

Media Announcement: Diversity Arts Australia Unveils 21 Trailblazing Case Studies For Racial Equity In The Arts In The ‘Imagine Australia Project’

Some of Australia’s best work in advancing cultural equity and inclusion in the arts will become accessible to a wide audience through the [Imagine Australia Project](#), managed by Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) and funded via the [Australia Council](#) with support from [British Council Australia](#).

Twenty-one new case studies will be produced, showcasing leading practice in equity in the arts, screen and creative sectors. The case studies were chosen out of 65 nominations from an open call-out across Australia.

These national case studies will provide inspiration and clear steps for creative cultural equity in a range of areas, with the case studies focusing on culturally and linguistically diverse, migrant, ethnic minority, refugee, humanitarian entrant, and people of colour (POC) contexts in the arts.

“This is a significant, game-changing project for Australia’s creative sectors,” says Lena Nahlous, CEO, Diversity Arts Australia. “We know anecdotally and through our work on the ground there has been amazing work done over the years, but often this work isn’t recorded outside of individual organisations.

“Congratulations to those whose case studies were chosen for documentation. This is an opportunity to ensure this knowledge is preserved and shared into the future,” Nahlous says.

“The Imagine Australia Project will provide practical case studies and actions for arts professionals to advance cultural diversity within their organisations. Knowledge sharing is a key part of positive change and we’re proud to be the co-founder of the Creative Equity Toolkit – a crucial platform to exchange best practice across countries,” said Helen Salmon, British Council Australia Director and co-founder of the [Creative Equity Toolkit](#).

Project History

The Imagine Project is one of the projects under the banner of the Creative Equity Toolkit, a website that provides an action-oriented approach to increasing cultural diversity and racial equity in the arts.

DARTS announced a call in 2021 for national case study nominations, and received 65. The selection process was undertaken by representatives from the Australia Council, The British Council, Western Sydney University and Darwin Community Arts.

The selected case studies highlight leading work in advancing cultural and racial equity and inclusion in the arts and creative industries.

Imagine Australia Project: 2022 National Case Studies

1. Talent Camp (NSW) - AFTRS

The AFTRS Talent Camp skills development program for creatives from marginalised backgrounds provides opportunities for emerging storytellers to create new content and be employment-ready for the screen sector.

2. Front & Centre (NSW) - Accessible Arts

Front & Centre is a leadership programme mainly for women with disability/Disabled women but also for women from culturally diverse and marginalised backgrounds, reconceptualising and reframing ideas about leadership.

3. BLEED (NSW) - Campbelltown Arts Centre

Led by Campbelltown Arts Centre in collaboration with Arts House Melbourne, this project digitally engages diverse artists, artforms and audiences. It demonstrates leading practice in artist-first approaches and engagement with the local community.

4. Lotus Program (NSW) - CAAP

The Lotus program in collaboration with Contemporary Australian Asian Performance has been cited as 'a highly successful long-term vision for the development of an underrepresented Australian voice'. The program provides a springboard for developing entry-level skills, providing high-level production support and opportunities for new playwrights.

5. Footscray Community Arts (VIC)

Footscray Community Arts is a leading example of a long-running arts centre and community space that supports diverse voices in art, with a focus on First Nations, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTIQ+ groups and artists with disability. This commitment is not just reflected in its programming and commissioning but in its unique governance, staffing and leadership structure.

6. Metanoia Theatre (VIC)

Through its innovative and engaging work, Metanoia has consistently redressed the under-representation of non-Anglo writers, performers, directors and other theatre artists on Australian stages, especially with regard to flagship theatre companies.

7. [Liminal \(VIC\)](#)

Anti-racist in its ethos, Liminal is a platform and publisher. The organisation runs events, commissions art and writing, publishes books, and creates a space for community building between marginalised people.

8. [National Regional Arts Fellowships \(NT\) - Regional Arts Australia](#)

The National Regional Arts Fellowships is an initiative providing strategic funding to regional, rural and remote artists and practitioners. Objectives include developing inclusive professional practices, intercultural awareness and supporting leadership capacity for underrepresented artists and practitioners, including First Nations people.

9. [The Diversity Project \(TAS\) - Cooper Screen Academy and Screen Tasmania](#)

Cooper Screen Academy, supported by Screen Tasmania and Guesswork Television ran The Diversity Project, a 2021 pilot project providing free training for people from diverse community groups. The program worked two-fold: providing industry standard training and connecting uncovered talent to casting agents and producers in an Amazon commissioned series.

10. [Inspire Program \(TAS\) - Migrant Resource Centre](#)

Inspire is an innovative community program and website platform that supports culturally diverse performers and artists by connecting them to Tasmanian events and producers, increasing paid performance opportunities.

11. [ACTNow Theatre \(SA\)](#)

ActNow theatre features programming and commissioning that specifically targets and works with people from marginalised backgrounds. It recently collaborated with Reconciliation SA, creating some creative and interactive arts projects, and skills and capacity development programs.

12. [OzAsia Festival \(SA\)](#)

The OzAsia festival is committed to fostering and presenting a cross-cultural collaboration between Asian and Australian artists. Its current leadership includes people from different diasporic communities with links to the Asian region. The festival's

broad programming of local artists in 2021 across different art forms and diversity in its lineup is testament to its excellent work in community collaboration.

13. Matt Hsu's Obscure Orchestra (QLD)

Matt Hsu's Obscure Orchestra advocates for marginalised communities, using music projects to underscore First Nations, refugee, immigrant, gender and abilities diverse issues through artistic collaborations.

14. Casus Circus (QLD)

Casus Circus is an example of a performing arts organisation committed to community and diversity. Their innovative shows include First Nations and CaLD-specific circus ensembles. Their community engagement initiatives have targeted locations like La Reunion Island, England, New Zealand and the regions of Australia.

15. Layla & Majnun (WA) - Performing Lines

Performing Lines WA developed new and deep relationships with Muslim communities through the process of staging the performance *Layla and Majnun*, one of the greatest love stories ever told. The work that led to this performance was undertaken over several years and developed new audiences and inclusive ways of working.

16. Portside Review (WA) - Centre For Stories

The Centre for Stories produces high-quality storytelling from marginalised people including refugees migrants, people of colour, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, older people, and people living with disabilities. Their publication the Portside Review exemplifies commitment to and promotion of craft, unique perspectives and ethical values. This work is generative - creating new pathways for diverse writers.

17. Bilingual Library Storytimes (ACT) - Libraries ACT

Libraries ACT supported people from marginalised and non-English speaking backgrounds with their Bilingual Storytime program. The success of the program is testament to the effectiveness of staff diversity in serving diverse communities. The story program was the winner of the 2022 ACT Multicultural Award in the category for Outstanding Excellence Award for Diversity and Inclusion.

DARTS has also collaborated with Melbourne-based audience development expert, Fotis Kapetopoulos of Kape Communications, to produce the following case studies:

18. Melbourne Rebetiko Festival (VIC)

A case study on expanding audiences for rebetiko music beyond the Greek community in Australia.

19. Ethnic and Multicultural Media Overview (NATIONAL)

A case study on using media to reach diverse audiences in Australia.

20. Mulatu Astatke at the Melbourne International Jazz Festival (VIC)

A case study on how organisers and producers engaged the Ethiopian community in a mainstream Australian festival.

21. Deep collaboration with the Greek-Australian community (ACT)

A case study on displaying Ancient Greek artworks from the British Museum at the National Museum of Australia.

Visit the [Diversity Arts Australia website](#) for the future online launch of both the national and global selection of case studies, planned for the latter half of 2022.

Diversity Arts is supported by the Australia Council for the Arts NSW and Create NSW.

For more information about the project, contact project coordinator Colin Ho at CreativeEquityToolkit@diversityarts.org.au

For Media Inquiries:

Thuy Nguyen at Communications@DiversityArts.org.au