

Sunshine Coast
Arts Advisory Board
Annual Report
2024-25



September 2025

sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
mail@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
07 5475 7272
Locked Bag 72
Sunshine Coast Mail Centre Qld 4560

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2024–25

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Cover image

Image: Yauar Warai Wandj,
Horizon 2025. Photo: Nic Morley

Traditional Acknowledgement

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Sunshine Coast Country, home of the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples, the Traditional Custodians, whose lands and waters we all now share.

We recognise that these have always been places of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance. The Traditional Custodians' unique values, and ancient and enduring cultures, deepen and enrich the life of our community.

We commit to working in partnership with the Traditional Custodians and the broader First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) communities to support self-determination through economic and community development.

Truth telling is a significant part of our journey. We are committed to better understanding the collective histories of the Sunshine Coast and the experiences of First Nations peoples. Legacy issues resulting from colonisation are still experienced by Traditional Custodians and First Nations peoples.

We recognise our shared history and will continue to work in partnership to provide a foundation for building a shared future with the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples.

We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the important role First Nations peoples continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

Together, we are all stronger.

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Image: No Souvenirs, Horizon 2025. Photo: Nic Morley

Chairperson's address

The Sunshine Coast Arts Advisory Board continues to proudly support Sunshine Coast Council and the creative industry in progressing the goals of the Sunshine Coast Creative Arts Plan. The region's arts sector has seen another year of dynamic growth, with increasing sophistication, diversity, and community engagement in creative experiences.

2025 has marked another year of significant progress.

- The Board welcomed new members with deep expertise in strategic planning and creative practice, further strengthening our capacity to guide the region's arts future.
- The First Nations Sub-Committee is playing a pivotal role in shaping the nationally significant First Nations Arts Strategic Plan, ensuring cultural protocols and leadership are embedded in all aspects of planning and delivery.
- The Arts and Heritage Levy has supported a range of projects and programs that provide important cultural and creative opportunities for artists and audiences.
- This year's Horizon festival was a great success and it continues to grow. It has been endorsed by Council for a further three years, including a new Strategy and Action Plan to guide the festival into the future.
- Public art continues to flourish, with new commissions to be unveiled at Library+ Caloundra and the development of a new regional Public Art Plan to guide future developments with a strong focus on place-making and community identity.

This upward trajectory reflects the strength of collaboration between Council, industry, and community. The Board remains committed to celebrating the achievements of the arts and culture sector on the Coast, identifying opportunities, and addressing challenges.

On the creative front, the region has great things to look forward to including the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The foundations we have laid to date provide us with an opportunity to now focus on the Games and beyond, unlocking the full creative potential of the Sunshine Coast and ensuring arts, culture, and creativity continue to thrive.

On behalf of the Board, and in my last term as Chair, I wish to extend sincere gratitude to the region's arts sector, who have embraced the Arts Plan and are passionately collaborating in delivering on its vision that 'the Sunshine Coast is alive with arts, culture and creativity'.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the thoughtfulness, leadership and deep commitment to the arts demonstrated by all board members, the Sunshine Coast Council Mayor, the arts portfolio councillor, senior council officers, and of course all of the councillors and the executive team over the past year. We are honoured to be playing a part in shaping a vibrant, connected and bold arts and cultural ecology.



Maz McGann

Chair
Sunshine Coast Arts Advisory Board



About the board

Established in 2016, the Sunshine Coast Arts Advisory Board has now completed eight years of dedicated service to the region's creative sector.

The Board plays a vital role in positioning the arts as both a cultural cornerstone and an economic driver for the Sunshine Coast. Since its inception, it has been instrumental in fostering partnerships between government, artists, arts organisations, philanthropists, and the broader business community.

As an advisory committee to Sunshine Coast Council, the Board provides expert guidance and insight, helping shape the strategic development of spaces, programs, and initiatives that contribute to a vibrant and sustainable arts ecosystem.

Through formal recommendations and strategic advice, the Board actively supports Council in identifying collaborative opportunities and guiding investment in arts and cultural infrastructure across the region.

Membership

The Board, which is governed by its Sunshine Coast Arts Advisory Board Charter, is comprised of locally and nationally recognised arts and creative industry leaders who represent a wide range of experience, skills and creative insight in strategic planning, policy and advice, artistic practice, community and audience engagement and development, First Nations arts, and arts and cultural festival and events.

Key roles of the Board include:

- Positioning the Sunshine Coast as a leading arts destination for tourism, industry, and community engagement.
- Advocating for investment in arts and cultural infrastructure to support long-term growth.
- Providing strategic advice on the development and enhancement of arts facilities and cultural spaces.
- Shaping cultural policy and strategy to reflect the region's creative ambitions.
- Encouraging philanthropic support and private sector engagement in the arts.

This strategic approach ensures that community and stakeholder voices are central to the delivery of the Sunshine Coast Creative Arts Plan 2023–2038, and that the region's creative future is inclusive, innovative, and resilient.

Board Members



Maz McGann (Chair)

**Founder and Principal,
Play Your Part Consultancy**

Maz McGann is a consultant working across arts, culture, tourism, and community development.



Rosanna Natoli

**Mayor,
Sunshine Coast Council**

Madam Mayor Rosanna Natoli is an honorary member of Council endorsed Boards. In relation to the Arts Advisory Board, the Mayor receives briefings on all recommendations before they are considered by Council.



David Law

**Councillor,
Sunshine Coast Council**

Cr Law has an extensive background and passion for the arts and all it brings to the community. He holds the Strong Community Portfolio – including community development, support services and facilities, community sport and recreation, arts, heritage and integrated transport planning and delivery.



Helena Gulash

Strategic Arts Consultant

Helena Gulash is a Kabi Kabi (Gubbi Gubbi) woman who brings strategic leadership experience from her work with First Nations within both government and community.



Jennifer Radbourne

Emeritus Professor

Emeritus Professor Jennifer Radbourne has extensive experience in performing arts, arts governance, philanthropy and academia.



Liz Burcham

**President,
Sunshine Coast Creative Alliance**

Liz is President of the Sunshine Coast Creative Alliance bringing to the role a wide-reaching career in the arts and creative industries.



Kris Stewart

CEO, QMusic

Kris is the Chief Executive Officer of QMusic, the statewide peak body for the Queensland music industry.



Andrew Maccoll

Founder of Saturate

A Creative Director and Cinematographer, Andy is an expert in brand strategy and culture changing creativity, with a skill set including photography and film direction.

Board Members



Bronwyn Edinger AM

CEO, The Events Centre

Bronwyn Edinger AM has worked across the performing arts, leading producing companies, venues and sector service organisations to create and program arts activities that are valued by their audiences and celebrated by their communities.



Catherine Jones

Creative Industries Leader

Catherine's prior roles include Director of the APAM Office delivering the Australian Performing Arts Market, and General Manager of Arts House, Melbourne's centre for contemporary and experimental performance.





Image: Nature and Culture – animal as object exhibition 2025. Photo: Pat Want

Meetings

The Board holds regular scheduled meetings throughout the year, structured to allow open and informed discussion and are supported by the Manager, Arts, Heritage and Libraries.

Meeting Dates	Board Members Attendance	Guests attended
28 August 2024	Cr David Law Maz McGann Jennifer Radbourne Liz Burcham Helena Gulash Kris Stewart Karina Seljak Andy Maccoll Catherine Jones Claudia Di Blasi Janine Symons Cholena Hughes (observer)	Jason Murphy and Deline Briscoe, First Nations Sub-Committee Bronwyn Edinger, CEO, The Events Centre Bryn Skilbeck, BASCO Consulting Greg Laverty, Group Executive Economic and Community Development, Sunshine Coast Council Nina Shadforth, Senior Curator (Collections) Caloundra Regional Gallery
20 November 2024	Cr David Law Maz McGann Jennifer Radbourne Liz Burcham Helena Gulash Kris Stewart Karina Seljak Catherine Jones Claudia Di Blasi Janine Symons	Sunshine Coast Council Grantley Switzer, Sunshine Coast Program Lead, Brisbane 2032 David Moore, Manager, Environment and Sustainable Policy Stacey Sherriff, Senior Project Officer, 2032 Olympics Megan Rowland, Horizon Creative Director
26 February 2025	Cr David Law Maz McGann Jennifer Radbourne Liz Burcham Helena Gulash Kris Stewart Andrew Maccoll Catherine Jones Claudia Di Blasi Janine Symons Cholena Hughes (observer)	Leigh Cleave, Cleave Consults. Chris Secker, Head of Tourism and Major Events, Sunshine Coast Council

Finance

The Queensland Government's 'Remuneration procedures for part-time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Bodies' (Category E-1) allows for the payment of local government appointed boards. Under this arrangement, the board has been remunerated as outlined below:

Fees up to March 2025

Chairperson	\$167 half day	\$334 full day
Ordinary Member	\$141 half day	\$282 full day

New Fees from April 2025

Chairperson	\$195 half day	\$390 full day
Ordinary Member	\$150 half day	\$300 full day

The Sunshine Coast Arts Advisory Board member fees and costs are outlined below:

2024–25 (Financial Year)



Board member fees
and contract services

\$13,041.31



Catering and hospitality
(including premises hire)

\$2,414.23



Materials, printing
and postage

\$2,745.39



Travel costs

\$7,373.76

As an advisory board of Council, the Board does not have authority to allocate funding or endorse arts programming. It provides long-term strategic advice and recommendations to achieve the vision, goals and outcomes as articulated in the Sunshine Coast Creative Arts Plan 2023–2038.



Image: No Souvenirs, Horizon 2025. Photo: Nic Morley

Building a profile for the Arts

Members of the Board, both formally and informally, represent and promote the Sunshine Coast as an arts destination, engage and connect with the arts and creative sectors and industries, and maintain and develop new relationships and networks locally, nationally and internationally. They do this to build the region's arts profile and identify opportunities for partnerships and advocacy.

The representation during 2024–25 included formal and informal roles, meetings and attendance at a range of arts festivals and events.

Industry activity including:

- Sunshine Coast Creative Alliance events including The Path, Refinery 6.0, Lindy Lee.
- Sunshine Coast Arts Foundation meetings, donor meetings and events
- Creative Collab. Brisbane events
- Creative Australia workshops and events including part of Leadership Cohort
- Australian Museums and Galleries Association Conference 2024
- National Association for the Visual Arts Round Table
- Audience Diversity Forum
- BIGSOUND
- Parliamentary Friends of Queensland Music
- Meetings with Music Australia, Tourism and Events Queensland, Queensland Theatre and Maleny Arts Council AGM
- Arts Queensland Peer Assessment
- Wellington Music Summit
- Queensland Tourism Industry Council Tourism Conference
- Reeperbahn Festival Conference
- Performing Arts Market in Seoul
- Hong Kong Performing Arts Expo
- NFACR Creative Forum on Engaging China
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Roundtable
- Creative Victoria x ArtsHub webinar on Working with First Peoples
- Meeting with visiting US expert in Philanthropy
- A Climate for Art Symposium
- Asia TOPA Exchange program
- Hosting Creative Climate international mobility conversation as part of Asia TOPA Exchange

- Creative Climate consortium 2025–29
- Small Giants Climate Accelerator program
- BlakCard Cultural Capability training
- Festivals including, Sunshine Coast Chamber Music Festival, Horizon, Rangebow, Australian Wearable Art, Sunshine Coast Hinterland Writers, Festival of Small Halls, Brisbane Festival, MELT Festival, Valley Fiesta, Yirramboi and China Shanghai International Arts Festival
- Arts events including Woodfordia, Open Studios, Maleny Music Weekend, Sculpture on the Edge, Naamba Folk Club, Open House, Melbourne Art Fair, Puccini Effect and Chopin at Maleny Arts Council.
- Performances including Dive Collective at The Old Ambo, Labyrinth dance performance at Rosetta book shop, Macbeth at La Boite, Bluey World opening, Media and Calamity Jane at Queensland Theatre, Eucalyptus opera and Round the Twist musical at QPAC, Grimm by Shake and Stir Theatre, The Puzzle at Dunstan Theatre Adelaide, and Chicago at Capitol Theatre Sydney, Drizzle Boy and Heathers at The Events Centre, and Those Folk at Pomona Theatre.
- Gallery events and exhibitions including Caloundra Regional Gallery, Cool Art Gallery, Contemporary Art Gallery Adelaide, Alla Prima painting workshop with Lauren Jones at Noosa Regional Gallery, Gallery LeBonne at Cooroy, Archibald Prize at NSW Gallery, Iris van Herpen at GOMA, Lethbridge Gallery in Brisbane, Prick Exhibition at RMIT, Yayoi Kusama at NGV, and the TarraWarra Museum of Art Biennial 2025.
- Artist launch events including Sunday Folk, Daryl James, Noni Hazelhurst, Michael Robotham and Dr Karl.



2024-25 Arts Plan outputs



838 events, programs and exhibitions
+ 82 digital programs presented to
200,438 audiences/ participants



867 local artists contracted or
funded by Council



264 training development
opportunities undertaken
by **923** artists



267 of which were First Nations



1371 art collection pieces
Valued at **\$9,186,320**
134 new works added to the
Sunshine Coast Art Collection



\$567,293 in council funding
provided to **82** art projects
valued at **\$1,155,865**



105 total grant applications received



587 volunteers engaged



82% applicant success rate



Image: Opening Night Street Party, Horizon 2025. Photo: Nic Morley

2024–25 Arts Plan profile



Webpage views

397,981:

Horizon, Gallery, Council and Artscoast



E-news subscribers

23,233: Horizon, Gallery and Artscoast



Instagram followers

16,631: Horizon, Gallery and Artscoast



Facebook followers

16,277: Horizon, Gallery

Media

Reach	5,226,825
Value	\$1,469,583
Placements	499

2024–25 Arts Plan outcomes

Satisfaction*

92% good to excellent

*Satisfaction derived from 582 Regional Gallery, Creative Program, Horizon Festival and digital event surveys conducted across the 2024–25 financial year. Attendees were asked to rank their score on a scale of 1–5 from poor to excellent

Cultural Vitality**

4.5

Indicates the level at which 578 attendees at a range of branch events agreed to five statements relating to individual well-being, local economy, community pride, capacity building and appreciation of the arts. Based on the measures 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The scores can be indicative of the cultural value of the community, with a higher score indicating higher levels of vitality. Note these surveys are integrated into all branch surveys. The questions do not relate specifically to the service or program being surveyed, they are generally based around Council's broader cultural services and programs.

First Nations

The Arts Plan has a key focus on supporting First Nations peoples to protect their cultural knowledge and to further develop their innovative contemporary expressions.

Key First Nations highlights over 2024–25 include:



472 First Nations artist beneficiaries (funded, promoted, engaged, participated)



6 First Nations Events delivered during Horizon Festival featured **155** First Nations artists and attracted **4,000** attendees.



2 First Nations visual art exhibitions at Caloundra Regional Gallery, (Contemporary Songlines and from the Mountains to the Seas), which attracted **6,000** visitors with **95%** of these satisfied to very satisfied.



91 grants recipients



155 artists involved in Horizon



57 artists exhibited in Gallery



5 artworks acquired into the Art Collection



164 participants in development programs

First Nations Sub-Committee

The First Nations Sub-Committee (FNSC) was established in 2023, now with five members, three of whom are Traditional Custodians of the region.

Meeting four times a year the FNSC:

- provide advice connected to First Nations arts activity
- provide a forum for discussing Indigenous community engagement, and existing issues faced by community within the arts context
- a mechanism to provide advice for First Nations arts development in the region, and
- provide advocacy for First Nations artists and the arts in the region.

The focus for the FNSC is the development of a First Nations Strategic Arts Plan to complement the Sunshine Coast Creative Arts Plan. In partnership with UniSC, this strategic plan is scheduled to be completed during the 2025–26 financial year.



Helena Gulash

Helena Gulash is a Kabi Kabi (Gubbi Gubbi) woman who brings strategic leadership experience from her work with First Nations within both government and community.



Lyndon Davis

Lyndon Davis is a Gubbi Gubbi (Kabi Kabi) man and internationally acclaimed artist, educator and cultural performer.



Jason Murphy

Jason Murphy is a Dungidau man of Jinibara descent and visual artist whose work critiques social, political and cultural issues affecting First Nations peoples.



Deline Brisco

Deline Brisco is a Yalanji woman of song whose practice explores Wulgkubadi (Yalanji traditional singing) with jazz, hip-hop and soul infusion.



Nicole Reilly

Nicole Reilly is a proud queer Wiradyuri woman, whose work spans the roles of creative producer, director, performer and teaching artist.

First Nations Programming

First Nations Programming for First Nations artists, creative businesses and arts organisations aims to strengthen professional practice, foster industry connections, develop new work, and link participants with presentation and career advancement opportunities.

Blak Creatives is a program born out of community voice. It provides culturally safe feedback loops through committed ongoing relationship building and networking while remaining responsive to First Nations artists and community needs..

'The welcome and hospitality! It really feels like a family, I met new people and learned new skills!'

Blak Creatives is designed to build the profile, recognition and capacity of First Nations artists/musicians/performers/writers and cultural practitioners, living and or connected to, the Sunshine Coast and extends to South East Queensland.

Blak Creatives hosts

- ongoing networking events
- members exclusive offers
- online forum
- master classes/professional development
- Peer-peer critiques
- BL:AK camp – a 5 day Camp on Kabi Kabi Country
- self-determined discussions – needs and priorities for our own arts and cultural sector and the way we want to collaborate with the broader sector

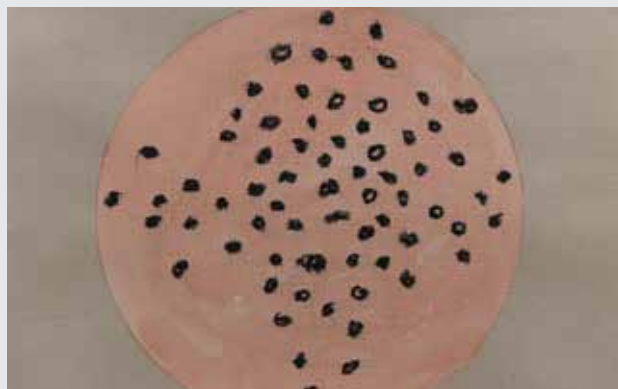
First Nations Elder in Residence and Knowledge Keepers initiatives are designed to provide advice and support in culturally appropriate ways to build capacity and humility for program facilitators and participants. The program has engaged Aunty Helena Gulash, Jason Murphy, Lyndon Davis, Bridgette Chilli, Deline Briscoe, Nadine McDonald-Dowd, Darren Blackman, Libby Harward, Uncle Paul Bong and Shannon Brett during this financial year.

The First Nations Artist in Residence program provides First Nations artists with space and time to develop capacity, connections to create opportunities for artists to test ideas, experiment and share their work. In partnership with Blak Creatives, a six-month residency was provided for Blak Print Club at 2nd Space. The First Nations Artist in Residence Program is funded by the Sunshine Coast Arts and Heritage Levy.

There has been an increase in First Nations creatives applying for RADF individually and being part of RADF applications. There has also been an increase in First Nations Peer Assessors.



Artist: Zartisha Davis. Photo: Kyle Dobie



Artist: David Rankin – Certain Skies Pink (1969). Photo: Christine Hall



Image: Yauar Warai Wandj, Horizon 2025. Photo: Nic Morley

ArtsCoast



ArtsCoast

In 2024–25, ArtsCoast has continued to advance its mission to position the Sunshine Coast as a nationally recognised destination for arts, culture and creativity. With sustained investment through the Arts and Heritage Levy, ArtsCoast has successfully profiled a diverse range of established and emerging artists, reflecting the richness and vitality of the region's creative community.

Over the past 12 months, ArtsCoast has worked to increase public engagement with the arts. Targeted campaigns and strategic storytelling have aimed to drive greater awareness and attendance among local residents, while also connecting visitors to the region's dynamic arts offerings. These efforts have not only enhanced cultural participation but have also contributed to the broader visitor experience on the Sunshine Coast.

ArtsCoast has also played an important role in elevating the region's profile within the national creative sector. A key highlight this year was ArtsCoast's delivery of REMIX Academy: Reimagining Regional, which helped to centre the region in a vital national conversation about the future of arts and culture in regional Australia. This engagement positioned the Sunshine Coast as a thought leader in creative placemaking and regional cultural development, reinforcing its reputation as a place where artistic excellence and creative innovation is both cultivated and celebrated.

As a central hub for arts communication and engagement, ArtsCoast continues to share events, tell artists' stories, and profile creative practice — building audiences, supporting careers, and contributing to a thriving cultural ecosystem. ArtsCoast remains committed to championing the region's creative identity into the future.

Key actions and activities:

- Delivery of REMIX Academy: Reimagining Regional in May 2025
- Implementation of the ArtsCoast Destination Marketing Plan 2024–25

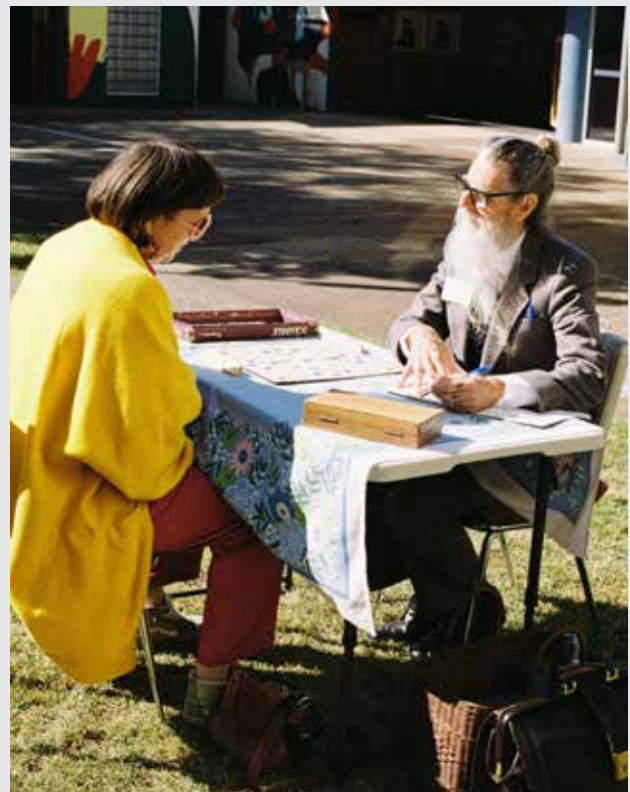


Image: Ant Gibbs, The Keeper Nambour, 2024. Photo: ArtsCoast



Image: REMIX Academy, 2025. Photo: Marcia Grimm

Grants and funding



Image: Project 24 Residency at 2ND Space - Mary Eggleston. Photo: Cooper Brady

Grants and funding

Funding support for not-for-profit arts organisations, independent creative businesses, and individual artists across the region through several grants and funding programs, including:

The **Regional Arts Development Fund** (RADF) supports independent projects and artist development. The fund received **78** applications for funding and awarded a total of **\$182,108** to **38** successful projects. The RADF grants supported the delivery of projects with a total value of more than **\$966,000**, and enabled the engagement of **320** artists, creative practitioners, and producers, with arts outputs reaching audiences of over **84,000**.

RADF is an annual partnership between the State Government, through Arts Queensland, and Sunshine Coast Council, promoting the role and value of arts, culture and heritage as key drivers of diverse and inclusive communities and strong regions.



Artist: Darren Blackman 2024. Photo: Kyle Dobie

Grants and funding

The **Creative Industries Investment Program** (CIIP) provides up to three years of funding for established arts and cultural initiatives that support the strategic development of the local arts ecology and deliver significant cultural benefit to the Sunshine Coast Region.

A total of **\$190,000** was awarded to **11** initiatives through CIIP, supporting a total value of more than **\$465,000**, engaging **250** artists, creative practitioners, and producers, and reaching audiences of **20,000**. Successful applicants are required to participate in a skills exchange and capacity development program involving group and one on one mentor sessions. Other local creative leaders are also invited to participate in these development opportunities.



more 2024–25 CIIP initiatives include:

- **Sunshine Coast Creative Alliance – Annual Creative Development Program** – promoting and developing professional contemporary practices and stimulating connection and collaboration. Program includes masterclasses, residencies, an Industry Development activity and delivery of the Refinery Creative Incubator – a 10-week intensive program engaging **30** industry leaders and creatives as mentors, facilitators and presenters.
- **IN | artist run initiative – IN | SITE Program** – a program of exhibitions, events, performances and residencies with a focus on site and place. Based at the Old Lock Up, Maroochydore.
- **Munimba-ja – Blak Creatives** – a series of Indigenous led professional development opportunities embedding cultural safety to support First Nations artistic endeavours on the Sunshine Coast.
- **Sunshine Coast Chamber Festival** – innovative program of bespoke events staged in stunning natural locations and intimate venues across the Coast, each event reimagines chamber music in a contemporary context, integrating site-specific, cross-form, and cross-cultural elements.
- **Basket of Hammers** – annual program of immersive arts events across the region.
- **Eumundi School of Rock – Inspiring Musical Journeys for Young Artists** – supporting **40** young musicians through a structured ten-week initiative, offering individual tuition, ensemble rehearsals, and stagecraft development under the guidance of professional mentors. Program culminates with a public performance and engages **40** artists and cultural workers.
- **Red Chair – The Compass Project** – developing and delivering a micro-touring circuit for musicians across SEQ.
- **The Old Ambo – TAKEOVER Project** – supporting artists to program the facility throughout the year.
- **Anywhere Festival** – creating performance makers. Anywhere through live theatre in unusual spaces.
- **Sunshine Coast Film Festival** – delivering an annual program of award winning films from across the globe to audiences on the Sunshine Coast.
- **Arts Connect Inc. – Open Studios Sunshine Coast** – week long curated arts trail of artists opening up their studios allowing visitors to explore and connect.



Image: BERSERK by KIN, an Old Ambo TAKEOVER Project, 2024. Photo: Ketakii Jewson-Brown

The Community Partnership Funding Program (CPFP) provides a contribution to the operational expenses of well-established not-for-profit local arts peak bodies and creative spaces for up to three years. A total of **\$102,000** was awarded to **7** creative not-for-profit organisations, supporting a total value of almost **\$700,000**, engaging **585** volunteers and benefiting almost **50,000** people. CPFP partners include Arts Connect, Munimba-ja Arts Centre, Buderim Craft Cottage, Caloundra Arts Centre Association, Kenilworth Arts Council, Maleny Community Centre, Sunshine Coasts Arts Industry Precinct, the Sunshine Coast Creative Alliance and the Sunshine Coast Screen Collective.

The Creative Development category (Major and Minor Grants) supports not-for-profit organisations to deliver projects, events and activities that strengthen the creative ecology of the Sunshine Coast by nurturing connections, promoting experimentation, and inspiring collaboration. A total of **\$79,785** was awarded to **21** projects, supporting a total value of almost **\$1.2m**, engaging over **700** volunteers and benefiting more than **30,000**.

Council continued its support of the Sunshine Coast Arts Foundation (SCAF) in 2024–25.

SCAF's Strategic Plan provides objectives along with annual measures of success that include dollars raised through donations, number of donors, events, newsletters, partners, letters of support and philanthropic workshops with artists and arts organisations, and planning for the philanthropic contribution to a new regional gallery build. Also included are intangible benefits that contribute to the success of the SCAF mission and strategic plan for the wellbeing of the arts community, an arts identity for the region, customer satisfaction, the donor experience, and regional growth.

Sector
development
programs



Sector development programs

A number of sector development programs have been delivered and supported throughout 2024–25, including:

Spaces for Creatives is an ongoing initiative that champions accessible, affordable places for artists to connect, create, and collaborate. It supports the development and activation of spaces for making, exhibiting, and performing, while advocating for the essential role of creative infrastructure.

Council continues its partnership with IN | ARI, curators of The Old Lock Up in Maroochydore. In the past year, this collaboration has delivered a residency, four performances, four curated exhibitions showcasing emerging and established contemporary artists, and a suite of professional development workshops. Council also remains a key supporter of SubTropic Studio in Caloundra. Established by Council in 2020 and now led by the Sunshine Coast Creative Alliance (SCCA), this dynamic space—located in the former Caloundra bus terminal—hosts an annual emerging artist residency, co-working and studio facilities for creative businesses, and a year-round program of events and masterclasses.

In 2022, Spaces for Creatives launched 2ND Space—a dedicated creative development hub located in Nambour – to build capacity, foster connection, and provide opportunities for artists to test ideas and present work. The space also served as a co-working environment for independent creative enterprises. Housed in a reimagined former dance school, it offered three large multi-use open

studios, a makerspace, breakout and meeting rooms.

MadeSC supports independent artists, creative businesses, and arts organisations to strengthen professional practice, foster industry connections, develop new work, and link participants with presentation and career advancement opportunities. In 2024–25 **12** artist residencies were delivered that supported **190** artists. Each residency culminated in a public showing, with a total of **179** attendees; offering valuable opportunities for artists to share works-in-progress, engage audiences and build visibility for their practice.

MadeSC Lab, a one-day, practice-focused intensive delivered with the support of The Events Centre, Caloundra, brought together **18** participants for three bespoke workshops led by nationally recognised creative practitioners. Workshops were on Audience Engagement through Intervention; Performance and All Things Live; and Blue-Sky: Project or Practice One-Pager.

The MadeSC Annual EOI invites established contemporary artists from all disciplines to propose ambitious and innovative projects for development in collaboration with venues, organisations, and presenters across the Sunshine Coast and beyond. The 2025 call out attracted **20** applications, with four shortlisted artists invited to submit a full proposal for final selection in late July 2025.



Image: Radical Hope Machine, Horizon 2025. Photo: Georgia Haupt



Image: Confashional by ShayeKet, Horizon 2025. Photo: Nic Morley.

In the 2024–25 financial year, MadeSC supported the development of new work for presentation at Horizon 2025. These new works directly supported **51** artists and were attended by over **12,000** people. They included;

- **Light Line** – two new First Nations sound works, featuring Kabi Kabi and Jinibara languages and celebrating the significance of the horizon – embedded into public places.
- **Confashional** – By Shaye Ket Productions, was a visual and interactive installation and experience where salvation from fashion guilt is served in sacred, ritualistic doses. Part performance, part sacred space and dedicated to confronting the fashion waste crisis on the Sunshine Coast.
- **Tokyo Rain** – Mary Eggleston, Mobius and Miami Vice. Blurring the lines between cinema, theatre, and installation, audiences were invited to wander the streets of 1980s Tokyo.
- **No Souvenirs** – curated by Libby Harward, was a thought-provoking exhibition hosted by The Old Ambulance Station Gallery that rejects the commodification of the tourist gaze often imposed on Blak art, featuring the work of **six** emerging Sunshine Coast based First Nations artists.

- **Catching a Whiff** – Lowana Davies. Created through a site-specific residency at Falls Farm, Mapleton. Audiences were guided through a suite of sensory surprises and delights, engaging with soils, orchards, gardens and in-conversations.
- **BOH! Sub_Culture** – Basket of Hammers. A new audio-visual installation promoting the discovery of new musicians, spaces, and experiences within local subcultures.
- **The Daily Muse** – by Alison Mooney, was a daily public art project, where each piece (an unavoidable good news mural) was created in response to current events in mainstream media's daily news.
- **Radical Hope Machine** led by artist Amanda Bennetts, fused art, technology, and sci-fi in a speculative workshop series culminating in an exhibition.
- **Eddie Ray Silence of the Jams 2: Lack of Judgement Day** – the second iteration of the live music and film combo.
- **Scene through the Screen** – curated by Jason Murphy, was a visual art exhibition of new screen-printing work to celebrate the stories of Jinibara artists.



Credit: Catching a Whiff by Lowana Davies, Horizon 2025.
Photo: Georgia Haupt



Image: Tokyo Rain by Mary Egglestone x Mobius, Horizon 2025.
Photo: Georgia Haupt



Image: FutureNOW 2025 Photo: Georgia Haupt

Now in its final year, FutureNOW explores the intersection of art and emerging technologies within a regional context. The program is designed to build artistic and digital capacity, foster new networks across Queensland and nationally, and position the Sunshine Coast as both connected and competitive within this fast-evolving creative space.

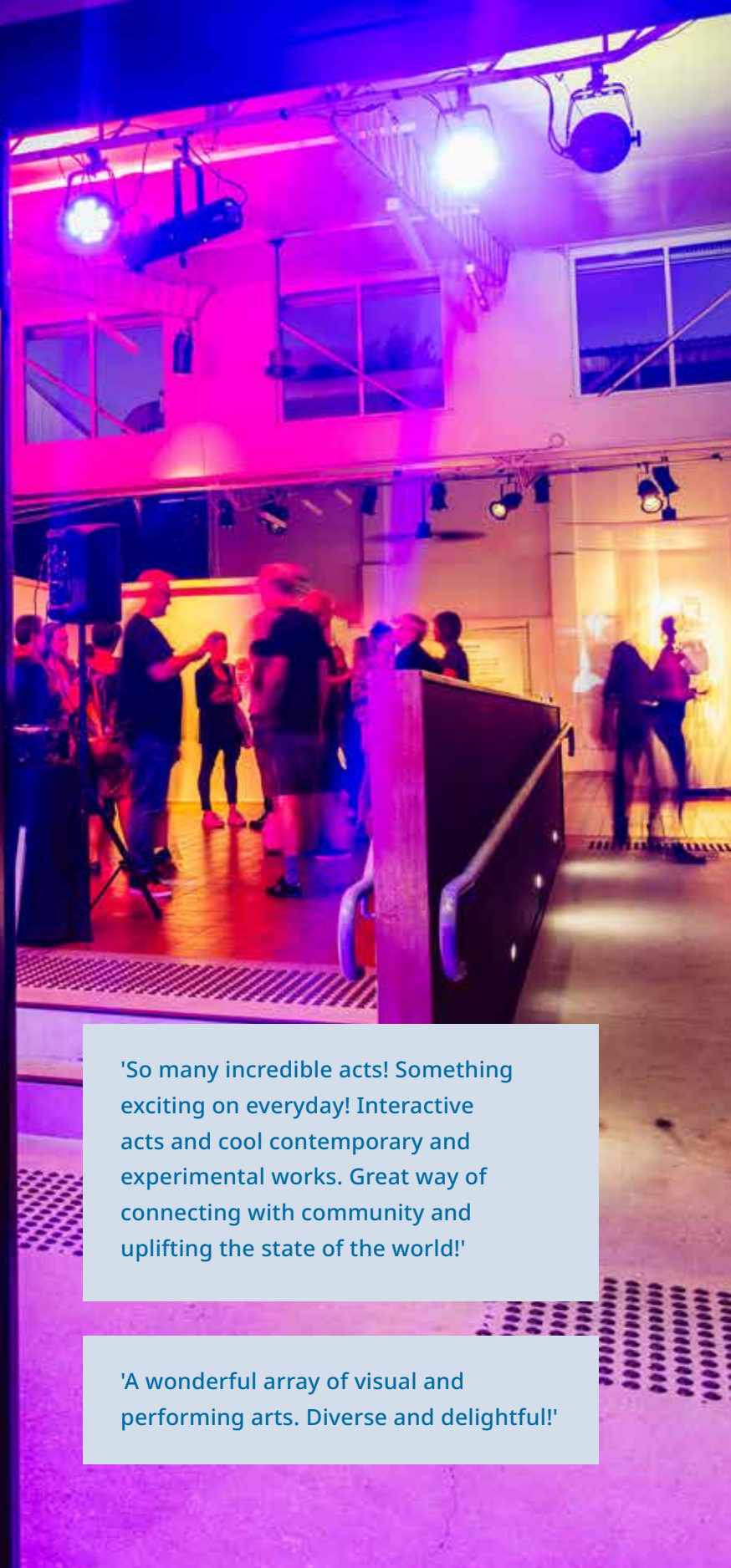
In 2024–25, FutureNOW supported the initial development of three new works over a nine-month period with dedicated budgets, industry connections, and critical feedback. These works are currently under consideration for further development and presentation opportunities.

The FutureNOW LAB supported eight artists and creative technologists through a three-month intensive that included a series of workshops and a three-day weekend intensive. Workshops focused on projection mapping, computer vision and AI and early-stage concept development while the weekend intensive—delivered in partnership with UniSC, Noosa Regional Gallery, and Experimenta—included curatorial sessions and two days of hands-on labs at UniSC led by industry leaders.

The Keeper Project is a live public art project where artists work in a temporary role as observer, collector, maker, and storyteller within a community. Established in 2019 by Council in collaboration with Field Theory (VIC) and delivered in partnership with Red Chair Productions from 2021–23 in Coolumb. Red Chair has since successfully secured funding from Arts Queensland and Creative Australia to continue delivery of The Keeper Project across three new locations. In 2024, **11** Keepers were selected for The Keeper Nambour, with the Keeper's Assistant based at 2nd Space. A total of **24** artists and cultural workers were engaged, almost **750** people directly participated, and nearly **50,000** people witnessed the Nambour project. In 2025, The Keeper Project is being delivered in Caloundra.

Horizon

Horizon



'So many incredible acts! Something exciting on everyday! Interactive acts and cool contemporary and experimental works. Great way of connecting with community and uplifting the state of the world!'

'A wonderful array of visual and performing arts. Diverse and delightful!'

Image: The Old Ambo, Horizon 2025. Photo: Nic Morley

Horizon

At its heart, Horizon is deeply connected to place. It celebrates the spectacular natural landscape of the Sunshine Coast region, honors the stories and artworks of our First Nations people and provides a platform for local artists to create work and dialogue. The festival recorded an audience of **21,837** who attended over **211** events and activities across **10** locations, with **89%** rating their experience as good to excellent.

In 2025, Horizon created a program that connected people, arts, culture and place through a carefully curated suite of events and activities. These events were scheduled across a range of locations across the region and featured **557** artists and arts workers, of which **428** were Sunshine Coast-based.

Horizon attracted just over **30%** of attendees from outside the region who visited specifically to attend the festival (In 2023 it was 20%) to contribute **\$1,439,316** in economic impact into the regional economy. This is an increase on the **\$1,082,882** from 2023.

An integrated marketing and PR campaign rolled out nationally across print and digital media, while the campaign shoot featured leading artists from the festival in prominent landscapes across the region.

Figures show an increase in audience engagement with strong website traffic, ticket sales and engagement across social media platforms which reinforced the festivals' reputation as the region's premier arts festival, boosted its reputation with arts visitors to Queensland and elevated the Sunshine Coast's position as a recognized cultural destination.



58% first time visitors



15% growth in instagram audience



4.2% growth in facebook audience



8.9% Growth in database



169 Media stories with a potential reach of **4m** people and value of **\$337,000**



Image: Full Flower Moon Band, Horizon 2025. Photo: Robbie Hammer



Image: Yauar Warai Wandj, Horizon 2025. Photo: Nic Morley



Image: Eddie Ray: Lack of Judgement Day, Horizon 2025. Photo: Robbie Hammer



Caloundra Regional Gallery

'Such thought-provoking artworks
which are well researched and
beautifully created'
Nature and Culture – animal as object

'Beautiful stunning art works and local
artists and it was good to see Aboriginal
local's creativity and stories a true sign
of respect'
From the sea, the land and the mountains

The gallery put on 17 exhibitions
throughout the 2024–25 financial year
at two locations. Accompanying the
exhibitions were complimentary pop-
up displays located in the Gallery Store
highlighting one of our local artists in
a mini-profile space. Each exhibition at
the gallery was also complemented with
programs and events aligned with the
exhibition's content.

Image: Caloundra Regional Gallery. Photo: ben vos productions.

Caloundra Regional Gallery

Caloundra Regional Gallery has remained pivotal in shaping the creative industries and cultural identity of the Sunshine Coast. Beyond hosting and fostering regional, national and international exhibitions and establishing one of the most prestigious national art prizes, the Gallery has continued to nurture and support artists through public and educational programs, artist residencies, art collection acquisitions, and public art commissions.

- **43,686** total audience – a **21%** increase on previous year
- **24,925** exhibition visitors
- **9,728** program attendances
- **9,033** digital attendances
- In person visitation to exhibitions and programs has increased by **6%** in the past year
- **\$37,500** sponsorship secured for the Sunshine Coast National Art Prize
- **129** local artists featured in programming
- **57** of which were First Nations artists.



15% Facebook growth with engagement rate of **4.63%**



21% Instagram growth with engagement rate of **15.47%**



6,691 e-newsletter subscribers



93% of visitors rated exhibitions and programs as good to excellent.



Image: Local Contemporary Art Prize 2025 exhibition. Photo: Pat Want.



Image: Local Contemporary Art Prize 2025 Finalist Exhibition. Photo: Pat Want

Exhibitions

The gallery put on **17** exhibitions throughout the 2024–25 financial year at two locations. Accompanying the exhibitions were complimentary pop-up displays located in the Gallery Store highlighting one of our local artists in a mini-profile space. Each exhibition at the gallery was also complemented with programs and events aligned with the exhibition's content.



Image: Latest and Greatest III Exhibition 2024. Photo: Pat Wan

Caloundra Regional Gallery

- **21 June to 18 August 2024**, Contemporary Songlines – Dhakkan/Mundagudda (Rainbow Serpent) and Maroochy (Black Swan) Project
- **23 August to 13 October 2024**, Sunshine Coast National Art Prize 2024
- **18 October to 8 December 2024**, Carbon_Dating
- **13 December 2024 to 2 February 2025**, Nature and Culture – animal as object
- **13 December 2024 to 2 February 2025**, Highlighting the Collection – Wendy McGrath-Lakeland
- **7 February to 6 April 2025**, Latest & Greatest III
- **11 April to 8 June 2025**, Local Contemporary Art Prize 2025
- **11 April to 8 June 2025**, Local Student Art Prize 2025
- **13 June to 3 August 2025**, From the sea, the land and the mountains

Maroochydore Library Artspace

- 28 May to 14 July 2024, **Pastel Era**
- 15 July to 31 August 2024, **Birds to Coastal Flowers**
- 2 September to 26 October 2024, **Transcendent Beauty**
- 29 October to 14 December 2024, **Submersion**
- 17 December 2024 to 15 February 2025, **Coast to Courses**
- 18 February to 12 April 2025, **Portraits of the Hinterland**
- 2 to 24 May 2025, **Horizon festival – Radical Hope Machine**
- 27 May to 19 July 2025, **Nan'garim Mi'bir**

Art Prizes

The acquisitive **Sunshine Coast National Art Prize 2024** is a dynamic visual art award reflecting outstanding contemporary arts practice in Australia. This significant art award is the flagship visual art event for the Sunshine Coast Regional Gallery. In 2024 the art prize attracted **455** entries from established and emerging artists across the nation.

Winners:

- Todd Fuller won **\$25,000**, generously funded by Argon Law and Sunshine Coast Council. The winning artwork was acquired into the Sunshine Coast Art Collection
- Highly Commended sponsored by the De Deyne family to the value of \$5,000 was awarded to Aylsa McHugh
- Hyun Hee Lee was awarded the two-week Artist Residency with accommodation and studio space provided by Montville Country Cabins and travel costs covered by Caloundra Regional Gallery
- a non-acquisitive People's Choice prize of **\$2,500**, sponsored by Caloundra Chamber of Commerce, was awarded to Amanda Western who received the most votes for her work Country Lane.

Highlights

- **455** entries
- out of the **40** finalists: **16** from Queensland, **10** from New South Wales, **10** from Victoria, **1** each from Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia and Tasmania
- **24** female artists, **16** male artists with **2** First Nations artists with **5** local artists represented
- judge was Julie Ewington
- visitation up more than **15%** and clocked over **5,000** for the first time.

Image: Sunshine Coast National Art Prize 2024 Finalist Exhibition. Photo: Pat Want



Local Contemporary Art Prize 2025 celebrates the diversity of visual arts practice across the Sunshine Coast. Caloundra Regional Gallery, in partnership with the gallery's friends, invited local artists working across all mediums, to submit 2D and 3D works for the prize. Forty finalists were selected from over **400** entries for the exhibition and winners shared in **\$17,000** prize money, thanks to this year's sponsors: Sunshine Coast Council, the Caloundra Regional Gallery, Mary Henzell Investments, Local Agents, Friends of the Gallery, Caloundra and Community Bank Caloundra – Bendigo Bank.

Winners:

- Sam Vatokey (Best in Show) **\$10,000** acquisitive award sponsored by Sunshine Coast Council and Caloundra Regional Gallery
- Terrence Gillespie (2D Excellence Award) **\$2,500** sponsored by Mary Henzell Investments
- Erin Conron (3D Excellence Award) **\$2,500** Local Agents
- Phillip Rolton (People's Choice) **\$2,000** sponsored by Community Bank Caloundra - Bendigo Bank and Friends of the Gallery, Caloundra.

Highlights:

- **4130** visitors to the gallery during the exhibition up **28%** from 2024.
- People's Choice voting received **623** votes
- the winning work, Mount Emu Walk, 2023 was acquired into the Sunshine Coast Art Collection.

Image: Local Contemporary Art Prize 2025 winner Sam Vatokey with Judge Claire Sourgnès and Sunshine Coast Mayor Rosanna Natoli. Photo: Pat Want



Social media marketing has again grown year-on-year with substantial follower increases – **724** on Facebook, a **49%** increase year-on-year and **1,273** on Instagram which is an incredible **73%** increase year-on-year. Engagement rates on Facebook (**4.63%**) and Instagram (**15.47%**) are sitting at a high level for the industry showing that the larger audience are also engaged with our content.

Social media has been a key driver for website visitation with a further increase on website visitation up **6.6%** year-on-year and totalling **187,439** page views.

One outcome that is particularly pleasing is the increase in attendance of programs and events put on and promoted via socials. With **9,903** people attending it increased year-on-year by over **15%**.

In 2024–25, the Sunshine Coast Art Collection (including public art) grew by approximately **14%** and increased their holdings to **1,440** individual items: **133** artworks valued at approximately **\$445,000** were added to the Art Collection, increasing the Collection's total value at **\$3.1M**. **8** new works were added to the Public Art Collection increasing that collection's value to approximately **\$6M**.





Image: Sunshine Coast National Art Prize 2024 Finalist Exhibition. Photo: Pat Want



Priorities for 2025–26

- implement the 2025–26 arts program of the Arts and Heritage Levy
- support the Sunshine Coast Arts Advisory Board's First Nations Sub-Committee to develop and deliver on a First Nations Strategic Arts Plan
- maintain strategic partnerships with peak creative arts industry bodies
- deliver the new Sunshine Coast Public Art Plan 2025–30
- deliver a successful Horizon Festival in line with its Strategy and Action Plan
- start planning for the Cultural Olympiad
- deliver a digital literacy and development program
- build on the achievements of the regional gallery and support the next steps in the business case for a new building including capital fundraising
- continue to collaborate with the sector and other government and non-government organisations to create opportunities for local artists
- continue the delivery of grant funding programs that support, grow, and develop arts and cultural vitality in the region

Sunshine Coast Arts Advisory Board Alumni

James Birrell (inaugural member)	August 2016 to October 2018
Kathi Holt (inaugural member)	August 2016 to November 2018
Phil Smith (inaugural member)	August 2016 to November 2019
Collette Brennan, Inaugural Chair	August 2016 to November 2020
Tracey Vieira (inaugural member)	August 2016 to November 2020
Paul Calcott	March 2019 to July 2020
Nicole Voevodin-Cash	April 2018 to August 2022
Amy Clarke	April 2019 to May 2023
Sue Davis	November 2019 to November 2020
Patricia Adjei	February 2021 to December 2023
Karina Seljak	February 2024 to November 2024

Image: Mapleton Public House, 2024. Photo: Kyle Dobie



sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
artscoast@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au