



DIVERSITY ARTS AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

EMPOWERING CREATIVE COMMUNITIES



DiversityArts
Australia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Diversity Arts Australia acknowledges the First Peoples of these lands, pays respects to Elders past and present, and recognises that sovereignty has never been ceded. We cannot address migration and race in Australia without contextualising it within the colonisation and dispossession of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We seek to be guided in all our work by First Peoples' leadership, recognising the immense value that First Nations artists and cultural workers create within the arts and cultural landscape.

**Always was, always will be,
Aboriginal land.**

About Diversity Arts Australia

Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) is the national voice for ethnocultural and migrant racial equity in the creative sector. Our work is underpinned by a human-rights ethic, social justice principles, and the belief that a diverse spectrum of creative expression and participation is fundamental to a democratic, inclusive and sustainable creative sector and society. We conduct research, share information and knowledge, produce events, provide training, consultancy and mentorships and commission new works to tell empowering and provoking stories.

DARTS began life in 2001 as Kultour, an initiative established through the Australia Council for the Arts (aka Creative Australia) to increase the profile of culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) artists by touring them nationally. Kultour began to shift and sharpen its focus to higher-level strategic support and advocacy. By 2016, Kultour moved from Melbourne to Western Sydney and shortly afterwards became Diversity Arts Australia. Between 2016-2019, DARTS adopted a new strategic approach to building relationships, partnerships and alliances with the cultural sectors to work towards greater racial equity within the sector. In 2016, we focused on Reinvigorating Our Vision. In 2017, we worked on Listening to the Sector. In 2018, it was Collaborative Connections, in 2019, Leadership and Support, in 2020, Equity in Action, in 2021 Sustainable Systems Change, in 2022 it was Reimagining Resilient Futures: Beyond Covid and in 2023 our focus was on Empowering Creative Communities.

Our Vision

A creative sector empowered by Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity.

Our Purpose

Diversity Arts is here to transform our creative sectors by foregrounding culturally and linguistically diverse arts and cultural work, championing leadership that better reflects our communities, and changing the way institutions engage with diversity.

© Diversity Arts Australia

Diversity Arts Australia
8 Victoria Road, Parramatta NSW 2150
Diversityarts.org.au
CreativeEquityToolkit.org

IN 2023, WE DELIVERED:

A review in numbers

46,590



**DIRECT
AUDIENCES**

102



**CREATIVE
WORKS
COMMISSIONED**

156



**CREATIVES
COMMISSIONED
AND EMPLOYED**

200+



**ORGANISATIONS
PARTICIPATED
IN OUR TALKS
AND EVENTS**

102



**REVIEWS,
ARTICLES AND
INTERVIEWS
PUBLISHED**

2



**EXHIBITIONS
HELD**

170



**SEMINARS,
TRAINING
SESSIONS AND
MASTERCLASSES
PRESENTED**

5



**REPORTS,
BOOKS AND
PUBLICATIONS
LAUNCHED**

65+



**ORGANISATIONS
& BUSINESSES
PARTICIPATED
IN OUR
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMS**

2



**SURVEYS
MEASURING
LOST WORK
DURING COVID**

SOCIAL MEDIA OVERVIEW

FOLLOWERS/SUBSCRIBERS

16,685

**Combined
followers/subscribers**
across all social media
platforms

5543

Facebook followers
(from 4,500 in 2020)

3653

Twitter followers
(from 3,300 in 2020)

4,292

Instagram followers
(from 3000 in 2019)

2901

LinkedIn followers
(from 700 in 2020)

308

Youtube followers
(from 64 in 2020)

1,932

**DARTS Newsletter
Subscribers**
(from 2,183 in 2020)

2,003

Creative Equity Toolkit
newsletter subscribers
(from 0 in 2020)

124,027

Combined Website Visits
87,740 (CET) +
36,287 (DARTS)

REACH/IMPRESSIONS

136,879

combined reach across
social media platforms
(1,802,093 from 2020)

50,028

Twitter impressions
(from 839,589 in 2020)

23,125

Facebook reach
(from 564,491 in 2020)

19,787

Instagram impressions
(from 255,000 in 2020)

43,939

LinkedIn impressions
(from 10,713 in 2020)

VIEWS

119,069

YouTube views
(from 13,300 in 2020)



STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO

2023 was a year when our work turned more intentionally toward strengthening relationships, supporting artists, and creating with care. While our national reach continued to grow, we remained grounded in connection, trust, and long-term collaboration.

Our theme, Empowering Creative Communities, shaped partnerships across the country — from regional centres to urban hubs — to co-create opportunities for learning, cultural leadership, and systemic change. The Fair Play Regional Victoria program culminated in a vibrant symposium in Bendigo. Our collaboration with Accessible Arts NSW delivered the Ripple Internship Program, opening paid pathways for creatives who have lived experience of Disability and cultural diversity.

With the launch of StoryCasters 2.0, we continued to support young content producers and journalists, while Season 6 of The Colour Cycle Podcast amplified intergenerational stories and was recognised as a finalist in the Australian Podcast Awards. Our Governance Conversations with Creative Australia drew over 1,300 participants and helped reimagine what inclusive leadership could look like. The Creative Equity Toolkit continued to grow, adding new case studies

and resources that are already shaping practice across the sector.

Like many in the sector, we navigated uncertainty. While we secured two major grants and increased our training and consultancy income, philanthropic and private sector support proved more challenging to secure in 2023. This made it clear that building sustainable, self-generated revenue streams needs to remain a central focus in our future planning.

Throughout it all, we stayed focused on working in genuine partnership with the communities we serve. This work is not ours alone — it's made possible by the relationships we've built with artists, communities, and collaborators who we walk alongside. We're deeply thankful to our artists, partners, funders, staff, and Board, whose ongoing support is what keeps this work going.

In 2024, under the theme "In Community", we're focusing on depth over breadth — investing in long-term relationships, listening deeply, and creating from a place of care, integrity, and cultural strength.

Cecilia Anthony
Chairperson

Lena Nahlous
CEO & Executive Producer

REIMAGINING RESILIENT FUTURES YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023, Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) delivered a diverse annual program, including internships, workshops, seminars, research, advocacy, commissioning new work, and professional development and capacity-building programs. These initiatives aimed to increase public recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity in the arts and create sustainable pathways for underrepresented groups, particularly culturally and racially marginalised communities.

The following are some highlights:

Rituals of Resistance exhibition (with Inner West Council and Refugee Art Project), part of the I Am Not a Virus Australia project.

The **Traditions & Transformations** exhibition at the **Institute for Australian and Chinese Arts and Culture, Western Sydney University**, featured works from I Am Not a Virus artists, **Susan Chen** and **Dongwang Fan**.

The **Bendigo Fair Play Symposium** hosted **130 participants**, fostering discussions on equity and inclusion.

The **Colour Cycle Podcast: Pacesetters Conversations** featured pioneering artists **Kamahl, MC Trey, Khaled Sabsabi, Tony Ayres**, and **Mayu Kanamori**, was a **finalist in the Australian Podcast Awards**, and reached **new audiences**, sparking **intergenerational conversations**.

Ripple: Disability and Cultural Diversity Internship, led by **Accessible Arts NSW**, placed **nine paid interns** at organisations including the **Art Gallery of NSW, Urban Theatre Projects**, and the **Portrait Gallery**. **Launched StoryCasters 2.0**, supporting **culturally diverse, young, and emerging content producers and journalists**.

Began development of an online equity and inclusion training initiative supported by **the City of Sydney**.

Delivered **three major Fair Play programs**, engaging **19 organisations**, including **Fair Play Regional Victoria** (in partnership with Creative Victoria), supporting **11 council-run regional arts venues**.

Hosted **four Governance Conversations with Creative Australia**, engaging **1,300+ participants** on **board diversity, cultural safety, and First Nations-led governance**, featuring experts **Hilary Carty (UK), Tasneem Chopra OAM**, and others, with webinars available on **Creative Australia's Governance Hub**.

The **Creative Equity Toolkit (CET)** remained a vital resource, with **regular updates and monthly newsletters engaging thousands**. The **Imagine Project** gathered new **First Nations and UK case studies** to share leading practices.

Hosted the **Multicultural Framework Review Roundtable** with **Creative Australia**.

Submitted a range of **policy submissions** and delivered **presentations and talks**, including being invited to speak at the **Screen Forever conference**.

Facilitated the **Creative Cultural Diversity Network**, bringing together creative workers nationally to **strategise and plan advocacy campaigns**.

CREATING CONTENT + PLATFORMS

Championing and amplifying the exceptional talent of diverse creatives, DARTS commissions new content tethered to our producing platforms to influence and direct its distribution and broaden potential audiences. We source and commission content through our programs, providing opportunities for creative development, collaboration, skills development, and mentoring.

CREATIVE EQUITY TOOLKIT

The Creative Equity Toolkit (CET) remains a cornerstone of our work, providing practical resources for embedding racial equity in creative practices. In 2023, we commissioned over 20 new Imagine case studies, including local First Nations-led and international case studies. CET user engagement was up by 15%, reflecting its growing relevance and impact.

The Creative Equity Toolkit provides an action-oriented approach to increasing cultural and racial equity and diversity in the arts and creative sectors. It features dozens of implementable actions, from simple to complex, along with hundreds of links to tools and resources developed around the world to help put these actions into practice. The

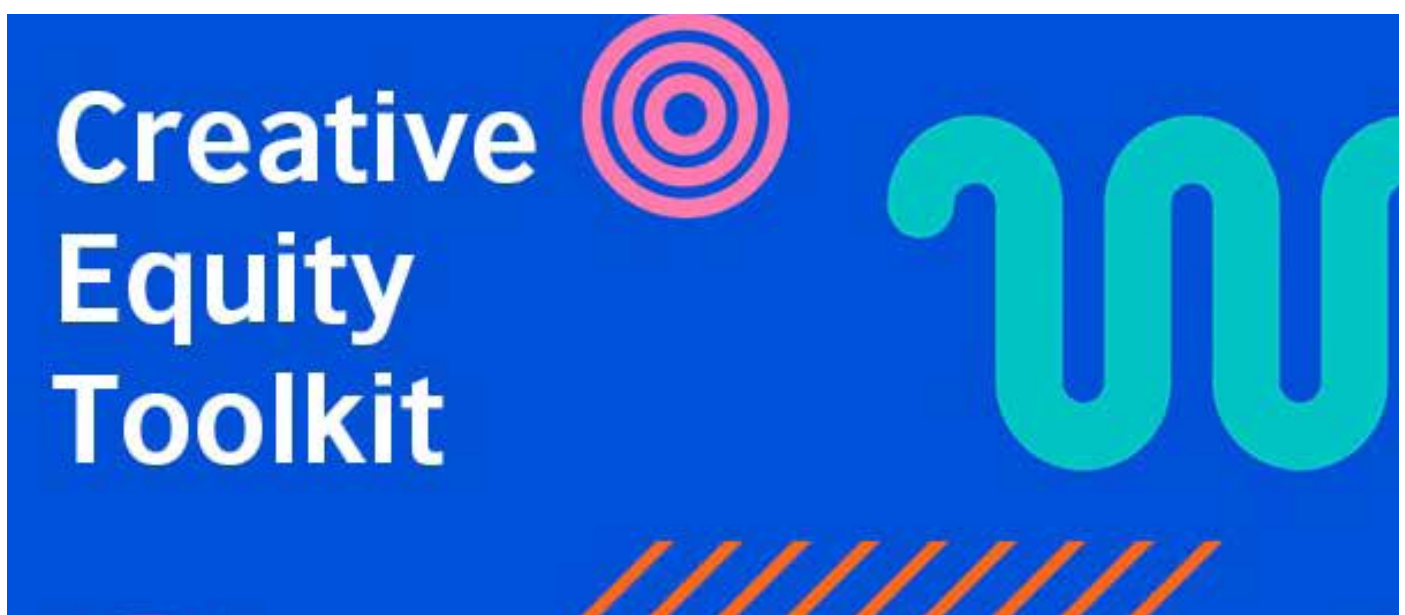
CET brings together ideas, research and best practice from Australia and around the world into one place.

The CET also aligns with **Capacity Building + Professional Development**

FIND OUT MORE:

creativeequitytoolkit.org

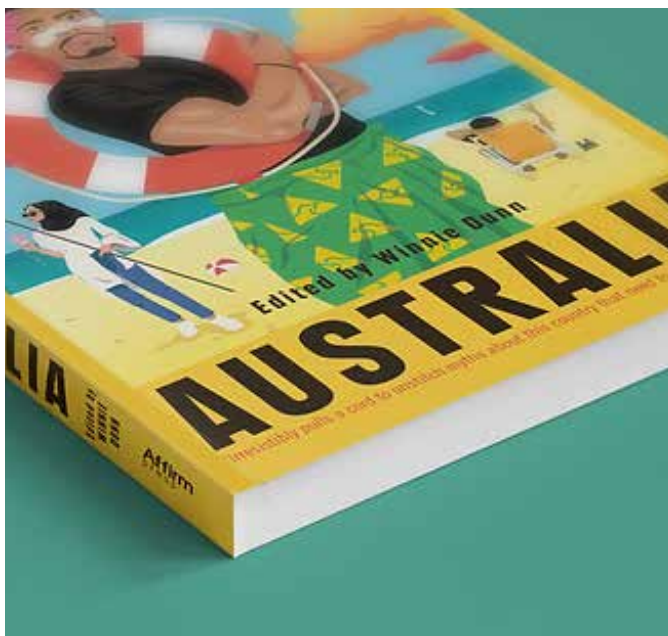
“I just wanted to let you and the staff know how great I think this (the CET) e-news is. It is visually beautiful and provides just the right amount of information to get through quickly on a busy day!”



CREATING CONTENT + PLATFORMS

STORIES FROM THE FUTURE

This project imagines a radically equitable arts sector through workshops, short films, podcasts, events, and a report featuring a timeline to 2050 and citizen journalist pieces. Developed with the University of Sydney's Dr Remy Low, workshops were held in every State and Territory. In 2023, we began collating findings into a 'timeline to the future,' with work continuing into 2024.



The project launched the speculative fiction anthology *After Australia* in 2020, followed by *Another Australia* in 2022, edited by Winnie Dunn. In 2023, Another Australia writers' talks were held at Perth Festival, Brisbane Writers' Festival, and Sydney Writers' Festival, and more.

Stories from the Future and the After Australia also aligns with **Advocacy + Influence**

FIND OUT MORE:

diversityarts.org.au/project/stories-from-the-future/
diversityarts.org.au/another-australia

THE COLOUR CYCLE SEASON 6: PACESETTERS CONVERSATIONS

"This is my new favourite podcast. The Colour Cycle podcast shares knowledge, experience and insight from artists and creative workers from across Australia and around the world. The podcast shares critical conversations about racial equity in the arts and screen sectors. They're also sharing leading practices, and spotlighting great work and creators. Well done Diversity Arts Australia, you're amazing."

The Colour Cycle podcast shares knowledge, experience and insight from artists and creative workers from across Australia and around the world. The podcast shares critical conversations about racial equity in the arts and screen sectors. We're also sharing leading practices, and spotlighting great work and creators.

In Season 6 we share intergenerational dialogues with trailblazing artists from culturally and racially marginalised backgrounds. Season 6 features Kamahl (in conversation with Sunil Badami), MC Trey (interviewed by Simone Amelia Jordan), Khaled Sabsabi (in conversation with Abdul Abdullah), Tony Ayres (with Patrick Abboud), and Mayu Kanamori (with Yuki Kawakami), exploring their creative journeys, challenges, and contributions to Australia's arts and creative industries. The series delves into themes of racial equity, cultural identity, and systemic barriers, and explores the impacts of their work. The podcast is available on major platforms, continuing DARTS' mission to amplify diverse voices and drive systemic change.

FIND OUT MORE:

diversityarts.org.au/the-colour-cycle-podcast-archive/the-colour-cycle-podcast-season-6-pacesetters-conversations/

CREATING CONTENT + PLATFORMS

RITUALS OF RESISTANCE: INNER WEST ARTISTS RESPOND TO I AM NOT A VIRUS

Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) proudly produced Rituals of Resistance: Inner West Artists Respond to I Am Not A Virus, an artist-led exhibition held from 9–25 March 2023 at Thirning Villa, Ashfield. Developed in partnership with Refugee Art Project, the exhibition challenged xenophobia and racism heightened by COVID-19 through powerful counter-narratives expressed via visual art, music, performance, literature, spoken word, and dance.

The project emerged in response to the rise in anti-Asian racism during the pandemic, including verbal and physical attacks, workplace discrimination, and racial scapegoating. Featuring artists from diverse backgrounds, Rituals of Resistance provided a platform to amplify lived experiences and creative resistance. Inner West ceramic artist Susan Chen, for example, used humour in her work *I'm Not Racist, But...* (Australian Mahjong) to spark critical conversations on casual racism in Australia.

Two public events accompanied the exhibition:

Opening Launch (9 March) – Featuring key speakers from Diversity Arts Australia, Inner West Council, and the Asian Australian Alliance.

Artist Talk (21 March) – Facilitated by Carielyn Tunion (Diversity Arts Australia), this event featured exhibiting artists Susan Chen, Fan Dongwang, and Wendy Qi Zhang, who shared their artistic responses to anti-Asian racism. The event included a performance by Jasper Lee-Lindsay.

FIND OUT MORE:
diversityarts.org.au/event/launch-rituals-of-resistance-i-am-not-a-virus-inner-west-artists/



Artist Talk - Rituals of Resistance (Photo: Anna Hay)

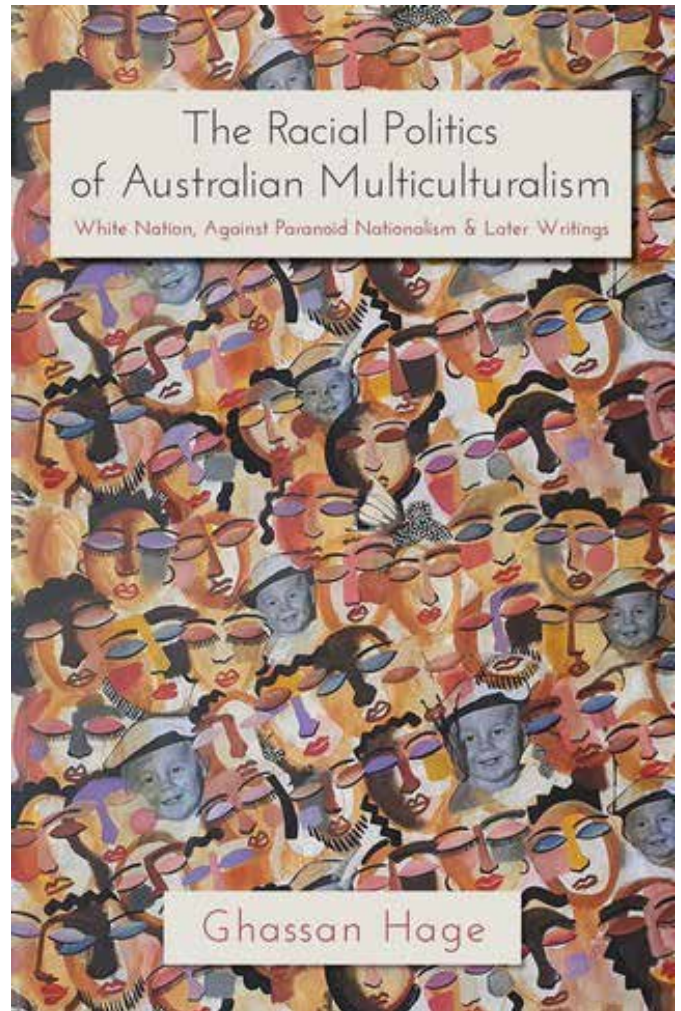
CREATING CONTENT + PLATFORMS

THE RACIAL POLITICS OF AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURALISM

The Racial Politics of Australian Multiculturalism is a landmark publication that brings together the seminal works of renowned anthropologist and cultural critic, Professor Ghassan Hage. Published by Sweatshop Literacy Movement with support from Diversity Arts Australia, this collection includes the 25th anniversary edition of *White Nation* and the 20th anniversary edition of *Against Paranoid Nationalism*, alongside Hage's later writings. The book offers critical insights into race politics in a settler colonial society and remains an essential resource for understanding contemporary discussions on racism, nationalism, and multiculturalism. It was launched during Sydney Writers' Festival and included several special events to mark its release. As part of this initiative, Ghassan Hage has donated his fee to establish a fellowship for emerging First Nations writers, providing mentorship and resources to develop debut non-fiction manuscripts. Diversity Arts Australia is proud to support this significant publication and the Fellowship initiative.

FIND OUT MORE:

diversityarts.org.au/sweatshop-racial-politics





Rituals of Resistance launch, 2023.

ADVOCACY + INFLUENCE

Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) continued its policy engagement, sector collaboration, and public advocacy throughout 2023, contributing to key submissions, government inquiries, and sector-wide initiatives to advance racial and cultural equity in the arts.

KEY POLICY SUBMISSIONS AND INQUIRIES

Multicultural Framework Review Submission (19 October 2023) – Coordinated a joint sector submission and an individual submission, advocating for systemic change.

Read the submission here:
diversityarts.org.au/diversity-arts-multicultural-framework-submission-2023

2023 Pre-Budget Submission (15 February 2023) – Called for equitable funding distribution across the arts and creative industries to enhance inclusivity and representation.

National Cultural Policy Senate Inquiry Submission (27 March 2023) – Provided insights and recommendations to shape a more diverse and equitable National Cultural Policy.

NSW Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy Submission (6 September 2023) – Offered feedback to strengthen inclusivity and equity in New South Wales' cultural sector.

Modern Awards Review Submission (8 December 2023) – Addressed employment challenges for culturally and linguistically diverse arts workers, advocating for fairer conditions.



[ImmiAccount](#)

[Visa Entitlement Verification Online \(VEVO\)](#)



[Home](#) [About us](#) [Reports and publications](#) [Research and statistics](#) [Corporate information](#) [Help and support](#) [More](#)

[Home](#) [About us](#) [Our functions](#)

Multicultural Framework Review

ADVOCACY AND INFLUENCE: SEMINARS + EVENTS

THE FAIR PLAY REGIONAL VICTORIA SYMPOSIUM

The Fair Play Regional Victoria Symposium at The Capital in Bendigo was a full-day event bringing together program participants, regional arts workers, artists, and industry leaders to celebrate achievements and share insights. The symposium featured a diverse lineup of speakers and performers, including Rodney Carter (Djaara Traditional Owner and CEO of DJAARA), Emma King (Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation), and Dominic Golding (National Ethnic Disability Alliance). Panel discussions included representatives from Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services, Arena Theatre, and Bendigo Art Gallery, focusing on inclusive leadership, governance, and systemic change within the arts sector.

The program included a keynote by Rodney Carter, followed by addresses from Deputy Mayor Cllr. Matthew Evans and DARTS CEO Lena Nahlous. Interactive sessions encouraged active engagement, such as a networking activity exploring visions for equitable arts and Arena Theatre's Three-Headed Monster creative activity. Participants also engaged in panel discussions on working with refugee and migrant communities, inclusive practices for Deaf and Disabled communities, and systemic change in arts leadership. The Creative Equity Toolkit session provided practical tools for fostering diversity and inclusion, and the day concluded with optional tours of the Golden Dragon Museum and Djaa Djuwima Gallery. The symposium was a culminating event for Fair Play Regional Victoria, offering a platform for reflection, knowledge-sharing, and future action in embedding equity in regional arts.

FIND OUT MORE

diversityarts.org.au/event/fairplay-regional-victoria-symposium

“Grateful to have visited Dja Dja Wurrung country in the area known as Bendigo, and observe local intersections of First Nations truth-telling and diasporic Chinese culture and heritage, amidst colonial settler infrastructures. Also great to learn from the brilliant Dominic Golding and Margaret Mayhew edu-comedy show; the team at Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services; and other speakers.”

“A day spent well on Thursday we got to attend Diversity Arts Australia's FAIR PLAY Regional Victoria Symposium. Part of the COPACC Team was privileged enough to take part in this wonderful program earlier this year and this was a wonderful wrap up with some incredible speakers, meaningful connections and fun activities including a 3D print of what equitable arts would look like. An added bonus was the amazing performance “Of the Land on which we meet” by the wonderful Na Djinang Circus the night before. An incredible performance.”

“This was an absolute delight to participate in. Fantastic to see the innovative work in genuine inclusion in Regional Victorian arts organisations. Congratulations to Diversity Arts Australia for making this possible.”

ADVOCACY AND INFLUENCE: SEMINARS + EVENTS

CREATIVE CULTURAL DIVERSITY NETWORK (CCDN)

The CCDN, facilitated by DARTS, is a national collective of arts workers and organisations dedicated to promoting racial and cultural equity in Australia's arts, screen and creative sectors. In 2023, the CCDN:

Strengthened sector-wide collaboration through networking and advocacy.

Convened regular roundtables, including CaLD Roundtables (for culturally and linguistically diverse individuals) and All-in Roundtables (for the broader network), fostering connectivity and collective action on systemic cultural inequities.

Played a pivotal role in **shaping DARTS' advocacy work** and contributed to multiple policy submissions.

"The Creative Cultural Diversity Network is such a valuable space to share lived and learned experience and real-life examples that need to be shared with the wider world to drive change."

Sherryl Reddy, Equity & Inclusion Advisor



CAPACITY BUILDING + PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DARTS builds the leadership and capacity of our sector by working with creative practitioners and organisations to provide skills development, networking and mentoring. We produce resources and infrastructure to support institutions increasing diversity within their organisations. Our programs address barriers to participation for underrepresented creatives and provide practical tools and training to support greater equity

RIPPLE: DISABILITY + CULTURALLY DIVERSE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Led by Accessible Arts in partnership with Diversity Arts Australia, Ripple is an internship program designed to support emerging arts professionals in NSW and the ACT who identify as both d/Deaf and/or disabled and culturally diverse.

Eight successful applicants were selected for paid internships, gaining industry experience at leading arts and cultural organisations. The 2023 interns were: M. Sunflower, Thuy Diem Mây Tr n, Faye Chamberlain, Cass Li, Monique Moate, Marianthe Loucataris, Fi Peel, and Phoebe Lupton.

Internships took place at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, UTP, Brand X, Lismore Regional Gallery, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, APRA AMCOS, and the National Portrait Gallery.

The goal of Ripple is to provide essential industry skills, foster connections, and increase representation in the arts sector. In addition to work placements, interns received specialised industry training and tailored support matched to their individual access requirements.

“This is an exciting opportunity to gain valuable insights into the kinds of organisations and work available in the arts and cultural sector, whilst forming connections as emerging creative sector workers.”

Liz Martin, Interim CEO of Accessible Arts

This program is supported by the Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Create NSW, and the Commonwealth Government Department of Social Services.

PARTNER: Accessible Arts
& Diversity Arts Australia

FIND OUT MORE

diversityarts.org.au/project/disability-and-culturally-diverse-internship-program

CAPACITY BUILDING + PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STORYCASTERS 2.0

In 2023, StoryCasters 2.0 launched with the support of a new partnership with Multicultural NSW, alongside new collaborator Media Diversity Australia. The program recruited a new cohort of young, culturally diverse emerging content creators and journalists, offering mentorship, hands-on training, and industry connections across podcasting, writing, filmmaking, and digital storytelling. Designed to amplify underrepresented voices in Australia's arts, creative, and media sectors, StoryCasters 2.0 placed a strong emphasis on long-term career pathways, empowering participants to create and share arts content through training and hands-on experience. The program will continue into 2024.

FAIR PLAY: EQUITY, INCLUSION AND THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

In 2023, Fair Play continued to drive equity, inclusion, and diversity in the creative industries through workshops, training, and in depth equity and inclusion programs, with a focus on anti-racism, cultural safety, access, and systemic change.

“The whole experience of undertaking the Fair Play training has been amazing. I feel so fortunate to have been able to learn directly from so many people with lived experience and continue that ongoing conversation. Big thanks to all the team at Diversity Arts Australia and especially our Mentor Margaret Mayhew. Definitely recommend it to anyone else working in an arts organisation.”

FAIR PLAY REGIONAL VICTORIA

Participating organisations included Benalla Art Gallery, Bendigo Venues and Events, Colac Otway Performing Arts Cultural Centre, Gippsland Art Gallery, Riverlinks – Greater Shepparton City Council, Horsham Regional Art Gallery, Lighthouse Theatre, Public Galleries Association of Victoria (PGAV), The Cube Wodonga, Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres (VAPAC), and West Gippsland Arts Centre.

FIND OUR MORE

diversityarts.org.au/project/fair-play

DIVERSE ARTS BOOSTER PROGRAM

Diversity Arts was proud to support Tasmania's Moonah Arts Centre and the Multicultural Council of Tasmania's Diverse Arts Booster program. This vital program supported eight talented emerging artists from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to tackle professional pathway barriers and showcase their art to broader Tasmanian audiences. The project was also supported by Arts Tasmania and performing Lines.

FIND OUR MORE

<https://diversityarts.org.au/diverse-arts-booster-kicks-off-in-tasmania/>

CAPACITY BUILDING + PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GOVERNANCE CONVERSATIONS: TRANSFORMING ARTS LEADERSHIP

“I just had to reach out and thank you for creating the Governance sessions with Creative Australia. After reflecting on the first few sessions, I have found it immeasurably useful for my confidence... Being on the board has been an enormous learning experience without much preparation, and I am grateful for the sessions Diversity Arts and Creative Australia are putting on.”

“I was very happy to participate in this conversation, recorded last week. If hashtag#ClimateAction is not part of your organisational plan then it might be time to rethink your program.”

In collaboration with **Creative Australia**, Diversity Arts Australia presented a groundbreaking series of four Governance Conversations in 2023. These free monthly webinars explored contemporary challenges in arts governance, with a focus on **robust leadership, equity, and innovative governance models**. With a total attendance of **1,322 participants**, the series provided critical insights for individuals and organisations across the creative sector. Key themes included **cultural safety, inclusive leadership, and First Nations governance perspectives**. Accessibility was prioritised, with **Auslan interpreters, live captions**, and flexible formats ensuring broader engagement.

The series featured expert speakers covering **fit-for-purpose governance models, board diversity, succession planning, and optimising board relationships**. Notable sessions included:

Doing it Differently: Fit-For-Purpose Governance Models (27 July 2023)

Speakers: Cecilia Anthony and Kate Larsen
Discussed tailored governance frameworks and First Nations-led strategies.
Live attendees: 179, YouTube views: 413

Board Representation: Promoting Cultural Safety and Addressing the Power Gap

(31 August 2023)
Speakers: Dr Lilly Brown and Tasneem Chopra OAM
Explored strategies to diversify boards and foster cultural safety.
Live attendees: 85, YouTube views: 139

Succession Planning: Who Are the Board Members of the Future? (21 September 2023)

Speakers: Caroline Bowditch and Clothilde Bulleen
Highlighted intergenerational knowledge transfer and accessibility in recruitment.
Live attendees: 70, YouTube views: 132

Governance vs. Management: Optimising the CEO, Chair, and Board Relationship

(19 October 2023)
Speaker: Hilary Carty
Focused on strategic relationships and diversity in board environments.
Live attendees: 57, YouTube views: 90

Participants praised the sessions for their **practicality, inclusivity, and focus on equity**, with many reporting improved governance understanding and appreciation for diverse leadership. These conversations have laid the foundation for **future governance transformation in the arts**, with recommendations to integrate insights into the **Creative Equity Toolkit** and expand the series to include **workshops and First Nations-led sessions**.



Rituals of Resistance launch, 2023.

RESEARCH + CONSULTATION

DARTS is recognised for its expertise in creative cultural diversity, regularly invited to sit on panels, deliver talks and workshops, offer advice, and speak to mainstream media. Our partnerships with government, researchers, universities, and key organisations in the arts, screen, cultural diversity, anti-racism, and human rights spaces, shape our research. We incorporate qualitative data collection into all projects and share our findings through reports, videos, podcasts, and articles. We also stream events to boost participation and engagement. In 2023, Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) continued its research and consultation work, focusing on equity, inclusion, and systemic change in the arts and cultural sector.

CREATIVE EQUITY TOOLKIT (CET)

The CET, a partnership with British Council Australia, remained a key flagship project and resource in 2023. New case studies were commissioned and published, including - in partnership with Garuwa - First Nations case studies and with the British Council - UK arts sector. Research for the Toolkit included: governance and leadership diversity in arts organisations; workplace inclusion strategies tailored to creative industries; and, international comparisons, drawing insights from global best practices.

READ MORE in Creating Content + Platforms

SECTOR CONSULTATION AND ADVOCACY

DARTS actively engaged in policy consultation and advocacy to drive structural change across the arts and creative industries. Key initiatives included the Governance Conversations Series, which brought together over 1,300 participants to discuss board diversity, cultural safety, and First Nations-led governance, as well as the Multicultural Framework Review Roundtable, held in partnership with Creative Australia, to advocate for policy changes that support cultural equity. DARTS also facilitated the Creative Cultural Diversity Network (CCDN), fostering sector-wide collaboration and advocacy, and participated in major industry events, including the Screen Forever conference, to elevate discussions on representation and inclusion.

Through these initiatives, DARTS deepened its evidence base, strengthened partnerships, and influenced sector-wide change, ensuring that research and consultation directly translated into action.

PARTNERSHIPS + INFRASTRUCTURE

DARTS continued to invest in the sustainability of our organisation and people. Staff and key contractors completed mental health training with the Black Dog Institute, with many also becoming accredited in Mental Health First Aid. Additionally, staff and Board members undertook Core Cultural Learning training through AIATSIS (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies).

We participated in Creative Australia's digital engagement program and collaborated with WAUC (a student consultancy organisation) to develop an income generation strategy, focusing on self-generated revenue through membership and training. We also partnered with Wendy Brooks and Partners to develop our Fundraising Theory of Change and Case for Support.



THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS AND SPONSORS

A sincere thank you to our artists and creatives, Board, staff, partners, funders, and communities who made our work possible in 2023. All of our work is achieved through collaboration and partnership.

A massive thank you to our funders and supporters

Creative Australia/Australia Council for the Arts
Creative Victoria
Multicultural NSW
Create NSW
British Council Australia
City of Parramatta
City of Sydney
Inner West Council

Thank you to Arts and Cultural Exchange
(formerly Information and Cultural Exchange)
for their ongoing and critical organisational support.

Thank you to our partners and collaborators. A special thanks to:

Accessible Arts NSW
Affirm Press
Arts Access Victoria
Bendigo Venues and Events
City of Greater Bendigo
Koorie Heritage Trust
Media Diversity Australia
Moonah Arts Centre
Multicultural Council of Tasmania
Public Galleries Association of Victoria (PGAV)
Regional Arts Victoria
Refugee Art Project
Sweatshop Literacy Movement
Victorian Association of Performing Arts
Centres (VAPAC)

OUR PEOPLE

Thank you to our dedicated team and Board for their work and commitment.

BOARD MEMBERS

Debbie Lee (Chair)

Director of Scripted Development, Matchbox Pictures From 2019 (Departed October 2023)

Cecilia Anthony (Director since 2022; Chair from December 2023)

General Manager; Government Relations Specialist; Policy and Programming Specialist

Francisca Peña, CPA (Treasurer)

Director, Finance and Administration, Sydney Theatre Company From 2018

Anthony Peluso (Deputy Chair)

Arts Programs Director, Country Arts SA From 2018

Professor Karen Soldatic (Director)

Sociologist, School of Social Sciences, Western Sydney University From 19 August 2019

Ade Djajamihardja (Director)

Film producer and disability advocate From May 2020

Caroline Kim (Director)

Corporate lawyer, KPMG; mergers and acquisitions: governance and board advisory matters. Resigned 15 November 2023

Phebe Chan (Director; Fundraising Subcommittee Chair)

Joined 16 October 2023 National Campaign & Partnership Manager, Stockland. Fundraising, philanthropy, and partnerships specialist.

FIND OUT MORE:

diversityarts.org.au/about/meet-our-board

CORE TEAM

Lena Nahlous

CEO and Executive Producer

Madlen Toumbourou

Business Growth and Development Consultant

Glaiza Perez

Digital Engagement and Communications Coordinator

Dr Rohini Balram

Research, Education and Policy Manager

Boyd and Associates - Accountants

Kevin Bathman

Creative Producer - Strategic Projects

Carielyn Tunion

Producer - Creative Projects and Campaigns

Joanne Cooper

Administration Officer and EA to CEO

Dr Paula Abood

Consultant & Educator

Dr Margaret Mayhew

Educator and Consultant

Dr Görkem Acaroğlu

Consultant - Training & Strategic Projects

Simone Amelia Jordan

StoryCasters Program Manager

Sonia Mehrmand

Training and Programs Consultant

Ayesha Mahmud

Research Assistant

Monique Choy

Writer and Researcher

Nadyat El Gawley

Senior Podcast Producer

Vir Kaula

Podcast Producer, Colour Cycle

In August, we farewelled Dr Alexia Derbas, our inaugural Research and Policy Manager, and Radhika Ram Tevita, our Business Manager. Thank you to the many contractors, consultants, and volunteers whose contributions may not be individually listed but are deeply valued.

FIND OUT MORE:

diversityarts.org.au/about/meet-our-team

