



Barkly  
Regional  
Arts

**2021-2024**

# **Strategic Plan**

**Edition II**



# Contents

Executive Summary	3
<b>1. About Barkly Regional Arts</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Model for Delivery</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Internal Situation</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Governance and Management	
3.2 Indigenous Employment	
3.3 Financial capacity	
3.4 Policies and business systems	
<b>4. External Situation</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1 Partnerships and Stakeholders	
4.2 Workforce Attraction and Retention	
<b>5. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Risks</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>6. Vision, Purpose, Values Goals</b>	<b>14</b>
6.1 Vision	
6.2 Purpose	
6.3 Values	
6.4 Goals	

## **Executive Summary**

Barkly Regional Arts (BRA) is pleased to present its 2021-2024 Strategic Plan (Revised).

The Strategic Plan (Revised) develops a clear vision and purpose for Barkly Regional Arts, providing an accessible and transparent framework for the organisation's programming.

The BRA strategic plan outlines how BRA will provide Barkly communities with access to the arts, and foster development and recognition for arts produced in the Barkly.

Barkly Regional Arts will do this while continuing to engage with the many challenges of delivering a dynamic and responsive programme in a very remote, geographically large, and culturally complex environment.

# 1. About Barkly Regional Arts

## The Barkly

The Barkly region spreads across a vast landscape of 320,000 sq. km consisting of Tennant Creek, eight remote communities and seventy family outstations. Home to sixteen Indigenous language groups, Traditional Ownership of this area includes the Alyawarr, Binbinya, Gurindji, Jingili, Kaytetye, Mudburra, Ngarnga, Wakaya, Wambaya, Warlmanpa and Warumungu peoples. Many people continue to reside on traditional lands and retain strong connections to Country and culture.

## Our role

BRA works in Tennant Creek and surrounding communities to deliver arts programmes to the Barkly's residents.

BRA provides Barkly residents with **access** to the arts through the delivery of sustained visual arts and music programmes in Tennant Creek and surrounding communities along with an annual programme of arts exhibitions, projects, and events.

The visual arts and music programmes are focused on supporting artists as they **develop** their creative practice and move toward artistic excellence.

Our programming of exhibitions and events gives our artists a platform to showcase their work within the Barkly and beyond, creating avenues for **recognition** of arts in the Barkly.



## 2. Model of delivery

The Visual Arts programme, Winanjikarri Music Centre, and Desert Harmony Festival, together with our annual programme of exhibitions, projects, and events allow us to offer year-round, sustained creative programmes which deliver on the objectives of access, development, and recognition (fig 1.).

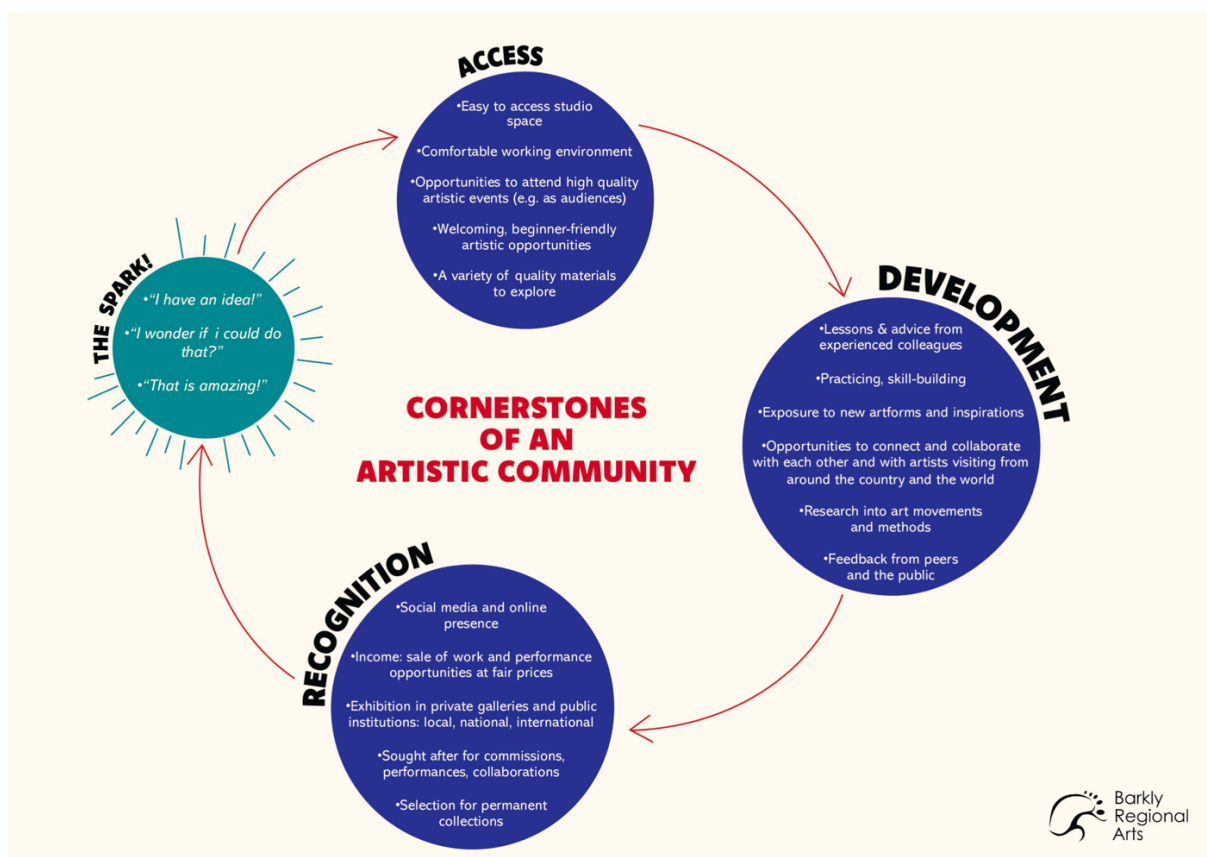


Figure 1. BRA Delivery Model

The **Visual Arts** programme operates on a hub-and-spoke model, where the hub is located at the BRA studio and gallery in Tennant Creek. From this hub, staff travel to four remote communities (Owairtilla/ Canteen Creek, Wutunugurra/Epenarra, Mungkarta and Elliott) to deliver the visual arts programme. The visual arts programme adheres to the principles of **access, development, and recognition**, by providing artists with access to studio space and materials, supporting the creative development of artists and building the profile of Barkly artists through the promotion and sale of work. For marketing purposes, the Visual Arts programme community outputs are promoted as 'Artists of the Barkly'.

The **Winanjikari Music Centre (WMC)** works to uphold the cornerstones of a musical community; learning, rehearsal, recording, and performance (fig. 2). The Centre operates an on-site music learning and rehearsal space, two on-site recording studios which have produced many albums by local musicians, maintains and operates a large volume of sound

and production gear for festivals and events, and provides full-service production management. The Centre accommodates both Winanjikari Music and Media Mob, enabling staff to work across both operations to enable increased skill development and full-service fee-for-service offerings to clients and the community.

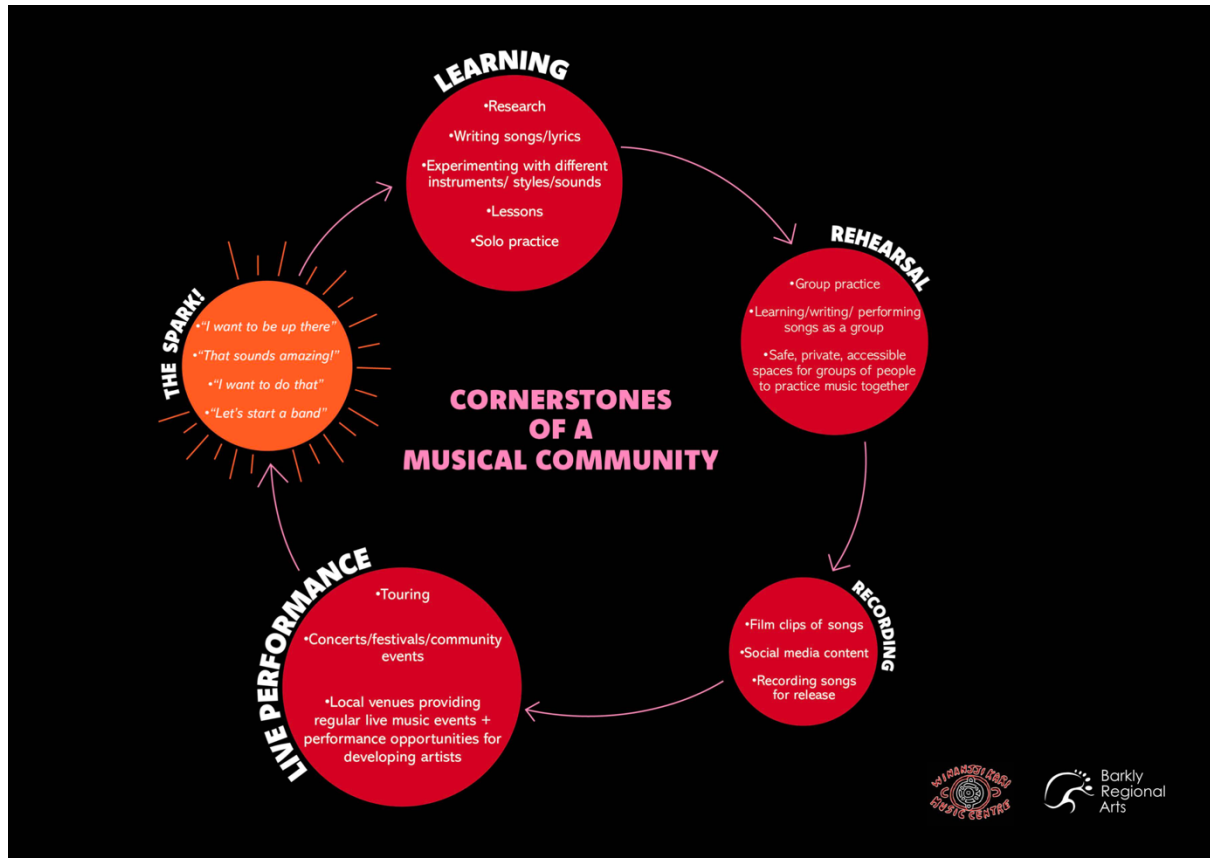


Figure 2. Cornerstones of a Musical Community

**Desert Harmony Festival** is a multi-day, multi-disciplinary arts event produced by BRA annually. It provides the Barkly community with **access** to a major arts event while supporting the **development** and **recognition** of local artists in providing a platform for performance and mentorship. Desert Harmony Festival attracts an average audiences of 2000 people each year, 90% of whom are local to the region.

### **3. Internal Situation**

Barkly Regional Arts is an enduring and effective regional arts organisation, able to achieve success through an internal structure and organisational culture which is purpose-built and adaptive. In 2022 the internal environment of BRA has the following key qualities:

#### **3.1 Governance and Management**

BRA is governed and managed by a dynamic team. Despite the frequent turnover of personnel typical of very remote workplaces, the Board and management team share a deep commitment to arts in the Barkly.

The Board of directors bring expertise in law, finance, and the arts with experience in regional development, research and evaluation, and local and Territory government relations. The board of directors also consists of members who are Traditional Owners and Indigenous Australians with local community knowledge. Equally, the management team brings a diverse set of skills in operational and artistic leadership.

Recruitment and retention of staff remains a key challenge for Barkly Regional Arts, (refer to section 3.2). To maintain a positive workplace culture in what is an at times challenging working environment, Barkly Regional Arts management have developed a set 'ingredients for good art and a successful centre' which establishes a set of eight pillars of a successful art centre and provides a guideline for standards of behaviour (fig 3).



## Ingredients for good art and a successful centre

- Warm relationships and care for artists,
- Joyful and peaceful environment to create,
- Stability, consistency, being there, developing trust,
- Motivation, productivity, goal setting, focus on priorities,
- Appropriate professional boundaries and strong support systems,
- Well defined strong processes, consistency and accountability,
- Professionalism, quality, precision, and excellence in artistic and operational practices,
- Happy staff: teamwork, positivity, clear roles, transparent communication, respect and kindness, encouragement, synergy, ethics, and stress management.

Figure 3. Ingredients for good art and a successful centre.

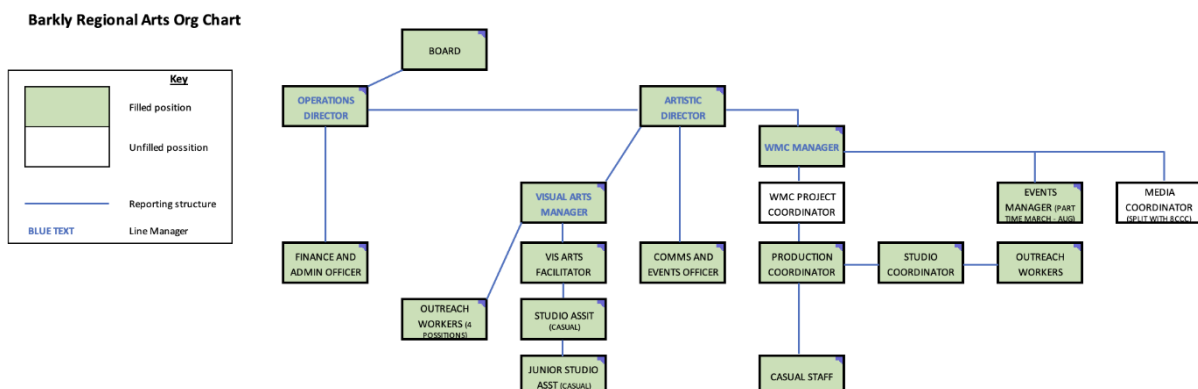


Figure 4. Barkly Regional Arts Organisational Chart, as of October 2022

Given the itinerant nature of much of Tennant Creek’s community and workforce, the BRA Board treats the organisational chart as adaptable and is committed to updating the chart to reflect the expertise and capacities of BRA staff (fig.4).

Position	Status	Role	Reports to
Operations Director	Full time	Management of BRA operations, including finance and administration. Contributes to the development of strategy, with board and AD.	BRA Board
Artistic Director	Full time	Management of BRA artistic programming and public relations. Contributes to the development of strategy, with board and OD.	BRA Board through Operations Director
External Accountants	Contract	Manages all financials with EO/OD including ATO, PayG, MYOB and advises EO.	Executive Officer/ Operations Director
Finance and Admin Officer	Full time	Supports administrative and in-house financial needs of the organisation.	Executive Officer/ Operations Director
Music Manager (WMC)	Full time	Management of Winanjikarri Music Centre projects, events, and operations.	Artistic Director
Festival Manager	F/T short term 6 -7 months	Management of Desert Harmony Festival planning, logistics and operations.	Artistic Director
Visual Arts Manager	Full time	Manages of Visual Arts programme studios, sales, projects, and operation.	Artistic Director

Figure 5. BRA Key positions, key positions are supported by a team of music, studio, and communications staff.

In addition to core personnel at BRA, the organisation employs the services of external accountants.

## 3.2 Indigenous Employment

Barkly Regional Arts is committed to Indigenous employment and to building a team that reflects the community in which it resides. An estimated 68% of the Barkly's residents are Indigenous. As of October 2022, 59% of the BRA team were Indigenous. This is three times the Northern Territory Government's global target of 16% and five times the actual level achieved by the Northern Territory Public Sector as of April 2019 of 10.5%.<sup>[4]</sup>

Through a long-term commitment to building relationships with Indigenous artists, audiences, and communities and listening to what people want, the BRA Indigenous workforce has slowly grown.

This achievement of Indigenous employment is supported through a Board with strong Indigenous representation and a team who are committed to ongoing, long-term relationship with communities.

## 3.3 Financial capacity

BRA has had consistently sound and professional financial management and meets a high standard of financial reporting and compliance to funders and regulatory bodies. Its financial story is strong, with total income in December 2021 of \$1,386,849 and total expenditure of \$1,568,949, leaving a loss of \$182,100, this loss was offset by carry forward grant funds. It has total Current Assets of \$697,858 and total Current Liabilities of \$536,362 with total Equity of \$622,688. BRA has a Working Capital ratio of 1.3.

The key financial risk at this time is a drop in government funding which will have an immediate impact on the number of staff who can be employed and overall capacity of BRA to meet the needs of a geographically large and culturally complex audience and participant base. Current reliance on grant funding emphasises the need to increase the organisation's financial independence, particularly given it is an income provider for 10 Indigenous arts workers and over 50 artists.

The BRA financial strategy has the following three goals:

1. Maintain Commonwealth and Northern Territory government funding at current levels and where possible increase salary components to attract and retain appropriately skilled senior leadership staff.
2. Grow self-generated income, especially fee-for-service income through the promotion of events and festival production services, full-service music and digital video recording and production and other Tennant Creek-based project management opportunities as they arise.



3. Continue to be careful with expenditure to ensure there is sufficient contingency to manage unplanned expenses which arise.

### **3.4 Policies and business systems**

BRA is a sophisticated organisation running from a hub in Tennant Creek whilst supporting a network of music, events, festivals, media, tours, and visual art outreach across the Barkly. Over the years it has developed a set of internal policies and procedures which support the annual delivery of the Desert Harmony Festival and the ongoing operation of the WMC, administration offices, and the Visual Arts programme. These policies are across governance, HR, event and programme delivery, finance, and risk management. As of 2022, a number of these policies and procedures are under review in efforts to ensure they are user-friendly, relevant, and reflect the current needs of the organisation.

## **4. External Situation**

### **4.1 Partnerships and Stakeholders**

Central to BRA's impact and sustainability since its formation has been its ability to work collaboratively with external stakeholders from Tennant Creek and beyond. BRA has an extensive number of partnerships formal and informal with arts organisations from across the Northern Territory and the Country. Selected partners are listed here:

- Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre
- Arlpwe Art and Culture Centre
- Barkly Regional Council (BRC)
- Music NT
- Desert
- Arts Law
- 8CCC Community Radio
- APRA
- Artback NT
- Opera Australia
- Tennant Creek Workcamp
- Literacy for Life
- Barkly schools

### **4.2 Workforce Attraction and Retention**

Attracting and retaining skilled and professional staff in Tennant Creek is an ongoing challenge shared across all sectors. While BRA has strong local employment figures, some of the roles require a skillset not available within the local workforce. Tennant Creek has limited

housing opportunities for staff new to town; and while BRA has a basic accommodation facility suitable for short term staff, long term or permanent staff would need to find a home from a very limited (sometimes non-existent) pool of available residential properties.

BRA therefore struggles to retain staff for the long term, however, shorter contracts and BRA's position as a unique and innovative arts organisation offers a key point of difference for arts professionals wanting to work in a dynamic multicultural setting. We have therefore been able to attract highly skilled and passionate professionals. Taking a flexible approach to organisational structure has allowed the Board to capitalise on the strengths of our current staff and build a workforce that can deliver the organisation's needs.

Promoting the benefits and opportunities of working at BRA and in the Northern Territory is ongoing commitment of the Board as well as being informed by the NT Population Strategy initiatives.

## 5. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

<p><b>STRENGTHS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective reach across the Barkly.</li> <li>• Passionate, capable workforce.</li> <li>• Indigenous workforce.</li> <li>• Capacity for independent income.</li> <li>• Creating and sustaining partnerships.</li> <li>• Diversity of programmes.</li> <li>• Remote engagement.</li> <li>• Operational excellence.</li> <li>• Strong reporting practices.</li> <li>• Organising and producing.</li> <li>• Innovation with remote delivery.</li> </ul>	<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased online reach.</li> <li>• Strengthened and increased gallery partnerships.</li> <li>• Strengthened of creative output in visual arts and music.</li> <li>• Strengthened relationships with network of art centres in the Barkly.</li> <li>• Relationships with philanthropic and corporate sponsors.</li> <li>• Growth in recognition and of the Artists of the Barkly and WMC.</li> <li>• Improved internal operational practices.</li> <li>• Gallery space, digital gallery spaces and partner gallery spaces.</li> <li>• Fee for service capabilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>WEAKNESSES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for stronger Indigenous representation on Board.</li> <li>• Limited succession planning at Board and senior staff level</li> <li>• Capacity limits on staff, particularly during the busy months of June – September.</li> <li>• Studio Gallery’s difficult to find location.</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High rates of staff turnover.</li> <li>• Reliance on Barkly Regional Council for the use of remote community studio spaces.</li> <li>• NIAA Policy prioritising Indigenous Corporations over non-Indigenous corporations.</li> <li>• Economic insecurity and inflation (as of October 2022).</li> <li>• Lack of appropriate housing for staff in Tennant Creek.</li> <li>• Reliance on Department of Education for Karguru Centre headquarters.</li> <li>• Possible withdrawal of government funding.</li> </ul>



## 6. Vision, Purpose, Values and Goals

The high-level strategic directives which define BRA over the period of 2021-2024 are:

### 6.1 Vision

The Barkly is a vibrant, thriving, and creative community. Arts programmes positively transform lives.

### 6.2 Purpose

To foster access, development, and recognition of the arts in the Barkly.

### 6.3 Values

- Excellence
- Integrity
- Inclusion

### 6.4 Goals

To achieve this Vision and Purpose the Board have set out six goals which respond to our organisational purpose for BRA over 2021-2024:

Purpose	Goals	Key Results Areas	Actions
Access	Continue to grow and advocate for Indigenous arts workforce, artists and audiences and contribute to the national conversation.	Strong local Indigenous representation among board and staff members. Mutually beneficial collaborative relationships with partner organisations and peak industry bodies. Data-driven advocacy. Strong long-term relationships with artists and audiences.	Promote the successes of local artists in collaboration with partner organisations. Participate in major Northern Territory Arts events. Measure and evaluate the impact of Barkly Regional Arts. Maintain membership with peak industry bodies. Work actively with the community to increase engagement in the arts. Offer traineeship opportunities for future arts workforce.

	Facilitate spaces which offer ongoing opportunities for community members to participate in the arts.	<p>Art studios are open and actively used in Tennant Creek and remote communities.</p> <p>Artists have consistent access to music studios and recording opportunities.</p> <p>Art and Music studio activities meet industry standards.</p> <p>Spaces meet the demand for engagement in the arts.</p>	<p>Employ remote arts workers to operate remote studios.</p> <p>Ensure art and music studios are adequately staffed.</p> <p>Maintain music learning space.</p> <p>Find and establish suitable music rehearsal space.</p>
	Facilitate events which offer opportunities for community members to engage with the arts.	<p>Desert Harmony Festival is produced to a high standard and maintains a focus on local artists and audiences.</p> <p>Barkly Regional Arts takes up opportunities to facilitate touring performances.</p> <p>Winanjikarri Music Centre collaborates with partner organisations to support production needs of events in the Northern Territory and beyond.</p> <p>The Artists of the Barkly have regular local exhibitions.</p>	<p>Maintain strong relationships with local event partners and sponsors.</p> <p>Maintain relationships with production partners and personnel outside of Tennant Creek.</p> <p>Maintain regular training sessions to ensure workforce are trained in event production.</p>
Development	Facilitate ongoing professional development opportunities in the arts.	<p>Barkly Artists Camp is produced with Desert to a high standard and strengthens relationships with other regional art centres.</p> <p>Creative development workshops are a mainstay of the annual artistic plan.</p> <p>Workforce skill levels are at industry standards</p>	<p>Maintain strong relationships with regional workshop facilitators.</p> <p>Collaborate with partner organisations to secure professional development opportunities for staff and artists.</p>

	Maintain the operational strength of the organisation	<p>All working documents are saved to the Barkly Regional Arts server.</p> <p>Best practice archival systems are followed in the management of all working documents.</p> <p>Financial systems are transparent and well documented.</p> <p>Finances are transparent and up to date.</p> <p>Reporting systems are transparent and well documented.</p> <p>Reporting is transparent and up to date.</p> <p>Policies and procedures are transparent and up to date.</p> <p>Handovers to new staff are detailed and transparent.</p>	<p>Maintain an up-to-date list of key contacts.</p> <p>Maintain transparent and consistent communication with funding bodies.</p> <p>Develop a handover policy which lays out processes for handover.</p> <p>Develop MoUs with partner organisations.</p>
	Establish relevant and achievable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) annually and maintain systems for review.	<p>Measurable and relevant KPIs are established by the Artistic Plan each year.</p> <p>KPIs are measured in Board meeting reports.</p> <p>Staff understand and work to meet KPIs.</p>	<p>Establish measurable and relevant KPIs each year.</p> <p>Provide Artistic and Operational board reports which address KPIs.</p> <p>Communicate KPIs clearly with staff.</p>
Recognition	Create opportunities to present work of artistic merit which builds recognition for artists and contributes to a positive profile of the Barkly region.	<p>The Barkly is known for its creative output.</p> <p>Artists are regularly exhibited across Australia and beyond.</p> <p>Barkly Regional Arts collaborates with other organisations to increase the profile of artists.</p> <p>Barkly Regional Arts uses multimedia platforms to increase the profile of artists.</p> <p>Artists benefit financially and socially</p>	<p>Maintain and foster relationships with partner galleries.</p> <p>Maintain and foster relationships with music promoters and festival organisers.</p> <p>Seek exhibition and performance opportunities outside of the Barkly.</p> <p>Utilise a broad range of digital platforms to promote artists' work.</p>

		<p>from promotional initiatives.</p> <p>Barkly Regional Arts presents high quality touring arts experiences for audiences in the Barkly.</p>	
--	--	--	--

## Contact

Kate Riethmuller  
Barkly Regional Arts  
65 Staunton Street, Tennant Creek  
Northern Territory, 0860  
08 8962 2799

## References

---

- [1] Bartleet, B. L., Sunderland, N., O'Sullivan, S., & Woodland, S. (2019). Creative Barkly: Sustaining the Arts and Creative Sector in Remote Australia. Australia Research Council Linkage Report. Brisbane: Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, Griffith University, pg 113.
- [2] Bartleet, B. L., Sunderland, N., O'Sullivan, S., & Woodland, S. (2019). Creative Barkly: Sustaining the Arts and Creative Sector in Remote Australia. Australia Research Council Linkage Report. Brisbane: Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, Griffith University, pg 113.
- [3] Bartleet, B. L., Sunderland, N., O'Sullivan, S., & Woodland, S. (2019). Creative Barkly: Sustaining the Arts and Creative Sector in Remote Australia. Australia Research Council Linkage Report. Brisbane: Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, Griffith University, pg 185.
- [4] [https://ocpe.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/711260/AECDS-Annual-Progress-Report-May-2019-with-Signature.pdf](https://ocpe.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/711260/AECDS-Annual-Progress-Report-May-2019-with-Signature.pdf)
- [5] <https://turbochargingtourism.nt.gov.au/home?>
- [6] <https://www.regional.gov.au/regional/deals/Barkly.aspx>
- [7] Bartleet, B.L., Sunderland, N., O'Sullivan, S., & Woodland, S. (2019). Creative Barkly: Sustaining the Arts and Creative Sector in Remote Australia. Australia Research Council Linkage Report. Brisbane: Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, Griffith University.
-