

A Cultural Tourism Toolkit





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About this toolkit

For regional NSW, cultural tourism represents a great opportunity. Cultural tourism can mean increased audiences for local events, more visitors to local galleries and museums, and greater support for local arts practitioners.

Cultural tourism can also bring broader economic benefits – for small businesses such as café owners and accommodation providers, taxi drivers and petrol stations – through increased visitor numbers and longer visitor stays.

Beyond the economic benefits, showcasing arts and culture can have a significant influence on building community and making people feel proud of their town or region.

The *Cultural Tourism Toolkit* is designed to assist small regional communities to enhance, profile and package their cultural offering. It has the dual aim of encouraging the growth of regional arts and culture and making them a vital part of the visitor experience.

The Toolkit makes practical suggestions to support planning for cultural tourism and recommends other useful resources. It also includes a number of case studies that show the different ways towns and regions are promoting their arts and culture to tourists.

The Toolkit assists:

- small arts and cultural organisations, such as volunteer-run museums, historical societies, musical groups, local artist co-ops/galleries or craft studios;
- coordinating organisations such as local councils, especially those who may not yet have a destination strategy in place.
- individual practitioners or businesses, helping them to build their offer, work together effectively and communicate better to increase patronage or attract more visitors.

The rich cultural offerings of regional NSW

Every town and region in NSW offers a range of vibrant arts and cultural activities.

There may be a regional performing arts centre, art gallery, conservatorium or museum, and many towns of all sizes have a library. These facilities may house treasured permanent collections and offer varied programming that engages audiences all year round.

Also part of the ecosystem is a myriad of smaller organisations like historical societies, writers' centres, choirs, small galleries or museums with eclectic collections, as well as local artists, writers, musicians or craftspeople. These are just as important to a vibrant regional culture as the larger arts institutions.

Aboriginal history, art and culture play a vital role in a region's cultural life. Community museums or 'keeping places', such as the Brewarrina Aboriginal Cultural Museum or the Wiradjuri Study Centre in Condobolin, are attractive to visitors as well as important to residents. They offer new insights into the region as well as act as an introduction to the vibrant art and culture of NSW's Aboriginal peoples.

Cultural events and experiences can range from high-profile annual festivals or monthly craft markets, to public art installations and culture or heritage trails. These may spring from something unique to the area, whether that's a local historical figure or celebrity (Don Bradman, Peter Allen, Henry Lawson), a seasonal event (autumn foliage, spring flowers) or regional produce specialisation (wine, olives, cheese). Or they may simply be brought to life by a group of locals with a shared passion.

Activities that start with a local focus can blossom into cultural tourist attractions. For example, an arts project to 'yarn-bomb' local submarine HMAS Otway in Holbrook was originally developed to help build community resilience when the Hume Highway bypassed the town. But people from across the region ended up flocking to see the 'Yellow Submarine', spending money in the town's cafes and restaurants as well as visiting the Holbrook Submarine Museum.

Building on the tourism potential of activities like these not only benefits the community directly, but also offers opportunities to strengthen the infrastructure and ongoing sustainability of arts and culture in regional NSW.

Understanding cultural tourism

‘Cultural tourism’ – travel that incorporates cultural activities and experiences – happens in various ways.

A visitor might actively seek out cultural institutions to visit or attend performances as a part of their trip. They might come for a special event, like a music festival or craft fair, or travel to participate in a creative learning activity or artist residency.

Travellers might also find themselves becoming cultural tourists incidentally. The reason for the trip may be to visit friends or family and, during their stay, they find themselves participating in local arts experiences – a concert, a light show, a night market or heritage trail – with their hosts. They may be in the area for a day, a week or just passing through.

Here are five trends that highlight the opportunities cultural tourism can offer to regional communities.

1. Cultural tourism is growing

In Australia and around the world, cultural tourism is growing. In 2015 NSW hosted over 11.4 million ‘cultural and heritage visitors’,¹ both international and domestic, who spent an estimated \$11.2 billion in the state, an increase of 15.4% on the previous year.²

In terms of overnight stays, cultural tourism is growing more quickly than tourism overall, increasing in 2015 by 15% for international visitors and 11% for domestic visitors, compared to 8% and 7% respectively for overall tourism.³

This trend is supported internationally. Cultural tourism comprises 37% of world travel and is growing at a rate of 15% year on year.⁴

2. Cultural tourists stay longer and spend more

Across Australia, international cultural tourists spend 24% more and stay 24% longer than international tourists generally. And domestic travellers staying overnight at a destination spend 56% more and stay 37% longer when they incorporate cultural activities into their visit.⁵

3. Regional museums and galleries are popular

According to Tourism Research Australia research, visiting art galleries is one of the primary activities of the domestic cultural tourist.⁶

And research conducted by Museums and Galleries NSW in 2015 shows that tourists already comprise 40% of regional museum audiences – a significant audience segment with the potential for growth.⁷

Visiting museums, galleries or libraries is an activity everyone can enjoy, regardless of age or background. Usually cheap or free to enter, they are easily accessible and offer a great focus for cultural tourism development.

4. International visitors are increasingly interested in cultural activities

Overall, interest in cultural activities has jumped among international visitors, particularly those coming from Australia's top source markets, i.e. the countries where the greatest numbers of tourists originate. These markets include Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, India and China.⁸

International visitors are especially interested in finding out more about NSW's Aboriginal heritage and unique culture.

5. Most cultural tourists in regional NSW are from NSW

Intrastate tourists make up around 75% of domestic regional tourism in NSW, with around two in five museum visitors identifying as NSW tourists.⁹

So your target market might be just three hours away.



TOWN HALL

CAFE

LIBRARY

OPEN

FRUIT
& VEG

REGIONAL MUSEUM

Planning for cultural tourism

This section sets out a broad approach to making the most of your cultural offerings and planning to become visitor-ready. Some towns or regions might already have a tourism plan or strategy in place; some might have tourism incorporated into their Community Strategic Plan; and others could be starting to plan for tourism.

The basic steps are to:

- research and analyse
- plan
- implement
- evaluate and review

The way a council or umbrella organisation might work through these steps will be different from that of an individual arts business or artist, but the basic structure still holds. And it's fine to start small and build gradually, especially for those new to cultural tourism planning. Don't overlook the simple things.

1. Research and analyse

Think about the current situation – what you're offering, how people currently engage with your cultural offer, and how you might build on this engagement.

- For a council, this might mean compiling a descriptive directory of all artists, arts and cultural organisations, and cultural institutions, plus an annual calendar of scheduled events.
- A regional arts organisation like a district museum might assess its current collection and displays, and seek out views from volunteers and other stakeholders, as well as its current visitors on how the organisation could make improvements to its visitor experience so that more people will enjoy the collection or event.
- An artists' co-op or historical society might survey its members for feedback and harness their ideas.

- For individual artists or arts businesses, this might mean a potter or painter reviewing their exhibition or sales arrangements; a gallery reviewing its arrangements with local artists and the exhibition schedule for the year; or a choir reviewing its repertoire and capacity for public performance.
- For Aboriginal people you may seek out other artists and smaller Aboriginal tourism providers in your area to create a visitor experience that explores many aspects of Aboriginal culture and provides a more rounded experience.

Think about who's currently visiting – how many people, who they are, why they come. Organisations like a local tourist association or visitor information centre might be able to help. Or undertake a simple baseline survey of your own ([see Action Toolkit D: Data collection and evaluation](#)).

Find out what tourism 'destination plans' or strategies are already in place in your area. How does your cultural offer fit with these?

2. Plan

Taking into account your research, consider what you want to achieve: perhaps your town or region already has lots of visitors, but they're missing out on cultural experiences; or perhaps you can see the potential to attract new visitors through enhanced cultural experiences; or there may be ways to extend visits through participation in arts and culture.

Consider:

- What else you could offer, or what you could do differently
> [See Action Toolkit A: Making the most of what you've got](#)
- Who you could partner with, and what resources you could utilise
> [See Action Toolkit B: Partnerships – coordinating, leveraging](#)
- How you'll get your message out and attract your target visitors
> [See Action Toolkit C: Marketing and communication](#)

Set measurable goals and time frames for achieving them.

3. Implement

Put your plan into action. Perhaps form a working group with representatives from interested parties you've identified in your research and planning phase. Be realistic. Remember, you don't have to do everything all at once.

4. Evaluate and review

Evaluating your progress against your objectives is important, not just so you can feel good when things are going well, but also to help you to find areas to improve. It will enable you to report back to stakeholders and funding bodies with concrete data, and demonstrate opportunities for further development and investment. > See Action Toolkit D: Data collection and evaluation

Diversity, inclusiveness and accessibility

Living with disability should not exclude people from participating fully in arts and culture, either as practitioners or as part of an audience. Accessible Arts, the peak arts + accessibility body in NSW, provides a range of information and advice that can help cultural organisations make venues accessible, services more inclusive, and communication more effective.

The Accessible Arts website also offers useful checklists on everything from signage, marketing and communication to ticketing, seating and exhibition environments. www.aarts.net.au

Museums & Galleries NSW also provides a factsheet for museums and galleries outlining some considerations for providing inclusive access. www.mgnsw.org.au



Action Toolkit



A. Making the most of what you've got

Simple ideas for enhancing cultural tourism activities

Look for synergies

Hold concerts in a local gallery or library for example; or mount exhibitions in restaurants or cafes. There might be an opportunity to introduce joint ticketing for venues or events across a town or region.

Harness local expertise to add value

Volunteers from the local history society might run walking tours along a cultural trail; local arts or craftspeople might offer workshops; Aboriginal cultural centres might offer a taste of traditional dance or art practice.

Ways to attract visitors

Take advantage of seasonality and peak visitor times, such as long weekends and school holidays, and other events – cultural or otherwise – to attract visitors. Capitalise on existing audiences to encourage them to participate in other cultural experiences. Visitors to a food and wine festival may also be interested in the local gallery, for example. And audiences for a music festival may discover fabulous regional food experiences that bring them back for return visits all year round – converting a one-off into a repeat visitor. Look at how you could plan strategically and link up these events and cultural attractions. If you're a local council, you might broker a partnership between organisations or jointly market the food and wine festival, for example, with the regional gallery (see [Action Toolkit B](#)).

Create new cultural experiences to attract new visitors or encourage your current visitors to stay longer and extend their engagement – like having 'arts out of hours' nights, or hosting a performance or exhibition opening or film screening in the civic precinct, along the riverbank or in any other unique building or public space.

Night-time arts activity means people will be out and about longer in town. Performances or exhibitions in unusual venues – an old warehouse, a barn, a railway station – not only breathe life into unloved buildings but add a special dimension that can make the experience particularly memorable for audiences. Hopefully, they'll want to come back for more.

**Be aware
of funding
opportunities**

This kind of programming does not need to cost much, but there are opportunities to apply for grant funding.

Speak to your Regional Arts Development Organisation

(see www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/networks/) or look at other community grants available, such as through www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au; www.business.gov.au/assistance; www.clubsnsw.com.au/community/clubgrants/about-clubgrants); or Community GrantGuru (www.community.grantready.com.au/).

Arts and cultural organisations and societies should subscribe to their local government grants email list so that they are alerted to opportunities for small grants.

**Hours and
consistency**

Finally, it's a simple tip but one that often gets overlooked. Remain open through peak periods, and keep consistent hours over weekends and holidays. It's in peak periods that the most visitors will come so it's an opportunity to deliver a quality cultural experience that will have them talking positively when they return home. Consider the distribution of work hours if increased opening hours is not feasible (financially or in terms of available staff). For example, opening for fewer hours on more days will not cost more and will ensure that you're open when the crowds come.

Case study
Yindyamarra
Sculpture Walk
(Albury)



Case study	Yindyamarra Sculpture Walk (Albury)
Opportunity	The local landscape combined with the richness of Aboriginal culture set the stage for a unique visitor experience for the Albury area.
Description	The Yindyamarra Sculpture Walk is a series of 11 sculptures by Aboriginal artists from Albury and the region set along 5km of the Wagirra Trail on the banks of the Murray River. It is a good example of how local arts and culture springing from the community can enhance the overall visitor offering. The sculptures are a permanent exhibition.
Implementation	<p>In 2013 AlburyCity received \$250,000 from the Commonwealth Government through the Tourism Industry Regional Development Fund to create the sculptures as part of Albury's tourist offering. The commissioning process was led by a steering committee of local Aboriginal artists and elders who worked with the council to select the artists. The landscape is as much part of the experience as the sculptures, with each artwork placed to complement its surroundings.</p> <p>Yindyamarra is a Wiradjuri word meaning to be gentle, polite, honour and do slowly. A fitting name for the trail.</p>

Case study

Yindyamarra Sculpture Walk (Albury)

Outcomes

The project provided meaningful artist development opportunities, with mentoring for commissioned artists. It also involved the participation of local school kids.

The Sculpture Walk is now something the residents of Albury are proud of. Locals frequently use the Murray track and the sculptures are an integral part of the experience. Businesses are also supportive with a local hotel designing visitor packages, which include maps, bicycle hire and a picnic lunch for visitors to explore the trail.

The Yindyamarra Sculpture Walk is a small-scale project that is unique to the town. Very much part of the cultural rejuvenation of Albury with the opening of the new Murray Arts Museum Albury, it offers visitors another unexpected insight into the region.

Learning

AlburyCity continues to look at ways to enhance the experience for visitors. Visitors are encouraged to find out more about the sculptures and the artists through video and audio, made possible through an augmented reality app, activated by a special AR/QR codes on the signs. These include 3D holograms of the artists talking about their work. The council is now looking at how it can improve signage to direct visitors to the starting point for the 5km walk.

The Sculpture Walk is now
something the residents of
Albury are proud of.



B. Partnerships – coordinating, leveraging

Working together; harnessing collective resources; sharing planning and data.

Peer networks

Sharing information with your colleagues, regardless of artform, can lead to new projects and partnerships that benefit both organisations. For example, the **Our Rivers – Our History** project (see case study) shows how seven regional museums worked together to curate an interactive exhibition for visitors to the region, promoting the collections in each place and encouraging tourists to explore the other collections.

Local councils

A close relationship between the local council and the arts organisations in an area will enhance communication and planning as part of a town or region's tourism strategy. This relationship should not be limited to the section of council responsible for cultural activities, but extend to those sections that look after tourism and economic development.

A good way to formalise the role of arts and culture in council planning is to make sure they are integrated into the Council's Community Strategic Plan. This plan is developed by the community for the community and sets the agenda for how community, government and business will work together to achieve the goals in the plan. The Council can provide information about how to be involved.

Destination Networks

www.destinationnsw.com.au/our-industry/destination-networks

The six Destination Networks, overseen by Destination NSW, are regional NSW's destination managers.¹⁰ They are coordinating organisations that work closely with local councils, tourism organisations and operators as well as with other NSW Government agencies and commercial partners. They are responsible for developing Destination Management Plans, industry development and engagement, product development, working with Destination NSW on marketing and communications, and exploring training needs for regional tourism operators. They are also responsible for reviewing applications to the Regional Visitor Economy Fund.

Think about how you can work with the Destination Networks to make arts and culture part of your region's Destination Management Plan and promote the many cultural experiences available to visitors.

Regional Arts NSW

www.regionalartsnsw.com.au

Regional Arts NSW supports arts and cultural development in regional NSW and works with the Regional Arts Development Organisations across the state (see below).

Regional Arts NSW can offer advice to arts and cultural organisations looking to build their profile. It can put you in touch with like-organisations, advise on marketing, programming and audience development and connect you to their networks. Sign up to the mailing list to keep up to date.

Regional Arts Development Organisations

www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/networks/

The Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs) are an invaluable information and coordination point for arts practitioners as well as arts and cultural organisations. There are 14 across NSW whose role it is to facilitate communication, programming and planning across their region by working with local artists, arts and cultural groups, local government and cultural workers engaged by other government agencies. Depending on the existing infrastructure, they work in partnership with existing organisations and/or strategic arts planning at a regional level. This includes looking at ways to support arts practice and arts workers through cultural tourism.

Your local RADO can provide guidance on the development of a marketing plan, or direct you to someone who can. They can also assist with linking you into regional cultural networks and the local council in areas where there might not be existing relationships.

Museums & Galleries in NSW (M&GNSW)

www.mgnsw.org.au/sector/

M&GNSW provides programs and services to improve the visitor experience in small to medium museums, galleries and Aboriginal Keeping Places across NSW. It offers a range of resources to the sector, and these are available on M&GNSW's website. Like Regional Arts NSW,

it can advise on marketing, programming and audience development and can connect you to their networks. Sign up to M&GNSW's email list to keep up to date with programming, research and news in the sector.

M&GNSW's website also has a 'public' section, which includes information about cultural places and trails across NSW as well as a 'trip planner' that visitors can use to plan their trips (www.mgnsw.org.au).

Other businesses in the town or region

The value of arts and culture to local economies is not always well known or communicated. But arts and culture create income for small businesses. Cultural tourists eat in local restaurants, stay in the local accommodation and buy petrol at local petrol stations. This helps businesses, particularly those in retail and hospitality.

Small businesses and arts organisations can look at opportunities for packaging deals that offer, for example, a special menu for theatre patrons or a meal/entry ticket combination. A hotel might offer entry to a special exhibition or event as part of the accommodation package.

Local accommodation and transport providers are also invaluable partners in getting your message out (see [Action Toolkit C: Marketing and communication](#)).

And arts and cultural exhibitions and events held out of hours are not only fun for visitors but also good for businesses that are able to capitalise on the increased number of people out and about town.

Arts organisations could consider becoming members of the local Chamber of Commerce, especially if the Chamber is very active in the region. Business networks are another marketing channel that arts organisations can tap into.

Also look at establishing a relationship with the RDA (Regional Development Australia) Committee in your area. RDA committees are representative bodies that promote and participate in regional programs and initiatives and provide information and advice on their region to all levels of government. There are 14 RDA committees in NSW (www.rda.gov.au/my-rda/nsw.aspx).

NSW Government support

The NSW Government recognises the vital role played by arts and culture in building diverse, strong and resilient communities across NSW.

Create in NSW is the NSW Government's Arts and Cultural Policy Framework, setting out the Government's vision for NSW to be known for its bold and exciting arts and culture. One of the priority areas of the policy is to grow arts and cultural participation in regional NSW.

Arts NSW is the NSW Government's arts and culture policy and funding body. It works to support a resilient and sustainable cultural sector. Arts NSW works with a number of regional art galleries, museums and performing arts companies to build a robust regional arts sector across all of NSW. Through the Arts and Cultural Development Program, Arts NSW provides funding aimed at:

- sustainable arts and cultural organisations and infrastructure
- improving quality
- increased access by, and engagement with, diverse artists and audiences
- partnerships to develop arts and culture in a specific region
- community collaboration

While designed to achieve cultural outcomes, these objectives support cultural tourism outcomes as well. The NSW Government supports the growth of the state's tourism and events sector through **Destination NSW**. Destination NSW's role is to market Sydney and NSW as one of the world's premiere tourism and major events destinations. It supports regional tourism through:

Case study
Our Rivers—Our History
(Mid North Coast)



Case study	Our Rivers—Our History (Mid North Coast)
Opportunity	The seven members of Museums Australia's Mid North Coast Chapter saw an opportunity to collaborate and cross promote through the development of an online exhibition showcasing the region's collections.
Description	<p>Supported by a Regional Museum Networking grant, the Wingham, Tinonee, Wauchope, Kempsey, Port Macquarie and Camden Haven museums, and the Mid North Coast Maritime Museum, worked together to develop a web-based showcase of the region's collections under the common theme 'our waterways'. The resultant exhibition, Our Rivers – Our History (www.oroh.com.au/), is an interactive collection of 51 objects that tell the story of the rivers and region across seven themes.</p> <p>The project promotes the museums and collections as a regional heritage tourism destination as well as building volunteer skills in collection documentation and best practice museum management.</p>
Implementation	<p>With the assistance of a Museums and Heritage Specialist and a Cultural Tourism consultant, the seven regional museums worked together to document a minimum of five objects from each collection. The project took over 12 months and involved 18 volunteers across the museums. Each object was documented and photographed and statements of significance prepared. This documentation was then provided to the cultural tourism consultant who worked with the museums to develop the online exhibition and accompanying brochure.</p> <p>The website functions across all screen devices and the brochure includes a QR code that links to the site for those interested in finding out more information.</p>

Image: Port Macquarie Fishermen: John McGann, Harry Peterson, Unknown, Jack Dart and Albert Peterson, no date. Image courtesy Port Macquarie Historical Society collection.

Case study	Our Rivers—Our History (Mid North Coast)
Implementation	<p>The brochures were placed in local Visitor Information Centres, with accommodation providers and local tourism operators, and in river and seaside cafes.</p> <p>Our Rivers – Our History was launched by the Member for Port Macquarie the Hon. Leslie Williams, MP in April 2015 and received good media coverage through the local newspapers, radio and television.</p>
Outcomes	<p>The user-friendly, intuitive website has become a resource for the region to develop new audiences, with visitors encouraged to explore the river systems and participating museums.</p> <p>The Mid North Chapter won the 2016 MAGNA (Museums and Galleries National Award) Category for Permanent Exhibition or Gallery fitout for Our Rivers – Our History, demonstrating that good arts and culture outcomes do not come at the cost of a well-developed tourism product. The judges commented on the strong link to cultural tourism priorities, and how the collaboration has obvious tourism benefits as well as being a good model for other museum networks (www.museumsaustralia.org.au/site/magna-2016.php).</p>
Learning	<p>Port Macquarie Museum was also a finalist in the 2015 NSW Tourism Awards for cultural tourism for its part in the Our Rivers – Our History exhibition. Additionally, the partnership between the museums has established a basis for future collaboration.</p> <p>The interactive exhibition has received a consistent 300–400 unique visitors each month. Its first month clocked up over 58,000 hits to the site, with numbers evening out over the following months. In comparison, summer saw a boost during January, February and March 2016 to 10,000 hits per month.</p>

The Mid North Chapter won the 2016 MAGNA (Museums and Galleries National Award) Category for Permanent Exhibition or Gallery fitout for Our Rivers – Our History, demonstrating that good arts and culture outcomes do not come at the cost of a well-developed tourism product.



- the **Destination Networks** – responsible for developing visitor experiences, marketing, coordinating services to industry, local tourism organisations and councils and administering Destination Management Plans;
- the **Regional Flagship Events Program** – which is worth investigating, both to see whether your cultural event or festival might be eligible for funding¹¹ and to see what other events are happening in your region which you could link into;
- the **Regional Visitor Economy Fund** – for product development and marketing activities that support a region’s destination management plan – another reason it’s important to ensure arts and culture are integral parts of this plan in your region.

Destination NSW also manages the **visitnsw.com website**, which lists accommodation providers and things to see and do in NSW. To showcase your tourism products on the site, register for Get Connected, Destination NSW’s website membership program (www.oauth.atdw-online.com.au/login). During 2014/15, Destination NSW delivered more than 6 million leads to the tourism industry in NSW through visitnsw.com and sydney.com.

The NSW Department of Industry and the **Office of the Small Business Commissioner (OSBC)** provide assistance to regional businesses to help grow local economies. The OSBC runs a Regional Activation Program and Business Connect to provide advice to small businesses.

OSBC Advisors may be able to help businesses understand what their cultural offering is and how to enhance it. To find out more, visit www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au.



C. Marketing & communication

Getting the message out; harnessing goodwill; attracting return visitors.

Think about how you would like to communicate with your audiences and potential visitors.

Content and message

It's worth spending a bit of time at the outset working out your 'key messages' – exactly what you want to say about your activity, event or venue – so you can present these messages consistently across all your communication channels.

What's the most important/interesting/distinctive/exciting feature of what you're offering? Why would people want to access or experience it?

Especially at the council level, it may be a good investment to pay a professional writer to research and write a reasonably comprehensive guide to the region's cultural offerings, focusing particularly on angles for target audiences you have identified such as families, gourmet travellers, or music lovers. This could then be used for multiple purposes including website, leaflets and other advertising materials.

Website

This is one of the most important, and simple, things you can do: create a website and make sure it is kept up-to-date. This goes for small (and large) arts organisations and services, from the local history council to the drama society, as well as local councils.

Websites do not need to be fancy or expensive. The most effective are simple to use, and provide visitors with the basic information they require – what you're offering, times, dates, addresses, prices.

Make your website as user-friendly as possible, including for people with disability.

Good quality pictures are essential, and if you are offering events, consider including the ability to purchase online. Open-access ticketing platforms like Eventbrite (www.eventbrite.com.au) are easy to use and cost-effective.

Platforms like Wordpress (www.wordpress.com), or Wix (www.wix.com) are designed to enable you to build your own site cost-effectively – or free of charge. However, professional advice in this area can be a good investment.

It is important that your chosen platform is multi-screen compatible: your website should be just as easily read on a mobile or tablet as on a computer screen. You also want to make it easy for people to navigate their way around. You want potential visitors or patrons – ticket-buyers – to get the best possible impression and be encouraged to find out more.

Once your website is up and running, consider listing your organisation or council on Google My Business. This listing is displayed next to the search result and makes it easy for people to find out opening hours and contact details. M&GNSW has easy-to-follow instructions on its website to help you (www.mgnsww.org.au/sector/resources/online-resources/).

Social Media

You can also use social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. These are free and easy to use. Your Facebook page could also be your organisation's webpage.

There are many benefits to using social media. They are easy to update and you can directly reach visitors who have 'liked' you on Facebook or subscribed for updates. Social media also provides an opportunity to interact with visitors, who can share feedback on their visit. Social media channels are already optimised for mobile viewing.

Make sure the information you provide is current and engaging. For social media, it's all about sharing, so try to post regular updates about interesting aspects of what you're doing. And again, photos are vital.

Tourism Research Australia has a social media toolkit designed for regional events that is available at www.tra.gov.au/Get-social-&-improve-your-event.html. While it is focussed on events, there are many tips for museums, galleries and local councils looking to promote their permanent cultural offering. Tourism Research Australia also has fact sheets on different online communication sites (like TripAdvisor, WordPress and Twitter) that you can access (also available on the social media toolkit page).

Advertising & promotion

Plan your communications carefully, depending on who you're trying to reach. Any advertising or printed material should also be supported by online communications, particularly by your own website.

You may want to seek out opportunities that will help you reach your audience when they are planning a trip. Nearly 3/10 (29.8%) of international cultural and heritage visitors to NSW planned their trip to Australia between '1 and 3 months' before they arrived. This was also the most popular time period to book before arrival.¹²

Listings on TripAdvisor are much more important than you think. TripAdvisor is a highly influential tool when travellers are planning their holidays. Travellers rely on the feedback and recommendations from others when considering where they will stay and what they will visit. Make sure you are included on the website and that you keep details up-to-date. Encourage your visitors to rate and review their experience.

For domestic travellers, motoring magazines like the NRMA's Open Road, regional guides and directories are also worth considering.

And accommodation providers often include on their website a page about the 'things to do when in town'. Make sure art and culture are part of the town or region's highlights.

For visitors already in the region, reaching them where they're staying is essential: providing foyer displays or brochures and building a connection with management and front-of-house staff in local hotels, motels and restaurants can be a great way of getting your message out.

Similarly, local transport providers, like buses and taxis, are another point of contact with tourists. There might be opportunities to publicise your cultural offering through the information pamphlets they provide to travellers, whether at the information centres or on the bus. Taxi drivers are another source of information through their daily conversations with passengers. It may be worth checking in with your local taxi organisation and making sure they are aware of all the activities on offer.

Tap into existing promotional resources offered via the Regional Arts Development Organisations' communications channels. Each organisation has its own newsletter, which it sends out regularly.

Similarly, Museums and Galleries in NSW (M&GNSW) and Regional Arts NSW have their own subscriber lists, which they communicate regularly with.

Think beyond your town and investigate how you can talk to visitors from across the region. Look at ways to work with other councils or sister organisations to communicate arts news to a broader visitor base. Local councils often have email lists and regularly send arts information. Community newsletters continue to be a very effective community communication tool.

Finally, don't underestimate the power of word of mouth – for both positive and negative experiences. If the overall experience falls below expectations, regardless of the quality of the arts experience, the overall impression is one of disappointment. Understanding customers' needs will help you meet their expectations. Social media and platforms like TripAdvisor effectively amplify the impact of word of mouth beyond an individual's immediate circle, so can have very powerful effects, both positive and negative!

Local advocates

Perhaps most importantly, local residents and business owners are your most loyal supporters. They will be the first people asked about things to do when in town and it is the local community who will support and participate in arts and culture when the tourists go home. So talk to them!

The importance of locals is backed by the statistics. In regional NSW, museum visitors are more likely to be staying with friends and relatives than other NSW tourists (49% v. 37%).¹³ Similarly, friends and family are a key audience for galleries. For example, some galleries attract over 60% of their audience from the local population.¹⁴

For this reason, make sure your local audience knows what is happening in the region. Make sure that your communication strategy includes advertising through regional communication channels, like the local newspaper or community newsletter.

Case study
Four Winds Festival
(Bermagui)



Case study	Four Winds Festival (Bermagui)
Opportunity	A small group of NSW South Coast residents who shared a passion for fine music and the local Bermagui landscape were brought together with the idea of arranging open air concerts.
Description	The Four Winds Festival is a music event held every two years over the Easter long weekend near the fishing town of Bermagui. Four Winds Concerts Inc, which now delivers a year round program of activities in addition to the festival, is run by a small professional team who work with the voluntary Four Winds board. The festival itself celebrates classical, cultural and world music and the ambience of the natural local landscape.
Implementation	<p>The festival began in 1991 as a small outdoor concert featuring poetry, piano and operatic arias. It attracted 200 people. By the mid-1990s it had developed into a two-day event and established a reputation for diversity and excellence, with musical offerings including didgeridoo, clarinet, the Japanese shakuhachi flute and string quartets. The bush setting has always been integral to the festival's spirit. The site is centred on an outdoor amphitheatre formed by a hillside framed by a small lake and tall trees. The outdoor 'Sound Shell' has a capacity of 2000 people and is complemented by the new indoor venue, 'The Windsong Pavilion', which can accommodate up to 200 people.</p> <p>Now after running for over 20 years, it provides audiences with a rich musical program as well as a range of local food and drink options, free onsite childcare programs and complimentary bus services to and from nearby towns.</p>

Image: Four Winds, *Taiko Trio* performing under Sound Shell at Four Winds Festival, 2015.
Photo by Marg Hansen. Image courtesy Four Winds.

Case study

Four Winds Festival (Bermagui)

The project has been supported by vigorous fundraising, led by a professional consulting firm experienced in the not-for-profit sector. \$2.8 million was raised, including a grant of \$1.67 million from the Regional Development Australia Fund for the development of the site, including 'The Windsong Pavilion.' The Four Winds board is committed to community-based collaborations and has also established a school music program, artistic residencies and mentorship programs for emerging artists.

Outcomes

The Four Winds Festival has succeeded in turning the geographical challenge of its remote location into cultural advantage. In 2016 the festival showcased its world-class performance facility, built debt free, and focused on enhanced community outreach and international opportunities. Four Winds now runs a year-round program of performances, residencies and venue hire with the possibility of new festivals showcasing film and other genres of music – all complemented by foods sourced from local providers.

Learning

The 2016 festival drew an estimated 4,300 people to a program featuring 80 artists, 21 events and 33 performances over six days. The festival included a range of local offerings including performances in nearby homes, pop up performances across the region during the week of the festival and evening performances in town. Of the 4,300 attendees, 40% were local to the area with 60% coming from the ACT, Sydney and elsewhere. A post-festival survey revealed that 98% of the audience said they would definitely return.

The Four Winds Festival
has succeeded in turning
the geographical challenge
of its remote location into
cultural advantage.



Access/navigation /signage

Clear signage is incredibly important for your visitors. Also known as wayfinding – the way people find their way through a town – good signage can play a big part in welcoming visitors and leading them through the town.

Signage needs to be functional but it doesn't need to be boring. Interesting signage can add to a town's character – you might be surprised by what your visitors photograph and share on social media. It could turn out to be your secret marketing tool and part of what makes your region different to others.

Signage is also a great opportunity to incorporate arts and culture into the fabric of a town or region. When councils are designing their signage, they could work with arts organisations and see what can be done within existing budgets.

Town signage and wayfinding can also be very simple, like painting arrows on pathways between venues in cultural precincts. This is something Albury City has done to encourage people to walk from the Murray Art Museum Albury to visit the Library Museum and Performing Arts Centre.

Make the experience of navigating through the region part of the visitors' experience. Wayfinding should make cultural venues and events easily accessible and inclusive. Everyone, including the less mobile, people with a disability and of all different ages, should be able to explore your town or region without getting lost.

Similarly, make sure people know that your venue or event is inclusive and welcomes everyone by incorporating universal access symbols to promote the accessibility of venues and services. Accessible Arts (www.aarts.net.au) provides practical information online, or you could contact them for advice.



D. Data collection and evaluation

Understanding your audience; evaluating progress; demonstrating success

Access to data on your visitors – where they come from, what they are looking for in a cultural experience, how long they stay, what they did, what they spent – is important in both targeting and evaluating your cultural tourism planning. This is especially relevant in today's crowded marketplace with so many options available to travellers.

For arts organisations, data collection will help you understand your audiences – helping you match what you are offering with what they want. The statistics might reveal patterns in attendance that you were not aware of, and provide an evidence base for adapting your operations to better meet the needs of potential visitors. It will also enable you to report back to local government and any stakeholders or supporting organisations.

For local councils, enhanced data collection will also help demonstrate to the community the value of arts and culture to your local government area and the opportunities for tourism.

Look at collecting data across the whole visitor experience – from the planning and booking stages through to the visit itself all the way to the return home. Not only will this information help you understand your audience better, but you can use it in your applications for grant funding to demonstrate audience numbers and the broader economic benefits your organisation/activity has generated.

The types of information you might like to collect include:

- Visitor numbers and demographics – origins (domestic, international) and types (solo, family, age group)
- Visitor behaviour
 - How long they stay in your venue (if a gallery/museum), or in the region
 - What other activities they have done
 - Whether they are planning to go into the town or visit another tourist site
 - How much they spent that day

- Visitor motivations and attitudes
 - Why they came – including whether they travelled specifically to undertake an arts or cultural activity or visit a museum, gallery or Aboriginal Keeping Place
 - What they liked best about their visit
- How they found out about you
- How they booked/planned their visit

Partnerships for data collection

Arts and cultural organisations and businesses can partner with each other to help with the data collection and ensure consistency for reporting. If you're employing someone to collect the data, partnering might also help reduce the cost. For example, you might like to look at the contribution of a music festival or visitors to the regional gallery over the holiday period, partnering with the gallery to survey visitors.

Collecting useful data can be difficult and expensive. However, there are organisations that can help and free online resources to draw on. For example, M&GNSW or the Regional Arts Development Organisations can advise on research methods and suggest ways to best capture data. Local councils could also look at opportunities to partner with a university or TAFE if there is a campus within the local government area.

Online resources include:

- *Crafting regional growth: A guide to evaluating cultural tourism in your region*, developed by the Cultural Ministers Council Statistical Working Group and the Australian Tourism Research Council to support arts organisations to understand the principles and requirements of data collection important to tourism.
- Destination NSW's business development resources – a whole range of support material to assist organisations become business-ready.
- SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com), which lets you create and send visitor surveys at little cost.

For details see 'Useful resources', page 32.



Useful resources

Take advantage of the many existing resources to help you with designing a plan, marketing, and capturing data.

Publications

The guide to best practice Destination Management, Australian Regional Tourism Network, 2012:
www.regionaltourism.com.au/destination-management

Template for a Destination Management Plan, Destination NSW:
www.destinationnsw.com.au/tourism/business-development-resources/destination-management-and-marketing/destination-management-planning

‘Business development resources’, Destination NSW:
www.destinationnsw.com.au/tourism/business-development-resources

‘Social media toolkit’, Tourism Research Australia:
www.tra.gov.au/Get-social-&-improve-your-event.html

Crafting regional growth: A guide to evaluating cultural tourism in your region, Cultural Ministers Council Statistical Working Group and the Australian Tourism Research Council, 2008:
http://culturaldata.arts.gov.au/sites/www.culturaldata.gov.au/files/Evaluating_Cultural_Tourism_guide.pdf

Cultural and Heritage Tourism. A Handbook for Community Champions. Bruce Whyte, Terry Hood and Brian White (eds), Federal Provincial Territorial Ministers of Culture and Heritage [Canada] 2012: www.linkbc.ca/siteFiles/85/files/CHT_WEB.pdf

A Tourism Toolkit for Ireland’s Cultural Experiences, Failte Ireland, 2012:
www.failteireland.ie/Supports/Develop-your-tourism-enterprise/Attract-Cultural-Tourists.aspx

Cultural Tourism Toolkit, City of London, 2015:
www.london.gov.uk/file/2650

Organisations

Accessible Arts:
www.aarts.net.au

Arts NSW:
www.arts.nsw.gov.au

Australian Government business assistance:
www.business.gov.au/assistance

Clubs NSW:
www.clubsnsw.com.au/community/clubgrants/about-clubgrants

Community Builders NSW:
www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au

Community GrantGuru
<http://community.grantready.com.au/>

Destination NSW:
www.destinationnsw.com.au

Destination Networks:
www.destinationnsw.com.au/our-industry/destination-networks

Regional Arts Network:
www.regionalartsnsw.com.au

Regional Development Australia committees:
www.rda.gov.au/my-rda/nsw.aspx.

Museums and Galleries NSW – sector-facing site:
www.mgnsw.org.au/sector/
(the organisation also has a separate site targeting the public at www.mgnsw.org.au)

Endnotes

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- 1 Destination NSW's definition of a cultural tourist is a 'cultural and heritage visitor' who participates in at least one of the following activities: attend theatre, concerts or other performing arts; attend festivals, fairs, or cultural events; visit museum or art galleries; visit art, craft workshops or studios; visit historical heritage buildings, sites or monuments; experience Aboriginal art, craft and cultural display; visit an Aboriginal site or community; attend Aboriginal performance (international visitors only). Note: a visitor may also participate in other activities. Cultural tourism also includes, for example, street art experiences and the business of providing cultural tourism experiences.
 - 2 Destination NSW: www.destinationnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Cultural-and-heritage-tourism-YE-Dec-15.pdf
 - 3 Transport and Tourism Forum, *Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Australia*, April 2016
 - 4 Take a Closer Look – A Cultural Tourism Vision for London 2015-2017, City of London, March 2015
 - 5 Transport and Tourism Forum, *Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Australia*, April 2016
 - 6 Tourism Research Australia, *Domestic Cultural and Heritage Visitors* by activity type, 2012
 - 7 M&GNSW *Guess who's going to the museum?* 2015
 - 8 Transport and Tourism Forum, *Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Australia*, April 2016
 - 9 M&GNSW *Guess who's going to the museum?* 2015
 - 10 The creation of Destination Networks was announced by the Minister for Tourism, Trade and Major Events on 6 July 2016 and will be established by early 2017. They will replace the Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs). Existing RTOs will be provided with transitional operational funding in 2016/17. For more information: www.destinationnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Regional-Destination-Networks.pdf
 - 11 The Regional Flagship Events Program attracts and nurtures events that contribute to the NSW Government's goal of doubling the overnight visitor economy by 2020. It provides economic, strategic and/or community benefits to regional NSW on a medium to long term basis.
 - 12 Destination NSW, *Cultural and Heritage Tourism to NSW*, Year ended December 2015 www.destinationnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Cultural-and-heritage-tourism-YE-Dec-15.pdf
 - 13 M&GNSW *Guess who's going to the museum?* 2015
 - 14 M&GNSW *Guess who's going to the gallery?* A strategic audience evaluation and development 2010

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Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727 then ask
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Internet relay users connect to the NRS then ask for 02 9995 0533

ABN 11 005 693 553

www.arts.nsw.gov.au

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HISTORY SOCIETY

TOWN HALL

ABORIGINAL
Cultural
Centre and
Keeping
Place

ARTIST STUDIO

OPEN

Herbert's
Portraits