



Image: Marilou Chagnaud, Play in a loop, DESIGN Canberra 2018 - 5 Foot Photography

Informing the successful governance of Canberra's Civic Square Precinct

> THE CONTEXT

The Cultural Facilities Corporation (CFC) operates the Theatre Centre and Canberra Museum and Gallery, in the civic heart of Canberra, as well as historic properties elsewhere in the ACT. With substantial precinct development proposals being progressed in the CFC's area by the City Renewal Authority, the board of the Corporation was keen to ensure that management and governance arrangements for the enlarged precinct are appropriate for the future.

In many cultural precincts there is no dedicated entity, or formalised structure, for managing and programming the public domain areas of the precinct. While this is common, it does not necessarily secure the best public outcome, as it fails to stimulate activation of the public realm, and build a strong precinct brand and sense of destination. With this in mind, consideration was needed on the best options available for Canberra's Civic Square precinct.

> THE BRIEF

Positive Solutions was engaged by the Cultural Facilities Corporation (CFC) to undertake research and report on management options that have been adopted, both in Australia and overseas, for cultural precincts comparable to the Civic Square Precinct, Canberra.

> OUR APPROACH

Five benchmark precincts were identified in consultation with the CFC Board Executive and Senior Teams, including precincts which were of a comparable scale and infrastructure range to that envisaged for Civic Square, and which ranged in governance and management models. These included Aotea Cultural Quarter, Auckland; Federation Square, Melbourne; HOTA (Home of the Arts), Gold Coast; Melbourne Arts Precinct and Queensland Cultural Precinct, Brisbane. For the shortlisted precincts available data from public domain sources was gathered, and supplemented by interviews with a management representative from each of the Precincts. Drawing on this information, we advised on the implications and considerations for successful operations of the precinct moving forward.

> THE RESULTS

The data was provided in a Report to the CFC. The benchmark evidence of operating arrangements and the treatment of costs and revenues in other precincts informed the Board's consideration, and possible future discussions with Government regarding the operation of the Civic Square Precinct.

SEE ALSO:

- > [Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation Governance](#)
- > [West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong](#)
- > [Aotea Quarter Precinct Demand Study](#)