

DCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2028

Art in a Fragile World

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Introduction

This strategic plan embraces uncertainty.¹

Uncertainty is part of fragility; the uncertainty of our times underlies and magnifies the fragility of our world.

Australia Council has this to say about uncertainty in advising those who seek support for 2025–2028:

*The Australia Council acknowledges that there will be ongoing uncertainty for the sector over the period of this plan and that it will not be a static document. How an organisation delivers on the strategic vision articulated in the plan will likely evolve in response to changes in the sector, the operating environment and future disruption or challenges.*²

Yet we continue to make and share art in these “uncertain hours”.³ We do so, recognising that we can control our attitudes or values and our actions, and little else; but we continue to hope that our communities will make and share art that will make our lives more meaningful and our world better.

So, this Strategic Plan also embraces hope.

About Darwin Community Arts

Our purpose is to build the motivation, means and opportunities for making and sharing art by all, for a fairer and habitable world.

Darwin Community Arts (DCA) is a multi-arts Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) organisation based on Larrakia Country in Garramilla / Darwin, NT. DCA operates four venues in the Darwin region, decentralised across a number of traditional lands, focussing on the democratisation of artistic production and distribution. Our artistic program engages local, regional, national and international communities. We focus on grassroots arts and cultural engagement to ensure that diverse communities have opportunities to develop creative practices in safe, inclusive and accessible art spaces.

Our headquarters are in Travers Street, Coconut Grove, where we have the Travers Street Theatre and Mudul-ma Community Art Room. We run UNTiLED Gallery + Studios, also in Coconut Grove, and Art Out operates a studio space in the rural hub of Humpty Doo. Previously, we have had art

¹ Chris Cheers, *The New Rule Book*, Harper Collins, 2023. Cheers (and others) suggests that we accept uncertainty in life, that we cease imagining we can predict the future. He says that we can only control our attitudes and actions, nothing else. Cheers says “embrace uncertainty”, p. 6.

² Australia Council, Strategic Plan Advice 2025–2028, <https://australiacouncil.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Strategic-plan-advice-FYIO-2025-2028.pdf>

³ Paul Simon wrote of uncertain hours in his song “American Tune”, released in 1973 (<https://www.newdirectionsinmusic.com/an-american-tune-by-paul-simon/#:~:text=I'm%20not%20the%20first,recorded%2C%20and%20released%20in%201973>). Times are much more uncertain now.

spaces in the CBD, Palmerston and Bagot Aboriginal Community – we wish to distribute our spaces more extensively in the future. Some of our activities take place in Cyberspace.

Our work is place-based, and location is a defining factor. We believe that locality is crucial if we wish to make and share art in a fragile world, especially in terms of the environment: we need to care for land, water and air at the grassroots level. Our art must be at the grassroots.

Our activities take place in our spaces, and in other spaces around the region, extending to interstate and international activity. By administering the Regional Arts Fund, we are able to support activities across the Northern Territory, especially to other regions (Central Australia, Katherine, the Barkly, Arnhem Land, Tiwi Islands).

Darwin Community Arts has operated for over 44 years, first as a community outreach program of the Trustees of Brown's Mart in the mid-1970s. Major developments in our history include:

- **1979** Browns Mart Community Arts (BMCA) was incorporated;
- **1970–2007** BMCA played a significant role in developing key arts organisations – Tracks Dance, Corrugated Iron Youth Arts, and the Northern Territory Writers' Centre;
- **2007** BMCA was reinvented to focus on grassroots Community Cultural Development. BMCA piloted work in Malak and the multi-cultural outer suburbs of Darwin;
- **2008** BMCA changed its name to Darwin Community Arts (DCA), and continued working in Malak;
- **2018** DCA relocated its headquarters, studio and theatre to Coconut Grove to step up our long-planned decentralisation and distribution plan to cover more neighbourhoods, including a space and program in rural Darwin.

In 2019 we transitioned to Holacracy, a non-hierarchical operating system.⁴ Invented by Brian Robertson, Holacracy is an operating system for organisations where “power is distributed through transparent rules and roles, all guided by the organisation’s purpose.”⁵ Major elements of Holacracy include: a Constitution which sets out the operational structure and redistributes authority; a structure that defines roles, domains and accountabilities for “Partners” (staff); and well-defined decision-making and meeting processes.⁶

⁴ Anna Weekes, a DCA Partner, introduced Holacracy to DCA. She learned of it, and other systems, from an Australia Council Leadership Program in 2019. Other non-hierarchical systems DCA considered are described in *Reinventing Organisations* by Frederic Laloux, Nelson Parker, 2014.

⁵ <https://www.holacracy.org/explore>

⁶ Brian J. Robertson, *Holacracy: The Revolutionary Management System that Abolishes Hierarchy*, Penguin Random House, 2015, p. 12.

DCA models a type of CACD practice that has been developed over forty years. Some of our experiences have been innovative, if not unique, in the CACD sector, and hope to inform or inspire others. They include: decentralised operations and distributed locations; interactive and intercreative digital arts in community contexts; trailblazing in arts and disability programs; full autonomy of workers and projects; and a non-hierarchical operating system.

Finally, DCA provides practical support to individuals and organisations. We annually offer support to around 40 independent artists and 20 community arts projects, alongside the DCA program, through the sharing of spaces, resources and administrative support, including grant auspicing.

Our Vision

DCA believes that the community is the artist, and anyone making art is an artist. We hold a vision for the Darwin region where art is made and shared by all, and where that art cherishes our communities and our planet. Our purpose is to build the motivation, means and opportunities for making and sharing art by all, for a fairer and habitable world.

In the coming four years, and beyond, we will democratise artistic production and creative spaces. We will engage communities, using methodologies for creative practice that are suitable for making art in a fragile world, and that are expressions of radical kindness.

Among other things, DCA will do this through:

- Providing safe, accessible and inclusive creative spaces;
- Facilitating time and spaces for artistic skills development for diverse communities;
- Building community connections through arts festivals, small gatherings, online collaborations and sharing, public showcases and performance;
- Improving and renovating DCA venues to meet highest standards of venue accessibility and sustainability;
- Expanding on our decentralised organisational model that provides art spaces in multiple locations; and
- Building on partnerships, collaborations and reciprocal relationships within communities and organisations.

Responding to Internal and External Factors

Practicing Holacracy, an alternative operating system, comes with the internal challenge of unlearning traditional hierarchies and tendencies to manage and be managed. Our staff are all on a journey of self-management and autonomy. There is also the need to articulate and defend the success of this alternative operating system. External factors that affect us include: the current climate crisis and the community's need for preparation and responsiveness; the cost-of-living challenges that people are experiencing currently; and the threat of another global pandemic.

DCA recognises that COVID was the tip of the iceberg, and that there is a multitude of injustices that were magnified by this crisis. One of the lessons learnt during the pandemic was that a grassroots, community-driven, local approach is robust in the face of crisis, and we believe that such an approach can help as we move through the current crisis of climate change. We will continue to make art from a place of ethics and care for people and the planet.

Uncertainty Factors; Our Operating Environment

We face uncertain times, perhaps more than at any other time in history. We are confronted by possible and actual crises, such as: the climate emergency;⁷ another pandemic;⁸ economic difficulties;⁹ wars;¹⁰ and racist conflicts.¹¹ The world, our lives, seem to be beyond our control, and we can't predict the future.

The world is “getting ‘measurably closer’ to the 1.5 degree threshold” of global warming; crossing that threshold will produce climate impacts that “will become increasingly harmful for people and indeed the entire planet.”¹²

We face continuing and escalating inequality. The most prominent in our region and on our continent is the wrongdoing of historical dispossession and oppression of First Nations peoples. A step towards redressing this historical injustice could be made at the 2023 referendum on The Voice; yet the disputes and debates surrounding this important issue may also amplify racist and colonial discourses in our communities, fuelling more division and conflict.

Pillars, Values, Actions

We are rethinking the perceived need to set goals, and have preferenced a framework that accounts for uncertainty as an implicit condition – a framework that is structured around pillars, values and actions.¹³ Our Pillar, Values, Action (PVA) framework was inspired by Chris Cheers’ The New Rule Book with a focus on pillars (the domains of our work, and the underlying foundations of our purpose) to highlight that we proceed from our basic beliefs and convictions, the foundation of our work. Aligning values to our pillars highlights the long-reaching bases for what we do, what we hold dear, and the principles that provide our bearings. Aligning actions to values and to pillars makes us focus on the now, on things we do now to realise, daily, our vision.

To achieve our PVA plan, we will support the community in a variety of ways, through inkind spaces and resources, creative and cultural exchange, employment opportunities, building goodwill and enhancing the mutual aid of our association and our communities.

⁷ <https://press.un.org/en/2021/sc14445.doc.htm>

⁸ https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-04-14/another-covid-like-pandemic-could-hit-the-world-within-10-years?in_source=embedded-checkout-banner

⁹ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-06-04/australia-economic-crisis-short-run-and-long-run/102436804>

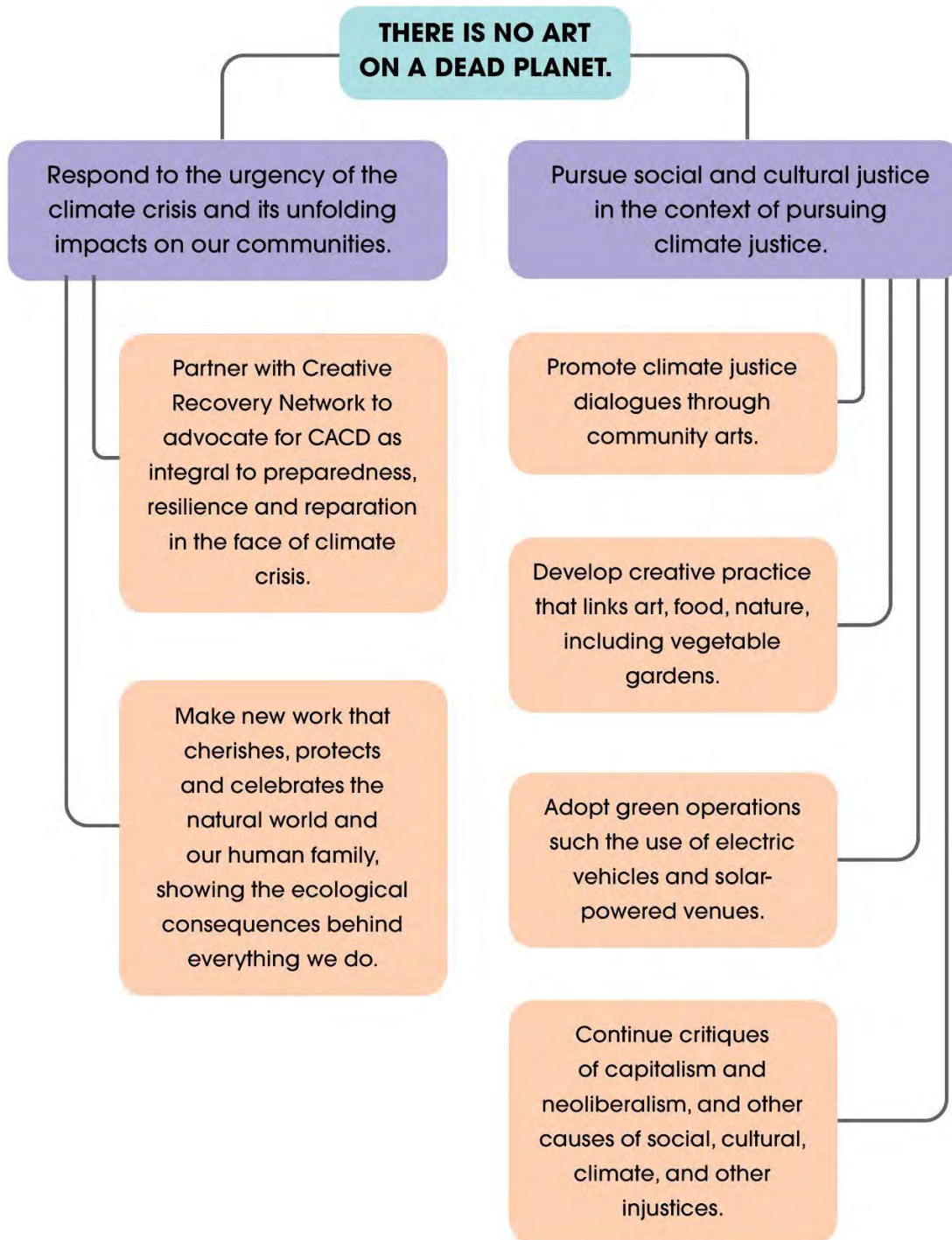
¹⁰ <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-currently-at-war>

¹¹ <https://reporter.anu.edu.au/all-stories/can-australia-resist-racism-in-the-voice-process>

¹² <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1117842>

¹³ Chris Cheers, The New Rule Book, p. 62.

We will make the most of the assets we have now. We will, however, need to pay for expenses, such as workers' wages, rent for premises, and other operational costs. Our budget shows our priority of funding communities to make art. The budget shows a diversity of funding sources, including the three tiers of government, and partnerships with organisations across compatible sectors, such as Health, Disability and First Nations.



EVERY HUMAN BEING IS AN ARTIST. ¹⁴

Realise Article 27: “Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.”

Make and share art with diverse communities: art that is reflective, brave, socially just, unique, weird, disruptive, proud, adaptable, earthy, passionate, relevant.

Create motivation, means, and opportunities for all members of all communities to make and share art.

Embrace art forms and cultural expressions from all communities.

Develop creative practice that links art, food, nature, including vegetable gardens.

Advocate that the arts are funded and valued, and that all workers are paid properly.

Deliver skills development and capacity building of artists from a range of backgrounds.

Create motivation, means, and opportunities for all members of all communities to make and share art.

Decolonise artistic practices by addressing the inherent systemic inequalities.

THE COMMUNITY IS THE ARTIST.

Lead in arts and disability practice across all artforms.

Recognise and value artists with disabilities.

LGBTIQA+ Youth: Facilitate connections & encourage the creation of new peer networks, providing social & community-building benefits, working with creative practices within mental health & wellbeing frameworks.

Promote accessibility and inclusion in arts through inclusion & access in our artistic programming & at all venues

Continue as a registered NDIS provider in the Innovative Community Participation category.

Expand our Arts Access work, building on & progressing our Disability Action Plan objectives.

Expand on remote community return to country artist residencies for Indigenous artists with disability.

Practise creative and cultural project development with communities to determine their own art projects through resources and funding.

Develop outreach and capacity-building in conjunction with multicultural, refugee & migrant communities through Harmony Soiree and other projects.

Revive Community Dinners.

Develop artistic facilitation within the community of theatre, dance, visual arts, youth arts, queer arts, media arts.

Produce events, performances and exhibitions sharing the art creation of the community with the community.

Advance innovative approaches to community art making as community building where making and sharing art brings people together, establishes connections and strengthens community.

Administer the NT Regional Arts Fund to increase equity in arts funding through targeted funding rounds for marginalised communities to make new art.

Produce arts and health projects, such as the FN wellbeing program we deliver with Mayala Bol.

Deploy the Art Out Cartwheels Mobile Art Studio.

Adopt access technologies, and the development of new digital access platforms that operate through our website, in our venues and at our events.

WE BELONG TO A COMMUNITY OF COMMUNITIES.

Recognise Aboriginal sovereignty and progress our ongoing commitment to solidarity with the Larrakia people on whose country we live and work, and with all First Nations peoples.

Establish a commissioning fund for the First Nations Advisory Board to self-determine new works and practice.

Enter into a treaty with the Larrakia.

Embed First Nations knowledge in all DCA work and across the sector

Apply First Nations First approaches to the decolonisation of the arts

Share the vision and bravery of DCA with the whole sector to increase motivation to create change

Conduct social marketing about community, sharing the voice, amplifying the voice of the community.

Trailblaze, recreate, bringing the rest of the sector along with us.

Do more advocacy, gentle activism.

Publish written articles on DCA & CACD praxis.

Deliver cross-sector knowledge, skills sharing and discourse by curating a series of moderated discussion programs looking at principles for CACD through different lenses - First Nations First, Decolonisation, Arts Access, Praxis, etc.

Explore socialist and other theories in rebuilding post-pandemic.

Nurture and expand collaboration with partners in Darwin, the NT and Australia.

Collaborate across sectors: Larrakia Nation, Bagot Aboriginal Community & Pudukul Aboriginal Cultural Tours, Mayala Bol, Garuwa (training partner), Melaleuca Refugee Centre, Environment Centre

Collaborate with disability service providers: Life Without Barriers, Carpentaria Disability Services, Diverseability Collective.

Join national peak bodies: Arts Access Australia, Arts Front.

Expand DCA's program reach in rural Darwin and work with local governments to establish a more appropriate community arts space.

Collaborate with local, state and federal government agencies: National Disability Insurance Agency, Department of Social Services, The City of Darwin, Litchfield Council, NT Government.

Nurture and expand collaboration internationally.

Support the development of decolonisation arts projects that examine the ongoing harm caused by acts of colonisation internationally.

Explore participation in maintaining international venues.

Continue collaboration with international arts organisations: AMP3, Arte Moris, Jatiwangi Art Factory, Survive!Garage, 98B COLLABoratory.

Advocate for less borders, less passports, less nations, less visas.

Produce a "Makassar heart Yolngu" project.

Produce a "Makassar heart Yolngu" project.

Study and discuss "cloud nationalism".

WE ARE A DEMOCRATIC AND ROBUST ASSOCIATION.

Evolve a non-hierarchical operating system.

Democratise further our creative and cultural programming, our organisational structure and management systems using the Holacracy operating system.

Maintain a uniform pay rate.

Ensure governance complies with legal obligations but also reflects what DCA wants and needs.

Resist doing too much.

Resist identity fraud and other problems in the financial system.

Maintain decentralisation of operations and programming.

Increase the number of venues in different localities.

Enhance decentralised outreach and programming.

Explore alternative ways of thinking, working and resourcing that challenge the mainstream and resist streamlining.

Be: still reflective, still responding, still changing.

Make art and build communities that challenge patriarchal, hierarchical and capitalist structures.

Still take risks.

Be hyper local and global.

Adapt Open Source approaches.

Explore the role of online technology in community arts.

Engage slower, more low-tech forms of connection including mailartprojects, phone messaging, Gifs; organise small gatherings, very local activities, connecting households and neighbourhoods.

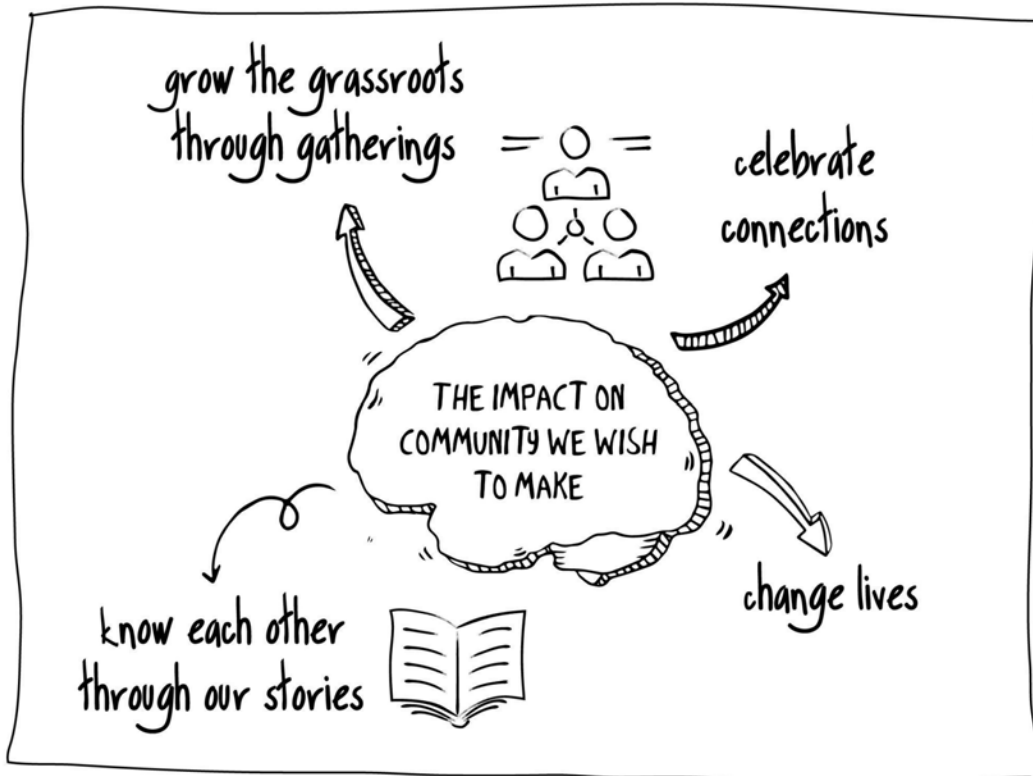
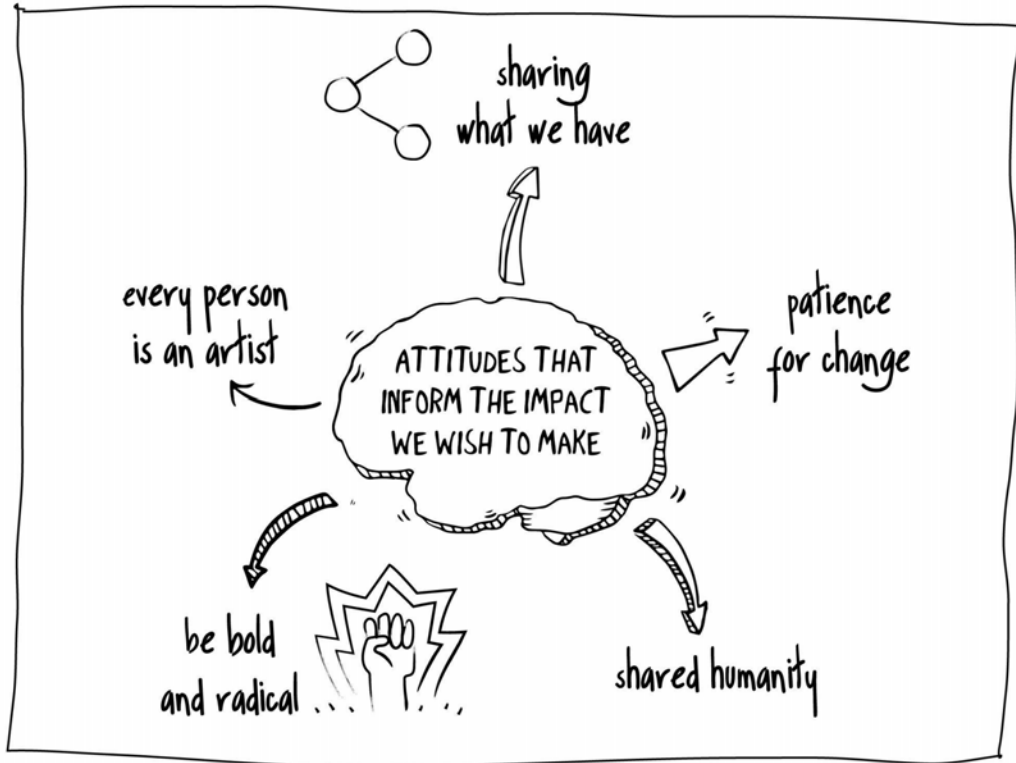
Increase diversity representation on the Board, Executive Committee and Creative Production team.

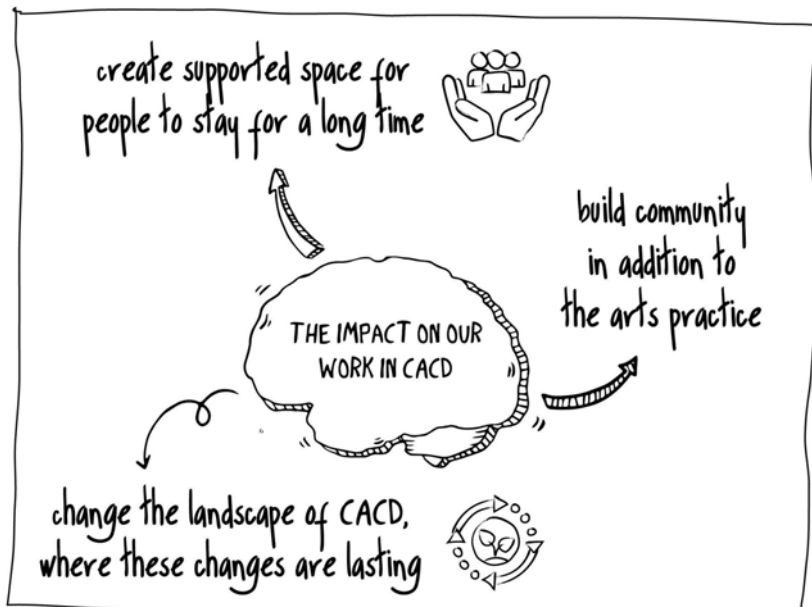
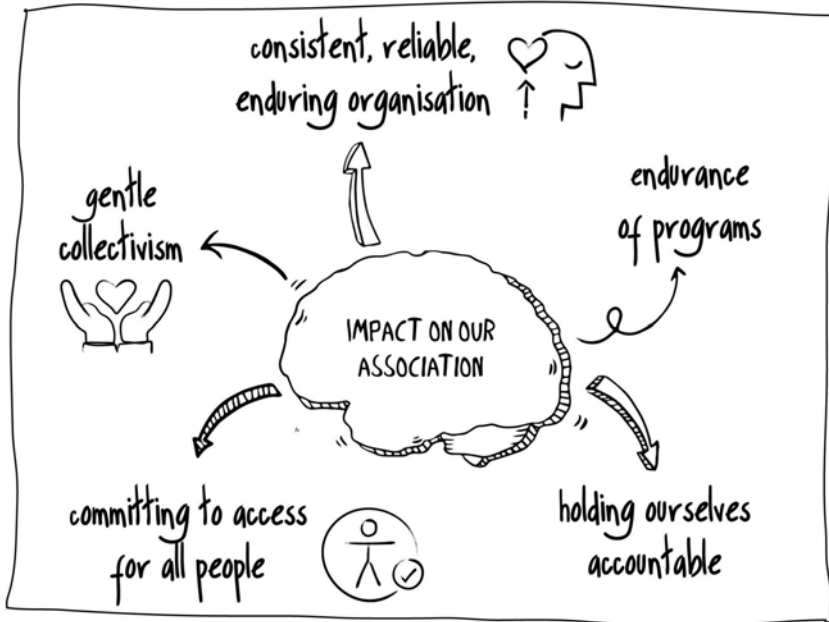
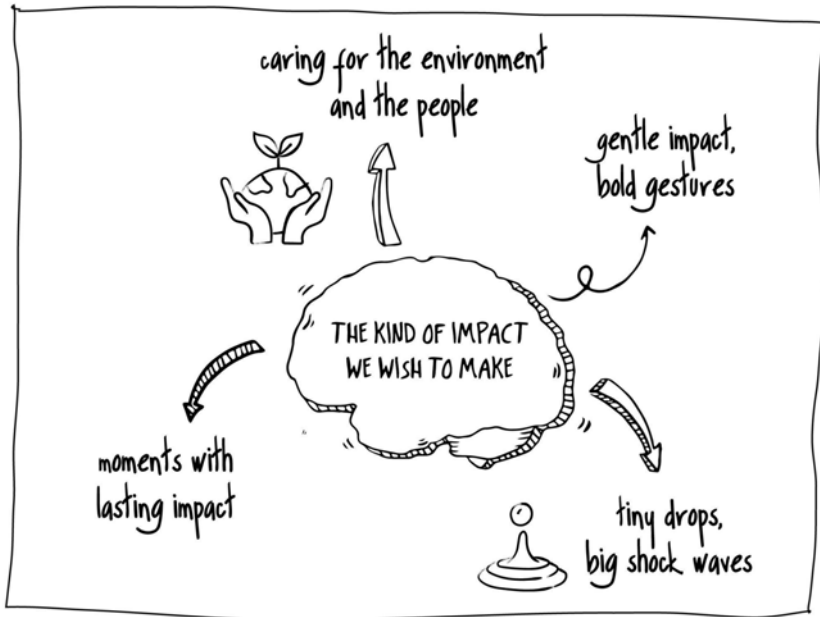
Increase BIPOC representation.

Increase representation of other diverse communities.

Impact and Engagement

We held a Visioning gathering in November 2022 to reflect on the experiences and learnings from previous years, especially the COVID-19 pandemic period. From that gathering, we discussed the impact of our work, and arrived at these points, among others:





Our Artistic Program

We will deliver our artistic and cultural programming in response to the needs and preferences of communities we work with. We seek to harmonise our activities with each other across DCA projects, and also seek to harmonise with regional, Territory-wide, Australia-wide and international events, shown in our 2025 program [view Here](#)

Our current projects include:

Arts Access Darwin (AAD) supports the production of disability-led projects, and supports artists with disability to reach their artistic goals through advocacy and professional practice support

The Free Space Studio an accessible visual arts studio focused on the development of skills and professional practice outcomes for artists with disabilities, many of whom are Indigenous. Free Space Studio facilitates exhibition opportunities, residencies, on Country programs for Indigenous artists, public art projects and publications.

UNTITLED Gallery+studio accessible community visual arts studios and gallery space. UNTITLED supports emerging and marginalised artists, and delivers a studio program of residencies, workshops and accessible short courses.

CemeNTworx community theatre program an inclusive and accessible theatre program, it delivers workshops, productions, touring, mentoring, development and other theatre activities for all ages and communities.

Harmony Soiree a large, annual, multicultural concert, staged in conjunction with the NT Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Frontline explores community stories and the relationship between people, places and new technologies; this is achieved through accessible media making.

Fist Full of Films community film festival that delivers filmmaking workshops and showcases local short films.

Culture and Climate emphasises the role of cultural justice in addressing the climate crisis; this is explored in conference talks, published papers, artist in residency programs, and international collaborations.

Indigenous Arts and Culture Program working alongside local Aboriginal artists and in collaboration with Aboriginal organisations, the program develops creative projects and initiatives that are First Nations Led, aligned with decolonisation and truth telling, with a commitment to solidarity.

Daminmin Arts and Cultural Festival an annual festival, First Nations-led and held on Wulna Country; the festival celebrates the community, environment and culture.

Lit Lavae for LGBTIQA+ Youth 16–25 yrs (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse, intersex, queer, asexual and questioning) across Darwin; creative workshops, including visual arts, new media, textiles and costume design.

Art Out CACD projects within the rural communities of Darwin, delivering workshops, community events, studio spaces, community dinners.

FLESH exploring the place of art in a more culturally equitable world, producing community-led exhibitions, events and workshop programs.

Intermingle Art in and about our relationship to the natural world; hosting workshops in situ that cherish the natural environment.

Community Dinners Social gatherings where the community comes together to share dinner, performances, pop-up exhibitions and participatory arts activities. The aim is to increase social connectedness, reduce isolation, share art and eat together.

Praxis research, discussion and publishing on the principles and practice of CACD from DCA's experiences; the praxis of Community Arts and Cultural Development as a movement for Cultural Justice, Social Justice, Environmental Justice and Climate Justice.

Northern Territory Regional Arts Fund administration of the Regional Arts Funding for the NT on behalf of Regional Arts Australia.

International Projects we recognise and celebrate our Asia and Pacific neighbourhood through artist exchanges (IRL and online), reciprocal residency programs, contribution to international conference panels.

Our Decentralised Venues include

Travers Theatre a 60-capacity, black box, multi-use venue for creative developments, productions, rehearsals, film/video productions, workshops/training, small scale music concerts, and curated and external events.

Mudul-ma Community Art Room an accessible and inclusive community arts studio in Coconut Grove, equipt with workshops space, yarning circle and video conferencing.

UNTitled gallery+studios accessible, community visual arts studios, artist in residence and gallery space

Art Out Studio a rural community arts studio situated 40kms outside of Darwin in Humpty Doo.

Our Methodologies

Darwin Community Arts recognises and emphasises intersectionality between areas of diversity. Diversity, access and inclusion are integral to our methodology. We will engage communities, using methodologies for creative practice that are suitable for making art in a fragile world, and that are expressions of radical kindness.

Multi-modality

DCA is a multi-arts organisation; we employ multi-modal methods and a broad range of practice-based methodologies appropriate to different artforms, as well as to cross-artform and experimental work.

Collaboration

Collaborations are opportunities to build creative and cultural relationships, share ideas and make new work. Nothing happens in isolation; much of our work happens through collaborations with individual artists, arts organisations, and non-arts organisations. Collaborative relationships require reciprocity, understanding, trust and time. DCA invests in, values and maintains collaborative relationships with communities, organisations and individual creative practitioners.

Studio-based practice

Is a key methodology that DCA employs. We believe that for communities to develop artistic practices and new work, they need spaces in which to practise, as well as resources, equipment and materials.

Advocacy

DCA amplifies the voices of the diverse groups we work with through promotional material, performances, storytelling, exhibitions, publications, residencies, festivals and presentations at arts conferences.

Capacity building

DCA builds capacity through accessible workshops focussed on skills development, alternative post-school options for people with disabilities, mentorships, work placements and administrative support for artists from diverse backgrounds.

Governance by our Board, is guided by DCA's 2008 Constitution and relevant legislation in the Northern Territory and Australia.

Operations is a Holacracy, a non-hierarchical operating system. Information on DCA's experience with Holacracy is expanded on here: [view HERE](#)

DCA has a **First Nations Solidarity Action Plan** that describes our principles and actions related to our relationships with First Nations peoples, specifically the Larrakia people of Darwin.

[view HERE](#)

DCA has a **Disability Action Plan** to guide our relationships with people living with a disability.

[view HERE](#)

Financial Management

We have multi-year funding agreements with the Australia Council, Regional Arts Australia, and Arts NT that we endeavour to renew and extend.

We receive project funding through:

- Regional Arts Australia
- NDIS
- Department of Social Services
- NT Major Events Company
- Festivals Australia
- Department of Infrastructure
- Department of Health
- Indigenous Languages and Arts program.

While most of our funding is from government sources, we have also attracted funding from **philanthropic trusts** and **private companies**, such as:

- Darwin Waterfront
- Bendigo Bank
- Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal.

We generate income from fee for service, for:

- performances
- sales of artworks
- workshop fees
- venue hire
- membership and donations

Our finance is managed by staff responsible for bookkeeping, accounting, reporting, BAS and other financial matters. Expenditure is guided by approved budgets from grants, and by agreements between Partners. Our finances are audited annually by an independent auditor, and show strong financial management. The combination of retained income and specified reserves create a healthy buffer of at least 20% of our annual turn over for stability in these

uncertain times. Planned surplus or deficit are a result of staff and board decisions for the benefit of organisation.

Risk Management

As a community arts organisation, we believe creative experimentation and risk-taking is vital to making responsive and relevant art; to be risk-averse is to avoid what needs to be said and done. However, while taking risks, we are careful to avoid harm – to ourselves, our communities, our artists; to the environment, region, and to art, itself. As outlined above, DCA has extensive policies, procedures and plans, as well as comprehensive liability insurance to ensure that risk does not result in harm.

The risk we are primarily focussed upon is the risk the climate crisis poses for our planet and for our communities, including those who are extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We address this risk through making and sharing art that acknowledges our fragility; we encourage communities to respond, prepare, speak up, and rebuild after a crisis.

See our Risk Matrix for further detail [view HERE](#)

Insurances and HR

We have a comprehensive suite of insurance policies that ensure that people and property related to DCA operations are insured. These include Public Liability, Directors and Public Officers, and Volunteers insurances. We also have a comprehensive suite of HR policies and procedures that support the Holacracy operating system. These were developed in partnership with Fair Work experts to ensure they align with employer requirements and the needs of our organisation.

Measuring Success

We will continue to use the Australia Council for the Arts Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are part of the Strategic Plan for 2021 to 2024, and specified in the 2024 artistic program. We will also develop KPIs as requested by our funders to measure the progress of our programs.

From 2025, an annual plan, known and built as a Tactical Plans, will outline the tactics – carefully planned actions to achieve certain outcomes – that will be the focus of our work for the year. This plan will accompany the annual artistic and cultural program.

We will use the Objectives - Key Results (OKR) method for setting priorities and using Objectives as measured by Key Results – as our method for forming Tactical Plans.¹⁴

¹⁴ OKRs are explained in our 2025 Tactical Plan. More information on OKRs is at <https://www.whatmatters.com/>.

OKRs were developed at Intel by Andy Grove and promoted mainly among technology business through the work of John Doerr, which explains succinctly and clearly the principles and practices to do with OKRs.¹⁵

We chose OKRs to measure our success from 2025 instead of KPIs because “They’re measures for change, whereas KPIs are measures of health.”¹⁶ OKRs are a simple idea (that can be complex in application) that complements well our Operating System, Holacracy. OKRs enable us to focus, align, track, and stretch in times of uncertainty and adversity.¹⁷

The Strategic Plan will be assessed and its outcomes measured annually. We will assess our success by measuring progress on the Actions annually and at the end of the four-year strategic period. Because the point behind the PVAs approach is that Actions are how we live our Values (and the Pillars they are part of) and that the Actions do sum up to meeting our Purpose.

The Tactical Plan is all about priorities. We don’t include all the Actions from the Strategic Plan, and the deliverables of specific plans, in the Tactical (or Annual Plan) if these are not priorities for the association for the year. We measure outcomes by measuring Key Results of Objectives. The specific plans (First Nations Solidarity Plan, Disability Action Plan) will be measured according to their own set of “deliverables”. These were developed along with the Strategic Plan (and Tactical Plan, or OKRs). These plans will also be assessed as part of assessing or measuring outcomes against the Strategic Plan, and when appropriate against the Tactical Plans.

We are making this shift in order to measure qualitative, as well as quantitative, data. Qualitative data is crucial to Community Arts Cultural Development practices as we need to be responsive, and gauge the needs and perspectives of the communities we work with. Key qualitative measuring mechanisms will be focus group discussion programs that will promote dialogue and community consultation, while providing accessible, inclusive ways for participants to provide feedback. More detail can be found in the 2025 tactical plan [view HERE](#)

Board Members and Staff/Partners

Our board is high calibre. The board members bring a wealth of diverse lived experiences, and a broad range of relevant qualifications. They include practising artists, filmmakers, producers, arts administrators, creative entrepreneurs, prominent First Nations artists, queer/LGBTQIA + artists, and advocates with lived experience of Disability.

Our staff is also high calibre, with the skills and experience required to deliver CACD with integrity. We have a diverse team of staff who bring a wealth of knowledge and life experience to their

¹⁵ John Doerr, *Measure What Matters: OKRs – The Simple Idea That Drives 10x Growth*, Penguin Business, 2018. There are several online resources on OKRs available, including <https://www.whatmatters.com/>, which builds on Doerr’s book.

¹⁶ <https://www.whatmatters.com/faqs/okr-meaning-definition-example>

¹⁷ Doerr explains that OKRs have Superpowers: Focus and Commit to Priorities; Align and Connect for Teamwork; Track for Accountability; Stretch for Amazing. We need these superpowers. A discussion of these superpowers and their relevance to DCA is appended.

roles. We are proud to have a number of First Nations and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse staff on our team.

We have a strong and committed Board and Staff, as we embrace uncertainty in this plan, we embrace uncertainty with this. Though our track record would suggest that we will only increase in strength and diversity

Our [Board](#) and [staff](#) members can be found here

Succession Planning

Board members are:

- elected from financial members of the association
- predominantly engaged and active in our activities
- interested in the operations and governance of the association
- like-minded community members who we collaborate with

Our staff/partners are:

- the most capable or culturally appropriate persons to take on roles
- are aligned with the purpose and objective of the organisation
- interested in a role with autonomy and self management
- in control of the creative outcomes of their role

We provide induction, and collegial supports, collaboration and training.

We currently have a team of 50 people, including:

- Creative Producers
- facilitators
- technicians
- administrators
- book-keepers

In Holacracy, Partners (staff) can share roles or have more than one role. Most of our Partners work part-time, so an increase in workload and accompanying resources provides the opportunity to expand on existing roles. With an increase in resources, we are able to devise new roles and recruit new Partners to address identified gaps or needs in our programming.

DCA does not have a hierarchical structure, so we plan for succession differently. There is fluidity, collaboration and skills-sharing to enable movement – or succession – into or between roles without the gaps and lengthy recruitment processes that are common in hierarchical systems.

- We have a team of Executive Officers which allows for a number of people with a complimentary range of skills to work collegially on keeping the organisation running.

- The core roles in the organisation have comprehensive role descriptions that include the accountabilities, objectives and key results (OKRs) relevant to that particular role, there is scope for incoming partners to redefine and progress their roles.
- Community artists participating in our program, develop the skills and confidence necessary to step into facilitation and coordination of workshops and projects and governance roles on the Board.

Conclusion

Darwin Community Arts has developed considerable capacity to adapt, to change with changes within and around us. We will review our Strategic Plan annually, and regularly assess progress on our Actions. From 2025, we will evaluate our Tactical Plans – our OKRs – every quarter. Projects will be assessed principally by Creative Producers and Project Teams as frequently as needed. Finally, we will use Holacracy’s Governance and Tactical Meetings to continuously examine our PVAs and OKRs, adapting these as needed to achieve our Purpose in what is a fragile and changing world.