schools to adapt to new modes of teaching at previously unimaginable speed. Beyond this, our future will be shaped in unpredictable ways by the impacts of climate change, geopolitical shifts, and our changing relationship with technology.

*Cultivating Creativity: A study of the Sydney Opera House’s Creative Leadership in Learning program in schools* comes at a moment when the need for agile and imaginative thinking is critical. The outcome of a partnership between the Sydney Opera House and the Australia Council for the Arts, this report offers powerful evidence for the ways in which creativity will help us – and our young people – thrive in uncertain times.

The Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) program uses the artistic and creative resources of the Opera House to embed creativity across school communities. Conducted by the Australia Council over two years, the research shows that CLIL has the capacity to dramatically increase student engagement, equipping students and the teaching community with the skills and capabilities to meet difference, difficulty and the previously unimaginable with confidence. The program is a powerful catalyst for school transformation, embedding a culture of creativity and risk-taking in schools, as well as increasing the wellbeing of educators and enhancing social cohesion within school communities.
Cultivating Creativity adds to a growing body of evidence that demonstrates the importance of creativity for developing healthy, happy and resilient citizens replete with the technical knowledge and creative thinking capabilities required for the jobs of the future. It also charts new and exciting directions for cultural organisations and suggests new professional opportunities for artists and creative work.

The insights contained in Cultivating Creativity will help shape 21st century cultural organisations. The changing nature of the Opera House’s relationships with schools from transactional to long-term engagement has already created new pathways for the wider community to access the Opera House, its artists and ideas. This commitment to creative learning will be expanded through a new centre for creativity at the Opera House, due to open to the community in 2021.

Similarly, the Australia Council is deeply engaged with changing contexts for artistic work, seeking new intersections between the creative industries and other sectors. Its Arts Futures research brings together a body of activity exploring the evolving environment for arts and culture and society. It highlights the important opportunities – cultural, social and economic – that an increased valuing of creativity could afford to all Australians.

Cultivating Creativity points to new relationships between imagination, experimentation, learning and community that are core to the future of cultural work, of education, and our collective wellbeing.

Fiona Winning  
Director, Programming  
Sydney Opera House

Dr Wendy Were  
Executive Director, Advocacy and Development  
Australia Council for the Arts
Executive summary

Creativity connects us and is vital to our nation’s success. Research repeatedly identifies creative skills as essential to the 21st century professional skillset and workforces of the future. Creativity enables adaptability, experimentation and innovative thinking, as well as empathy and human connection in an increasingly automated and polarised world.

Creativity also plays a vital role in child development and education. Arts and creative activities can help students develop personal, social and cognitive skills that transfer to a wide range of academic and social situations and improve performance in their future careers.

Focused on creativity, Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) is an innovative Sydney Opera House program that embeds creativity in schools.

A flexible three-year program, CLIL brings the artistic resources and creative processes of the Opera House into the school ecosystem by increasing creativity, communication, collaboration, and curiosity in teaching and learning.

The program is a combination of professional learning for school principals and teachers, and collaborative creative projects between students and Opera House artists, developed in the classroom or online over a 20-week period.

CLIL is not intended as a one-size-fits-all model delivered the same way in each school. Instead, the program is delivered via a tailored approach underpinned by a methodological framework in each learning environment. This deep, longer-term and co-constructed method is seen as part of its in-built creativity and value for schools.

Within school communities, CLIL aims to increase the capacity for creative learning, supporting schools to develop the skills and knowledge required to increase engagement, build resilience, and equip students and teachers for future social and professional contexts. The program plays a critical role in demonstrating how creative skills and processes are innate, but often need to be re-learnt or strengthened so that innovative thinking and collaboration can flourish.

More broadly, the program supports a shift in the Opera House’s relationship with schools, from one that is largely transactional to one that builds capacity and creativity over time and which makes the most of all that the Opera House and its people can offer the education sector.
This research report documents the results of a collaborative research partnership between the Sydney Opera House and the Australia Council for the Arts. The research aimed to understand the impact of the CLIL program within schools on both learning and wider community engagement. It also explored the relevance of the program and the application of the lessons learned to the wider education and creative sectors.

Drawing on interviews conducted with principals and teachers from participating schools, and data co-created with the SOH CLIL team and its artists, the research found that CLIL had a wide range of positive impacts.

**Impacts for teachers**

For teachers, the program has increased engagement with their teaching practice, enlivening the curriculum and leading to new flexible experiences with students. Through participation in CLIL’s ‘teacher professional learning’, teachers have enjoyed increased support and collaboration between colleagues, resulting in improved health and wellbeing. Teachers feel their engagement with CLIL has given them the opportunity to take risks and experiment with new approaches, allowing them to apply creativity and its processes in unexpected subject areas. Teachers talked about how CLIL has significantly repositioned the way they practise and understand their teaching. CLIL’s creative intervention in schools has also led to new opportunities for leadership and mentoring, and an enhanced sense of trust within the classroom.

**Impacts for students**

Teachers, principals and CLIL artists also described the positive impacts of the program on students, reporting improved engagement and increased excitement for learning. Engaging with creativity at school has encouraged students to take risks, share their thoughts, and try new ideas. Additionally, a perceived growth in confidence was connected to the encouragement of risk-taking through creativity. Principals and teachers spoke about how applying creativity has the potential to impact the whole child – academically, socially and emotionally.

**Impacts for families and communities**

CLIL has led to increased parental engagement with both their children’s schoolwork and with the school more broadly, enhancing a shared sense of community. Several interviewees spoke about the pride families felt seeing their children perform, especially during CLIL’s annual *Amplified* festival at the Opera House.

**Impacts on creative capabilities within schools**

Within schools, CLIL has changed the meaning of creativity and its significant potential for learning across a range of academic subjects, not only those typically associated with the arts. The program is enabling schools to spark a conversation with families, students and other educators about the value of creativity in building new skills such as resilience and adaptability, which will be valued in a new, complex world of work.
Impacts for artists

For participating artists, CLIL has presented new horizons and stimuli for creative practice. Artists have experienced new contexts for collaboration, and even new concepts of what artistic collaboration might mean. For some, the program has created a new site for their artistic work, taking their studio to the classroom and, with that, opening a range of novel possibilities for producing work. For many artists, CLIL has also provided a new professional context for their practice, and an important new source of income.

The changing relationship between schools and the Opera House

CLIL has also promoted a new relationship between schools and the Opera House that is based on collaboration and a connection that lasts over time. Previously, students might have just come to the Opera House to see a show, but CLIL has engaged schools in far more meaningful and enduring ways. The program has increased students’ sense of confidence regarding their own creative capabilities as well as their sense of familiarity with the Opera House. For many who might not have previously attended a performance, CLIL has cultivated a feeling of belonging and connection with this icon of Sydney cultural life.

This enhanced sense of trust between schools, students and the Opera House is a key outcome of the CLIL program, particularly given the program’s efforts to help bridge the educational and creative sectors. Some schools describe the Opera House as becoming an extension of, or resource for, the school. Meanwhile, the Opera House is creating new, engaged relationships with communities, and audiences that will play an important role in the development of civic and professional skills for the citizens of the future.

Navigating challenges

So far, the program has had to navigate various challenges, including an inflexible school system, ensuring that key people understand the relevance and purpose of the program, and building sustainability and reach beyond the initial three-year partnership with schools.

A further challenge, identified by principals, teachers and the CLIL team, is the intentionally ambiguous and flexible nature of the CLIL program. There is uncertainty around the degree to which CLIL is a fixed model or something that can be tailored to the individual context and needs of the school.

A program like CLIL also challenges an institution like the Opera House in many ways. While the creative projects in schools often prioritise creative process and school needs, the schools’ annual performances at the Opera House, as part of the Amplified festival, must conform to relatively strict production schedules and large-scale venue requirements.
Factors for success

There are many factors that contribute to the success of CLIL within schools. These include: the school’s culture and leadership (the less risk averse a school culture or principal, the more positive the results), the degree to which the program connects to wider school objectives, and the degree to which a school is focused on the skills required for future workforces. At the Opera House, CLIL has been enabled by a culture of experimentation and trust in the program’s early positive implementation.

Looking to the future

Far from working in isolation, CLIL is only one example of how previously performance-focused cultural organisations are moving into educational work, and reimagining themselves as community hubs of creative activity and/or creative specialists active in building civic capacity.

However, the future of CLIL will require ongoing exploration of the program’s business model, and consideration of how to balance the twin needs of flexibility and standardisation. This is a question of quality, and one that sits at the heart of wider questions regarding how CLIL and similar cultural programs might expand while remaining dynamic, alive, and responsive to community needs.

Through a willingness to take risks and remain open to true collaboration off-site, the Opera House has been able to move very successfully towards more community-engaged work. As the Opera House advances the value of creative approaches for negotiating times of opportunity, challenge and change, the insights presented in this report should be considered highly relevant – both for the CLIL program, and for the broader educational and cultural sectors.
Introduction

At its simplest, Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) is a three-year program for schools focussed on creativity, delivered by the Sydney Opera House. It offers a combination of professional learning for teachers and creative projects for students delivered by practising artists.

In reality, the program is much more complex. Including a pilot with four schools in 2015, 16 schools have worked with the Opera House to co-construct the program to address their individual context and needs. Between 2017 and 2019, eight schools were enrolled with CLIL, and nearly 500 teachers and more than 2,000 students were engaged in the project.1

The students, teachers and artists have created works as diverse as a reconfigured classroom, a puppet-making workstation, an absurdist theatre performance, songs and films, and maps and murals. These works tackle themes such as environmental sustainability, belonging, identity and migration. In one school the program culminated in a three-week ‘Takeover’ of the school site and timetable to enable students to focus on passion projects.

The impacts of CLIL have been many and varied, and include:

— **Impacts on the teachers, students and families involved.** These include increased engagement in teaching and learning, increased collaboration, risk taking and confidence, increased connectivity between schools and local communities, and new leadership and mentoring roles.

— **Impacts on the creative capabilities of the CLIL schools.** These include teachers’ understanding of their own and others’ creativity, how creativity can be applied in a school context and how to embed it within teaching practice, and how creativity can support the strategic goals of schools.

— **Impacts on the relationship between the CLIL schools and the Opera House.** These include developing a collaborative partnership between schools and the Sydney Opera House, with the Opera House brand representing quality and instilling trust in the capacity to deliver. Schools view the Opera House as having significant expertise in creativity and the ability to bridge the creative and education sectors. For communities that might not otherwise have felt comfortable visiting this iconic building on Sydney Harbour, the program is developing a sense of belonging to and ownership over this culturally significant place.

The Opera House developed CLIL as part of their Children, Families and Creative Learning (CFCL) workstream. The aim was to support a shift in the Opera House’s relationship with schools from one that was essentially transactional to one that builds capacity and creativity over time, and makes the most of all the Opera House and its people can offer the education sector.

1 These eight schools, enrolled in the years between 2017 and 2019, are the focus of this report.
A partnership between the Australia Council for the Arts and Sydney Opera House

This research report documents the results of a collaborative research partnership, between the Opera House and the Australia Council for the Arts, which aims to understand the CLIL program in two ways:

— As an intrinsic case study, which documents and evaluates CLIL against its own objectives, to understand how it has developed and what it has achieved.
— As an instrumental or thematic case study, which explores the relevance of the program and the lessons learnt from it to the wider cultural sector and to the education sector.

For the Australia Council, the CLIL program is an example of changing professional contexts for artistic production, the contributions that artists make in community settings, and the value of creative approaches in schools. For the Opera House, this research is a key opportunity to better understand and communicate the impacts of the CLIL program, and to consider future directions for program development.

Why it matters

With its focus on creativity, education and social engagement, this research contributes to a large and growing body of literature that demonstrates the immense value of creativity, connection and engagement to 21st century skills and the future of both educational and cultural institutions.

There is growing evidence of the power of the arts to teach core subjects, to improve both short-term and long-term academic outcomes, and of the effectiveness of creative interdisciplinary learning for rehearsing and preparing for ‘real world’ encounters and problems. Research also suggests the need for schools to transform themselves, developing deeper, more critical and creative learning environments that are relevant to contemporary social demands.

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Alongside this, the growth of those employed in creative occupations is rapidly accelerating, growing at almost double the rate of other occupations between 2011 and 2016. This demand for creative skills is expected to increase as the trend to the automation of goods and services continues. In an ever more volatile and uncertain world, challenges will become increasingly complex, as will the ideas needed to solve them. It follows that the jobs of the future will require an agile, empathetic and creative-thinking workforce with high level technical and equally high-capacity imaginative thinking skills to best make use of their knowledge.

Research has shown that creative methodologies are the strongest way to explicitly teach empathy, collaboration and imaginative thinking skills. Creative-based pedagogies are particularly valuable for ‘at risk’ students, since they increase self-esteem, improve communication skills, provide a sense of achievement and wellbeing and increase feelings of connection to teachers and the community.

CLIL takes place within the context of this evidence base and its insights into the needs of future citizens and societies. Accordingly, CLIL’s interest in creativity is not as a specialised subject, such as music or dance, but as an approach that might be threaded throughout the curriculum, applied in interdisciplinary contexts and understood to have value as a mode of problem-solving, program design and achieving social connection in the community.

This research has clear importance, then, for schools (illustrating effective pedagogies) and for the arts sector (scoping new sites of creative practice). It is also useful for reflecting on the future of cultural organisations, their approaches to program development, and their potential relationships with communities beyond those who self-identify with the arts.

The report

To explore the program and its learnings, this research draws on two main sources of data:

— interviews with principals and teachers from CLIL schools; and
— data co-created using an action research approach with the Opera House CLIL team and its freelance artists (see page 76 for a more detailed methodology).

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

**Part One: About the program**, including the program structure and number of schools involved.

**Part Two: Impacts of the program** on teachers, students, families and communities, the creative capacity of participating schools, and on the relationship between schools and the Opera House.

**Part Three: Navigating challenges and factors for success**, considering key themes identified by the research.

**Part Four: The wider strategic context** and the future of CLIL.

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Artist Lilly Blue working with Lansvale Public School. Credit: Anna Zhu.
Part One: About the program

The Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) brochure describes the program as:

"an immersive program that harnesses creativity and artistic practice to leverage the full potential of what the Sydney Opera House has to offer, engaging with the education sector and encouraging schools to see the House as their own dynamic learning environment."  

CLIL is not intended as a one-size-fits-all model, delivered the same way in each school. Indeed, as this research demonstrates, the co-constructed and at times bespoke nature of the program is part of its in-built creativity and value to schools. The ability to tailor the approach to each learning environment has been identified by schools as the most important aspect of their involvement, enabling schools to get the most out of the partnership experience. With a strong emphasis on formal and informal reflection, the program has also developed over time in an iterative way, incorporating learning and feedback from those participating in and delivering the program.

However, this flexible and developing structure has made the program difficult for some to fully grasp, both within and outside the Opera House. The program’s flexibility also makes it challenging to succinctly describe what CLIL is without losing a sense of its intentional creativity. Analysis of how individual schools have co-created the program to meet school need is included throughout the report.

The overall structure of the program and its core components

The CLIL program is designed to operate over three years. It is built around two core activities delivered in most schools each year:

1. Teacher professional learning using the Sydney Opera House Creativity Framework
2. 20-week creative projects with professional artists.

Figure 1 provides a simplified model of the program and how it operates over the three years.

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Figure 1: A simplified model of the Creative Leadership in Learning program

**Year 1**

- **Ignition Day** – focus question designed
- **Teacher professional learning** – based on the Creativity Framework
- **Creative project with artist** – culminating in a performance
- **Reflection and review** – planning for the following year

**Engagement with the Sydney Opera House**

**Year 2**

- **Teach professional learning** – based on the Creativity Framework
- **Creative project with artist** – culminating in a performance
- **Reflection and review** – planning for the following year

**Engagement with the Sydney Opera House**

**Year 3**

- **Teach professional learning** – based on the Creativity Framework
- **Creative project with artist** – culminating in a performance
- **Reflection and review** – planning for the following year

**Engagement with the Sydney Opera House**

**The Focus Question**

The focus question is unique to each school and is developed by the teachers and principals who participate in the Ignition Day. This is an initial day-long workshop with the CLIL team where participants work through the Creativity Framework to focus on and define the challenge the school is trying to address through their involvement with the program.

The focus question articulates the school’s challenge, and is intended to underpin all strategic and pedagogical decisions as the school moves through the program, as well as to provide a guide for the school and CLIL team to evaluate progress and understand impact. The question is sometimes a provocative statement, but serves the same purpose of driving all activity across the three years.

Examples of these focus questions (or statements), and the school challenge they frame, include:

1. ‘You’re not the Boss of Me.’
   - **Challenge:** How to foster student-led learning where students are encouraged to follow their passions and learn according to a path defined by their individual needs and ambitions, rather than defined by the structures of the school.

2. ‘Together we educate the whole child.’
   - **Challenge:** How to broaden understanding of education within the school community from a narrow focus on traditional academic knowledge to include future focussed skills and a holistic understanding of student well-being.

3. ‘What does a flexible learning environment look like in our place/school?’
   - **Challenge:** How to develop flexible ways of teaching that offer multiple and inclusive ways for students to engage depending on their individual needs and abilities.
1. Teacher professional learning and the Sydney Opera House Creativity Framework

Teacher professional learning is provided to a small group of teachers over a series of masterclasses or learning labs. It is usually delivered across five two-day sessions in terms two, three and four of the school year, but is sometimes condensed or adapted depending on the needs of and practicalities at the school. The fully accredited teacher professional learning is delivered by the Opera House’s Creative Learning Specialist, who leads the CLIL program, or one of the professional artists engaged by the Opera House. It is structured around the Sydney Opera House Creativity Framework.

The Creativity Framework aims to shed light on the creative process and articulate it in such a way that it becomes accessible for and teachable to educators, who can then embed it within their own classroom practice. It was developed by the Opera House team in conjunction with academics, teachers and artists, drawing on a range of research and creative practice from the sector. The framework is written as a sequence of seven processes but is intended to be lived in a more dynamic, recursive way (see below).

The teacher professional learning, using the Creativity Framework as a structure, aims to equip participating teachers with a theoretical understanding of creativity and practical tools and to embed these within teaching practice and classrooms.

The Creativity Framework\footnote{Summarised from: Sydney Opera House 2017, Creative Leadership in Learning: Sydney Opera House program overview and Creativity Framework.}

1. Prepare: tools and pathways
The creative process requires preparation, from its leaders as much as its participants. These leaders must prepare mind and body, so that both are ready to launch into a creative journey. They will also need to prepare the space, materials and organisational structure.

2. Buy-in: presence and enthusiasm
Buy-in is about getting the participants to want to be there with you and the subject material. It is about developing a presence of body and mind and enthusiasm for what is to come.

3. Imagine: the fertile unknown
This part of the framework is about exploring ideas through artistic and imaginative processes. It is about unbridled exploration, with less focus on outcome and more focus on process.

4. Question: analysis, investigation, revelation
Through an ongoing process of questioning, participants actively create their own understanding. Through questioning what has occurred in the creative process participants construct meaning, make connections and set a path forward. This section of the framework is not about reflecting or looking back to understand what has happened, but rather grappling with the content to develop new ideas with which to play.
5. Make: forging form and content
Making is about taking the exploration phase of the creative process and giving the emerging artwork clear shape and form. This is an iterative process where the shape and form emerge through commitment to the key ideas. Making is about editing out the redundant materials and focussing on what is most pertinent.

6. Show: commitment, framing, judgement
Showing is both the end product of a process and a pedagogical tool to refine an artwork throughout the journey. The process of participants showing their work to an audience requires risk and courage, and also involves framing and judgement. Exploring how to control the impact of showing and performing across a process heightens Buy-in and an embodied understanding of the content. It also builds a sense of ensemble.

7. Reflect: making meaning and memories
Reflecting is making sense of the bigger objectives and context, based on reflections from the experience of creating, and processing those experiences into long lasting memories.

As part of CLIL’s ongoing process of adjustment, the framework has been refined for 2020, with the ‘Prepare’ stage removed and ‘Collaboration’ added after ‘Buy-in’.

Teacher Professional Learning workshop led by artist Sarah Vyne Vassallo. Credit: Daniel Boud.
2. 20-week Creative projects with artists

Creative projects with artists make up the second core activity of CLIL, usually delivered across term three of the school year.

Each school is paired with a professional artist, who works alongside one or two of the teachers who also undertake the teacher professional learning and a group of students. Depending on the school, student groups can range from 15–90 people, and can be made up of students from one year or from across the whole school. The artists come from a range of backgrounds and art forms, including film, photography, theatre, puppetry and music.

The teachers, students and artist partner in a creative endeavour that brings the Creativity Framework to life, enabling teachers to put their teacher professional learning into practice and to witness and experience the creative practice of the artists with whom they are working.

The creative project is designed collaboratively by the teachers, artist and students. The project uses an Opera House performance as a springboard to create a new original performance or artwork that can connect to the curriculum, either directly or indirectly, and can also respond to the school’s focus question. The relative importance of each of these elements varies for each project. At times the projects directly respond to the focus question; at other times the connection is less obvious. For some the project is a direct response to a performance at the Opera House. For some schools an explicit connection to the curriculum is vital, for others less so. The balance between these elements is created through the planning process with the school leadership and the Creative Learning Specialist.

For examples of creative projects and/or focus questions, see the section on Connecting to wider school objectives (page 56); the case study on the Takeover (page 40); and the summary of school involvement in Appendix One (page 78).

The students who participate in the creative project have an intense and immersive experience that builds towards a final creative output and performance. So far, most of these performances have taken place at the Opera House, often combining presentations from more than one CLIL school, and including friends and family in the audience. At the end of the three years the schools perform at the Opera House as part of Amplified: A festival of creative learning.

The goal of the Amplified festival is hugely important for the creative projects, acting as a catalyst for the creation of students’ original works. This is a core part of the creative projects process. It is also a significant challenge, since it is difficult to know in advance when performances will be planned and what they will be. With so many stakeholders involved, including the Opera House with its strict production schedules and venue availabilities, CLIL teams and their freelance artists often have to be extremely responsive – both to the availability of work as produced in the schools and to the processes and demands of the Opera House.
Creative Leadership in Learning in the time of COVID-19

From March 2020, due to restrictions on gathering associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, theatres were closed across Australia and all school teaching was moved online.

CLIL responded rapidly to these changes, its artists quickly workshopping new approaches while working remotely and delivering these to schools through online conferencing software. COVID-19 was in many ways a test of the program’s creativity and responsiveness – the very things it was aiming to teach.

Artists developed creative workshops that allowed for innovation within the digital environment. Initially, students maintained connection with their schools and one another through engagement in the program online, while later the program adopted a hybrid delivery, operating both online and in schools. Some artists found the online experience brought them closer and provided an opportunity to share teaching methods, where normally they would be working individually across different schools.

One effect of COVID-19, however, was the cancellation of the Amplified festival for 2020, since organisers felt that the importance of that event occurring within the physical space of the Opera House was huge. While moving CLIL online maintained a sense of connection and playful experimentation in new digital environments, the online world could not stand in for the experience of performing at the Opera House.

This points to one of the productive paradoxes of CLIL. While the Opera House is keen for the program to involve new communities, and make these new communities feel at home in the space, part of the allure of the program for students, parents and schools is the ways in which the Opera House represents ‘high culture’. The fact that the building is potentially intimidating and represents ‘excellence’ contributes to the sense of value that participating schools extract from the program.
Throughout the three years of CLIL, the participating schools engage with the Opera House in a variety of ways. For example, the creative project is intended to connect with the art form and/or content of one of the performances in the Opera House’s broader schools program, with the aim that the performance is a stepping off point for the creative project.

Classes from the participating schools often attend other shows from the Opera House schools program through the year. The schools are also encouraged to access the Opera House’s Digital Creative Learning program and to participate in real and virtual tours of the Opera House, exploring themes such as First Nations connections, the design of the building and environmental sustainability. They are usually offered a range of other ‘behind the scenes’ opportunities such as Q&A sessions with Opera House specialists or the artists behind the shows.

The CLIL program also has ambitions to connect with families and the wider community. This happens in a variety of ways depending on the context of the school. Across all schools, families provide vital support that enables students to participate in the creative projects and are a key part of the audience for student performances at school and at the Opera House.12

In some schools, families and community members have been active participants in the creative projects, being interviewed by students or working alongside them in their creative project. In one school, teachers have been trying out some of the creative exercises with their parent committees. In another, families and the wider community have been involved in framing the focus question for the school.

Long-term engagement and collaboration between participating schools and the Opera House is central to the program. CLIL is designed as a three-year process, with formal debrief and reflection built into the end of each year ahead of planning for the following year.

As they get further into the program, schools are encouraged to take ownership of how the learning from CLIL is embedded through the wider school. And although the program is designed to take place over three years, the first cohort of schools (which began in 2017) are all now continuing their work with the Opera House beyond this initial period.

The program is led by the Creative Learning Specialist at the Opera House, who sits within the Children, Families and Creative Learning team. This team is made up of the Head of Children, Families and Creative Learning, a senior and associate producer, and a producer and co-ordinator for Digital Creative Learning, as well as the Creative Learning Specialist.

A part time co-ordinator was employed for several months to support the delivery of CLIL, and also worked part time on this research (see Methodology on page 76 for more). However, this position no longer exists.13

The program employs a range of professional artists who deliver the creative projects in schools, as well as some of the teacher professional learning. These artists are employed as freelancers rather than as full-time members of the CLIL team.

13 Sydney Opera House 2018, Sydney Opera House Performing Arts Portfolio Structure (internal presentation document).
Part One: About the program

Between 2017 and 2019, eight schools were enrolled in the Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) program.

The first cohort of five schools started in 2017, another school joined in 2018 and two more in 2019 (see Figure 2 for more information). Four of the schools were high schools, and four were primary schools. Seven were public schools and one was from the Catholic school system.

Most of these schools are located in Southwest Sydney, and five are considered to be serving communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. All of the participating schools draw students from highly culturally and linguistically diverse communities, with approximately 90% of students coming from a language background other than English (see Appendix One for further school context and output data).

Figure 2: Summary of Creative Leadership in Learning schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year started CLIL</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>School system</th>
<th>School stage</th>
<th>Experiencing socio-economic disadvantage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Liverpool Boys High School</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St Johns Park High School</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casula High School</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lansvale Public School</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victoria Avenue Public School</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Chipping Norton Public School</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Holy Spirit Catholic College</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Campsie Public School</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outputs from CLIL, such as numbers of teachers receiving teacher professional learning or hours of artist workshops, have not been recorded consistently across the program. In 2019 the CLIL team put in place a more systematic approach to recording this kind of information across schools and for the program as a whole. Figure 3 presents the headlines from this data.

In 2019:

- 261 teachers engaged with the CLIL program across the eight schools, allocating almost 10,500 teacher hours to the program
- nearly 1,700 students committed almost 61,500 student hours to the program
- CLIL engaged 31 artists who delivered almost 3,800 hours with teachers and students (including the Creative Learning Specialist).

Figure 3: Summary output data for the Creative Leadership in Learning program 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of schools</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Number of artists</th>
<th>Total teacher hours</th>
<th>Total student hours</th>
<th>Total artist hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>1,697</td>
<td>31*</td>
<td>10,496</td>
<td>61,415</td>
<td>3,768</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Does not include Creative Learning Specialist.

Compiling information from 2017 to 2019, we can estimate that over the initial three years of CLIL, the program directly engaged with nearly 500 teachers and at least 2,000 students across the eight schools. This engagement includes core professional learning and whole staff development events.

The output data is heavily weighted to 2019, in part because this was the year all eight schools were engaged, but more due to the work at Liverpool Boys High School. The Takeover project at this school was an intense three-week period of CLIL activity, involving 120 students, up to 30 teachers and 15 artists (see page 40 for more on the Takeover). Looking across both the Takeover and all other CLIL activity at Liverpool Boys High School in 2019, students at this school committed more than 26,000 hours to the program, and teachers nearly 4,500 hours.

Of the 31 artists engaged through the program in 2019, a core group of 12 had the most sustained engagement, working closely with teachers and students. Between 2017–2018 a smaller group of four artists delivered the full load of professional learning and creative projects.

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14 Sydney Opera House project reporting data.
Part Two:
Impacts of the program

It has been challenging to quantitatively measure the impact of the Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) program as no tools or evaluative framework were built in at the outset of the program.

However, the principals and teachers interviewed for this research did not find this lack of evaluative framework problematic. Rather, they expressed an anticipation that evaluation of impacts would come as the program continues to develop, that the longer-term effects of such a program would take time to appear, and that the impacts connected to creativity are somewhat ‘immeasurable’ anyway.

Some spoke in unspecific terms about the potential to link CLIL to curriculum outcomes and the general capabilities which play a significant role in the Australian curriculum (which includes ‘critical and creative thinking’, but provides little guidance on implementation). However, they were also wary of the development of tick-box measurement of such complex concepts.

Overall, principals and teachers could see change happening in their schools and, for now, that was ample evidence for them:

“When I go watch a performance and I see the kids’ faces ... they were so excited, three or four of them came up and hugged me! ... How do you capture that as a piece of evidence? But to me that’s really, really strong evidence of success. Because these kids are loving school, and if you are loving school you are going to start learning.”

In the following sections, interviews with teachers, students, artists and the wider school community contribute rich data on outcomes and impacts of the program, providing insights on the effects of the program so far.

15 Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority no date, General capabilities, viewed 07 March 2020 https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/
17 Bolding within quotes is emphasis added by the authors to highlight key points.
A summary of these impacts is as follows:

**For teachers**, CLIL's creative intervention in schools has resulted in:
- increased engagement with teaching practice
- new approaches to curriculum delivery and new flexible experiences for students
- increased collaboration and support between teachers, leading to improved wellbeing
- new opportunities for leadership and mentoring
- an enhanced sense of trust between teachers and students.

**For students**, CLIL's creative intervention in schools has resulted in:
- increased engagement and excitement for learning
- increased ability to collaborate
- increased capacity to explore one's own passions
- increased ability to take risks
- growth in self-confidence.

**For families and communities**, CLIL's creative intervention in schools has resulted in:
- increased parental engagement with their children's schoolwork
- pride in their children's creative work and performances, especially at the Sydney Opera House
- enhanced sense of community and mutual trust
- increased sense of investment within CLIL and a sense of familiarity with the Opera House.

**For creative capabilities within schools**, CLIL has resulted in:
- enhanced understanding and confidence regarding existing creative capacities
- increased understanding of the role of creativity in teaching
- increased use of creativity and creative thinking among students and staff
- use of creativity to develop future job skills and capabilities such as resilience and adaptability.

**For artists**, CLIL has resulted in:
- new horizons and stimuli for their artistic practice
- new contexts for collaboration, and new concepts of what artistic collaboration might mean
- a better appreciation of the value of one's own artistic capabilities
- new options for income associated with creative activity.

**For the relationship between schools and the Opera House**, CLIL has resulted in:
- a new form of engagement with schools, and potentially a new kind of partnership between the Opera House and the public
- trust between schools and the Opera House
- an idea of the Opera House as not only a performing arts venue, but as a centre of creative expertise
- a new sense of membership to the Opera House among people who might not otherwise have felt included within the activities of the organisation.
Impacts for teachers

Teachers told us that their involvement in CLIL had increased their engagement with their teaching practice, encouraging them to reflect on how they were teaching, and return to ways of teaching they had not used recently or to try out new approaches:

“The teacher professional learning encourages you] to explore different pedagogical styles, different styles of delivering the curriculum. I think the big thing I was reflecting on at the end of last year was that it allows you to think differently about how you approach curriculum delivery, and in that approach it allows you to tap in to a broad range of learning styles that might not be tapped in to through more traditional ways of, you know, planning and delivering teaching and learning experiences.”

Examples included the use of drama games to teach science, or using artistic approaches to maths. Both teachers and artists commented on the ways in which these interdisciplinary relationships enlivened the curriculum, and dissolved distinctions between creative and non-creative disciplines.

Teachers also reported that through participation in the teacher professional learning they were experiencing increased collaboration between teachers, as they found new ways to work together between age groups and across disciplines:

“Definitely the professional development around creativity has been really impactful. I think that through that, the collaboration now of that team and the way they’ve worked together has just been a real win for the school. [The creative project with the artist] last year was our first cross-curricular project delivered concurrently with two different subjects, which was another real win for us and something that we want to build upon as well.”

These new ways of working were described as a process built on a foundational level of trust developed in the teacher professional learning. In one school this was having a positive impact on structures of support and wellbeing, with teachers gaining new levels of support from one another because of the relationships strengthened through their collaborations in CLIL’s teacher professional learning and the creative project:

“There’s been lots of different sorts of things around collaboration and trust. The teachers that have worked together on that project have built really collaborative, trusting relationships.

The other thing was around wellbeing. Last year in particular, we had some really very tricky kids in our support classes that were exhibiting some really challenging behaviours which was really difficult for the teachers, and troubling for the teachers. And I think having that time together and working through those creativity exercises, and that collaboration and trust and that sort of thing was actually really good for their wellbeing.”
Teachers describe how their engagement with CLIL has given them the permission and support to take risks and try new approaches. This has enabled them to become less of an expert and to be a learner themselves:

“If it’s a way of thinking differently. That’s something very hard traditionally for teachers across the world to get their heads around, because they have to become less of an expert. See teachers are “experts”, they are good at doing something their way, and it works for them, and so for a while, if you’re embarking on a project like this, for a while, you become less of an “expert”, you become a risk taker. And that’s very hard for some people to do, because you’re trying to be a learner yourself. Which we’re meant to be: life-long-learners. But you are doing this learning yourself while you have 30 students in front of you also wanting to be engaged in learning. And so for some people that can be very daunting.

But the way that the team at the Opera House support us through this is by giving us good quality professional learning that is hands-on, engaging, and then the resources afterwards to support us. So you know you go through this and you feel really well supported to go “right I can do this, I can take something back from this and trial it with my students”, and at the end of the day, if it works it works, and if not I can come back tweak it and try it again later.

This is resulting in new approaches to delivery and new flexible experiences for students:

“I think in terms of teachers’ programs, they’ve really stretched, and the learning experiences that the kids are having are a lot richer, which has been really good. … I do see those teachers trying things out and going to places which they may not have done before. Before, teachers really liked very routine, very controlled classrooms where all the children were doing the same things. And then through the [CLIL] program, you go in, and you see the kids' works of art, or you see the way they're teaching maths through drama, and just being a lot more flexible in the way that they deliver content, so that’s been a really good outcome too.

Teachers and principals describe how participating in CLIL is providing new opportunities for leadership and mentoring between teachers. Those who have directly participated in the teacher professional learning or the creative project are stepping up into informal leadership roles, translating and sharing their learning with their colleagues:

“I would say [one of the most significant impacts is] the professional learning of the teachers and them having the confidence to get up and deliver to the other teachers.

“The fact that [the teachers who have done the teacher professional learning are] able to work as an ensemble there, to co-construct and create learning for their colleagues is really profound. Each one of those people last year designed two whole days of practice around a theme. And [they] were leaders of that, and [the Creative Learning Specialist] stood right back and let them, after being exposed and incubated, leaving them to investigate and learn and reflect.
The nature of the creative project and other experiences delivered through CLIL, their intensity and high level of personal engagement creates a unique shared experience for teachers and students which can significantly impact on relationships within the school. This was especially true for the Takeover at Liverpool Boys High School, where the all-encompassing experience of a three-week timetable-free experiment has forged new relationships in the school. As the principal describes:

“I was talking to one of my headteachers the other day about it, and what was most impactful for her was the relationships that she built with those kids. So here she is with 100 kids that she has never worked with like this before, and some of them she worked with really intensely across those three weeks, and got to see a side of them she’s never seen before. And she is still talking about it: “I had no idea this boy had this passion, and that he could work so hard, I’ve never seen that out of him”. I think the impact on relationships across the school, between everybody who participated, was a massive step forward, and that has massive spin-offs, because that translates into the classroom and the playground.”
Co-creating the Creative Leadership in Learning program to focus on teacher development

The flexible nature of CLIL enables schools to work with the Sydney Opera House team to co-create a program that meets the specific needs of their school.

At Casula High School, they decided to focus their first year of CLIL purely on their teachers and their development, and to wait until year two to start involving students and the creative project with artists.

They intentionally picked teachers who could be described as ‘drivers of change’ to participate in the first round of teacher professional learning, and several of the school leaders took part as well.

The principal felt this initial focus on their teachers had a range of benefits, including:

— taking time to really **unpack creativity** and what it might mean in their school, **developing their understanding and confidence** before trying to apply it in practice
— **generating greater buy-in** by reducing the logistical impact on teachers in the early days of the program
— **demonstrating school commitment** to the program and **creating powerful advocates** in the teaching community
— making a clear connection to the school plan and **the goal of creating dynamic educators**
— **embedding greater sustainability of the impacts of the program by focussing on skill development** and how it might apply across the school, without getting distracted by additional elements of the program
— **upskilling teachers to be able to share the tools with their colleagues** as part of the roll out through the wider school.
Impacts for students

Teachers told us that CLIL was leading to increased student engagement and excitement for learning both through participation in the creative projects with artists and where their class teachers had received the CLIL teacher professional learning:

"I think the program really allowed for excitement and new creative ways of learning. It wasn't just, "oh, I'm going to walk into this class and we're going to do the same thing". We kept them on their toes; it kept the kids on their toes. They were like, "oh, what's going to happen today? What are we using from the Opera House today?" So, it was great to just spark a new love of learning in them, and not stick to our old ways of teaching and find those creative paths that we can take with them."

Parents described to teachers how they were seeing their children more engaged with school and more willing to share this at home:

"And [parents] did say it sparked conversation at home. So, kids go home sometimes, you know, "what did you do at school today," "oh, nothing," but kids are going home, and they were more willing to have that conversation around the dinner table about, "well, we did this today," or "our performance is coming up"."

Participating in the creative projects and other CLIL opportunities, such as the Takeover at Liverpool Boys High School, enabled students to learn through exploring their own passions, engaging in ways that traditional forms of teaching did not necessarily encourage.

Teachers described how engaging with CLIL increased students' ability to collaborate and that this was having impacts on projects outside the program:

"We do project-based learning, and a lot of our projects involve collaboration between the [students]. That's a skill that you think [you] intrinsically have and pick up. However, it's not really a skill that the [students] have or are adept at. So, using activities that really promoted collaboration and teamwork were really beneficial and I found that that then had a greater impact on their ability to actually collaborate and work holistically together in different projects."

This increased collaboration was especially evident in one school where a mainstream class and an inclusive class for children with disabilities participated in CLIL together. The teachers reported that the students collaborated in new ways, learning from each other and seeing themselves and their peers differently. The collaborative process has lasted beyond the time the classes were directly participating in CLIL, expanding out to other school experiences such as camp, and with the sliding doors between the two classes now regularly open to allow the classes to work together:

"The kids in the mainstream class have changed from being, "I'm helping this child because they've got a disability," to "this child is my peer, and they've got strengths in different ways." So, there's a massive shift in terms of collaboration for integration or inclusion. And then also a massive shift in the relationships between the students which is evidenced on camp, where you see the kids playing and supporting each other."

See the box on the opposite page for more on how this school used CLIL to increase inclusion.
Teachers described how engaging with **creativity encouraged students to take risks**, to share their thoughts, to try out new ideas and put themselves out there for others to see:

“[C]reativity would ask the students to stand up and really voice what they believe, and when you have those reluctant students at the beginning, it was hard to get them involved. But once they saw that it was OK, and you weren’t failing if you got it wrong, you were just giving it a go ... I think that challenge of bringing them out of their shell was probably the biggest thing, but it was the most rewarding thing in the end.

[And] like I said, students that don’t normally want to put their hand up because of the fear of being wrong: I think the beauty of creativity is there’s really no right or wrong way. You’re just giving it a go, and you’re doing it in a way that ... being creative, it allows you to do it in a way that suits you. So, we had students who were able to just put their hand up and have a go, and there wasn’t that fear of, “I’m being judged.” Everybody is doing it in a fun or silly way, and that’s OK.

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**Co-creating the Creative Leadership in Learning program to support the inclusion of students with disabilities**

The flexible nature of CLIL enables schools to work with the Opera House team to co-create a program that meets the specific needs of their school.

At Victoria Avenue Public School, they had two objectives for their CLIL work:

— to understand the **potential of creativity for increasing inclusion** for students with disabilities

— to develop **future focussed skills** for all students.

They designed each of their creative projects to bring together a mainstream class and an inclusive class for students with disabilities.

The Assistant Principal felt this enabled them to tailor CLIL to:

— clearly **connect with the school strategic direction** ‘include, innovate, inspire’

— support the school focus on Universal Design for Learning and increase teachers’ flexibility

— **explore new ways to deliver content**, for example using sensory exploration, which enables students with disabilities to participate and thrive as part of the class without needing extra support

— **encourage collaboration between teachers** - both in terms of professional practice and designing ways to deliver content flexibly, but also developing supportive, trusting relationships that enhance well-being

— **encourage collaboration between students** between students, helping them to understand their peers differently.
Connected to new risk-taking through creativity was a perceived growth in confidence among students:

“I just saw such growth in the students in their confidence. We had reluctant readers that wouldn’t read in front of you at the guided reading table, but then they’re standing up in front of an audience at the Sydney Opera House reading their own stories.”

Principals and teachers often told us stories of how participation in CLIL had had a dramatic impact on individual children:

“We did an activity where we all stood in a circle with the kids, and they had to introduce themselves using an adjective that started with the letter of their name, and an action. So, if your name was Mary, you might have said, “I’m Marvellous Mary” and everybody had to say, “hey Marvellous Mary”. We had one student that ... stood there, and she was, you know, twiddling her thumbs, and she really didn’t want to do it. She was that shy and she didn’t really have the confidence. And she turned around, and she said, "my name is Annabelle, and my adjective is anxiety". So, she called herself Anxiety Annabelle, and she just stood there, and she just completely shut down again. But then in two weeks’ time, she was standing front and centre, singing, and talking, and reading, and it was just amazing to see her have the confidence to flourish through the program. I just thought that was incredible.”

Students are also experiencing the opportunity to take on leadership roles through their involvement in CLIL, which is supporting them to develop new skills and contributing to increased confidence:

“The students that were involved directly with the program were able to take it back to our classroom, and they became the leaders. So they were able to take on those leadership roles. And the confidence in speaking and explaining an activity to the rest of the class, and these were the kids that ... you know, we chose kids that weren’t the most confident. We wanted to see what we could bring out in them, and I can confidently say that all students grew their confidence massively over the period of the course.”

Principals and teachers often spoke about how working with creativity has the potential to impact the whole child, academically, socially and emotionally, and to support mental health and wellbeing. One principal described how engaging with CLIL enabled their students to experience moving through different feelings, to practice being vulnerable in front of their peers in a supportive environment, to express themselves and to challenge themselves: ‘There is so much in the arts to develop the child in every area’.

The experience of performing at the Opera House was brought up by almost all interviewees as something quite impactful for students, but also quite difficult to fully articulate in terms of why it was so impactful and what those impacts might be. Teachers often spoke of an immense sense of pride among the students – a sense of recognition and voice from having their own work presented in such a place. This was especially true for kids from Western Sydney who are in many ways geographically, economically and socially remote from the city centre home of the Opera House and might not otherwise have the opportunity to visit with their family. For others it was about resilience and personal growth:

18 A pseudonym has been used here to protect the student’s identity.
The kids who were involved in those performances really shone, they were once in a lifetime performances. “I’ve put together something that I am performing at the Opera House.” That’s an amazing experience for those kids. 

[The] Opera House is a world stage. As a musician, I’ve been at the Opera House, and I’ve performed at the Opera House, but how many kids could say that? For our, you know, somewhere out in Western Sydney, Southwest Sydney school, to have that opportunity is just immeasurable. It does wonders for our kids’ self-esteem.

And the resilience, like this was a real challenge because there was a deadline and the deadline was a performance at the Opera House. So it’s just I suppose like opening night, isn’t it, for Swan Lake or something. So the pressure that our students felt, and the staff, and then being able to rise to the occasion and perform to that level was brilliant. And so I think there was a lot of personal growth.

CLIL’s artists also spoke of positive impacts observed in the students, from social to academic to creative, connecting the risk-taking encouraged in students to that undertaken by CLIL:

‘I have seen the program take giant risks, and I have seen it change young people’s lives.’

The following story provides a vivid example of the CLIL’s potential benefits to ‘at risk’ students in particular, and of the value of using creativity to teach across a variety of non-arts disciplines. It is about a boy who was struggling with the school curriculum and was feeling disconnected from his peers:

“He didn’t have a lot of literacy so he couldn’t converse very much. But he was very much into balloons, just loved balloons … So I started to work with balloons and as I got to know him he just knew which balloon skins would release more air, which wouldn’t depending on sunlight and temperature. He started to understand that. And by the end of the two weeks we started making functional balloon furniture, that you could sit on and would take weight and wouldn’t be crushed.

No one else in the world had done that. And this was done by this young boy in Liverpool, through the help of an artist, and a program that’s been set up where he got to make art, but he had to look up science, maths, physics, to make that happen. And he designed an uncrushable cube made out of balloons that was the pillar for all his furniture. And we even tested it with Year 10 boys, who smashed it with their bodies – and it was impossible.

So I’ve seen really new and exciting evolutions of thought and ideas …”

For student testimonials on the effects of the program, see page 41. Further comments from students can be heard in two videos produced by the Sydney Opera House and available online.  

19 Hear testimonials from students at Liverpool Boys High School at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Z03moqnhFQ ; and from Lansvale Public School at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQHY7LPCltI
Using creativity to have big conversations

The creative projects with artists are a highly collaborative experience between the students, teachers and artists. The content for the creative project is usually a combination of, or negotiation between, the school’s focus question, the curriculum priorities of the teachers, a performance at the Opera House, and the skills, interests and backgrounds of all those involved.

The project develops as the artist leads the group through a series of bespoke workshops and activities using a wide variety of art forms that support them to work towards a creative output.

The creative projects have explored a wide variety of themes including environmental sustainability, belonging, inclusion and exclusion, empathy, power, identity, place, migration, for example:

— A Special Education Unit class at Casula High School created a film ‘Voyage to our Future’ exploring life after school and their hopes for the future.
— Students from Chipping Norton Public School explored issues of sustainability and how the behaviours of today could impact on the world of the future, creating a performance piece using shadows and songs.
— In ‘Dirt Bike Time Machine’ students from Liverpool Boys High School explored issues of power, politics and history in a theatrical representation of a futuristic ancient civilisation.
— Students from St Johns Park High School shared personal stories of the great heroes in their lives – often stories connected to migration, sacrifice, economic and cultural survival – in their performance ‘Standing on the Shoulders of Giants’.
— The song ‘Boat of Dreams’ was created by students from Lansvale Public School exploring some of the journeys their grandparents and parents had made in order to create a life for their families in Australia.

The creative projects enable students to talk with their peers, teachers and parents about these complex issues, to develop their thinking and understanding, and to create a performance that shares their ideas and views with others.

The performance of their work at school, and especially at the Opera House, comes with a huge personal risk of sharing this work publicly, but also an opportunity to be heard, and taken seriously, on a world-class stage.

CLIL’s artists have also related their excitement at the rich and complex topics explored by students, speaking of the importance of having ‘big cultural conversations’ with young people. Some worked with students on projects about their cultural heritage, others about self-esteem, others about pride in one’s identity. For these artists, CLIL was informing their own practice while helping students find their voice:

CLIL is redefining what collaboration is, it’s redefining what creation is, it’s redefining what ensemble is. It’s redefining what analysis is. It’s redefining what reflection is. It’s even redefining how to do that. But at the end of the day it’s not imparting information, it’s giving you tools so that you can make your own artistic signature and to see that that signature is valid and of value.

The works created by students through the CLIL program are impactful, at times hilarious, at times intensely moving, giving insight into the thoughts and experiences of the students involved.
Part Two: Impacts of the program

A student explains his project to a parent attending the final day of the Liverpool Boys High School Takeovers. Credit: Daniel Boud.
Impacts for families and community

Teachers and principals seemed less able to comment on the impact of CLIL on families. This may be due partly to the variability of the level of engagement of families in CLIL, and partly to the fact that, unlike impacts on students, impacts on families are less visible to them.

Some teachers suggested that CLIL had led to increased engagement of parents with their children’s schoolwork, since some parents became involved in research and preparation for the creative project and performances. For some there was an increased level of engagement with the school that impacted on a shared sense of community:

“[Parents] were really thrilled to see their kids involved in something at the Opera House. There’s something nice about standing out the front and having a glass of wine and some food and networking with each other, but it was a really lovely sense of community with that creative focus.”

Several interviewees spoke about the pride families felt seeing their children perform, especially at the Opera House:

“And then, you know, the experience that those students got by performing at the Opera House... Our community, they just don’t think that something like that is accessible to them. So, you know, parents on that night were just so proud of their kids and just couldn’t believe that their child was performing at the Opera House. So the benefit for our community was huge as well.”

“It was really nice when we went last year with one of the kids from our autism class. And his mum was there, and her son has got quite significant needs in terms of autism, and she said: “I had to say... that I couldn’t go to [a work meeting] because my son was performing at the Opera House.” And for her, that was huge, because he’s always struggled to meet benchmarks in terms of his same-aged peers, and that was really powerful for her.”

In one project, at Lansvale Public School, CLIL even involved parents in the creative program, and later extended this to knit the wider school community into CLIL’s creative work. Responding initially to parents’ confusion (and even dubiousness) about the CLIL program, educators structured a project around the school’s active parents’ community.

Working one day a week for ten weeks, these parents created half an artwork, and then in the following term their children came in to respond to what their parents had done, adding to the collaborative piece. For the school principal, this was a community building event, all the more significant for the sense of suspicion that preceded it:

“That was 10 weeks’ work with parents, again a really diverse group of parents who all hung on and succeeded despite where they were at on the continuum of learning around creativity. They all developed ensemble and trust and purpose.”

After a final finishing stage conducted by professional artists, the artwork was presented at the Sydney Opera House’s Creative Play holiday program. Those involved described the impact on the families as ‘profound’. Parents developed an understanding of what their children were doing through CLIL at the school, and even became advocates for creativity in the classroom. These same parents who had been wary of CLIL at the outset came to believe in creativity as a way of educating the whole child.
Activating the community through the prism of creativity, this project created a powerful sense of investment within CLIL and a sense of familiarity with the Opera House. Opera House projects are now part and parcel of what happens at this local public school. Parents know and understand why teachers might be away from their usual classroom working on the CLIL project at times, and creativity has become embedded within the culture of the school and its community.

**Impact on creativity capabilities within schools**

All the impacts for teachers, students and families described above can be understood as part of the experience of creativity: engagement, collaboration, risk taking, developing confidence. When interviewing principals and teachers we asked how participating in CLIL was impacting on the role of creativity in their schools. Interviewees told us about impacts: on personal understandings of creativity; on teaching practice and how it was understood and applied at the school level; and on understandings of creativity at a community level.

Teachers and principals told us that participating in CLIL, especially the teacher professional learning, had changed their understanding of and confidence in their own creativity, especially for those who hadn’t previously considered themselves creative:

“I think too it is about building confidence. I had a meltdown one day, we did an activity and I stamped my feet and I went “I can’t do this”. It stretches you, it really stretches you. Creativity for me doesn’t come easily, but I know we are all creative beings. And this is what the program teaches you, we are all creative, but you need to stretch yourself, you need to take a risk, believe in yourself and we can all get something out of that.”

“Well [I thought] I’m not a creative person because I’m a PE teacher, so I can’t be. So participating in the program ... opened my eyes in terms of the structures, and what the artists did, and got us to work with and develop part of the program. And the understanding of the impact in terms of myself as a person, but also to how myself as a teacher and an educator and how that could pass onto the kids.”
Teachers described how their developing sense of creativity also translates to how they see creativity within their students, and how to encourage students to see themselves as creative:

“It’s the understanding of what is this thing called creativity? Teachers may have said a while ago, “I’m not a creative person”, now they have discovered they are, that there are many multiple forms. [The program] is shifting the question – how are you creative, not are you creative. How is this kid creative, how am I creative?”

Participating in CLIL is having impacts on the way teachers understand the role of creativity in teaching, even at a principal level:

“It’s certainly had an impact on me. I always knew that this style of learning must have existed somewhere, but I don’t have the background or the skills to deliver it. I’m a maths teacher, and I knew that it could be done very differently, but actually seeing it was … was really exciting for me. So that’s been good for my professional development. And there’s not a lot that is, at my stage and experience, as principal, there isn’t a lot of professional development that you can get that really has an impact on you.”

As well as the theory and tools learnt in the teacher professional learning, the creative projects with artists are providing exposure to how creativity can operate in schools:

“We witnessed a case study of what this practice looks like unfolding in front of us, that resulted in incredible community pride, in a learning experience that the students will remember for the rest of their lives, and something that we can draw on as the rest of the teachers … work towards developing units of work that are so equally educationally powerful. That’s the biggest impact.”

This understanding of creativity is translating into new ways of working and teachers changing their approaches to embed creativity into teaching practice:

“I think in terms of teachers’ programs, they’ve really stretched in a much richer [direction], and the learning experiences that the kids are having are a lot richer, which has been really good. I think that the teachers that have been involved in the program are much more likely to take risks in the classroom than they were previously to being in the program. I do see those teachers trying things out and going to places which they may not have done before.”

For some, CLIL has increased understanding of creativity at a strategic, whole school level, connecting with the school plan:

“I think the 4Cs [communication, collaboration, creativity and critical reflection] have been really a trendy reform in education in the last few years, and I think we all think we know a little bit about collaboration, communication, creativity, but really, [CLIL] dug deeper into what is creativity. The Opera House has a creativity framework that they use to create the project, and they work you through that framework, and that framework helps you. I feel it helped us as teachers to really understand what is creativity, how to embed it confidently. You know, from some of us who felt we weren’t creative ourselves, but how to embed that into a classroom.

And we hadn’t had that kind of support from the Department around that. We’ve done a lot of work on the 4Cs, if you look at a lot of schools, a lot of schools have 4Cs in their school plan, they mention it. But I always wonder how deep an understanding of it we really had, and I think the Opera House has brought that out. We have a much deeper understanding of what creativity is, how to embed it into our normal practice, and that’s happened because of these guys and the project.”
Other principals and teachers spoke of seeing the impact of CLIL in classrooms, of the **tools and games** taught in the teacher professional learning being used with students, and **whole classes designed around creativity**. For example, at one school they have developed creativity classes for their Year 7 students as part of their transition to high school and the new ways of thinking and learning they will experience there. In another school, at which research interviews were conducted during their second year of participating in CLIL, the principal was confident that the teacher professional learning was **increasing the understanding of creativity and ways to use it in the classroom for the individual teachers**. They felt the creative project with the artist had 'shown the school what was possible' in terms of ways to use creativity within learning. While they did not feel this learning was translating into day-to-day practice, this was not seen as a problem due to the complex nature of creativity and the shift needed to embed creativity more thoroughly. The principal felt they were still at an ‘exploratory phase’ and the impacts would continue to build.

At one of the schools furthest into their CLIL journey, where the focus on creativity through CLIL was supported by work on creativity through other programs and a wider school aim towards student-led and project-based learning, the principal reported seeing **an increase in creativity and creative thinking among students and teachers**. They described how the teacher professional learning and creative projects had had significant impacts on those who directly participated, and that some of these impacts were trickling out to others within the school. However, in their fourth year of CLIL they **weren’t yet seeing an impact on the way whole programs were written to embed creativity**. This final embedding of creativity within the school culture was something the principal felt would **take longer to see as part of a cultural shift in a complex school environment**.

For some schools, participation in CLIL was impacting on perceptions of creativity in the wider community. Several interviewees described how their schools serve a community that is made up of a complex mix of cultural backgrounds, where traditional ways of learning and a focus on academic subjects are highly valued. To counter this, some schools are using CLIL to demonstrate to families that creativity can support the development of the whole child, that it leads to important skills that will be valued in the workforce and capabilities such as resilience and adaptability which will be needed for a new complex world of work, and that it can support learning of academic subjects. The program is enabling schools to open up a conversation with families about the value of creativity and what the children of today might need from their education to be ready for the workforce of tomorrow:

> “We’ve never judged that [attitude to education] as limited in any way, it’s just where our kids start … And our thing was to say to our parents “we respect your aspirations for your children … We think our journey is around creating whole people and by creating whole people your child will be a better doctor, your child will be a better teacher, your child will be a better father or mother or contributor to community”. And they’ve bought into that.”

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20 This was a project of Casula High School, initiated by the school but based on the CLIL framework. Lurnea High School conducted a similar program as part of their participation in the CLIL pilot program in 2015.
Co-creating the Creative Leadership in Learning program to contribute to a new kind of school

The flexible nature of CLIL enables schools to work with the Opera House team to co-create a program that meets the specific needs of their school.

Liverpool Boys High School is on a longer journey towards becoming a wholly different kind of school - one that is better able to **equip students for the workforce of the future**.

The school is moving towards more **cross-curriculum, project-based learning**, with skills seen as more significant than knowledge. Students are encouraged to follow their passions and shape their own learning. The principal has ambitions to eventually remove the traditional school year group structure and move towards **personalised pathways through learning**.

CLIL supports this by **encouraging flexibility and removing standardisation** in the classroom. It fits with the school’s strategic focus on **innovative learning** and connects with other areas of work such as Big Picture Education Australia,\(^1\) all of which contribute to this goal of personalised learning pathways.

As well as delivering the teacher professional learning and creative projects with artists, during their third year of **CLIL Liverpool Boys High embarked on their first ‘Takeover’** - a three week period during which the normal timetable of the school was suspended and the CLIL team brought in a group of artists to support the staff and students to follow passion projects.

The Takeover was designed as a **response to issues with engagement at the school**, led by artists rather than teachers and so requiring a high degree of trust from the staff. It began with an ‘art bomb’, allowing students to break open their idea of what creativity was and using the space of the school to explore ideas that were of immediate relevance to them.

Each classroom had a different theme, designed with immersive elements, e.g. visuals from online gaming, and many rooms had DJs playing. Students were assigned to a room where they played drama games, guided by artists, and developed a passion project. Over the following three weeks students made specific artworks with both artists and teachers, ultimately presenting these to the public and their peers.

At one point, it appeared that the experiment was out of control and so the teachers stepped back in to wrestle back the reins. However, it was also at that point that the Takeover found its purpose, becoming a **genuine collaboration between art exploration and learning**. Teachers started to drive the learning while the CLIL team drove the artistic and creative projects and the festival framework. With extremely high stakes, the Takeover became a highly successful collaboration.

\(^1\) Big Picture Education Australia creates personalised learning journeys for individual students based on their passions and needs, supported by mentors and connected to real-world experiences outside school (internships). Example passions include physiotherapy, engineering, veterinary science. For more information visit [https://www.bigpicture.org.au/](https://www.bigpicture.org.au/)
In a video made about the Takeover by the Opera House, 22 students described their experience with pride and excitement:

“I felt good, people looking at my project work. I felt like I’ve done something ... once I done something good in my life.”

“Before this happened I was shy to talk to other teachers. But then during this project, when they were talking about ask other head teachers about your ideas, it definitely helped me to talk and don’t be shy – to ask questions.”

“The main thing was boosting our confidence because we’re really shy.”

“If it were not for the Takeover project I would not know how to handle cameras, I would not know how to speak to people. This Takeover project has really helped us. Today is one of my best days in this world.”

A participating artist described the Takeover as a valuable opportunity for students to move into new creative and personal territory:

“The idea was about getting these kids to have a project that they didn’t think was possible, or they didn’t believe had some logic, and then to push them.”

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Watch the Takeover at Liverpool Boys High School at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Z03moqnhFQ
Impacts for artists

For participating artists, CLIL has presented new horizons and stimuli for artistic practice. While some artists have worked with drama, art or music teachers in the past, CLIL has led them to work with teachers in mathematics, science and other non-arts subjects, leading to new conversations through the cross-fertilisation of disciplines:

“The way you end up hanging out with teachers who are experts in something else like maths or science ... it’s more interesting than endlessly hanging out with other drama teachers.”

“It was exciting to work with people who didn’t necessarily have an arts history or arts training. They opened onto these great ideas.”

In this way, artists have experienced new contexts for collaboration through CLIL, and even new concepts of what collaboration might mean. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, artists have been energised by the socially and community-engaged nature of their work through CLIL. They view the program as an opportunity for new interdisciplinary activity, and even to redefine what analysis, ensemble and creativity can be (see pages 33, 46 and 52–4 for more).

Rather than divorcing their artistic work from their teaching work, many CLIL artists now see the classroom as a site for their creative practice, locating their creative work within schools. In this vein, artists spoke about the opportunity that CLIL has provided for trialling experimental approaches, opening an avenue for cutting-edge artistic practice that conventional performing arts or gallery programs might not allow:

“I guess what I really enjoyed about ... being part of the program on a more substantial level is the notion of being able to collaboratively practise something that maybe is a little bit tougher to get up in the real world, or in the commercial world.”

“I thrive on it more in my artist self than in my educator self.”

Several artists commented on the pleasure they have experienced helping principals, teachers or students to appreciate the value of creativity, either in themselves or within wider society:

“I’m really getting to experience other people’s eyes and minds being cracked open with art, and them seeing that actually art has a place like food, like shelter, like emotional needs.”

Observing others’ appreciation of creativity has also led some artists to develop a better understanding of the value of their own creative capabilities, and of the resource that these capabilities might represent to the educational and community sectors:

“I started working with the creative play stuff and then kind of understood: oh, there’s this whole other sector here. Families and children and connecting with communities outside of the central hub of Sydney. That’s what really excited me.”

Importantly, CLIL also provides a source of income for participating artists, many of whom patch together a livelihood through multiple short-term projects. In this sense, CLIL provides a new professional context for artists to extend their practice, while also recognising them as professionals with valuable skills and expertise.

See Appendix Two for a list of the artists involved in the CLIL program.
The changing relationship between schools and the Opera House

One of the Opera House’s aims for the CLIL program is to create a new form of engagement with schools. They aim to move away from a transactional, excursion-based model – in which the school busses students in, they see a show, and bus home again – to a more in-depth relationship ‘based on creativity that harnesses everything the world heritage building, its performances, its people and history have to offer’.  

One of the aims of this research is to explore the changing role of the Opera House as an example of a large, complex cultural organisation, and how it can create new relationships and connections with the public. Along with the Barbican in the UK, the Chicago Arts Partnership in the USA, and the Sydney Theatre Company in Sydney, the Opera House is moving towards facilitating greater connections between creative producers and educational institutions, and from being almost exclusively focussed on performance to becoming hubs for community wellbeing (see Appendix Three for details of these and other similar programs).

To explore and understand how schools perceive the Opera House and their relationship with the organisation, principals and teachers were asked about the role of the Opera House within CLIL, what it brings to the program and how their relationships with the Opera House have changed through their participation in CLIL. CLIL artists and staff from the Opera House were also asked about how the program extends and adds to the ‘core business’ of the Opera House, taking creativity off-site and into the community.

Although most of the schools had visited the Opera House in the past, taking their students on an excursion to see a show or another activity (see Figure 4 below), most of the schools did not have a particular relationship with the Opera House before their engagement through CLIL and were not making use of it as an educational resource in any broader sense.

Figure 4: School attendance at the Opera House before engaging with the Creative Leadership in Learning program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of attendances at the Opera House between 2010 and starting CLIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool Boys High School</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Johns Park High School</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casula High School</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansvale Public School</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Avenue Public School</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chipping Norton Public School</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Spirit Catholic College</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campsie Public School</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24 Sydney Opera House attendance data.
Part two: Impacts of the program

Individual teachers and principals might be regular visitors to the Opera House in their personal lives, but many suggested that their students and families may well have never been to or inside the Opera House.

The principals generally spoke about their current relationship with the Opera House as a **partnership**, something quite different to their usual relationship with providers of teacher professional learning. There seemed to be several features of the program that encouraged this, not least the interpersonal relationship with Frank Newman as the Creative Learning Specialist and face of the program.

Additionally, the long term, sustained and regular engagement over several years built a strong relationship and level of **trust in the individuals and the program**. As one school leader described:

> “That relationship that we’ve built with the Opera House over time has been really beneficial to us. A lot of the types of professional learning that we do is somebody comes, and then they go; to have that continual coaching and the in-class coaching, and the relationship building over a longer time has been really good.”

The way in which the program is tailored to meet an individual school’s needs is quite different to standard, off the shelf teacher professional learning packages as often experienced by schools. The CLIL team were described as always willing to listen to and consider feedback from the schools, adapting aspects of the program to be more practical for use in schools or to deliver stronger outcomes.

The evolving nature of the program, both as something designed to be somewhat bespoke for each school and as a program that is still developing from its pilot stage, could at times be challenging for those involved but also gave schools a sense of co-creating the program with the Opera House. This has strengthened schools’ relationships with the Opera House, while also supporting the development of a sense of ownership over the program by this first cohort.

CLIL offers the opportunity for teachers and students to engage in a completely different **real-world work place**, away from the day-to-day demands of the school. Being at the Opera House, for teacher professional learning or to engage with shows and tours, was described as providing a change of scene and of air which gave time and space for learning and reflection, and encouraged new ways of thinking - something that can’t easily be achieved by running training in the school hall or library:

> “And we were off site for that [teacher professional learning], we would go to the Opera House for most of them, so it got us out of this environment where there is always interruptions and lots of things, so we were completely focussed for those two days, we didn’t even come home, we stayed in the city.”

Meanwhile, for Sydney Opera House staff, CLIL offers an equally exciting opportunity to get off-site, to visit schools for workshops and to embody the organisation in the wider community (see Part Four: The strategic context for more on the location of CLIL and its staff).
Part Two: Impacts of the program

The **brand of the Opera House**, and its associated reputation for quality, supports the trust that is needed for schools to embrace the unknown of the program. It is also an association that can be seen as a selling point in itself, as one principal half-joked:

“[Working with the Opera House] It doesn’t get better than that. **It is so prestigious.** And look if the opportunity was there with the little local theatre company, we would take it up, some sort of partnership. I don’t know if we would throw $20,000 at it... Because it’s the Opera House, because culturally, in our city we see the culture of the Opera House as the pinnacle of professionalism, respect, all of the work that is associated with that, and the building, so iconic... **I have used that in a promotional sense, “our partnership with the Opera House”, it sounds so impressive, it’s worth $20,000 just for that!**”

The Opera House is described by schools as a ‘world stage’ with an international reputation that brings kudos to the program, and by extension potentially to the schools engaged in it: ‘If you think creativity, you think Opera House in Sydney’.

The Opera House is seen as representing creative excellence in terms of its artistic outputs, its heritage and the building itself. And the team at the House are seen as **experts in creativity** - both in terms of being technically creative and creating artistically excellent work, and in their expertise in what creativity is and how to share this understanding with others - which reinforces the brand perception:

“[T]he Opera House brand instils trust. When you partner with the Opera House you [have] a very high level of trust. **There is no risk in terms of do they know their creativity stuff, you know! If they don’t know it no one in this country does!**... But as we went along that trust just got entrenched because we got **quality people**, every person that we’ve had over the three years has been quality.”
Artists involved in the program are also keenly aware of this reputation, and conscious of the need to live up to the expectations that come with schools’ involvement within Opera House programs:

“I think the Opera House is so esteemed and, you know … this is the Opera House and if we’re going to a school the school is expecting Opera House quality!”

“Because it is the Opera House there are high expectations on artistic outcome. It’s stressful but great for my creative practice. I have to creatively problem solve. I have to understand the resources and my own capabilities.”

In this way, the program was described as bridging the creative and educational sectors. Artists experienced new classroom experiences. Meanwhile, CLIL connected teachers and students to the cultural sector – a sector to which many had not had exposure before:

“Most kids had never been to the foreshore, never walked into the Opera House, never visited there, never met a teaching artist, never met a performer … So, yeah, just bringing in real people, in the arts, is something really unique.”

Several principals mentioned that they would not have known how to access such high-quality artists with the range of creative practice and ability to work in the school setting. Because of their position in the sector, however, Opera House staff had links to these creative professionals and could bring them into the program with relative ease:

“I could say to Frank, could you recommend a person to come and do an art program for our autistic kids – that kind of thing. He is a very valuable resource. Stage and lighting stuff for shows, he has supported us there. It’s a great resource.”

Access to professional artists was a key part of the CLIL offer. One principal suggested that this would be something they would need the Opera House to continue to provide. Although the teacher professional learning could become embedded and transferred within the school, the principal could never expect their teachers to develop the skills or experience of the professional artists.

The program and the people delivering it were described as both specialised and attuned to school needs, able to translate creativity from the cultural sector into the education sector in a way that maintained creative quality but made it relevant to the school setting:

“So I think some of the stuff could be run [by another organisation], but I think that it’s really, I think the calibre of the artists that they get to come and work with the students at school wouldn’t be there if it was another organisation. And Frank, I can’t speak more highly of Frank. He was, he was just on it and his ability to kind of translate the creative aspect and the more, like, creative world, the world of the Opera House into a school setting was brilliant. He did a really good job of that.”

The Opera House was recognised as having expertise not only in the cultural sector, but also within the educational sector, and as having sound foundations for the program:

“I think what drew me in was, cool we get to play with the Opera House, what has kept me excited about the program is … how strong the educational philosophy and base and program actually is around it.”

Several principals mentioned the potential of the Opera House as a strong advocate for creativity and its application within education. The Opera House could have significant influence within the education sector because of its brand, reputation and expertise.
The Opera House is described as a **culturally significant place** that connects to a shared sense of identity for Sydney and Australia. Through CLIL, the schools and students connect with the cultural significance of the place and build cultural literacy about what it might mean for them as Australians:

“I guess it’s [the] location [of the Sydney Opera House], and in terms of our identity as Australians, and living in Sydney, and part of our community and culture, it’s really important.”

“It’s the cultural understanding of the building, and where it is and how important it is to Sydney. And you live in Sydney, so it is important for you, you know?”

Several schools suggested that although their students and families might be aware of the significance of the Opera House, they may never have been there:

“For many of our kids and families when they go to see the performance it’s their first time in the House. Some of our families don’t go to the city, and we’re on the train line, and … it’s not an expensive excursion to take your kids in to the Gardens and show them the Opera House and the Bridge, but so many of these kids have never done those sort of experiences. So this is a brand new thing. But they know of it, they’ve seen it on TV, they know it’s iconic, they know it’s important, they watch the fireworks … and it’s that special place. So to get invited to go in, and they don’t have to pay, is actually something quite special for a lot of our families.”

Principals and teachers describe how students can develop a **sense of ownership over and belonging to** this iconic place through the special access that comes through CLIL:

“We’ve gone in under the Opera House in different rooms and spaces, and we feel that we’re a part of it. in a way. It’s very different to just being an audience member. It does feel like it’s a little bit ours, or something... And the kids are really very comfortable there. Traditionally you see it as a site of opera, and it can be seen as a place where a certain privileged people might attend there, but it’s nice for the kids to feel like that’s a place where they can go at any time and enjoy a show, or go and see some art; like it’s a place where they belong, which has been lovely.”

The opportunity to perform there entrenched this sense of ownership and belonging:

“And it was just like, our kids like, one of the parents when we were in there for the launch for that, they went “you can’t stop us now”, like our voices are always going to be heard in the Opera House.”

“There’s a group of kids who think they belong there, you know, like “It’s ours, we’re in the House”.”

Some schools describe the Opera House as becoming an **extension of, or resource for, the school**. It has become a place they can confidently embed in their learning programs – whether that’s the building itself, the performance program or how it connects to broader themes like environmental sustainability.

The next section reviews some of the challenges encountered in the process of implementing the program, the ways these challenges were navigated, along with factors for the program’s success.
Part Three: Navigating challenges and factors for success

Schools encountered a number of common challenges in delivering the Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) program, as did the freelance artists and CLIL staff.

These included the inflexibility of the school system and the intentional flexibility of CLIL; the need to ensure buy-in and promote the value of creativity in education; and ensuring that the benefits of CLIL were sustained and shared beyond the program. This section explores some of these key challenges and the way some schools have navigated them. It shows the importance of school culture and leadership to the success of CLIL, as well as connection to broader school objectives such as student-led learning and building skills for the jobs of the future.

Navigating the inflexibility of the school system

The challenge most frequently mentioned by principals and teachers, was the logistics and practicalities of running a program like CLIL in schools, including the burden on teachers’ time and inflexibility of the school system. Teachers need to be freed up from their classrooms to participate in teacher professional learning. Those teachers engaged in the creative project need time away from their class to plan and review with the artist. And where the creative project only involves part of a class, the students not involved in the project need cover from a relief teacher.

The creative project also needs to be built into the timetable for the students involved, fitting in around existing lesson plans and curriculum requirements, daily structures and long-term plans leading to assessments:

“... and the system! You know? Because the system says “you’ve got this set of outcomes”, and then the syllabus comes with all these bullet points, right, and I guess even as the person who has [been most involved with the program] I still get stuck with what is the actual definite answer. You know? Are we allowed to actually be that flexible?”
Not only is this a logistical timetabling challenge and a potential challenge to delivering the content of the curriculum (although the creative projects can deliver curriculum content), it is also connected to the cost of covering the teaching time discussed above:

“It’s a challenge and very complex. Yeah, so being in a high school you’ve got the constraints of a rigid timetable, an inflexible timetable. You then have to have six, eight staff out all at once. [it] is a huge financial cost and that has to be planned for, and then there’s the impact on those classes and those students in those classes ... I think that, yeah, that the financial and also organisational, to organise eight teachers to be off classes is just mammoth.”

These logistical challenges are particularly acute in large schools and in secondary schools, where the timetable is complex and assessments a more pressing priority. To some extent there is more freedom in smaller primary schools with greater room to manoeuvre in their timetable.

Although frequently mentioned as a challenge, this logistical issue was not seen as a specific problem of CLIL – delivering projects and experimenting with new ways of working is seen as a broader challenge in schools.

Some schools have found ways of delivering the program with minimal disruption:

“...It has been challenging, I think sometimes, to get casuals to replace the teachers, and I think when we have it as a regular time ... the part with the teaching artist is really smooth, and it’s quite nice; it just fits in. We just use the Thursday in the morning where the teachers work with the artists and the kids in the classroom, and then on the Thursday afternoon [it’s the teacher’s] usual release from class, so they’ve got time off to talk with the artists. So, that part of the program just fits in. We don’t need casuals; it doesn’t cost us anything extra, really, apart from the professional learning. It’s just when we withdraw big groups of teachers at the same time; that can be a bit of a challenge. But it’s been manageable and worth it.”

And as this teacher suggests, even when there are difficulties and costs of weaving CLIL into the school, it isn’t insurmountable, and the impact of the program is worth it.

Ensuring buy-in and understanding the broader relevance of creativity

A further challenge of participating in CLIL is ensuring key people understand the relevance of the program and getting adequate buy-in.

Several schools mentioned that it was important to explain clearly to families why the focus on creativity was important and relevant, and a good use of teacher and student time, especially in communities where families might place a much greater emphasis on traditional learning approaches and subjects such as maths, science and english.

Schools generally suggested that it was relatively easy to get students to buy-in to embrace the CLIL process. However, one school reported that they received negative feedback from a group of high achieving students who did not understand the relevance of the ‘games’ and were concerned that their participation in creativity activities was taking away from learning in more traditional ways. The teacher involved recognised that they needed to do more to increase understanding and buy-in from the students.
Several interviewees suggested it was challenging but ***vital to ensure those teachers participating in the teacher professional learning understood what CLIL was attempting within schools, that it was more than ‘just drama games’ and that creativity was relevant across all learning areas, not just the creative arts.*** This is a particular challenge when moving beyond the initial groups of teachers – those who had a particular interest in creativity and put themselves forward, or were ‘volunteered’ by others because of their skills or aptitude – to the wider community of teachers:

> "I think the challenge for us now [is] spreading it to the others in the school, it’s the ones who don’t really have an awareness of it. … [I]f I had no exposure to it, [I might think] “well what benefit is that going to give to a student?”. And some teachers do have that [mindset] still. [And] rather than saying “well no that’s ridiculous you need to think this”, you’ve got to acknowledge that and understand that. And instead of just saying well “no they’re just being … a barrier, we’ll just ignore them”, I think it’s more about understanding [that] they haven’t been exposed and persevering and to keep going but also **talking to those teachers, giving them an understanding of why it’s important in the classroom.**"

For some, the ***Creativity Framework was a useful tool*** for doing this:

> "I think revisiting the framework regularly has been really good too. I think that, at points, teachers would get lost … well, not lost, but **we’d do lots of focus on creativity and doing drama games**, and sometimes the teachers would be a bit like, “why are we doing this?” Last week we did a whole school one, and **the framework was on the board in the background**, and we kept re-looking at it, and it just did make it a little more concrete for the teachers to fit it into something that was relevant for them in their classrooms."

Teachers and principals also reported that it was important to get the buy-in of those teachers not directly involved in the teacher professional learning, as these teachers could help overcome some of the practical and logistical challenges of freeing up classroom time for engaging in the program.

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A student at Liverpool Boys High School showcases his project to a parent on the final day of the Takeover. Credit: Daniel Boud.
Building the sustainability and reach of the program

Principals and teachers were all very positive about the content, quality of delivery and overall experience of the teacher professional learning. However, sustainability of the impacts of CLIL over time and beyond those directly involved in the teacher professional learning and creative projects was a challenge identified by most schools. Concerns included a lack of clarity over how they could apply what they had learnt in their classroom, a desire to have greater structure or a ‘workbook’ to follow, and a request to see the approaches shared in the teacher professional learning delivered by the trainers with students so they could see the tools in action.

These were not universal views. Some teachers and principals were completely clear on how to apply the teacher professional learning back in the classroom:

“Every aspect of it was hands-on. It was informing; you left every session with something you could do. You didn’t leave a workshop and think, “well, that was a waste of time”, you just knew, “I can use this, I’m going to go into my classroom tomorrow, and this is what we’re going to do”.

Some teachers and principals were concerned that although the quality of the teacher professional learning was high, the learning was not necessarily becoming embedded in day-to-day practice by participants or being rolled out to other teachers, due to a lack of processes to support this within the school.

Part of the structure of CLIL allows for and encourages the school to take ownership of the diffusion of the learning from the program through their school. Schools have approached this in a variety of ways, such as: Year one teacher professional learning participants mentoring Year two participants or teacher professional learning participants running elements of the training for their colleagues.

However, none of the principals seemed confident that they had yet reached the right solution to this question of how to diffuse the learning through the school. In many cases this was put down partly to a lack of time and capacity to develop these mechanisms. But some also felt that it would just take time to fully grasp what was required and what was possible as the school leaders and teaching staff really got to grips with what creativity might mean for their school. Several principals were keen to hear how other schools were working on this, and keen for the Sydney Opera House to facilitate this conversation.

Some interviewees also suggested there would be a need for regular refresher sessions with the Opera House in which schools could return to the framework and the content of the teacher professional learning – especially as they identified creativity as a gap in general teacher training.
The intentional ambiguity and flexibility of the program

A further challenge identified by principals and teachers, and the CLIL team themselves, is the intentionally ambiguous and flexible nature of the program. There is a core tension within the program around the degree to which the CLIL is a fixed model or something more bespoke. The Creative Learning Specialist suggests that the lack of a clear, precise definition enables some of the creativity of the program and allows the program to address specific school needs.

This flexibility is largely welcomed by the schools:

“If we had got something that was very scripted and structured from beginning to end,..., I probably would have pulled out. Because I didn't want another organised, structured project, I've got plenty of those, I wanted something that was unpredictable.”

And especially by those schools recognising the complexity of creativity and looking for CLIL to contribute to sustained change:

“Because that’s our relationship with all other professional learning providers, it’s one size fits all, it’s not tailored to our school, it’s not ongoing. ... I think we were just expecting it to be “here is the framework and off you go”. Which is what we get at every other time, whereas the ongoing support from Frank and the team has just been integral for the teachers to actually get to the crux of what creativity might be or might look like in a classroom.”

The flexibility enables the program to be tailored to the context and needs of the individual school in a way most other teacher professional learning is not:

“[The flexibility is] part of why this program is so successful, because from the Ignition Day through to the pre-work that you do with the artist and with Frank, because he obviously develops a really good connection and understanding of your school, plus they come on site, all of that is tailored for your context. Other programs, it’s ... here’s this program and we all do the same thing. [Whereas] this is really tailored around what you want for your school, and what’s the overarching question that we can answer through this project, and you have written that for your needs and for your school.”

Artists also noted the benefits the program’s freedom provided for them, both in terms of their work with schools specifically and for their broader creative development:

“Ambiguity and lack of structure is deeply satisfying and enables me to grow as an artist as I have autonomy and freedom, and ability to move around and make choices in a way that I can’t when working on other programs for other organisations.”

“I love this program because Frank is so open and gives us such freedom.”

However, the flexibility and ambiguity, and the potential for uncertainty over what the program is or will deliver, can also be very challenging. It can make it more difficult to explain the relevance of the program and to generate buy-in from those who may be reluctant. It demands a high level of trust in the Opera House and their team. And it requires schools to be agile and able to respond to opportunities as they arise during the program.
As one principal describes, it requires a certain school culture or style of leadership:

“There are lots of benefits to the program. But you have to be the sort of person that doesn’t like everything [locked down]. Because it’s a bit of a journey that you’re going on together, and it’s not, you know, it’s not prescriptive. There are boundaries of course, and timeframes, but you don’t know what you are going to come out with at the end. So, you need to … have a level of comfort I suppose with being slightly uncomfortable, and just bumbling along and just knowing that the process that you’re going through as a school community is going to be pretty magic. But you are sort of trusting in that process. And I don’t think everyone could do that.

Challenges related to buy-in were not exclusive to schools, but were encountered at various stages with the Opera House’s systems as well. As the Head of Event Operations explained, a program like CLIL challenges an institution like the Opera House in many ways:

“Because when you’re doing a creative leadership program, you’re wanting people to free flow the ideas. “Let’s do this and let’s go over here with this idea and let’s go there …” And we’re like “No, you’ve got to lock the crew in two weeks before, and this is when you’re going to start, and this is the start time, and how many lighting people do you want, and when are we going to start plotting and when are we going to do this?”

Production schedules create efficiencies but also limits, and set expectations that do not always sit comfortably with CLIL’s dynamic and process-driven approach. As an institution, the Opera House is also obliged to establish systems to protect the building and these can present limitations on CLIL’s creative process:

“And some of the stuff Frank wants to do, you know … creative play – we’re going to have scissors, and have paint and we’re going to… eek the heritage, it’s a World Heritage building! You’re in the Utzon Room doing something – oh no the floor, the tapestries. You know?!"

Artists spoke of a similar tension between the need for creative freedom and structure, and of the program’s ‘intentional ambiguity’ as both a challenge and a factor underlying the program’s success:

“In CLIL I don’t feel trapped by anything, but I also feel a bit off the tether – unhinged by that.

“‘It’s very malleable and flexible. I guess that’s what’s so exciting about it – it feels very alive and present. … It does feel dangerous, [but] it feels like we’re actually becoming custodians of art and bringing it out to where everybody feels they have access to it.”

For both artists and Opera House operational staff, the difficulties of embedding CLIL within existing systems was offset by the opportunity to work with communities beyond the usual Opera House clientele. Describing the responses of her production staff to the program, the Head of Event Operations said:

“They love it, even though they know it’s challenging – oh my God another Frank show coming! [laughs] … But on the ground, you know the stage managers who are literally working on the floor with the kids to pull their show together, they just find it so rewarding.”
The value of the program’s inclusivity was also mentioned as important, and integral to the program’s open approach:

“My team love to get involved with [CLIL] because it is about being there for everyone.”

Artists spoke with a similar enthusiasm about the opportunity to work interactively and responsively with community:

“I love this program because it is so open ... I feel like the community will always drive what I do with these kids, whether it be a performance at the end or creating an artwork.”

And so, while the Opera House might be bound by certain responsibilities related to heritage, production schedules or workplace safety, there is also a willingness and excitement about allowing creativity to drive its processes. Dwelling on this tension, the Director, Programming pointed to the ways in which the Opera House will continue to evolve, particularly in its capacity as a site of learning and collaboration:

“Obviously I love the Opera House. I love the architecture and the order of the place. But I also love it when kids mess with the order. There is something about inviting chaos in a beautiful and meaningful way that is very attractive. Organised chaos. [laughs]”

For more on CLIL’s relation to the Opera House, both building and institutional processes, see Part Four: The strategic context.
School culture and leadership

Leadership is a key element of the program. It is built into the contract between the school and the Opera House that the principal, or another leader if that is more appropriate, is fully engaged in the program and participates in the teacher professional learning and other elements of the program. Leadership interconnects with the other challenges described above. The logistics and practicalities are only insurmountable if there is insufficient buy-in, and buy-in can be increased through the visible commitment of key leaders.

At schools where principals allow risk-taking, teachers are given permission to innovate with their teaching approaches and to not feel bound by the curriculum:

- The syllabus is a document, it’s mandatory, yes it’s there, but there’s nothing in those syllabus documents that tells you how you actually approach the teaching and learning, and so it’s like ... once teachers have the permission to be a little bit outside the box, they will do that.

- What we saw at the end of last year was that there were more teachers wanting to be involved. Initially it was only a very small number. Now more teachers are ... saying I want some of that as well.

By actively participating in the program the school leaders demonstrate their own willingness to take personal creative risks and embrace the uncertainty of the program, which encourages others to embrace the program as well. As it was described by one of the CLIL team in an action learning workshop: ‘the more [the principals] are rolling around on the floor making art, the better’. In the same way, teachers lead for their students and provide them with permission and confidence to take risks:

- [My advice] to the teachers that are involved is to jump in. You have to be the role model for those students, so if you go in there, and you’re nervous, or you’re worried, you just have to put it all behind you, and you have to be so involved. That way the children can follow in your footsteps and be brave, and find a different way to learn.

School leaders are able to implement the structures needed to increase the sustainability of the program and hold teachers to account to maintain their practice. In one school all the executive team and head teachers took part in the teacher professional learning and it was put as a standing item on their weekly meeting. This enabled them to keep focus on CLIL, to support each other and their colleagues, and to deal with barriers that might be preventing the process of embedding their learning.
Connecting to wider school objectives

The motivation of the school and how it connects CLIL to wider school objectives seems key to how they engage with the program, how they perceive and deal with any challenges of engagement, and consequently the potential impacts of CLIL in their school.

All schools involved with the program had incorporated creativity in their school plans in some way, either by using the term ‘creativity’ or gesturing towards this focus with consideration of critical thinking and/or future work skills. CLIL has never been interested in converting schools to its particular path, but rather assists them in achieving what they were already setting out to do.

In this context, CLIL was described in a range of ways by individual principals and teachers. At one end of the scale, it could be described as a discrete project about teaching strategies, drama games and a performance at the Opera House. On the other end, it can be framed as a process that can support a range of broader objectives for cultural change and whole school transformation.

For example, one principal described how CLIL contributes to the school vision for student-led learning:

“We came up with the description “You’re not the boss of me” ... because we wanted kids to take control of the learning and tell us to back out. Now we’re not there yet, but it wasn’t the Opera House project that was going to achieve that. That was one of many strategies that was trying to achieve that broad goal. But I think it’s helping us open up the learning for the kids, so that we can start to achieve that really broad goal... And] because that kind of goal is the goal of our school, it was very easy to maintain that objective. We’re not trying to do something over here, as an add-on or a bit of a tangent, this is right in the middle of our core disruptive work.”

For this school, participation in CLIL contributed to a broader school goal and facilitated greater progress and focus towards achieving that. This was the same school that participated in the three-week Takeover project. The Takeover was also designed to address this question of student agency, was an extension of this ‘You’re not the boss of me’ sentiment and was driven by the specificities of this school’s particular needs.

Perceptions of the program and what it might be able to achieve can also change over time. One principal described how they were attracted to the program by the opportunity to work with the Opera House, but stayed engaged once convinced by the potential for extensive change.

In one school, CLIL was described as one of many projects and the connection to school vision seemed weaker. This was also the school where the challenges of participating in CLIL were described as most disruptive and problematic and the principal was most hesitant to describe the program as good value for money.
Schools had different motivations and objectives depending on their context and CLIL was seen as having the potential to contribute to all these goals. One school was focussed on how they could further their work on inclusion of students with disabilities through creativity. Other schools’ objectives were around building school culture, supporting innovation in teaching, flexibility in approaches to teaching and learning, embedding the 4Cs (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication) and educating the whole child, including social and emotional learning:

“[CLIL] links so strongly with our whole school vision. We’re committed to innovating in our approach to educating students. And when I say educating students I am talking about academically, socially and emotionally, a broad, you know the whole child. And so this project really links in well to the philosophy and the culture that we’re trying to build at this school, in embedding innovative practices in what we do, and allowing kids to develop skills like creativity, like critical thinking, communication, collaboration, that they’re going to use when they enter society as adults.”

**Future focused skills for tomorrow’s workforces**

Developing future focussed skills among their students was a common objective for schools. These skills included those beyond the traditionally academic (e.g. writing or science), along with knowledge appropriate for jobs that have not yet been imaged and the disposition and resilience to deal with change:

“Well I think it’s because as leaders we’ve become very mindful of the need to be ready for this future world, this unknown future world, and we’re definitely on board with the research and the evidence that talks about the need to develop the skills beyond the traditional academic skills, and so creativity is such a key skill.”

As discussed in Part Two of this report, the impacts of CLIL upon students include an increased ability to take risks, increased self-confidence, increased ability to collaborate and increased engagement and excitement for learning. All such skills and abilities will be essential for negotiating societies and professional contexts to come.

While navigating the inflexibility of the school system, ensuring buy-in, and building the sustainability and reach of the program may represent challenges for CLIL, the benefits of the program to school culture and students is clear.

The next section moves beyond a study of the intrinsic effects of the CLIL program, that is, an assessment of the program on its own terms, to consider CLIL’s place within a wider strategic context. What social and cultural transformations are behind this move for the Opera House to develop relationships with different communities? How did the program develop? And what lessons can the story of CLIL provide to other cultural organisations?
So, why would the Sydney Opera House deliver a program like the Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) program?

The Sydney Opera House is one of the world’s busiest performing arts centres and most recognisable buildings, making it Australia’s premier cultural institution and tourism destination. With a vision ‘to be as bold and inspiring’ as the building itself, the Opera House lists creativity as one of its five core values, along with a mission:

“to treasure and renew the Opera House for future generations of artists, audiences and visitors; and to inspire, and strengthen the community, in everything we do.”

The Opera House is currently more than halfway through a decade of renewal, taking steps to anticipate the demands of 21st century performances and audiences. This includes renovation of both main performance spaces, a redesign of the functions and events areas and improvements to the entry and foyers.

The renewal program will conclude with the development of a dedicated centre for creativity which will be home to the Children, Families and Creative Learning program.

The Children, Families and Creative Learning program sits within the Performing Arts portfolio as part of the Opera House’s presenting arm, Sydney Opera House Presents.

It uses three pathways (onsite, online and offsite) for engaging with three target audiences:

— **Children, families and their carers** through their children and families work, primarily live performances from popular culture and non-commercial cultural contexts, including shows such as *Sarah and Duck’s Big Top Birthday* and *The Great Illusionist*.

— **Kindergarten to year 12 students, teachers and principals** through their creative learning work, which takes the form of live performances on-site for specific age groups with clear curriculum connections and supplied teacher resources. Along with CLIL, this pathway includes other teacher professional learning and events such as the Schools of the Future conference.

— **Regional and national kindergarten to year 12 students, teachers and principals** through their digital creative learning program, including free streaming of performances, talks and tours.

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CLIL is a central part of the Children, Families and Creative Learning program’s objectives, which are to:

— **Place the child at the centre of everything we do** – we want children to think, feel, play, and experience wonder.

— **Diversify our entry points to culture** so that Sydney Opera House is accessible to all children and creates a lifelong love of the arts.

— **Continue to present the very best artistic experiences** that are imaginative, bold, and challenging in areas of popular culture, the classics, contemporary performing arts, and multi-media.

— Establish Sydney Opera House as a place where **21st century learning** is relevant and meaningful, and inspires the creative lives of teachers, students and families.

— **Expand the Creative Leadership in Learning program** and establish a research program that measures creative learning outcomes.

— **Use our digital footprint to build two-way relationships** with schools across Australia and internationally.\(^{31}\)

The organisational rationale for the Opera House to deliver CLIL includes both its externally stated ambition to **use the creative potential of the Opera House to engage with the education sector**, and a more internally focussed aim to:

＞ move beyond a transactional sales-focussed relationship with schools, to a relationship based on creativity that harnesses everything the world heritage building, its performances, its people and history have to offer.\(^{32}\)

The CLIL program’s internal objectives are to:

— **increase the capacities of a school’s skills and knowledge in creativity learning**

— **use the Sydney Opera House as an enabling driver of creative learning**

— **connect families and school communities in creative programs at school and the Sydney Opera House.**\(^{33}\)

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The CLIL program is developing during this decade of change when key spaces for connecting with audiences on site and opportunities for generating income are temporarily closed. The CLIL program also seeks to meet the organisational need for new opportunities for engagement that are economically sustainable.

CLIL sits within a complex cultural organisation and seeks to contribute to a range of organisational goals. These goals include deeper engagement with audiences and broader communities, economic sustainability, increased access and diversity, as well as increased creative capabilities in the education sector.

Far from working in isolation, CLIL is only one example of how previously performance-focussed cultural organisations are moving into educational work, reimagining themselves as community hubs of creative activity and/or creative specialists active in building civic capacity. For other examples of school-focussed arts and creativity programs, both in Australia and internationally, see Appendix Three.

34 In early 2020, while this report was nearing completion, all Opera House theatres were closed due to restrictions on gatherings associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, and CLIL had moved many of its teaching programs online.
Interview with Fiona Winning, Director, Programming at the Sydney Opera House

“I knew about the CLIL program before I started working at the Opera House, and … what attracted me to it was that it was a program that was attempting to set up different kinds of relationships that weren’t just about buying a ticket. Since I started at the Opera House in 2017, I’ve really understood the transactional relationship that many people have [with the place] versus those who are lucky enough to feel like the Opera House is a second home. But they’re probably subscribers to our resident companies and have enjoyed the arts for much of their lives. What I love about CLIL is that it’s setting up relationships with kids and with people who might not normally have a relationship with us.

I think the other thing that is so important about CLIL is that it’s a genuine intervention in schools around using creativity – which we take for granted in many ways in the arts – to change the learning paradigm and learning options for teachers to use and for students to experience.

How does CLIL fit within the organisation?

“In some ways it’s an aberration but in some ways it’s an important symbol of what is possible in terms of changing relationships at the House, and breaking down what is seen to be an extremely elite place. In terms of our brand, we do represent creative excellence, but we also represent elitism, expensive and intimidating experience to some in our community. I love the idea that kids are able to come to the House and feel comfortable, and especially kids whose families might never have brought them to the Opera House. There’s a sense for Sydneysiders that it’s always there and you can go later, but I love the fact that kids from Southwest Sydney, early in their lives, hopefully can create memories of cultural activity and great experience.

How does a program like CLIL speak to the evolving role of large cultural organisations?

“I think it’s about a different set of relationships, and about a very contemporary engagement. It’s more participatory, it’s more direct. And it is fundamental to the future of our cultural institutions that play and experimentation and collaboration are all on offer, in terms of skills development and also experience. I think that this is fundamentally a very important part of our experience, coming into the next decade.”
How the program developed

Reflecting on the way the Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) program has developed within the specific context of the Sydney Opera House can provide insights into how new ways of working might be adopted within other cultural organisations, particularly those with a commitment to working in community contexts.

CLIL is an example of how the Opera House is both expanding its audience while also reimagining its partnerships, moving from a model where people usually come to the building as audience members, to one in which they engage as co-producers in exploratory work. This move towards collaboration has required a responsiveness to community needs, and a relatively open-ended method at times.

The narrative of the program’s development presented below is constructed largely from workshops, interviews and conversations with key members of the CLIL team, including some of the artists. These reflections provide insights into the challenges, successes and idiosyncrasies of the program from a variety of different perspectives.

The Creative Leadership in Learning story

The CLIL story began in 2014, driven by a recognition within the Opera House that the school-based audience was decreasing annually, and a new model of education engagement was needed.

An initial investment of $70,000 was allocated to the Children, Families and Creative Learning team to research, develop and pilot a new approach. This investment meant the project was able to operate outside core Opera House business and, as it was a research and development program, no explicit KPIs were set to pre-empt or shape its progress.

In 2015, four schools took part in the pilot version of CLIL, a program co-constructed on a school-by-school basis, to address a specific school need or question. The core elements of the program centred on ten weeks of engagement with an artist, some level of teacher professional learning, engagement at the Opera House through tours and performances, and some of the schools also performed at the Opera House.

This first incarnation of CLIL was structured around the creativity cascade, a framework for understanding creativity developed by Dr Miranda Jefferson and Professor Michael Anderson from the University of Sydney.35 The cascade was used in the program to organise learning and scaffold creativity in the schools.36

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An external evaluation of the pilot year recognised the ability of the Opera House to deliver arts-based learning but questioned whether it had the capacity to deliver high quality professional development in school leadership and creative pedagogies.37 The CLIL team were not expecting such a critical response. Reflecting on this in an action learning workshop they described how the findings initially sent them into a ‘tailspin’, but on reflection they recognised that the evaluation made some valuable suggestions about the challenges of the pilot program.

2016 was described as a year spent ‘underground … reading, researching, developing’. Supported by additional funding from the Opera House, the CLIL team used this time to return to their own creative processes and to consider how their personal and professional understandings of creativity fit (or didn’t fit) with the approach they were attempting to use with schools. Working with teachers and artists as well as the guidance from Judith McLean from QUT, they created their own articulation of the creative process they would deliver in schools, that is, the Creativity Framework as described in Part One: About the program (see page 14).

In 2017 they emerged with a re-worked version of the program, structured around their own Creativity Framework. At this stage CLIL was understood by the team as a program still under development, rather than a fixed and finished model to be rolled out, and it was still operating somewhat under the radar of the broader Opera House.

This ‘slow baking time’ and the opportunity to develop without intense scrutiny from the wider organisation enabled the team to take risks, reflect on successes and mistakes, and to be creative and playful in their approach to developing the program.

This fluidity has also enabled the ‘intentional ambiguity’ that is designed into CLIL which allows the program to be highly adaptable to school needs (this is discussed further in Part Three: Navigating challenges and factors for success, and by Creative Learning Specialist Frank Newman on page 66). The ambiguity over what the program is and how it should be delivered has been seen both positively and negatively by different team members at different times. It was described in one workshop as the ‘swamp’ of the program, seen as a ‘rich and fertile’ place of opportunity by one team member and as ‘dark and smelly’ with the potential for getting deeply stuck by another.

The vision, expertise and drive of the Creative Learning Specialist has maintained the coherence of the program. But when this understanding of and responsibility for the program’s substance sits largely with one person, it can be challenging for others to fully grasp what the program is and how it operates. This reliance on this one person – for drive, vision and program direction – has also been noted as both a strength and a weakness: maintaining a coherent and dynamic approach, while also presenting challenges for institutionalising the program within the Opera House’s systems.

Through 2018 and 2019, CLIL became more embedded and visible within the broader organisation. It was slotted into the language and process of the financial and reporting systems, although this was not always a good fit. For example, CLIL works on a calendar year cycle to fit with the school year, but must report into the financial year systems of the Opera House. With greater confidence in and evidence for the potential of the program and the way it contributes to the priorities of the Opera House, CLIL was more clearly articulated by the team to the wider organisation.

As CLIL became more established and understood, a wider group of specialists from within the Opera House became involved in the delivery of the program at all stages, including contracting with the schools. Several of the artists also became more involved, delivering some of the teacher professional learning, and there is the ambition that one artist will now develop a leadership role to bring together and support the team of artists.

This increased involvement from Opera House specialists and artists ultimately strengthened the program, moving it from a position of relative dependence on the Creative Learning Specialist for strategic direction and delivery, to a deeper involvement with the Children, Families and Creative Learning program and other teams. This changed the ways in which the program was understood internally and altered how CLIL looked to schools. Through involving more people in the program, CLIL became both more collaborative and more integral to the core business of the Opera House.

The process of embedding CLIL within the broader context of the Opera House is ongoing. Many have mentioned a need to make the program more widely known and valued. Others, particularly Opera House staff, have commented on the need for artists to be better connected to the culture and decision-making processes of the organisation. There is a desire for both artists and the teachers involved in CLIL to be given a more active voice within Opera House operations, and for CLIL to be better surfaced as an example of the organisation’s new and future relationships.

Currently, there is also discussion of whether CLIL should be framed as ‘community cultural development’ (CCD), that is, a type of community-engaged arts practice which has social justice at the core of its work. Several of the artists find this a useful framework for understanding their involvement in the program, using it to identify with a particular creative practice and creative community. For the Creative Learning Specialist, Frank Newman, the prism of CCD enables a deeper engagement than one which is only classroom based, including other school staff, parents and the wider school community. ‘I want to extend these ideas over the coming years’, he says.

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38 Also referred to as community arts and cultural development (CACD).
CLIL remains open to further developments and adaptations that may be called upon by specific schools or the changing demands of the Opera House. However, with its history of uncertainty and receptiveness to changing conditions, CLIL remains an important example of how a large cultural organisation can support the dynamic evolution of cultural programs, particularly those that work collaboratively with the community. Supported financially for a significant stage of research and development, but exempt from the pressure to report to KPIs, CLIL was able to develop outside the usual systems of preparation and forward-planning, ultimately demonstrating its value to the wider strategic context of the organisation.

A major question at this point relates to the challenges and values of expansion. How to reach more schools and students without abandoning the flexibility and sensitivity that is so integral to the program’s success? How, or whether, to resolve the tension between customisation and standardisation that has been integral to the program’s development?
Reflections from Frank Newman, Creative Learning Specialist

CLIL is a beast. It is a beautiful beast, but it is certainly rough edged and unruly. In many ways this reflects the way that I work. I have responded to situations as an artist responds to opportunities, not as a systematic program administrator would respond. I have followed exciting conversations and opportunities where they presented themselves and then at other times worked hard to push a school into what appeared to be a good opportunity. I have found connections and links and shaped things on the fly tugging at the thread of an exciting idea.

At all stages I have known the parameters of the program and knew what the Opera House wanted from CLIL, but many times CLIL was responsive rather than singularly programmatic. I recognise this as a strength and a weakness. It’s what keeps CLIL alive, but it’s also what holds it back from growing. This has laid the way to the wonderful term intentional ambiguity as a driver of the methodological viewpoint from which we make decisions about CLIL and its evolution.
New business models for cultural organisations?

CLIL is designed so that each school starts their journey by designing a focus question for the program in their school. It’s a way for schools to think about how they want to use the program. It’s designed for them to think about what CLIL can achieve for them. But what it does, is make the program about their school. It situates CLIL at the school.

This raises questions for the Sydney Opera House. If CLIL is situated at the school addressing their needs, then the Opera House is just an enabler of the answers to their questions. It means that all CLIL’s activities are designed around what the school needs. It does not place the Opera House performance programs as the primary driver of these answers. It just makes these programs one of the possible ways we answer the school’s needs.

This is a business model question. Is the model about a cultural organisation contributing to public good by running an outreach program and using whatever means it has at its disposal to achieve the objectives of this outreach program, in this instance the objectives of teaching creativity? Or is the business model about knitting the Opera House more tightly into its local education community and economy by designing a program which drives the education sector to come to the Opera House to explore creativity?

If we worked with schools to train them how to unpack our performances through beautiful projects with artists in schools and through teacher professional learning, the program would be much more systematic. It would use the shows as the driver of all activity. From a business perspective this is much smarter, arguably having rich outcomes in teaching and learning around creativity. But it would not be as responsive and adaptive to the needs and wants of the school.

Would this business model lead to the Takeover, that complex and ambitious project that was the result of a three-year relationship with the school and that principal? Or would it result in the original work with the parents at Lansvale which grew from reflective conversations around the school’s focus question and current challenges? My gut feeling is it wouldn’t. But it would be much more scale-able; and easier to communicate internally. What do we lose in this? I think we would lose the personal relationships that develop between the leadership teams. We would do business together rather than be bonded in an experiment to address problems in the school and broader questions about education.

This Focus Question version of the business model places the emphasis on the relationship with the school and therefore makes growing the program challenging because managing numerous bespoke projects is consuming. It does however ensure that the CLIL program is alive and kicking, as each project in each school has elements that are being moulded as opportunities present themselves. It ensures that the central idea of creativity, that each school is exploring, is genuinely at play in both the content and structure of the program. And that feels honest!
The financial structure of the program

As mentioned in the previous section, CLIL began as a pilot project funded by Sydney Opera House investment. However, designers and supporters of CLIL always had the ambition that the program would become economically self-sustaining in the long term.

The business model for the program is largely based on the annual fees paid by the participating schools. For the schools, the fee to the Opera House is just the initial investment and, once additional costs are accounted for (e.g. fees for casual teachers covering lessons while others are working with CLIL), the overall cost to the school can be several times more.

Financial structure from the Opera House perspective

As demonstrated in the table below, CLIL has moved from a position of requiring annual project investment from the Opera House – in addition to its provision of wages for the Creative Learning Specialist and other core staff. The project is financially sustainable with co-investment from the schools (covering artist wages, project material costs and tickets) and the Opera House (covering Creative Learning Specialist and other core staff wages).

![Table]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019 (includes Amplified Festival)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>$63,346</td>
<td>$154,150</td>
<td>$305,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>$92,174</td>
<td>$153,152</td>
<td>$299,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net result</td>
<td>(28,828)</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>5,758</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2019 the CLIL program presented the Amplified festival to showcase the works of schools in their third year. This festival was professionally produced in The Studio at the Opera House. Schools contributed towards the production costs through their annual fee. The breakdown of costs for Amplified which are included in the above table are detailed on the next page.

39 Sydney Opera House budget data.
While the main source of revenue for CLIL is the annual fee paid by schools, other sources of income include sponsorship and consultancy, such as providing teacher professional learning to schools and organisations not signed up to the full program.

The largest cost to the project is artists’ fees, at almost 80% of project costs in 2019. Note that the Creative Learning Specialist and other core staff are not costed from this budget.

**Financial structure from the schools’ perspectives**

CLIL represents a significant investment for the schools, both financially and in terms of time and other resources. Each school initially signs up in principle for the three-year program, but with an annual contract that is negotiated each year enabling a degree of flexibility for both the Opera House and the school.

The schools pay a standard annual fee to the Opera House, which covers the teacher professional learning and creative project, and which for 2019 was $20,000. Schools fund their involvement in different ways, depending on their particular financial situation, fundraising capacities and budget distribution. In previous years there has been an element of corporate sponsorship, allowing the Opera House to offer the program to some schools at a reduced rate. Schools have also been able to access performance tickets at a reduced rate and financial support for travel through other Opera House programs such as Arts Assist.

Alongside the fee to the Opera House, the schools have to invest significantly in temporary cover for the teachers who need to leave their usual classroom for the teacher professional learning and the creative project. At approximately $500 per teacher per day, this can run to several times the cost of the CLIL fee each year. Where schools embark on other significant projects as part of CLIL, like the Takeover at Liverpool Boys High School (see page 40), there are further costs and fees payable to the Opera House.

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40 Sydney Opera House budget data.
When asked whether they consider CLIL to be value for money almost all principals of participating schools did not hesitate to say ‘yes’. Several qualified this, saying that it was a significant investment for them, but still represented good value for money. Reasons given by principals for the good value of CLIL include:

— the fee is primarily for people’s time, and buying **high quality expertise is expensive**
— the impacts they are seeing for teachers and students are so important that it is **worth the investment**
— CLIL is **attempting to change pedagogy**, and such a large task requires significant investment
— CLIL is **delivering on wider school aims and priorities** (for more on the connection to school objectives, see: *School culture and leadership* on page 55, *Connecting to wider school objectives* on page 56, and *Future focussed skills for tomorrow’s workforces* on page 57).

The following quotes illustrate how principals express the value for money of participating in CLIL:

> “Resourcing is always difficult, but you know the impact, so you hold that close and you go “this is worth it”.”

> “But that is **great value for helping change the mindset in the school** … So yes, it is expensive, but you know what you are getting with your money … this is what it costs to employ people.”

One principal, although positive about the program overall, was more hesitant than others when asked about value for money. When interviewed in their second year of participating in CLIL, they suggested that although they were seeing impressive impacts on participating students and teachers, they questioned the scale of investment considering that at that point they felt they were still unclear on what the intended impacts of the program were meant to be. They felt somewhat uncomfortable with this uncertainty and were not sure how they would embed the learning from the program into the wider school (more on each of these challenges in *Part Three: Navigating challenges and factors for success*). This school has however remained part of the program and continued to invest into their third, and now fourth, years.

† Watch Class 5/6H from Lansvale Public School perform their songs ‘Asian Supermarket’ and ‘Boat of Dreams’ at Amplified 2019 at Sydney Opera House. Credit: Clare Hawley.
Reflections from Tamara Harrison, Head of Children, Families and Creative Learning

Being relatively new to the Sydney Opera House, it has been fascinating for me to experience the ‘beast’, as Frank refers to it, that is CLIL. There is no doubt that CLIL is an unruly project - difficult to administer and develop due to the boutique nature of its engagements and, now in its fifth year, needing a much tighter evaluation framework to enable a better understanding of impacts and to demonstrate the integrity of the work to potential partners.

We have many avenues to further explore, such as the wealth of knowledge we have built up around teachers’ professional development, and the question of how to share this more widely. We are also keen to support our artists in their creative journeys through the projects. For the Opera House this program enables us to engage meaningfully with communities we may not otherwise have had the opportunity to work with. And now, we have the opportunity to consider how we can support a lifelong engagement with the Opera House for these communities when their years with CLIL have finished.

When I think deeply about CLIL, and why we all know it is a great program for young people and teachers, I think it is because CLIL is one of the increasingly rare times that we invest in slowing down to spend quality, meaningful time with different communities. Frank and our team of artists sit, listen, and learn from these school communities, and the communities respond with ambition, rigour, empathy, excitement, and passion.

Both sides lean in for the extra mile to make things happen. It is a very respectful and authentic exchange where both artists and communities learn, take risks, and both are changed for the better.
The future for the program

Four years after the first CLIL pilot began, this report marks an important point from which to review the success of this learning intervention, and to take stock of the opportunities and challenges ahead. While many of these issues have been noted throughout the report, this section pulls these together and provides a road map for future program development.

Future considerations for schools

— The first cohort of (non-pilot) participating schools finished their three-year program at the end of 2019, and are currently considering how they can stay engaged. Tellingly, none of the schools involved want to end their relationship with the program.

— Participating schools recognise that their relationship with CLIL has the potential to be a long journey. In many cases, schools feel that they have only just begun, and real change will take time to build and embed.

— In this vein, the schools are all seriously considering how to support the sustainability of the program and its learning, and how to embed this learning in the long term. This raises questions such as:
  — What resources are required for schools to continue to deliver on CLIL learnings, and to what extent will schools continue to rely on the Opera House for these?
  — Will refresher programs be available for the teacher professional learning?
  — Will learning such as that included in the teacher professional learning be made available in university-based teacher training in future?
  — How to maintain a connection to the Opera House, its artists, and all the organisation can offer in terms of experiences after the first three years of engagement are complete?
Future considerations for the Opera House

As the initiators and managers of CLIL, the Opera House has a longer list of questions directing its future thinking around the program. Many of these have been raised throughout the course of this paper, and can be summarised as follows:

— Where does CLIL fit within the organisation’s hierarchy of learning opportunities, particularly given the design and intensive delivery load of the project, and the opening of a new centre for creativity next year?

— What further documentation is required for communication and development purposes? For example, the program would benefit from a clearer internal evaluation framework that demonstrates artistic and organisational rigour; and marketing materials would be useful to ‘sell’ the project to teachers and schools.

— How can the Opera House nurture and support a ‘family of CLIL artists’ over the coming years, and how can artists’ relationships with the Opera House be better embedded?

— How to best tackle risk mitigation? Specifically, how to take the main artistic load off the Creative Learning Specialist so that the program is not so reliant on one individual? This is an issue of long-term sustainability and may require the uplift of a teaching artist into a managing artist position.

— How to raise the profile of CLIL across Opera House activity, making it visible even if it occurs ‘off-site’?

— What lessons can be taken from CLIL’s rapid and creative response to COVID-19, and put into the Opera House’s longer-term digital development strategies?

— How can CLIL be made more financially sustainable? Is the development of ‘creativity competency’ attractive to Opera House sponsors and donors?

— How can CLIL and the Creative Learning program better articulate an economic and artistic rationale for its program to the Opera House, and engage the Opera House along the journey of its annual projects?

— How might CLIL’s teacher professional learning program be expanded to other groups to develop ‘creativity competency’, for example to corporate partners? Might this be a revenue stream to support the accessibility of the school programs?

— How to manage long term relationships with the first cohort of schools, keeping them involved while also enabling them to become more in charge of the learning and embedding the program throughout the wider school?

— What might other artists glean from CLIL and why?

— Is the bespoke nature of asking schools what they want a possible business model that can be adapted, refined, debunked by others?

— Should the program be described as a community cultural development (CCD) project when briefing artists, particularly given that artists need to work with the wider school community, in addition to staff and students?
Perhaps the greatest question for the future of CLIL is that of scale and reach. **How to expand the program to more students, more schools and more communities without losing its bespoke and adaptive approach?** This question of scale and reach sits at the core of wider issues of quality, and it is essential that the Opera House - and other cultural organisations - get this right if they are embarking on community-engaged arts practice.

This is a key insight of this report, particularly when considering CLIL within the context of the wider cultural and educational sectors. In judging CLIL or similar programs, **it is essential that growth is not the only metric of success.** If creativity is to remain at the heart of community-engaged art programs, then these programs must remain open to reinvention, rather than being simply repeated each time. Repetition may enable efficiencies and planning for production schedules or other necessary systems or processes. However, if repetition is allowed to set in, a program is no longer alive and, in the case of CLIL, no longer responsive to school needs and potential contributions.

**Programs such as CLIL reposition the relationship between cultural organisations and schools, disrupting each in productive ways.** CLIL treats schools as cultural sites, and schools see the Opera House as a dynamic place of learning. In this, CLIL demonstrates a business model, but also the need to position that business model within that symbiotic relationship between partners. The relationship between cultural organisations and schools need not be limited to ticket sales for theatre performances. This relationship can involve ticket sales, but these sales can be an avenue to achieve something far more significant and lasting. Artists can learn from community and communities can be strengthened by the engagement with artistic work.

There could be many paths through the CLIL program, some more straightforward and 'standard', others more custom-made and complex. However, the use of artistic methods to inform teaching practice will always involve a degree of uncertainty and experimentation.

It is through this willingness to take risks that schools enjoyed such positive benefits from the program, and that the Opera House have been able to pivot successfully towards more community-engaged work. In this sense, the same lessons taught by CLIL in the classroom are relevant for the educational and cultural sectors more broadly, advancing the value of creative and collaborative approaches for encountering times of opportunity, challenge and change.
Students from St Johns Park High School perform their work created with artist Margie Breen at Amplified 2019 at Sydney Opera House. Credit: Clare Hawley
Methodology

This research partnership between the Australia Council and the Sydney Opera House began in May 2018, part way through the second full year of the Creative Leadership in Learning (CLIL) program.

The partnership continued for two years, enabling exploration of the experiences of the first cohort of schools through to the conclusion of their initial three-year engagement with the program.

Broadly, the research aimed to understand CLIL in two ways:

— **An intrinsic case study of the program**, to document and evaluate CLIL against its own objectives, to understand how it has developed and what it has achieved.

— **An instrumental or thematic case study** which explores what we can learn from the program in a wider context, and how it connects to current issues for the Australia Council and the sector, including what it might add to the narratives on the public value of arts and creativity across portfolios, changing business models for cultural organisations, and the vital role of creativity and creative capabilities in future workforces.

The research is based around a set of broad, exploratory research questions designed to generate insight for both types of case study:

— **What is CLIL?** Including aims and objectives, delivery, engagement and economics.

— **What has CLIL delivered?** Including outputs produced and outcomes/impacts achieved.

— **What has worked well and what has been challenging?**

— **How has CLIL evolved and why?** Including how it fits within the context of the Opera House.

— **What is unique about CLIL?** Why do schools select this over others and what is the role of the Opera House?

— **How does CLIL sit within wider narratives on the future of skills and creative capabilities?**

— **What is the future for CLIL?**
The research methodology was designed to be a highly collaborative, action research-style approach, to encourage learning and reflection which could inform program design throughout the research process, and to co-construct knowledge and generate research findings that are of practical application to both organisations and the wider sector.

Part of the investment from the Australia Council funded a member of the Opera House team to be employed on the research project for one day a week for a year. This enabled the research to include an element of ethnography, with the member of staff acting as a participant researcher, able to observe the program in action and reflect on it through the lens of the research questions. This produced a depth of information and understanding about the program which would likely have been impossible with the standard research team alone.

The research design also included action learning style workshops, which brought together key members of the Opera House Children Families and Creative Learning team, along with some of the artists where possible, to consider questions and issues as they arose during the research and to share initial findings as part of an iterative approach to analysis.

The main sources of data for this research were:

- Academic and grey literature, including documentation from the Opera House.
- Program data and artefacts, such as quantitative data on program outputs and teaching artist reports on creative projects with schools.
- Surveys and in-depth interviews with the CLIL team, including artists.
- Artefacts, observations and reflections developed in the action learning style workshops.
- Observations and reflections from the participant researcher.
- In-depth interviews with principals (or other senior leaders) and teachers at seven of the eight participating schools, with a follow up interview with three of the schools one year later. One CLIL school did not participate in the research.

The data was analysed by the Australia Council research team using a thematic approach structured around the research questions and other emerging themes. NVivo was used to support the analysis of some of the qualitative data. The Australia Council then led the first stages of writing based on the themes and learnings that have developed collaboratively through the research process, with the final report and other research outputs co-written with the Opera House team.
Appendix One: Summary of school involvement with the Creative Leadership in Learning program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Focus question</th>
<th>CLIL year</th>
<th>Teacher professional learning</th>
<th>Creative project</th>
<th>Engagement with the Opera House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Liverpool Boys High School | Approx. 580 Yr 7–12 students       | You’re not the Boss of Me   | 1         | 8 teachers                    | 18 Yr 9 students working with artist Howard Matthew on ‘What a Waste’, producing short film and sound score | Student visits to participate in tours, Q+As and see 5 shows  
Teachers participated in a teacher professional learning session at the Opera House                                                                 |
|                        | 88% of students from language background other than English |                             |           |                               |                                                                                  |                                                                                                |
|                        |                                   |                             | 2         |                               | 30 Yr 7 students working with artist Jane Grimley on ‘Dirt Bike Time Machine’, producing an immersive theatre performance | Student visits to see 2 shows  
Students performed at the Opera House  
Teachers participated in a teacher professional learning session at the Opera House                                                                 |
|                        |                                   |                             | 3         |                               | 15 Yr 9 students in creative project ‘Under Age Learning Perspective’ with artist Amy Hardingham, produced VR performance work | Student visit to see 1 show  
Students performed in Amplified at the Opera House                                                                 |

Takeover: a 3-week immersive creative project, with the timetable suspended to enable students to focus on passion projects, involving 8 Head Teachers, 120 Yr 7–10 pupils, 7 artists, multiple performance and exhibition outputs. This process included teacher professional learning across 2019 in preparation for that year’s Takeover.

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41 Data from school websites and CLIL program reporting.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Focus question</th>
<th>CLIL year</th>
<th>Teacher professional learning</th>
<th>Creative project</th>
<th>Engagement with the Opera House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| St John’s Park High School | Approx. 850 Yr 7–12 students 90% of students from language background other than English | How can we collaboratively embed creativity across the school?                    | 1         | 8 teachers                    | 25 Yr 8 students in creative project with artist Howard Matthew producing picture story books | Teachers attended schools of the future conference  
Student visit to see 1 show  
Teachers participated in a teacher professional learning session at the Opera House |
|                        |                                              |                                                                                 |           |                               | 'Water Heroes' with artists Daniel Dunlop and Duncan Maurice, producing interdisciplinary performances | Student visits to see 2 shows, plus tours and Q&A sessions  
Students performed at the Opera House  
Teachers participated in a teacher professional learning session at the Opera House |
| Casula High School     | Approx. 800 Yr 7–12 students 62% of students from language background other than English | How can we embed creativity into the programming of all KLAS across the school?  | 1         | 8 teachers                    | In Yr 1 Casula focussed entirely on teacher professional learning                 | Student visit to see 1 show  
Students performed in Amplified at the Opera House |
|                        |                                              |                                                                                 |           |                               | 'STEM – Solving Today’s Emerging Messes’ with Jane Grimley, producing a theatre performance | Student visit to see 1 show  
Students performed at the Opera House |
|                        |                                              |                                                                                 |           |                               | 15 students from the Special Education Unit in creative project ‘Voyage to our Future’, with artist Howard Matthew, producing a short film | Student visit to see 1 show  
Students performed in Amplified at the Opera House  
Teachers participated in a teacher professional learning session at the Opera House |
## School Context

**Lansvale Public School**
- Approx. 700 K–Yr 6 students
- 94% of students from language background other than English

### Focus question
How can we make evident the miracle and complexity of learning for all our diverse and dynamic school community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLIL year</th>
<th>Teacher professional learning</th>
<th>Creative project</th>
<th>Engagement with the Opera House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8 teachers</td>
<td>All 5 classes of the teachers who participated in teacher professional learning undertook creative projects, with artist Lilly Blue including redesigning their classroom to increase creativity, a mural and performance, and a recycled forest and sound score. Collectively the classes produced a small book, video and launch celebration event</td>
<td>Student visits to see 3 shows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CLIL year 2
- 8 teachers
- 30 Yr 6 students and 14 parents in creative project ‘The Dream Maker’s Kiosk’ with artist Howard Matthew, creating a mobile puppet making activity for creative play at the Opera House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLIL year</th>
<th>Teacher professional learning</th>
<th>Creative project</th>
<th>Engagement with the Opera House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8 teachers</td>
<td>Presented ‘The Dream Maker’s Kiosk’ as part of the Creative Play Holiday program. Group of parents attended a show, participated in a workshop and shared a meal at the Opera House Teachers participated in a teacher professional learning session at the Opera House</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CLIL year 3
- 24 teachers
- 90 Yrs 1, 3, and 5/6 students in creative project with artist Howard Matthew, producing an exhibition and with Luke Escombe producing original songs, inspired by community Ignition Day and in response to Vietnamese French circus performance seen at the Opera House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLIL year</th>
<th>Teacher professional learning</th>
<th>Creative project</th>
<th>Engagement with the Opera House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>24 teachers</td>
<td>Student visit to see 1 show Students performed in Amplified at the Opera House Sydney Opera House professionally recorded school compositions and made short film 30 community members participated in consultation workshop at the Opera House</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Focus question</td>
<td>CLIL year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Avenue Public School</td>
<td>Approx. 250 K-Yr 6 students Diverse community representing more than 40 cultural and language groups</td>
<td>What does a flexible learning environment look like in our place/school?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chipping Norton Public School</td>
<td>Approx. 330 K-Yr 6 students 62% of students from language backgrounds other than English</td>
<td>How do we build a creative learning culture?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Focus question</td>
<td>CLIL year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Spirit Catholic College</td>
<td>Approx. 950 Yr 7–12 students 90% of students from language background other than English</td>
<td>Our story. Understand it. Own it. Share it.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campsie Public School</td>
<td>Approx. 750 K-Yr 6 students 97% of students from language backgrounds other than English</td>
<td>Together we educate the whole child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix Two: Artists involved in the Creative Leadership in Learning Program

Curly Fernandez  Luke Escombe  Megan Lipworth
Kay Yasugi  Roy Weiland  Tahir Bilgic
Howard Matthew  Margie Breen  Michael Moebus
Lilly Blue  Alice Osborne  Lili Occhiuto
Jane Grimley  Michelle Robin Anderson  Kai Raisbeck
Kate Murphy  Sarah Vyne Vassallo  Carlos Gomez
Sophie Kelley  Duncan Maurice  Frank Newman
Amy Hardingham  James Brown

Appendix Three: Other examples of school-focussed arts and creativity programs

While CLIL has developed its own methodology and rationale for creative interventions and training, many other organisations are also delivering programs that aim to support and embed arts and creativity in schools. Examples include:

**4C Transformative Learning**\(^\text{42}\) (Australia)

This program uses the **4Cs - communication, collaboration, critical reflection and creativity - to support school transformation** to better prepare students for an increasingly complex world. It was developed by Dr Miranda Jefferson and Professor Michael Anderson (who were involved in the pilot stage of CLIL).

The program involves collaborating with schools to develop a unique transformation plan, supported by practical tools, capacity building for leadership, mentoring and professional development on the 4Cs for teachers.

**FORM’s Creative Schools**\(^\text{43}\) (Australia)

Through their Creative Learning work, FORM aims to support students to **develop the skills for the world and workforces of the future**.

The program partners teachers with creative practitioners to co-design and co-deliver classroom activities to teach the curriculum in creative ways.

Recent evaluation suggests the program is having a positive impact on: learner knowledge and understanding, attitudes and attributes, and skills and capabilities. Wider impacts are being felt within practice for both teachers and the creative practitioners.\(^\text{44}\)

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\(^\text{42}\) 4C Transformative Learning, viewed 25 March 2020 https://www.4ctransformativelearning.org/


\(^\text{44}\) Joubert M 2019, Creative Schools 2019 at a Glance: A researcher’s view.
Sydney Theatre Company\textsuperscript{45} (Australia)
Sydney Theatre Company offers a range of shows, resources and experiences as part of their education program, alongside teacher professional learning for primary and secondary teachers.

Their School Drama program, delivered in partnership with the University of Sydney, pairs a primary school teacher with a teaching artist to provide teacher professional learning that demonstrates how drama-based strategies can be used to improve student literacy and engagement.

Research has demonstrated that the program can increase student academic achievement in literacy and English, improve student confidence, increase student engagement and motivation, improve class collaboration and generate positive shifts in empathy.\textsuperscript{46}

The Song Room\textsuperscript{47} (Australia)
The Song Room aims to provide Australia’s most disadvantaged school children with access to high quality music and arts programs to enhance their education, personal development and community involvement.

The program is tailored to each school and involves teaching artist-led workshops for students, professional development for teachers, and engagement with families and the wider community.

Recent research suggests that participation in Song Room programs can improve school attendance, increase academic achievement and enhance social and emotional well-being.\textsuperscript{48}

Y Connect\textsuperscript{49} (Australia, ended 2018)
Y Connect partnered a Brisbane high school with researchers from Griffith University. The project brought together secondary students, teachers, school leaders, artists, arts organisations and researchers. It aimed to enhance young people’s sense of connectedness, belonging and engagement in learning.

The project involved a wide range of activity, including teacher professional learning, creative work, collaborative teaching between teachers and artists, formal and informal performances and displays, and visits to theatres and galleries.

Y Connect included a significant research element, which found positive impacts for students, teachers and artists in a range of areas. For students these included: self-confidence, creativity, imagination, teamwork, collaboration, attitudes to learning and academic outcomes, and sense of belonging at school. For teachers, positive impacts included increased knowledge, skills and confidence to embed the arts in their teaching. For the artists, impacts included job satisfaction, learning and opportunities to make a difference.

Lincoln Center Education\textsuperscript{50} (USA)

The Lincoln Center uses engagement with the arts to support the development of skills for the 21st century, including problem solving, collaboration, communication, imagination and creativity. It aims to equip young people with the skills they need for success in their careers and as active participants in their communities.

The Lincoln Center offers a range of opportunities, delivered at the Center, online and in schools. The Center has developed long term relationships with schools by embedding artists within schools to support students, teachers and communities to experience the arts and develop capabilities for delivering a sustainable arts program.

Chicago Arts Partnership in Education\textsuperscript{51} (USA)

CAPE sparks students’ passion for learning by integrating the arts into other subjects such as science, maths and languages, to increase academic and social-emotional outcomes such as creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and problem solving.

The program partners a schoolteacher with a teaching artist for long term engagement through training, mentoring and collaborative teaching.

CAPE has been involved in a variety of research and evaluation projects. These have demonstrated the positive impact of CAPE’s work on the academic success of students, especially those from economically disadvantaged communities, and on the teaching practices and capabilities of teachers.\textsuperscript{52}

Barbican Box\textsuperscript{53} (UK)

The Barbican deliver their Barbican Box program in schools and further education centres in London and Manchester to encourage an imaginative and adventurous approach to arts learning.

The program begins with professional development for teachers, followed by a box of resources and an artist mentor to support a creative project in the school. Students see a show at the Barbican before performing their own work there. ‘Boxes’ are tailored to different age groups and art forms.

Punchdrunk\textsuperscript{54} (UK)

Punchdrunk use immersive installations in schools to encourage creative and imaginative teaching and learning experiences.

The projects generally involve providing tools for use in the classroom; teacher professional development and networking with other participating schools; and the installation of an immersive, creative experience for students, such as a lost lending library.

A recent evaluation of the lost lending library project, delivered by Punchdrunk across several schools, found it led to increased student motivation, greater written and spoken vocabulary, and increased engagement with stories and imagination, as well as a positive impact on relationships within the schools.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{50} Lincoln Center Education, viewed 25 March 2020 https://www.lincolncenter.org/education/education
\textsuperscript{51} Chicago Arts Partnership in Education, viewed 25 March 2020 https://capechicago.org/
\textsuperscript{52} Research Overview, viewed 25 March 2020 https://capechicago.org/general-overview/
\textsuperscript{53} Barbican Box, viewed 26 March 2020 https://www.barbican.org.uk/take-part/schools-colleges/barbican-box
\textsuperscript{54} Punchdrunk Schools, viewed 26 March 2020 https://www.punchdrunk.org.uk/schools/