

Providing focus for Council's role in the development of the cultural economy.

> THE CONTEXT

Port Macquarie-Hastings (PMH), located on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales, has a thriving community of creatives attracted by the temperate climate and unique attributes of the region. With significant cultural assets it attracts creative enterprise and has the potential to foster a strong cultural economy. A Cultural Economy Plan was needed to set out a roadmap for the development of the arts and cultural sector, focused on sustaining employment and economic activity, and contributing across a range of local and State economic objectives.

> THE BRIEF

Positive Solutions, with support from The Maytrix Group, was engaged by Port Macquarie–Hastings Council to provide insight into the current creative and cultural industries sector and identify strategies and actions to support further development through the Cultural Plan. This information would be used to leverage future targeted investment, and provide evidence to advocate for continued funding from State and Federal funding programs.

> OUR APPROACH

To provide an up-to-date knowledge base of cultural and creative infrastructure, organisations, artists and creative businesses, Positive Solutions undertook a mapping process, drawing on databases, and officer knowledge. Community and stakeholder consultation was conducted through interviews, focus group sessions, and a sector wide survey and skills audit, from which we identified strengths, gaps, priorities and opportunities for the cultural economy. The findings were benchmarked against relevant initiatives taken in other local government areas.

> THE RESULT

Informed by the consultation process and benchmarking, the resulting Cultural Economy Plan outlined the value of culture and its economic importance to the region for both tourism and social and educational outcomes. We developed a clear Vision, Goals and Strategies to focus Council's role in the development of the cultural economy during the next four years. A detailed Strategy Map and Action Plan including KPIs was provided with indicative timeframes.

SEE ALSO:

- > AlburyCity Creative Economy Strategy
- > <u>Development of Coffs Harbour Cultural Strategic Plan 2017-</u> 2022
- Regional Arts and Creative Industries Strategy for The Northern Rivers Region
- Ten years of involvement in Bendigo's thriving arts precinct

