

Footscray Community Arts Centre

Annual Report 2017



Indigenous Advisory Group Elder Uncle Larry at the 2017 Wominjeka Festival. Photo by Jody Haines.



We acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri peoples of the Kulin Nation. We offer our respect to the Elders of these traditional lands and, through them, to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.





1.0

A Message from Uncle Larry Walsh

Elder In Residence and Indigenous Advisory Group Member

When I acknowledge our Aboriginal Elders, I always like to remind people that all communities have elders. It is important to remember that we all have elders who are leaders and willing to spend their time in guiding the next generation. The Indigenous Advisory Group at FCAC was especially proud of the way in which the 2017 program worked deeply with our community, particularly young women, to build skills, networks and employment, and guide the next generation.

One of our successes includes the completion of the two-year mentorship program, *Blak Stream*. All four *Blak Stream* artists are employed and doing independent work after building or enhancing their skills through the program. We have seen these women blossom and embrace the opportunities that opened up to them through their work, and by building cross-cultural networks with the participants in FCAC's Emerging Cultural Leaders program.

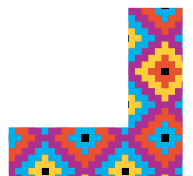
The Women of the World Festival (WOW) was a fantastic platform for Aboriginal women - and from my perspective it was great to take a back seat! I also heard wonderful feedback from Aboriginal women attending the festival, including my daughters. At least three of the women involved in *Mum is the Medicine*, held as part of WOW, are receiving further employment opportunities in the arts, and are making great impact in their community.

Footscray Community Arts Centre has always assisted artists in raising social awareness around specific community issues. In 2017, the centre's program did this through presenting an exhibition by Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance, which may have contributed to the groundswell of support at the 2018 Invasion Day rally. FCAC's role in supporting different community groups creates unique opportunities for sharing culture and experience within the centre. This benefits all of us as a community, allowing us to understand our similarities as much as our differences.

ILBIJERRI's presentation of *Coranderrk*, featuring new cast members, added a refreshed perspective on this iconic work. Offsite, FCAC did an exchange with Katherine Arts Centre that saw some of our young artists travel to Katherine and experience a different perspective. We were grateful for that knowledge sharing opportunity that broadened everyone's view.

Thank you to all of the members of the advisory group, especially to Genevieve Grieves as our Board representative. I would like to congratulate Genevieve on her pregnancy and am delighted that Karen Jackson from Victoria University's Moondani Balluk will take on the role of Board representative in 2018 while Genevieve is on leave. Paola Balla's creative ideas and energy to carry it through to concept is invaluable, and all members of the IAG regularly meet and work with other members of the FCAC team.

We were sad to farewell Lydia from the role of Head of Programming, but were proud to see her career progress to a vitally important lead role at ILBIJERRI Theatre. I'd like to thank the previous CEO, Jade Lillie for her hard work and commitment to our vision, and former Chair, Lyn Morgain. We welcome Martin Paten, and the relatively recently appointed Chair, Jason Rostant, who are working with us now to support our ideas and needs in the arts for 2018 and beyond.





2.0 A Message from the Chairs of our Board

**A shared statement
by Lyn Morgain (Chair
to May 2017) and Jason
Rostant (Chair from
May 2017 to present)**

As always, 2017 was a big year for Footscray Community Arts Centre – the first of two transition years marked by significant changes in Board and management leadership, and changes to our funding. Noting the transition of Board leadership, it is our pleasure to present this joint report, having both held the role of FCAC Chair throughout part of 2017.

First, we acknowledge Jade Lillie's departure as CEO and Director in October after a remarkable five years of artistic achievements and organisational leadership. Jade's legacy includes significant growth in FCAC programming, reputation and influence, and deepened connections with local communities, especially First Nations communities.

We welcome Martin Paten to the role of CEO and Director following an extensive recruitment process. Martin brings deep experience in the art and community cultural sector, and his decade-long role as CEO and Director of Castlemaine State Festival made him an ideal choice to lead FCAC into its next important chapter.

FCAC presented a rich suite of projects, programs and events with and for our valued artists, communities and audiences throughout 2017. We continued to prepare for transition of our Artlife program to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in 2018 and commenced precinct planning discussions to ensure our future approach to people, program and place continues to meet the changing needs and interests of the communities that surround us.

The year was not without its challenges. We entered 2017 with a projected operational deficit and significant unconfirmed grants – part of our transition from program to operational funding that both reduced our eligibility and success in securing grants, and compounded challenges already facing the national arts sector, including constrained funding and increased costs and competition.

The Board and management revised projections and expenditure throughout

the year, including implementing a mid-year reforecast that significantly revised expected project grant success downward. Notwithstanding our strategy, the organisation delivered a significant year-end deficit position.

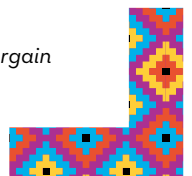
As we enter another transition year marked by NDIS implementation, the Board and management are carefully reviewing all aspects of FCAC operations to ensure and strengthen our future position. We are focused on major new partnerships, continued earned income growth, new programming opportunities and internal systems review.

On behalf of the Board we would like to acknowledge the exceptional work of FCAC's dedicated, hard-working and skilled staff and thank them for their commitments over this last year. Special thanks to Alia Gabres, Bo Svoronos, Lydia Fairhall and Susan Doel who left FCAC throughout the year, and to all members of the Indigenous Advisory Group for their continued stewardship of FCAC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programming and activity.

Thanks too to our newer and longer-term funders and partners who have so deeply connected with our programs, artist and staff. Your trust and friendships means a great deal to us. This year we particularly thank members of the new Directors' Giving Circle, a donor circle of some of FCAC's closest friends. We are proud to be leading this giving initiative that has contributed invaluable untied financial support at this time.

We look forward to strengthening our relationship and shared impact with you all as we continue to create powerful community art and fulfil our history, mission and values serving the diverse communities of Melbourne's west.

Jason Rostant and Lyn Morgain





3.0 Vision

Footscray Community Arts Centre is Australia's leading community engaged, contemporary arts centre. It is our vision that all communities are valued as makers of culture, where creativity and collaboration drive increased participation, self-determination and diversity of representation, in the civic narrative and public sphere.

Our goal areas:

Innovation

Be leading community engaged, contemporary arts practice locally, nationally and internationally

Diversity

Be recognised as a best practice organisation for socially and culturally diverse, creative and cultural practices

Leadership

Be driving and integrating leadership opportunities across all aspects of the organisation and arts sector through people, program, place and operations

Access

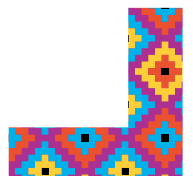
Be leading strategies and processes for access and equity in our organisation and the community

Sustainability

Have sustainable practices that are creative, strong and viable across all areas of our business

Our focus communities are:

1. Melbourne's west
2. Indigenous communities (local, state and national)
3. Culturally and linguistically diverse people, including newly arrived and refugee communities
4. People with disability
5. Artists and cultural workers





4.0 Our 2017 Snapshot

Across 1,800 individual events, programs and projects, we achieved:

\$125,000+ In-kind support
to artists and
community groups

70,000 visitors

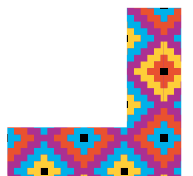
41,600 digital
followers

1300+ produced and
presented works

340+ paid artists and
cultural personnel

240 free
activities

98 partnerships





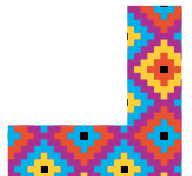
5.0 Our People

Board

- Lyn Morgain (Chair until May)
- Jason Rostant (Chair from May)
- Joe Toohey (Treasurer)
- Paul Galbally (Until September)
- Anna Skreiner
- Andi Jones
- Genevieve Grieves
- Barbara Horn
- Joyce Watts
- Neil Gardiner

Indigenous Advisory Group

- Arweet Carolyn Briggs
- Uncle Larry Walsh
- Aunty Annette Xiberras
- Genevieve Grieves (Chair)
- Paola Balla
- Robbie Bundle
- Vicki Couzens
- Karen Jackson

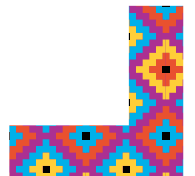




5.1 Our People

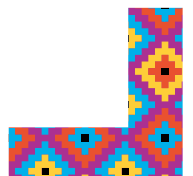
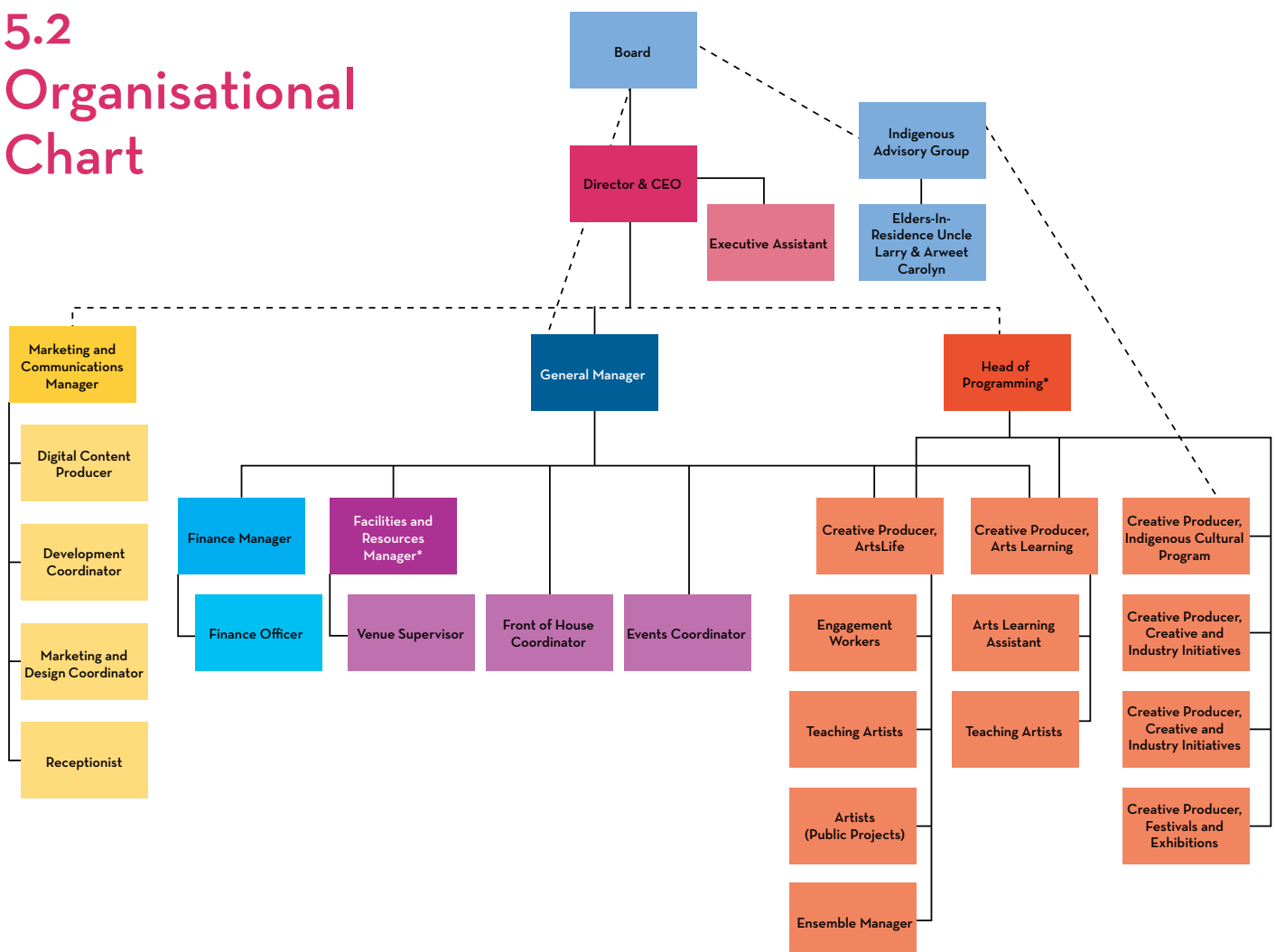
Staff

- Adam Hammad
- Adria Bonacci
- Adrienne Baldwin
- Alec Reade
- Alexandre Schoelcher
- Alia Gabres
- Alicia Peet
- Alister Karl
- Allara Pattison
- Ami Taib
- Amy Lasslett
- Amy McMurtrie
- Ana Pires
- Andre Hillas
- Andrew Glover
- Angela Pamic
- Annie Edney
- Arthur Tanzi
- Benjamin Beare
- Benjamin Bennett
- Benjamin Beracasa Vargas
- Bernadette Fitzgerald
- Bo Svoronos
- Brendan Jellie
- Brett Lee
- Cash Harvey
- Cat Graveson
- Catherine Lew
- Catriona Graveson
- Cheralyn Lim
- Christie Widiarto
- Claudette Justice-Allen
- Daniel Parsons
- Danika Smith
- Darien Pullen
- Darren Gee
- David Maney
- David Pennay
- Demeysa Ahmed
- Dimitri Filianovsky
- Dishan Vincent
- Elizabeth Duigan
- Elliot Buis
- Emily Ross
- Emma Rasmussen
- Etienne Danet
- Fernando Barbosa Elias
- Filomena Coppola
- Franca Stadler
- Gabriel Collie
- Georgia Sedgwick
- Gianna Rizzo
- Gregory Fryer
- Hannah Morphy-Walsh
- Hayley Lawson
- Iguot Mabor
- Jacinta Perry
- Jackson Hughes
- Jade Lillie
- Jaime Powell
- James Hullick
- James Santhiyapillai
- Jamie O'Shea
- Jamie Rawls
- Jared Kuvent
- Jasmin Lefers
- Jenna Williams
- Jennifer Mcleod
- Jennifer Tran
- Jessica Ibacache
- John Gregg
- Jonathan Sinatra
- Joseph Vella
- Jude Bowman
- Justin Blackwell
- Karolina Kulewioz
- Kate Buuren
- Kate Middleweek
- Kathrine Clarke
- Kelly Russ
- Khalid Warsame
- Lawrence Upston
- Lia Pa'apa'a
- Liam Barclay
- Lily Huynh
- Lisa Maza
- Lola Tanzi
- Lori Dribbin
- Louis Mason
- Louise Malcolm
- Lucas Hehir
- Lucine Eusani
- Lucky Peveira
- Luke Holdsworth
- Luke Ison
- Lydia Fairhall
- Martin Paten
- Matthew Hore
- May Sabet
- Melissa White
- Morgan Brady
- Nathan Forsyth
- Nathan Gee-Landman
- Neil Cabatingan
- Nikki Lam
- Paula Van Beek
- Penelope Harpham
- Rebecca Rigby
- Robin Waters
- Sarah Ward
- Sean Slevin
- Sebastian Diaz
- Simon de Lacy-Leacey
- Stephen Richards
- Steven Trosti
- Sudeep Lingamneni
- Susan Doel
- Tanya Bunter
- Tanya McLaine
- Tennessee Mynott-Rudland
- Tija Lodins
- Tina Montgomery
- Trevor Dunn
- Vanessa Pidwell-Agboegulem
- Xanthe Beesley
- Demeysa Ahmed
- Ahmarnya Price





5.2 Organisational Chart



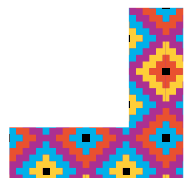
For full details of our staff, artists, arts and cultural workers and partners, please click [here](#).



6.0

Our Partners our gratitude

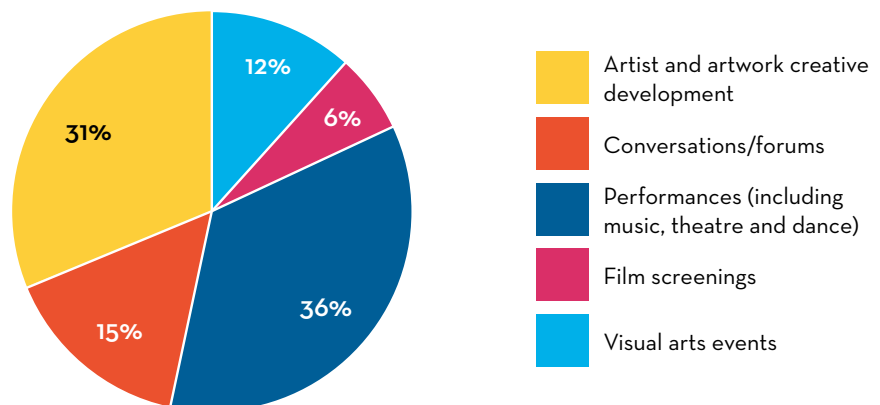
- 100 Story Building
- ACMI
- Action Education
- Arnold Bloch Leibler
- Arts Access Victoria
- Arts Centre Melbourne
- Arts House
- Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR)
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
- Australia Council for the Arts
- Australian Government
- Back Alley Sally's
- Baran Theatre
- Belvoir
- Besen Family Foundation
- Brown Cabs
- Circus Oz
- City of Melbourne
- Cohealth
- Cohealth Arts Generator
- Conways Hot Fish
- Creative Victoria
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Digital Writers Festival
- Djed Press
- Dr Roebucks
- Emerging Writers Festival
- First Nations Foundation
- Foundation House
- Free Theatre
- Fresh Milk Barbados
- Gandel Philanthropy
- Gertrude Street Projection Festival
- Helen Macpherson Smith Trust
- Herb Feith Foundation
- Highpoint
- HillScene LIVE Festival
- Hobson's Bay City Council
- Human Rights Arts Film Festival
- ILBIJERRI
- Indirect Object
- JOLT
- Kape Communications
- Katherine Regional Arts
- Learn Local
- Limbs 2 Riddims
- Malthouse Theatre
- Maribyrnong City Council
- McCullough Robertson
- Melbourne Music Week
- Melbourne Spoken Word
- Melko
- Moon Mother Productions
- Moondani Balluk at VU
- Mpavillion
- Myriad Collective
- Of One Mind
- Office of the Minister for Women
- Peril Magazine
- Queen Victoria Women's Centre
- Ras Dashen
- Raspberry Ripple
- Regional Arts Victoria
- Repair Café
- Robogals Melbourne
- Rotary Club of Footscray
- Sidney Myer Fund
- St Jerome's Laneway Festival
- State Trustees
- Sun Bookshop
- Sweatshop Western Sydney Literacy
- T Cavallaro and Sons
- Testing Grounds
- The Aesop Foundation
- The Footscray Milking Station
- The Happy River Café
- The Jack Brockhoff Foundation
- The Lifted Brow
- The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
- The Make It Up Club
- The Malcolm Robertson Foundation
- The Moroccan Soup Kitchen
- The Reverence Hotel
- The Squeaky Wheel
- The Substation
- The White House
- TheatreWorks
- Thien An
- Third Horizon Caribbean Film Festival
- Tilde
- Vaiusu Creator's Space
- Vichealth
- Victoria University
- Victorian International Container Terminal
- Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust
- Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance
- West Projections
- Women's Circus
- Women's Health West
- WORD - The Front Line
- Wyndham City Council





7.0 Our Program

PROGRAM BY ART FORM

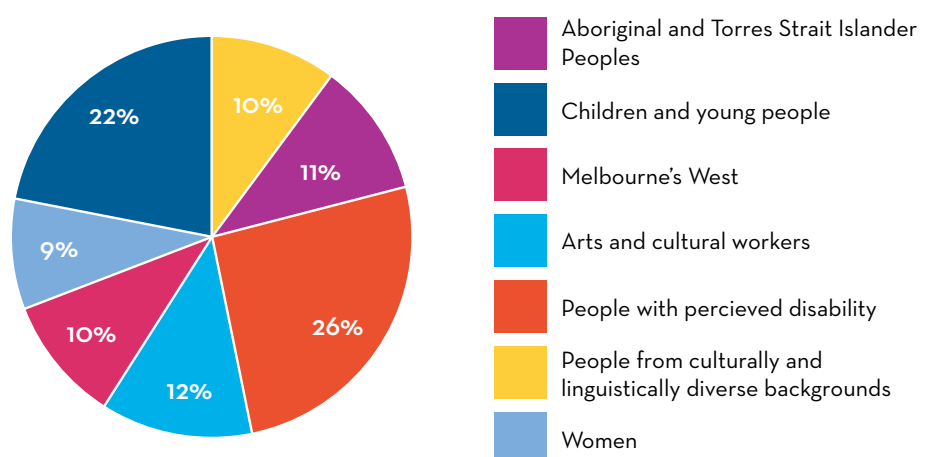


Of the 1,300 events and activities that we produce annually:

- Professional development and performances evenly accounts for approximately two thirds of our creative output

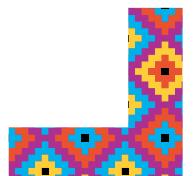
Please note: Graph includes the opening events and artist talks for 21 visual arts exhibitions but excludes our Arts Learning workshop program. For exhibitions held concurrently, each attendee was counted as a single audience member.

PROGRAM BY FOCUS COMMUNITY



This graph outlines:

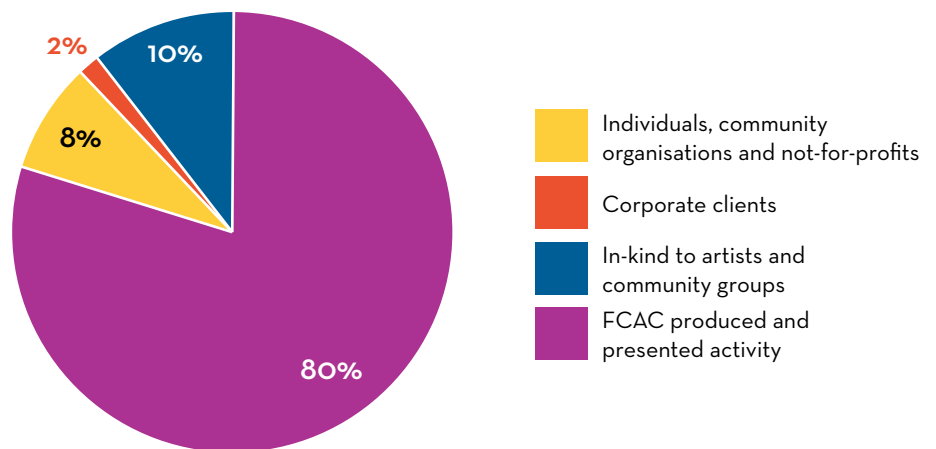
- The communities of focus specified in the 'Strategic Plan to 2020' and how they were engaged through our 2017 artistic program.
- The significant female-centric programming held in 2017 due to the Women of the World Festival.
- That our Arts Learning workshops for children are a popular program and crucial for engaging families in the local community.





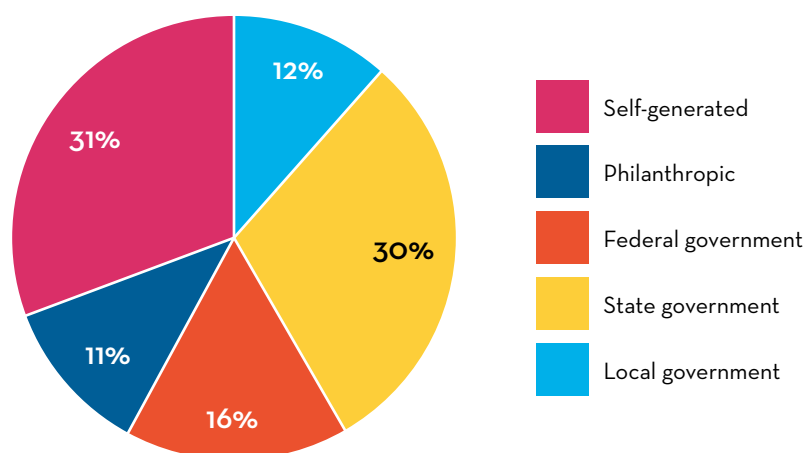
8.0 Our Place

HOURS OF VENUE USE BY HIRER

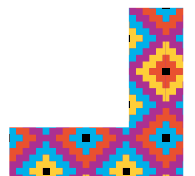


Our programmed activity accounts for 80% of venue use, with a total of 10% used for hire. 10% of venue use is provided in-kind to artists.

REVENUE BREAKDOWN BY SOURCE



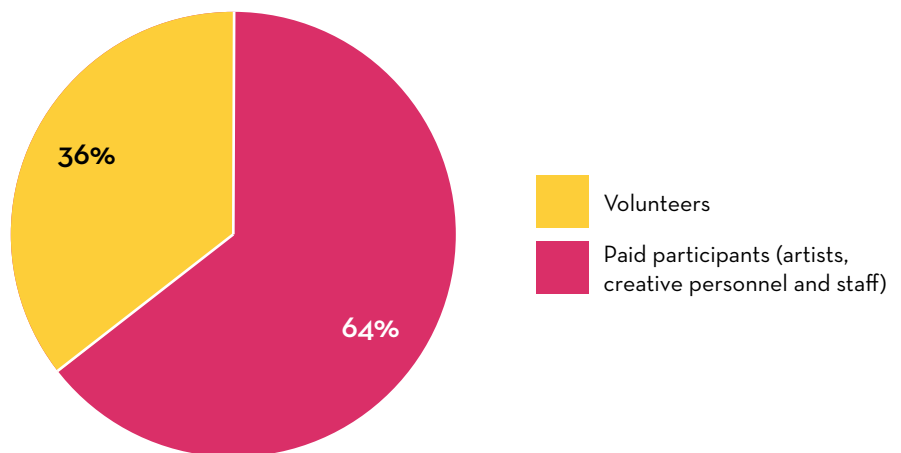
Our self-generated income encompasses workshop fees, ticket sales, membership, bar income, hire and other service fees, now comprising almost a third of our total revenue.





9.1 Our People

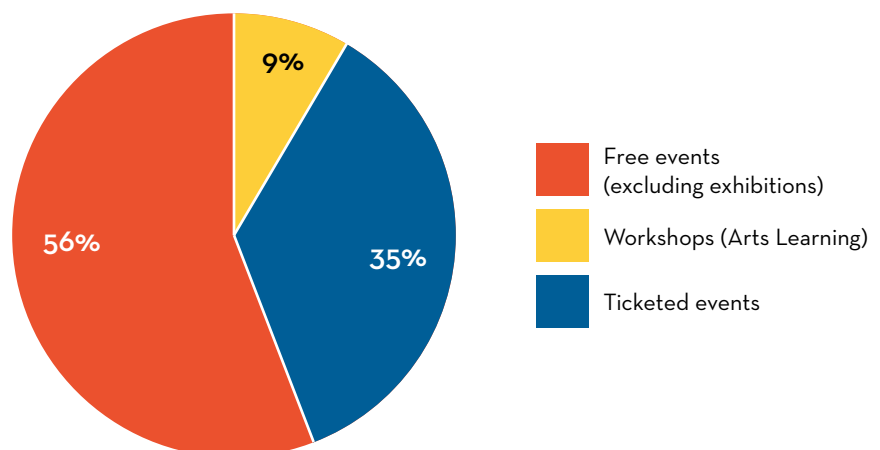
PAID PARTICIPANTS VS VOLUNTEERS



As is symptomatic in most arts organisations:

- Volunteers play a critical role in event delivery and execution
- Greater operational funding would allow FCAC further capacity to employ paid participants within the core demographic areas its programming supports

ATTENDEES BY EVENT TYPE



Key insights:

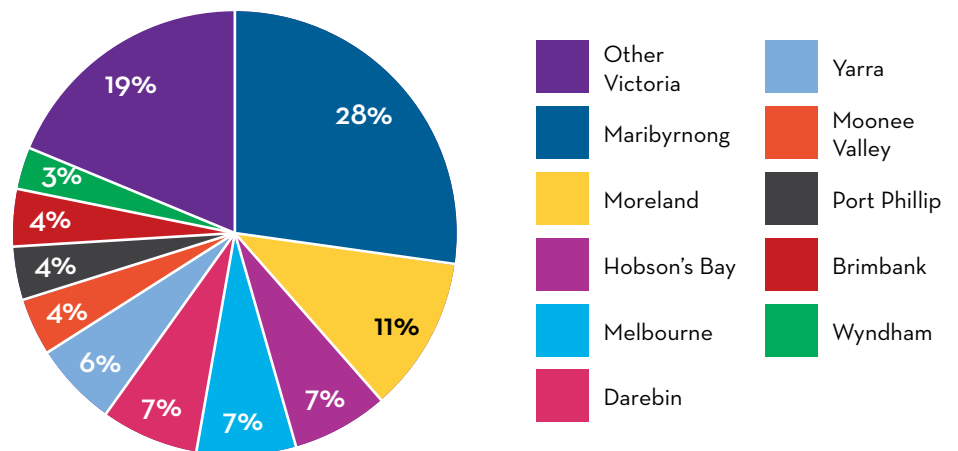
- In line with FCAC's values, and thanks to the support of key financial partners, the organisation hosts a large proportion of free events to ensure financial barriers don't prohibit community access to the centre's activities





9.2 Our People

AUDIENCE BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

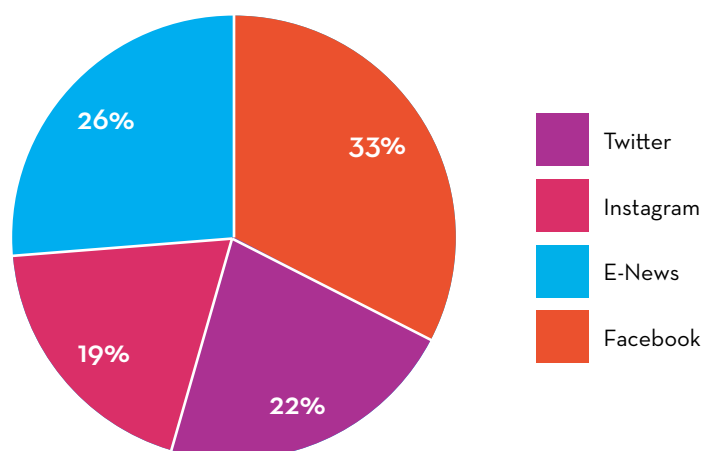


In terms of location:

- The largest contingent (28%) of FCAC audiences live within Maribyrnong City which is the second most ethnically diverse population in Victoria with 40% of residents born overseas and having a median age of 33.
- Our second largest audience contingent comes from the Moreland municipality (11%), which correlates with arts and creative consumers. The median age is approximately 35 and 27% have a Bachelor degree or higher.

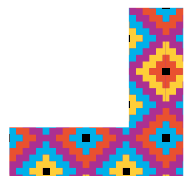
(Source: Patternmakers Postcode Data analysis Audience Mapping Report, Brooke Boyce, October 2017)

ONLINE AUDIENCE

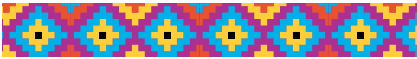


Of our 41,500 digital followers:

- The largest proportion is contained on Facebook at 33%
- 74% can be found on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), which is an important tool for engaging audiences





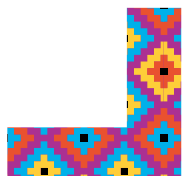


FCAC's annual Wominjeka Festival presents a rich and diverse program of art, music, performance, film and activities celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in Melbourne's west, and from across the country.

[View](#) the Wominjeka 2017 Program.

10.1 Indigenous Cultural Program

Wominjeka

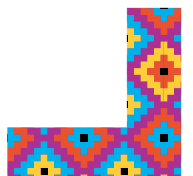
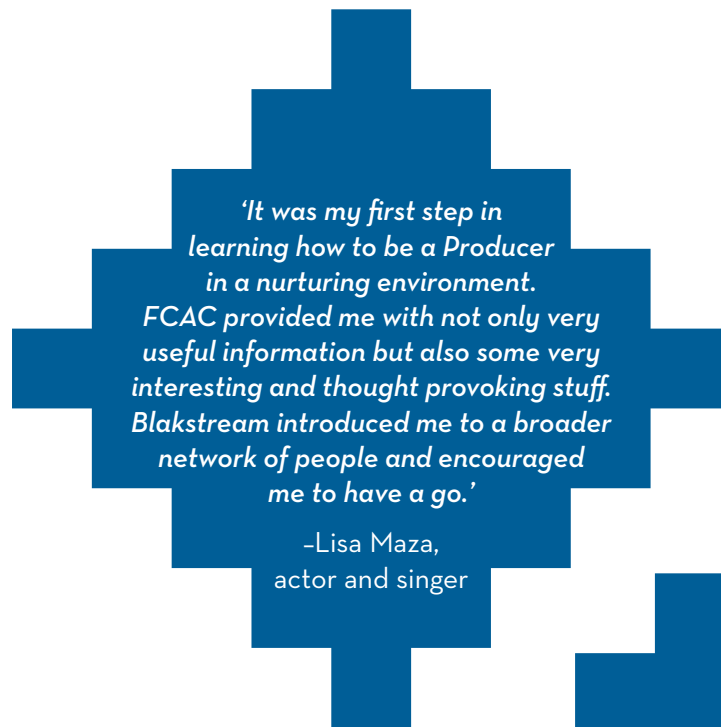






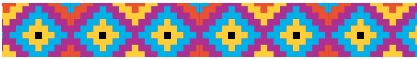
The Blakstream program provided Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and creatives with skills development, training and mentorship opportunities from our Indigenous Advisory Group and FCAC Creative Producers. In 2017, the four participants in Blakstream had placements in arts and cultural organisations across Victoria.

10.2 Blakstream





Yelmo-Garang exhibition curated by Kat Clark and Kate ten Buuren. Photo by Artificial Studios.

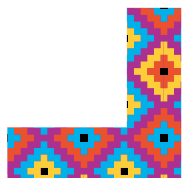


11.0 Indigenous Cultural Program

Yelmo-Garang

Yelmo-Garang is a creative work curated by **Kate ten Buuren** and **Kat Clarke**, participants in FCAC's 2017 Blakstream program.

Yelmo-Garang is the Kulin word for 'Nest'. Curated by Kate ten Buuren (Taungurung) and Kat Clarke (Wotjobaluk) from *this mob*, an Indigenous run collective nurturing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists based in Melbourne. The exhibition invited audiences to experience a space where time ceases to exist. Whether it was sitting, reading, sharing or creating, attendees were invited to find something special and unique about the space, leave their mark and become part of 'this mob's' community. With a mix of traditional and contemporary First Nation's culture, the space was a welcoming cove made for participants to experience the energy that is *Yelmo-Garang*.

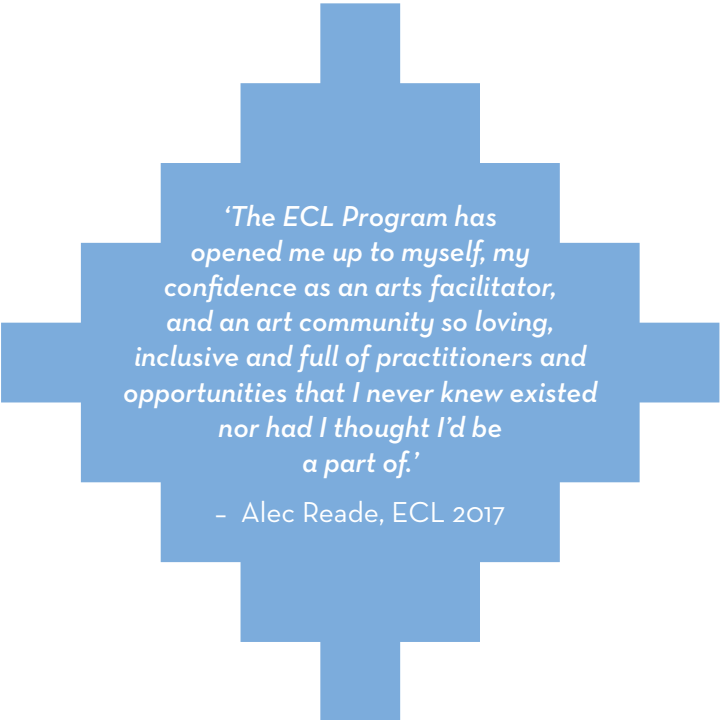






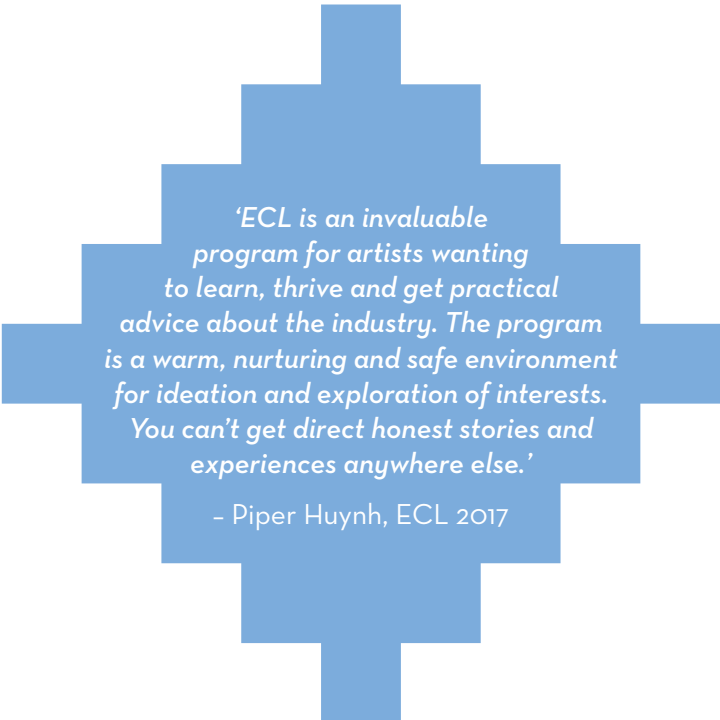
12.0 Emerging Cultural Leaders

Emerging Cultural Leaders (ECL) is a six-month skills development and mentoring program for emerging artists and cultural facilitators who live, work or have other connections to Melbourne's western region.



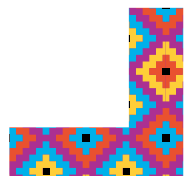
'The ECL Program has opened me up to myself, my confidence as an arts facilitator, and an art community so loving, inclusive and full of practitioners and opportunities that I never knew existed nor had I thought I'd be a part of.'

- Alec Reade, ECL 2017



'ECL is an invaluable program for artists wanting to learn, thrive and get practical advice about the industry. The program is a warm, nurturing and safe environment for ideation and exploration of interests. You can't get direct honest stories and experiences anywhere else.'

- Piper Huynh, ECL 2017





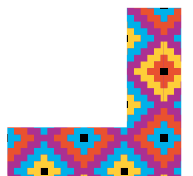


Three members of the West Writers, **Christina Taylor**, **Nikki Tran** and **Sumudu Samarawickrama** collaborated on the new work *SideKicked*, presented at FCAC as part of the Melbourne Fringe Festival 2017.

13.0 West Writers

*'WE WON!!!! SideKicked
voted best show in the
Words and Ideas category at
Melbourne Fringe 2017! Thank
you to everyone who came out
to see the show! Congrats to
all of the incredible SideKicked
artists and thanks to FCAC
fam for hosting us xo'*
– Christina Taylor, writer

*'2017 was a very good for
me as a writer and I credit
West Writers Group with the success
almost entirely! Work that I originated
at WWG was published by the Boston
Globe, and shortlisted for the Lord
Mayor of Melbourne's Awards. This is
a space that is safe, but asks one to be
ambitious - how wonderful.'*
– Sumudu Samarawickrama,
writer







A collaboration between FCAC and Malthouse Theatre, the Living Now program supports visionary writers from diverse backgrounds to bring culturally contemporary stories to the stage. The 2017 Living Now recipients, theatremaker **Tania Cañas** and writer **Rajith Savanadasa**, undertook a residency at Malthouse Theatre throughout the year.

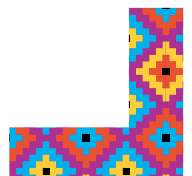
14.0 Living Now

'(Living Now) has allowed for a space to unpack theatrical narratives in all its forms from being able to be part of rehearsals, one-on-one mentorship with the resident dramaturgs or seeing shows ... The program is flexible enough to cater to participants desires and also rigorous enough to challenge form and therefore storytelling technique'

– Tania Cañas,
theatremaker

'What I think was most valuable were the conversations I've had with dramaturgs and directors about what I might produce. I found the collaborative aspects of theatre, which can be foreign to a novelist, really sparked my imagination and enriched my practice'

– Rajith Savanadasa,
writer







15.0 Exhibitions



'Bright reflective & real, creative surprising - I liked interacting with this work.'

- Gallery visitor (How About A Rainbow)

'A story that must be told, remembered and acted on.. courage!'

- Gallery visitor (The Act of Living)

'Stunning and powerful work ... my heart feels this exhibition ...'

- Gallery visitor (This is not resolved, Jody Haines)

'So incredible, so so much strength & talent power & wisdom thank you for sharing your stories'

- Gallery visitor (Transtrevaganza)

'I've just moved house, so many things hold an image of what I am ... Thought provoking & enagaing - questioning ones attachment ... Loved the interactive parts'

- Gallery visitor (Created + Cremated)



Heart is a Wasteland theatre, film and live music show featuring Aaron Pedersen and Ursula Yovich.
Photo by Derek McAplin.



16.0 Performances

Thoda Dhyan Se (Be Careful) by Indian theatre-maker **Mallika Taneja**, offered an international perspective on the experience of womanhood.

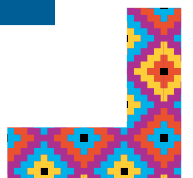
'The performance is subtle, gentle, truthful and generous ... a cleverly crafted, well designed piece of work that drives home the desired result in unexpected ways. I didn't expect to come out feeling so affected that I could barely talk for a while.'

- 9/10, Suhasini Seelin,
In Review

Heart is a Wasteland was the result of a creative development by company in residence, Brown Cab Productions at FCAC. After its development period, supported in-kind by FCAC, the performance premiered at Malthouse Theatre.

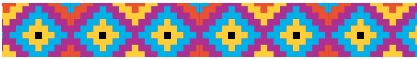
'In Heart is a Wasteland we have a work that is universal in its humanity, but complex in its Indigeneity. It is at once both relatable and unrelatable and therein lies its sophistication. Much like its ending, it is unresolved yet not unsatisfying and it leaves the audience pensively wanting more.'

- Eugenia Flynn
Review





Larissa McFarlane with FCAC's ArtLife participants, Steven Tran and Megan Hunter.



17.1 Artist Exhibition in Residence

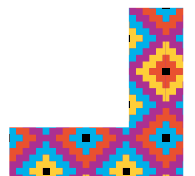
Larissa MacFarlane

Larissa MacFarlane is a Footscray based visual artist, working across printmaking and street art. Her work is inspired by the urban industrial landscapes of Melbourne's west, as well as by her experience of illness and disability. Through her work, she investigates ideas of belonging, place, healing, change and celebrating what we have in the present.

'It has been a tough week, but here is a picture of some joy and solidarity.'

It is the last 2 days of my exhibition at Footscray Community Arts Centre. My 9 week residency has been a marvellous, exciting, emotional rollercoaster of an adventure. Thanks to the FCAC team and Artlife artists, Megan Hunter, Steven Tran and Chelsea Michelle. Come and see the huge paste up mural that we made.'

- Larissa MacFarlane





Kate Hood from Raspberry Ripple. Photo by Jessica Ibacache.



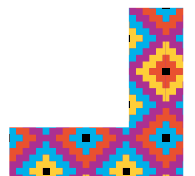
17.2 Artists in Residence

Raspberry Ripple

Raspberry Ripple is a way of developing new work in an atmosphere of inclusion. We will try out new ideas with script in hand, and work out how disability can add new dimension in the context of established theatre practices. We want to watch how it makes new themes emerge, and actively go after those moments where disability makes a positive difference to the work. As theatre makers, this is gold to us. At *Raspberry Ripple*, we are intrigued by all of the human condition. For us, diversity makes the work better.

'As a disabled Artist in Residence at FCAC, the overwhelming benefit has been that I feel absolutely welcome! I am utterly respected and supported as an artist. My disability-led theatre company, Raspberry Ripple, goes from strength to strength. Lucky me!'

– Kate Hood,
Raspberry Ripple





ArtLife participants at Testing Grounds. Photo by Shuttermain.

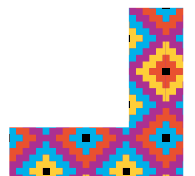


18.1 ArtLife

ArtLife has been running for over 20 years and engages artists with disability in collaborations with professional tutors to make new work, build capacity and change perceptions. We facilitate these opportunities through visual art, performance, music, sound art, digital media, animation, horticulture, hospitality, photography and movement. These arts activities are combined with the development of life skills in areas such as communication, health and general self-development.

BirdLife, a new work, was presented at West Projections Festival: [Click here](#) to see the work and hear about the process from the artists.

The Amplified Elephants are one of the many creative ensembles that have been spawned from FCAC's ArtLife program. The Amplified Elephants and dancers from ArtLife undertook a residency at Testing Grounds. Testing Grounds is a temporary space for creative practices encompassing art, performance and design, where people at all levels can test, develop and share their work. [Click here](#) to see the ArtLife team in action.







18.2 ArtLife

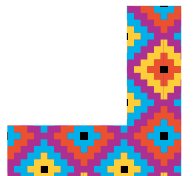
The Hackkets

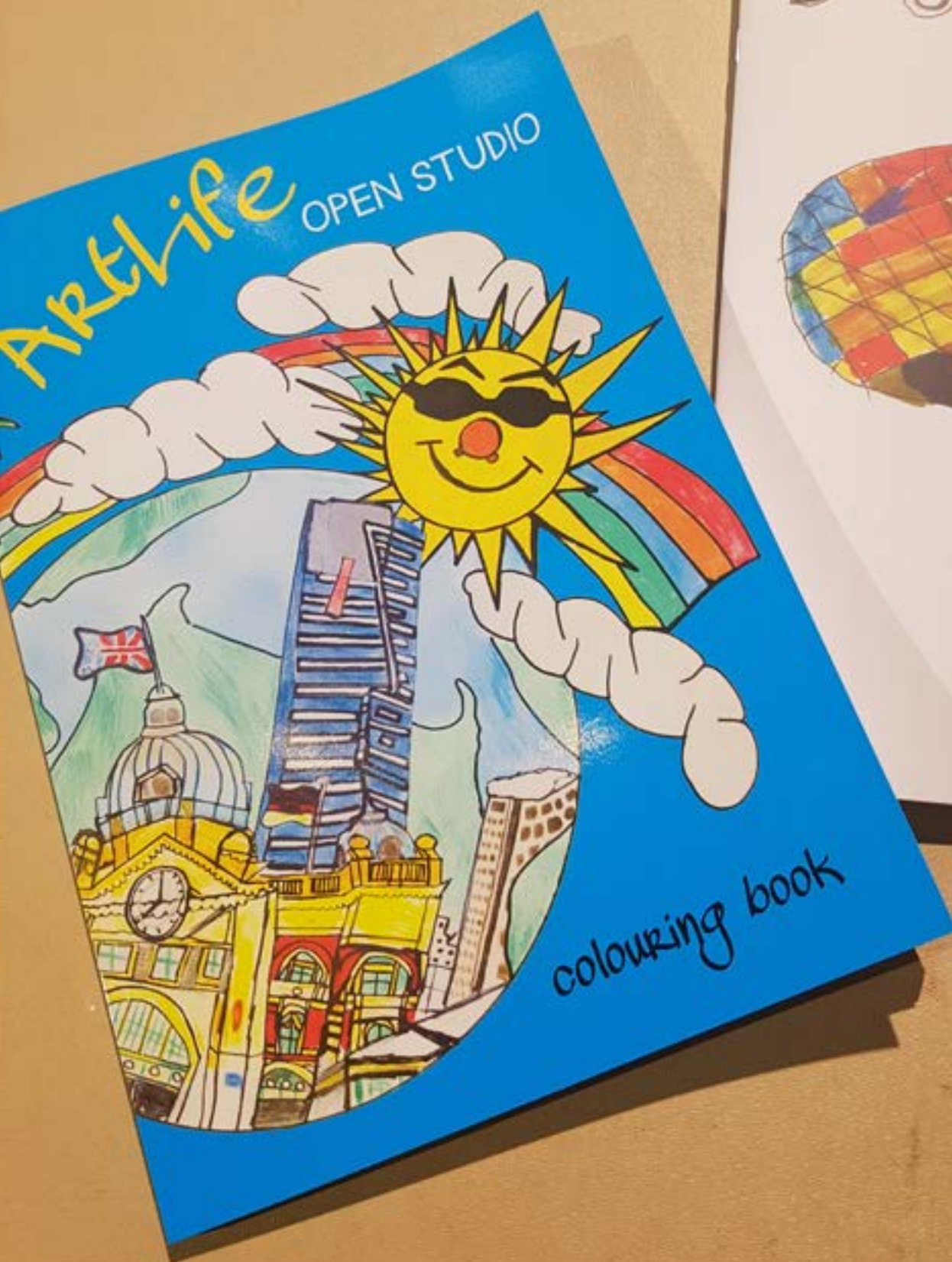
Proudly hailing from Melbourne's West, *The Hackkets* are a band made up of members with and without disability, brought together more than 10 years ago as part of FCAC's ArtLife program. The band originally focused on covers, immersing themselves in universal classic rock hits.

In 2017, *The Hackkets* released the single 'Speechless' in April, and the band's profile rose throughout the year, with many collaborations and performances throughout Melbourne and the west.

[Click Here](#) to hear *Speechless*

[Click Here](#) to see *The Hackkets* performing *I Love Travel* in August 2017





Big umbrella



Our process

New work by ArtLife Studio

The development of the ArtLife colouring book was conceived from ArtsBox's residency at FCAC, which was supported by Maribyrnong City Council. As part of the residency, artists created black and white images and explored their passion for colouring in using textas. Following artist consent, a curatorial team was established to choose works to develop the colouring book.

ArtLife participants also produced a zine - the creative outcome of a 12-week program focused on painting. Artists captured their work via photography for a collective zine as well as producing individual zines inspired by other print publications. There was a special event held at FCAC to launch the publications.

'There was lots of people, interesting'

- Tegan Connor,
ArtLife artist

'It was a such beautiful magical night... I realise that ArtLife is so much more than just an art program, it touches people in such a profound way.'

- From an
artist's family

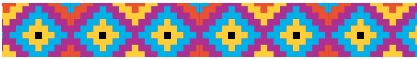
'People had courage in putting their Art out there'

- Diego, ArtLife artist

'Good, loved it all'

- Megan Hunter,
ArtLife artist





19.0 Women of the World Festival

Conceived by Southbank Centre and launched in London, *Women of the World Festival* Melbourne was a three-day festival of critical conversations, music, film and performance, celebrating women and taking an in-depth look at the challenges to gender equality.

'I loved the deep discussions and thought provoking ideas that were shared and the diversity of women who spoke.'

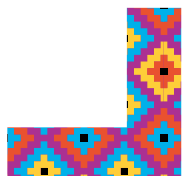
- Audience Member

'Thank you FCAC for including me in WOW 2017! It was spectacular to be among the discussions and buzz of Women's movements around the globe! Audiences were warm and responsive and I would like to congratulate you all on putting together a memorable event!'

- WOW Artist

'I think it made it more accessible for Indigenous women knowing that some of us had key roles ... so the Indigenous women there made us feel even more able to engage with WOW... that made it very accessible for us in that sense.'

- Festival Participant







20.0 Arts Learning

Kids workshops

Kids workshops provide a creatively stimulating, fun and safe way for children aged 5 - 12 (and parents!) to participate in the creative arts. Workshops include painting, drawing, singing, animation and theatre.

'You're awesome and play a really important role in our community. Thank you!'

- Participating parent

'The circus is a serious part of my kids' learning, and if my son could do it on the weekends, in holidays and after he's turned 12 that would be awesome.'

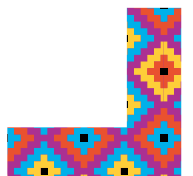
- Participating parent

'It's the highest quality school holiday program in the area and possibly in the world! The kids have access to the most amazing experiences.'

- Participating parent

'We love FCAC and enjoy all the programs we've attended.'

- Participating parent







21.0 Generate

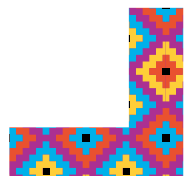
Generate is FCAC's professional development program catered to individuals and organisations working in the arts and community sector. The program is specifically designed to provide context and knowledge on the intricacies of partnering with diverse communities in delivering successful project outcomes.

'Thank you so much. This was the most incredible session. I am so appreciative of all that Genevieve (and co-facilitators) put into it. It has really got me questioning and reassessing how I do things.'

- Workshop Participant,
Working in First Nations'
Cultural Context

'As someone from a non-English speaking background, I had a certain perception of how to target multicultural audiences that was based purely on my personal experience. This workshop made me realise my own biases and opened my thinking to how to market the arts to a large scope of diverse audiences (which includes different classes, interests, communities etc)'

- Workshop Participant,
Audiences and Diversity





Arts West Collaboration Launch. Photo by Jessica Ibacache.

Arts West Alliance

As the leading arts organisation in Melbourne's west, the Arts West Alliance was instrumental in connecting the FCAC team, as well as our artists and community members, with professional development opportunities that strengthened our existing capabilities.

This included conducting workshops on:

- Arts Law
- Evaluation and The Art of Measurement
- Mental Health First Aid Training


Resources developed by Arts West also enabled the team to better understand the communities we service and the way in which we work with them.

Resources produced included:

- A Collaboration Guide
- Postcode Data Analysis and Reporting: In collaboration with Patternmakers, postcode data was used as a metric for identifying our audience's demographic and behaviour based on their local government area.

Arts West continues to be a vehicle for driving further collaboration between creative organisations in Melbourne's west, enabling us to leverage our combined resources to develop the artistic capacity of the community as a whole.

Thank you to our partners Gandel Philanthropy and Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation for supporting Arts West.



'The course was really great. I definitely learned things I didn't know and have improved [my] confidence in this area'

– Participant in Mental Health First Aid Training, August 2017



Wedding reception in the FCAC Performance Space.



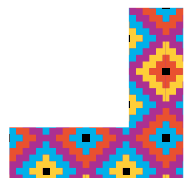
22.0 Venue Hire

Venue hire is a core service that FCAC offers to the community. We have facilitated community and personal events for the Indigenous, culturally and linguistically diverse and LGBTIQ community and organised high profile events for festivals, corporate organisations, and state and federal government. Previous venue hire events range from intimate nuptials and conferences to large scale events, such as St Jerome's Laneway Festival.

In line with its ethos, FCAC continues to be an inclusive space for artists and communities to engage with Victorian audiences. There is growth potential for venue hire to become a critical contributor to FCAC's self-generated revenue.

'It was a fabulous experience for me as the event organiser, we were able to easily create the atmosphere we wanted and give our staff an event they really enjoyed - I highly recommend the location and team.'

- Karen Rogers,
cohealth





AFTER DARK

#2: Cargo Bike in the Dark

By C. B. MAKO

[Click here](#) to listen to audio recording of poem.

“BIKE THE BLUES away,” read a random post somewhere online. When an anonymous cancer charity gifted us with a cargo bike, I did just that, crushing crankiness away with a slow ride around the inner western suburbs of Melbourne. But only during the daytime. With two young children, my husband Chris and I rarely had a need to go out at night. Until, on a dare, I applied to join a writers group.

It was the same year our younger child’s cancer went into remission and her oncology appointments were now only every twelve months. When I received an email that I was accepted among the shortlisted candidates for West Writers Group, it took a while to hit me that their meetings were held at night.

Was I ready to broaden my horizons and move away from my comfort zone? Was I ready to face my seemingly unfounded fear of the dark, though at times it felt frightfully real?

Over the past five years, we have seen the inner west transform into a friendlier, more welcoming place, especially with its extensive and interconnected bicycle infrastructure. Surely my journey through three suburbs at night, to get to the writers group venue, would be safe. Would it matter that I, a woman—a woman of colour no less—would even cycle at night?

With the sunset behind me, I cycled towards the already-darkened sky, pedalling furiously to get to the writing group on time. My husband had stuck more reflective strips onto my cargo bike, the back of my boots, and my mandatory helmet. He had uploaded his rock music onto my mobile’s music folder; his way of saying, you’re not alone; I’m with you, throughout my forty-minute ride along the newly built, well-lit, off-street bicycle path that ran alongside the Sydenham train line.

As an art student of Footscray Community Arts Centre (FCAC) for the last three years, I’ve been attending drawing and painting courses during daylight hours. I had never seen FCAC at night. To my surprise, the art centre was brightly lit and welcoming, even as darkness fell.

Footscray at night, with its newly renovated train station, was awash in bright lights. As the seasons changed and days became shorter, nights longer and the rain colder, I realised I had already been slow cycling in the dark for half of the year.



FOOTSCRAY
COMMUNITY
ARTS
CENTRE