



G R E A T E R

CREA TIVE

B E N D I G O

Creative Action Plan
2025 – 2029

FACILITATE • PARTNER • ADVOCATE • SUPPORT



CITY OF GREATER
BENDIGO

GREATER *CREATIVE* BENDIGO
IS DESIGNED TO

CONNECTING

TO COUNTRY AND CULTURE

INSPIRE

A CULTURE OF CREATIVITY

CREATE

MORE ACTIVATED SPACES

NURTURE

AND SUPPORT TALENT

CHAMPION

INCLUSION AND ACCESS

SHOW

THE WORLD



About

The **Greater CREATIVE Bendigo (GCB) Strategy** was endorsed by Greater Bendigo City Council in 2019. A bold and ambitious strategy that aimed to address the local creative ecosystem and allow for new ideas to emerge. The strategy has delivered meaningful outcomes, across 33 actions, between 2019 and 2023.

An updated *Creative Action Plan 2025 – 2029*, has been developed through consultation with external and internal stakeholders and will be undertaken by the City of Greater Bendigo over the next four years.

Consultation recommended a consolidated focus on First Nations cultural visibility by adding a new theme to the existing five strategic themes.

Actions included in the plan respond to the key strategic themes:

CONNECTING to Country and culture

We recognise and value the importance and cultural contributions of First Nations communities.

INSPIRE a culture of creativity

Through initiatives that connect, engage, innovate, experiment and surprise.

CREATE more activated spaces

Where creative innovation and cultural activity can thrive.

NUTURE and support talent

Ensuring education pathways and local opportunities for our diverse creative community.

CHAMPION inclusion and access

Across all abilities, ages, and cultural backgrounds.

SHOW the world

We recognise and have pride in our creative industries and cultural institutions.

**Note: all actions that require Council Budget will go through the Council budget cycle and will be subject to final decision by Council.*

Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Greater Bendigo is on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country. We acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples, the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples. We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual, and cultural costs of that sharing, and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.



CONNECTING

CONNECTING to Country and culture

We recognise and value the importance and cultural contributions of First Nations communities.

Description	Why	Lead	Who's involved	Term	Measures
CAP 1.1 Consult Traditional Owner groups on how to incorporate Country Plan goals and aspirations in City-led arts and creative industries programs.	To respond to Dja Dja Wurrung Country Plan <i>Dhelkunya Dja</i> and Taungurung Country Plan <i>Taungurung buk dadbagi</i> in program design and delivery.	Economic Development	Bendigo Venues & Events, Community Partnerships, Bendigo Art Gallery	1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional owner groups consulted Propose workshop to be delivered with Tourism and Major Events, and Arts and Culture teams
CAP 1.2 Facilitate opportunities for First Nations creatives to develop their practice and share their cultural heritage through Djaa Djuwima.	Djaa Djuwima as a hub supporting knowledge sharing for local First Nations communities.	Bendigo Venues & Events	First Nations community members	1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events Number of participants
CAP 1.3 Partner to support and promote Dumawul's arts, culture, and tourism offerings, e.g. cultural tours.	Valuing and leveraging First Nations cultural contributions.	Tourism and Major Events	DJAARA/ Dumawul	1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of campaigns and promotion opportunities
RP 8.2 Support and work with Traditional Owner Groups to deliver initiatives as part of the UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy program.	Embedding UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy initiatives in connection to Country.	Economic Development	Traditional Owner Groups	1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of initiatives delivered
RP 16.3 First Nations art, workshops and education programs into Bendigo Art Gallery's annual programming and provide support to First Nations art practitioners.	Centering First Nations arts and culture in Bendigo Art Gallery programming.	Bendigo Art Gallery	First Nations artists	1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of workshops delivered Number of First Nations artists engaged Number of participants
PARTP 1.4 Support the creation of a landmark First Nations artwork.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase visibility of First Nations culture Opportunity to celebrate local cultural heritage and connection to Country 	Bendigo Venues & Events	Tourism and Major Events, Bendigo Art Gallery, Parks and Open Space	1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artwork created

BGM Bendigo Botanic Gardens White Hills Masterplan – 2010 // CAP Creative Action Plan 2025 - 2029 // CP Council Plan Annual Actions 2024 - 2025
PARTP Public Art Plan 2023 - 2028 // RP Reconciliation Plan 2021 - 2025 // YAP Youth Action Plan 2023 – 2024



INSPIRE

INSPIRE a culture of creativity

Through initiatives that connect, engage, innovate, experiment and surprise.

Description	Why	Lead	Who's involved	Term	Measures
CAP 2.1 Create and implement a data capture model for units delivering arts-based initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with relevant project leads to create a template that offers consistent reporting across City led arts-based initiatives Demonstrating the City's support for arts and creative industries, and the impact of that support 	Economic Development	Bendigo Venues & Events, Tourism and Major Events, Community Partnerships, Bendigo Art Gallery	1 - 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Template created and implemented across relevant units Biannual survey delivered on Let's Talk Greater Bendigo, indicating arts participation by residents Number of surveys completed
CAP 2.2 Develop an audience engagement strategy to increase visitation to City owned and managed exhibition spaces e.g. Djaa Djuwima, Dudley House, Living Arts Space, Exhibit B.	To understand and respond to local audiences.	Bendigo Venues & Events	Communications, Tourism and Major Events	3 - 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy developed and implemented

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Description	Why	Lead	Who's involved	Term	Measures
CAP 2.3 Partner with local organisations to develop a winter gastronomy and arts event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To showcase local arts and creative industries, engage local audiences, consolidate diverse arts ecology Aligns with promotion of Bendigo as a cultural capital 	Tourism and Major Events	Economic Development	1 - 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A delivery plan for the event Funding secured and event delivered
CAP 2.4 Partner with local organisations to facilitate a cross sectorial approach to programming, events and networking opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create local professional development opportunities, and cross sectorial relationships To break down silos and encourage innovation, collaboration between creative industries, first nations communities, business and research 	Economic Development	Local education providers, industry leaders, business representatives	1 - 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biannual event delivered and evaluated
CAP 2.5 Facilitate opportunities for the engagement of creatives in City and State Strategies and Infrastructure Projects.	Apply creative innovation, design principles, placemaking and problem solving to City plans and policies.	Economic Development		1 - 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanisms for engagement facilitated and documented
CAP 2.6 Support and maintain City owned Public Art assets and new commissions e.g Pennyweight Walk Open Air Gallery, Chancery Lane, Djaara Lights.	Currently no maintenance allocations.	Bendigo Venues & Events	Economic Development	1 - 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costings established Budget Bid and allocations successful
PARTP 1.1 Consider the recruitment of a Public Art Officer.	To continue the creative placemaking legacy, momentum and opportunities generated through the new Public Art Policy and Plan.	Bendigo Venues & Events		3 - 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business case developed

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CREATE

CREATE more activated spaces

Where creative innovation and cultural activity can thrive.

Description	Why	Lead	Who's involved	Term	Measures
CAP 3.1 Advocate for the use of vacant commercial and private sector spaces for the use of micro business, community arts practice, galleries, wet spaces for artists.	To activate dormant spaces, enable small business development, support new community arts program development.	Economic Development	Strategic Planning	1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database of vacant spaces created Contact made with vendors Mapping need from community
CAP 3.2 Advocate for the ongoing sustainability of the Emporium Creative Hub.	Important part of the local economy, providing access to: cross industry collaboration, business development, networking, resources.	Economic Development		1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emporium Creative Hub in a secured position Number of businesses operating
CAP 3.3 Facilitate Cultural Precinct Facilities Improvement Plan.	To identify building improvements and immediate public realm improvements that can better facilitate movement, safety and experience in the View Street Cultural Precinct.	Bendigo Venues & Events	Strategic Planning, Property Services	3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan delivered
CAP 3.4 Reinstate subsidies for performing artists and small to medium not for profit organisations to access the Engine Room.	Support local performing artists and companies to access space in an equitable way.	Bendigo Venues & Events		1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in number of independent artists and small not for profits accessing Engine Room
PARTP 1.2 Consider public art walls and spaces for building infrastructure related capital works projects as part of graffiti reduction program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support creative community to access spaces Activate spaces for public safety Utilise walls for graffiti prevention 	Property Services	Economic Development	3– 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites identified
BGM 7 Construction of event space.	Increase number of fit for purpose outdoor venues for community use.	Parks and Open Space		3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work commenced at Bendigo Botanic Gardens site

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NUTURE

NUTURE and support talent

Ensuring education pathways and local opportunities for our diverse creative community.

Description	Why	Lead	Who's involved	Term	Measures
CAP 4.1 Create an online platform for showcasing success stories of our local cultural and creative industries.	For local audiences and those further afield to understand Bendigo's thriving and diverse arts and creative industries.	Economic Development	Bendigo Venues & Events	1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review digital strategy document Develop a digital/ social media plan to promote the local arts sector
CAP 4.2 Facilitate a bespoke mentoring project for young and emerging artists.	Create pre-professional pathways for young and emerging artists and support young people to see what career pathways are possible within the creative industries.	Economic Development	Community Partnerships	1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful delivery of a program
CAP 4.3 Encourage local creatives to register with Vendor Panel and engage with the tender process and City procurement systems.	Empower creatives to develop capacity to work with LGAs.	Economic Development	Bendigo Venues & Events, Procurement	1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in locally procured creatives Increase in number of local creatives on tender system
CAP 4.4 Bendigo Art Gallery to create professional development opportunities for local creatives.	Bendigo Art Gallery supports capacity building of local creatives.	Bendigo Art Gallery		1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual professional development opportunity provided
CAP 4.5 Map arts and creative industries education and employment pathways within Greater Bendigo.	To support local pathways for education and training in the creative industries.	Economic Development	Education providers	1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation created
YAP 20 Provide young artists and creatives with performance or exhibition opportunities across the municipality.	Create opportunities for emerging artists to build their professional profiles.	Community Partnerships		1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of opportunities created Number of artists participating
PARTP 1.9 Explore and identify partnership opportunities for skills and capacity development around public art creation.	Develop capacity of local artists to make work for the public realm.	Economic Development		1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of partnerships established



CHAMPION

CHAMPION inclusion and access

Across all abilities, ages, and cultural backgrounds.

Description	Why	Lead	Who's involved	Term	Measures
CAP 5.1 Meet with organisations annually to discuss diverse programming.	Celebrate diversity across Greater Bendigo.	Bendigo Venues & Events		1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual meeting documented Number of participating groups
CAP 5.2 Embed ways to increase accessibility at events including related resources for event promotion and delivery.	The City is a leader in inclusion and supports audiences of all abilities and needs.	Community Partnerships	Tourism and Major Events, Bendigo Venues & Events, Economic Development	3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility resource updated and referenced Checklist embedded in City resources Training sourced and recommendations made Bendigo Venues & Events recredited with Scope Communication Access Symbol Accreditation 2026
CAP 5.3 Apply an equity lens for approvals across public events and festivals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including all aspects of the process e.g. signage, application processes Including feedback and data collection 	Tourism and Major Events	Community Partnerships	3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of diversity, access and inclusion requirements for event applications and permits Feedback and data collection methods include diversity, access and inclusion lens
CAP 5.4 Encourage and Promote the health benefits of arts participation, e.g. <i>My Health Story</i> - Arts in Health.	City can have a role in advocating and supporting arts participation for health and wellbeing. Increase local participation.	Bendigo Venues & Events	Community Partnerships	3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events that promote arts for wellbeing Data that measure impact of programs on wellbeing
CAP 5.5 Updated programming policy to reflect the diversity of the Greater Bendigo community including First Nations arts, disability arts, youth arts, and culturally diverse arts.	City as a leader of diverse and inclusive events.	Bendigo Venues & Events		1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated programming policy
PARTP 1.5 Oversee permanent Plinth Activation Sites with opportunities for diverse and inclusive representation from the community.	Sites will form part of a future Public Art Trail with revolving artworks that celebrate the diversity of Greater Bendigo.	Parks and Open Space		3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites identified Business case developed



SHOW

SHOW the world

We recognise and have pride in our creative industries and cultural institutions.

Description	Why	Lead	Who's involved	Term	Measures
CAP 6.1 Create a new Bendigo brand story that celebrates the UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy designation, First Nations culture, and the local cultural and creative industries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand and utilise the UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy branding To celebrate Greater Bendigo's inclusive and diverse cultural and creative industries To represent a maturing and evolving local creative and cultural industry 	Tourism and Major Events	Bendigo Venues & Events, Bendigo Art Gallery, Community Partnerships, Communications, Economic Development, Climate Change and Environment	1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful campaign developed and delivered
CAP 6.2 Disseminate a local gig guide created by the local music industry.	Encourage local audiences and support financial sustainability of the local live music industry.	Bendigo Venues & Events	Economic Development	1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register created and promoted

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Description	Why	Lead	Who's involved	Term	Measures
CAP 6.3 Facilitate an annual program of gastronomy and arts-based projects and opportunities ensuring participation from diverse and emerging creatives.	Engage creatives in supporting the UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy brand and brand creating opportunities for cultural and creative industries.	Economic Development	Tourism and Major Events	1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events and diverse representation of local artists
CAP 6.4 Update signage to include creative spaces e.g. Exhibit B, Chancery Lane, Djaa Djuwima, Djaara Lights.	For local residents and visitors to access creative spaces.	Parks and Open Space	Bendigo Venues & Events	3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased wayfinding signage to cultural venues
CAP 6.5 Investigate subsidised Bendigo Tourism memberships for individuals and not for profit organisations.	Improve accessibility as Tourism membership is a key promotional tool the City offers.	Tourism and Major Events		3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of artists, and creative businesses as members
CAP 6.6 Advocate for investment in our cultural infrastructure to lift them to world class standards e.g. Bendigo Art Gallery, The Capital, Dudley House, The Great Stupa, The Golden Dragon Museum.	Recognising and preserving the cultural value of our local cultural icons and facilities.	Economic Development	Cultural partners	3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority upgrades identified and business case developed
CAP 6.7 Create opportunities for exchanges, residencies and collaboration through the UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy program.	Engage with other state, national and international Creative Cities.	Economic Development	Bendigo Venues & Events, Bendigo Art Gallery, Community Partnerships, Communications, Economic Development, Climate Change and Environment	1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of exchanges and residencies Evaluation of benefits on artists
CAP 6.8 Facilitate a plan for public art works that amplify a sense of arrival at Greater Bendigo as a cultural destination.	Amplify Creative City brand.	Tourism and Major Events		3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business plan ready
CAP 6.9 Continue to pursue World Heritage recognition for the Central Victorian Goldfields.	Recognise and celebrate Greater Bendigo's significant national and international heritage.	Tourism and Major Events		1 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Heritage Bid achieved
CP 3.5.1 Deliver a Bendigo Art Gallery International Exhibition program supported by multiyear funding for tourism marketing from Visit Victoria.	Build Bendigo Art Gallery's reputation as a leading cultural institution.	Bendigo Art Gallery	Tourism and Major Events	1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program finalised
CP 4.2.1 Engagement of Djandak and Traditional Owner designer for elements of the Bendigo Art Gallery building redevelopment, landscaping and architecture.	Celebrate First Nations design.	Bendigo Art Gallery		1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designer engaged



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