

Creative | Connected | Change

Strategic Plan: 2020-2024

artsource



Contents

01 **Our Distinguishing Features**

- Our Vision
- Our Mission
- Our Values
- Our Aims
- Our Objectives

02 **Our Context**

- Background
- Achievements 2020
- Goals 2021
- Growth demographics 2019-2020
- Positional statement
- Our Board
- Acknowledgement

03 **Credits**

Artsource acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

**We pay our respects to them and their cultures;
and to elders past, present and emerging.**

OUR DISTINGUISHING FEATURES



Artsource is the peak membership body for visual artists in Western Australia

Artsource is the sole organisation located in Western Australia, and one of only five in Australia, dedicated to serving the professional needs of visual artists and championing the visual arts in the community. Our thirty-four-year history makes us one of the oldest art membership organisations in the State, and a mature and important asset to the cultural infrastructure in Western Australia. Our accumulated resources including networks, partners and supporters, wealth of collective knowledge and the experience of our leadership and members, position us uniquely, to lead in supporting the visual arts sector, to survive and thrive into the future.

In 2020 our organisation underwent significant transformation and forged socially relevant new directions while retaining valued services and functions.



- > We are the only organisation providing studio licences for artists and plan to continue with an additional new focus on sustainable and social enterprise development through arts business incubator studios. We aim to provide greater community access to a shared facility that hosts artist-run workshops, offering engagement in creative experiences for artists and community. Combined with our custodianship of the Old Customs House and our program of exhibitions and arts events, we provide affordable or free, cultural enrichment that supports the wellbeing of West Australians.
- > We provide professional development for artists and plan to expand our offerings by providing state-wide access to professional learning, through innovative digital technologies and strategic partnerships, including industry placements for the education sector.
- > We welcome a wide variety of artists' practices and plan to extend our reach to include diverse groups and cultural communities, including in regional and remote locations and importantly, our Indigenous artists. We aim to support the development of artist-run social enterprises, economic opportunities and raise the profile of our unique West Australian visual arts culture.
- > We encourage artistic expression and activities that focus on how arts shape and express Australian identity, reflect our Australian cultural diversity, and that promote respect, empathy, trust and social cohesion. We value First Nations arts as an important part of Australia's culture.
- > We develop economic opportunities and employment for artists, and we propose to connect artists with local businesses to revitalise local communities. We aim to develop strategic partnerships with online arts marketing platforms, offer live streaming and online services, to reach global audiences and markets.

Art is not a luxury, not an adornment of civilization. It is a necessity. It is one of the central purposes of civilization. Artists lead in ways politicians, chief executives, or generals cannot. They enable us to explore the mysterious — deep within us and all around us. They find the universal within the quotidian and in what has never before been imagined — the links that bind us to one another in the most profound ways.

As a consequence, culture — the product of all of the arts within a society amplified and augmented and internalized by custom and social intercourse — is perhaps the most powerful force on the planet...The arts and culture are the glue that bind together civilizations and the drivers of social change.

David Rothkopf, The Urgency of Art in a Dangerous Rapidly Changing World, April 2017



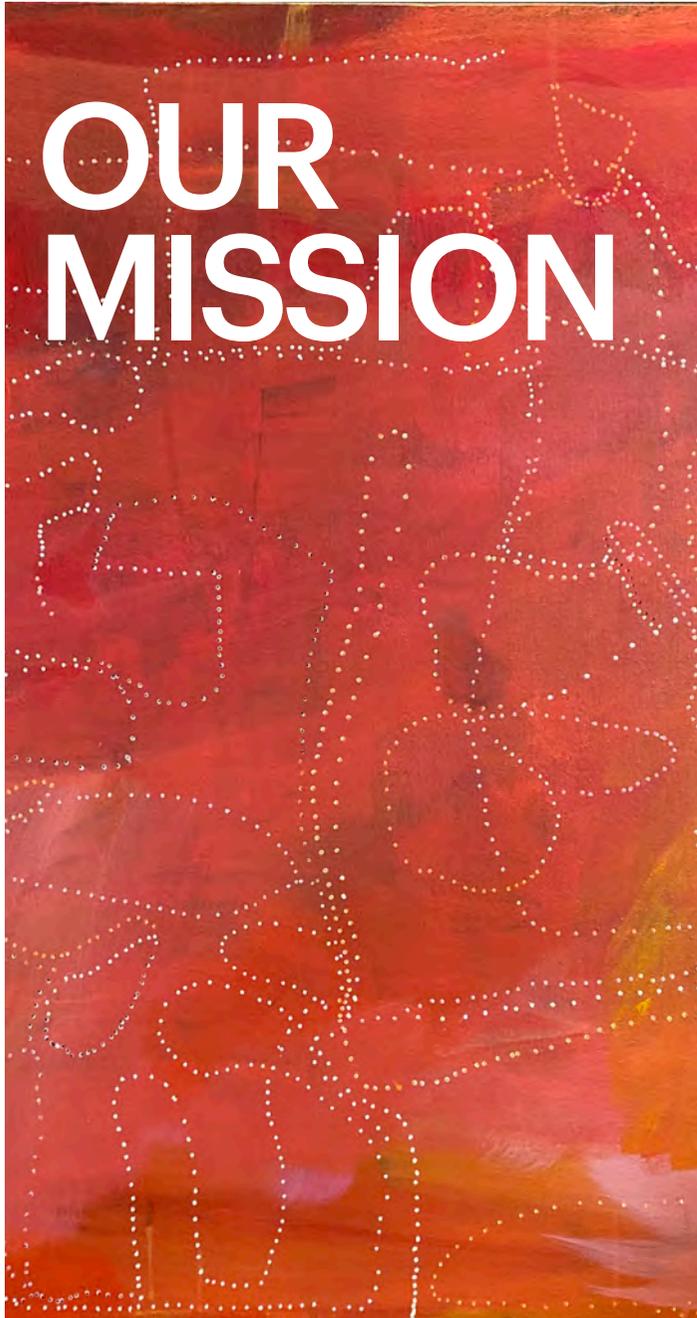
OUR VISION

Creative connected change.

To drive change by empowering creative artists to contribute to a dynamic, inclusive and connected society that values the visual arts, in Western Australia.

We envisage a changed society that:

- > recognises the intrinsic value of the arts, which enable us to explore our humanity and the 'links that bind us to one another, in profound ways';
- > supports artistic freedom to innovate and push boundaries, to provoke and imagine new ways of being, and to create exceptional artworks and experiences;
- > includes artists' diverse practices, cultures, locations, and heritages, which help us understand different perspectives and contribute to a cohesive, connected community.



Supporting artistic practice strengthens culture and community.

Our mission is to generate change by:

- > securing the resources and physical spaces, providing relevant practical services, and offering professional development that supports artists' economic capability and physical and psychological well-being;
- > providing an inclusive arts community and network, that develops artist's identities and independence, through critique, discourse and mentoring, to uphold high standards of artistic and professional practice;
- > promoting and recognising artists' achievements, generating dialogue and discussion, which strengthen appreciation of visual arts and culture, and has a positive social impact on the lives of Western Australians;
- > creating initiatives and diverse professional opportunities, for artists to pursue their goals, advise, lead, teach, and collectively advocate for valuing the arts and developing a sustainable model for the arts in society, which strengthens culture, in a creative, connected community in WA.

OUR VALUES



Creativity
unearth artistry

Connection
shape identity

Diversity
invite inclusion

Wellbeing
fulfill needs

Our Focus

Our motivation

- > Future economic success for artists and community
- > Social cohesion
- > Equal opportunity and access to arts and creativity
- > Health and wellbeing for artists and community

Our Pillars

Supports we offer

- > Services
- > Education
- > Social Enterprise

Our Domains

Our spheres of influence

- > Artists
- > Community
- > Business and industry
- > Global

Our Modes

Ways we support

- > Agency
- > Advocacy
- > Professional Development

OUR AIMS



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- 1** To promote and strive to ensure the economic value and future success of Western Australian visual arts and culture, locally, nationally and internationally.
 - 2** To ignite discussions and critique, to reference art histories, philosophies and ideas, and to reframe culture, by engaging artists and audiences in addressing issues that help us understand different perspectives and provide a bridge to mutual understanding and trust.
 - 3** To strive to ensure equity of access to the arts in WA. For all visual artists - equal and fair access to professional opportunities and learning; and, for audiences - equity of access to exceptional arts experiences, learning and the benefits of creativity.
 - 4** To develop and support artistic expression and activities, that promote connection and positively impact the health and wellbeing of visual artists and the community in Western Australia.

OUR OBJECTIVES



1 Future economic success

1. To raise the level of recognition and profile of Western Australian visual art within Australia and internationally.
2. To clearly articulate the unique profile of Western Australian visual art to national and global audiences.
3. To raise the level of exposure of Western Australian visual art and artists internationally.
4. To develop the capacity of West Australian visual artists to engage internationally.
5. To develop the relationship between young people and the arts, to set them up for success.
6. To emphasize the importance of arts and creativity to child development, and of creativity in lifelong education.
7. To develop and maximise the benefits of arts and creativity to local businesses.
8. To develop and emphasize the creative skills of artists and of the arts in future workforces.
9. To develop and emphasize visual arts events for regional / remote arts reinvigorating arts tourism opportunities and our economy.

2 Social cohesion

1. To develop and promote artistic expression and activities that focus on how arts shape and express Australian identity.
2. To develop and promote First Nations arts as an important part of Australia's culture.
3. To develop and promote artistic expression and activities that reflect our Australian cultural diversity and that impact our understanding of other people and cultures.
4. To develop and promote artistic expression and activities that allow us to connect with others help us understand perspectives that are different to our own, help us navigate multiple viewpoints, and promote respect, empathy and trust.
5. To engage artists and audiences in intellectual framing of artists' practice and art inquiry, appreciation and critique.
6. To engage artists and audiences in critically informed discussion about market realities and the social issues affecting the artists' present and future working lives.
7. To empower artists to collectively advocate for the world they would like to live and work in and reinforce art practices that create accessible openings into political discussions, and that educate and activate people in tacit ways.

3 Equal access to arts and creativity

1. To provide professional development and networking opportunities for visual artists of all career stages, who are committed to furthering their professional practices.
2. To further develop diverse artistic and creative practices and knowledge.
3. To bring about social change, social justice and significant positive changes for the artist and for the community at large.
4. To forge partnerships with educational institutions and arts organisations, to offer high-quality professional development programs.
5. To provide services to members and other arts practitioners where appropriate, to assist them to improve and promote their public profile and income earning capacity.
6. To develop and advocate for professional employment and opportunities for artists addressing social inequity.
7. To foster, develop and promote development of new innovative artistic and creative work.
8. To develop and promote artistic activities and free or low-cost events to immerse audiences in exceptional arts experiences.
9. To develop and promote artistic expression or activities through digital offerings.
10. To develop and promote forms of artistic expression that are culturally and socially inclusive.

4 Health and wellbeing

1. To develop and support self-identification as an artist through artistic networks, connections with other artistic individuals, and the adoption of 'artworld capital'.
2. To develop and promote artistic expression or activities that generate positive impacts of arts and creativity on our sense of wellbeing.
3. To adopt and promote inclusive and flexible notions of what an artist is and does, to accommodate a more realistic definition of an artist considering the multiple career roles undertaken, to support their arts practices.
4. To develop and promote artistic expression or activities that generate positive impact of arts and creativity on helping us deal with stress, anxiety or depression.
5. To seek public and private investment in the arts for programmes that ensure that arts and creative experiences are available to support people's health and wellbeing.
6. To develop and promote artistic expression or activities that generate connection and wellbeing for Australians who attend arts events focused on their cultural background or community, and younger generations in CALD communities.
7. To develop and promote artistic expression or activities that support wellbeing through online arts engagement during COVID-19 that enable Australians to feel connected, and transcend isolation.

OUR CONTEXT



Background

This has been a difficult economic period for the visual arts industry. The Western Australian economy has been affected by the boom-bust cycle of the mining industry, the global economy, and slower growth in China since 2012. Government spending affecting arts grants for individuals, funding for arts organisations, and opportunities for visual artists in Western Australia, declined. Federal funding cuts in 2015-16, and the cancelling of the financial assistance scheme Artstart for emerging artists in May 2015, was signaled in 2013, when Department for Culture and the Arts' (DCA) reported that the visual arts industry is 'at risk'.

In a declining economic situation Artsource experienced recurring reductions in government support, beginning with the loss of all funds at the end of 2018. The 2019 application for Organisational Investment Program (OIP) was unsuccessful in that the funding required to support full delivery of service was not achieved. The Department for Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries' (DLGSCI) feedback was that the application was not aspirational enough. Despite the lack of a substantive funding base, the membership of Artsource voted overwhelmingly to support the organisation and the board's stated intention to reimagine its operations and model. And then COVID-19 broke out.

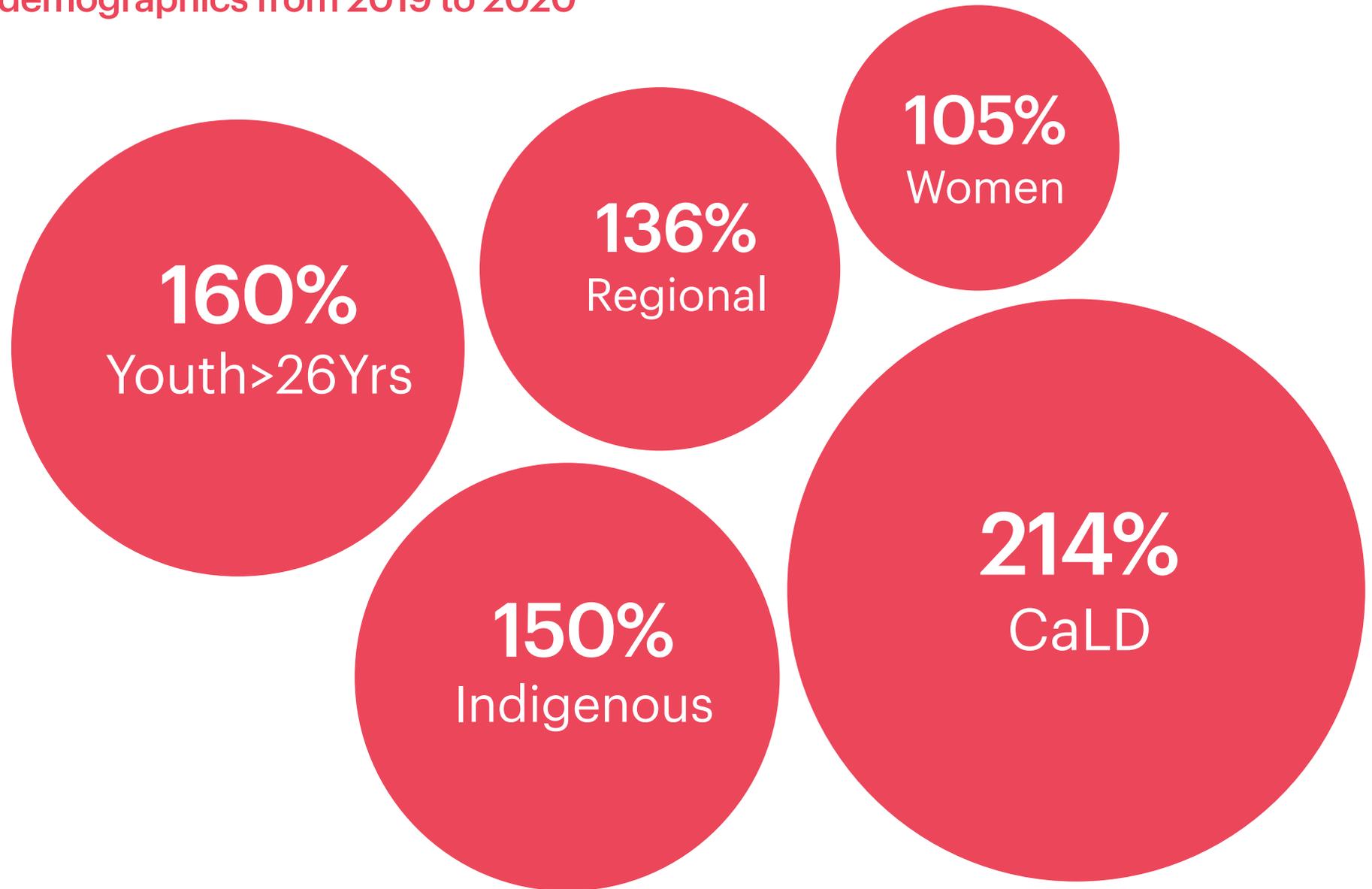
Achievements 2020

Since 2019, the organisation has been operating with a skeleton staff whose skills and complementary experience lie both within the arts and as business professionals in areas of insurance, real estate, media, publishing and hospitality. Through a multi-disciplinary approach to recruitment and operational development, the delivery of value to artists and associates has been commendably maintained across artist studios, advocacy, professional development, infrastructure development, insurance requirements, sales and marketing, partnerships and COVID support.

Old Customs House furthered its role as an incubator for both artists and industry personnel to practice, exhibit and participate in supportive work opportunities through private studios, public events and exhibitions and work placements in partnership with tertiary institutions.

Artsource has sustained membership support from 800 members who are visual artists from Western Australia professionally dedicated to their practice and who may also identify as artists, industry professionals, teachers, consultants, researchers, curators, tradespersons, developers, architects and more.

Growth demographics from 2019 to 2020



REBOOT

The Artsource Board committed to an open feedback campaign throughout 2020 called REBOOT. Panel discussions and open forums with members painted a clear picture of artist needs weighted towards advocacy, artist studios and employment opportunities.

“Social capital and cultural capital is the reason why Artsource needs to be here.”

“Artsource matters because it creates business opportunities for artists in ways that FORM or NAVA do not.”

“In my experience of working in art centres they want business literacy, marketing research and agency in terms of strategically thinking about selling.”

“More property developers are asking how they can deliver percent for art studio components to developments”

Goals 2021

The last twelve months have presented an unprecedented challenge and forced those of us at Artsource to re-evaluate our purpose and role. However, in doing so, we have also been re-energised, and we are pleased to announce that we are making some exciting and significant changes.

With a newly invigorated board, Artsource has reviewed its' services, operations and relationships with its' stakeholders in the light of the latest arts sector research. The findings were clear:

- > Artsource needs to articulate its purpose and capability more clearly.
- > Artsource needs to create focused and more relevant value propositions and enact these through its' projects, programs and Old Customs House occupancy.
- > Artsource should seek to elevate its service culture as an exemplar for the arts sector.
- > Artsource requires a focus on sustainability and economic viability of its own operations and those of its members.
- > Artsource requires a focus that more strongly emphasises the diversity of arts sector needs and provides equitable and

inclusive opportunities.

- > Artsource needs to be proactive in making the arts and culture more accessible to and inclusive of the wider community.
- > Artsource should prioritise the health and wellbeing of its members and sharing the benefits of the arts for the well-being of community.

We have wholeheartedly accepted these findings and begun to implement significant changes to our operational model, structure and plans for our physical environment.

The first is that we have clearly defined our vision as **'creative connected change'**. It signals that we see our role as transformative, but that it involves working collaboratively to coordinate dialogue with the critical partnerships, to develop solutions and initiatives to bring about change.

We have redefined our mission as **'supporting artistic practice strengthens culture and community'**. It means that we are streamlining our services and adopting new ones by maximizing our position and assets, so that we can provide improved services and opportunities for artists, that ultimately benefit community.

Our seven goals for 2021 are:

- > Strengthening governance, oversight and monitoring systems and redefining our business and organisational model to align with and operationalise, our strategic vision and mission.
- > Securing and implementing the transformation of Old Customs House, to connect with and welcome the diverse community.
- > Developing strategic partnerships with the DLGSCI and Fremantle Council to refurbish Old Customs House and its streetscape, and to include commercial opportunities to ensure the sustainability and viability of our organisation and our services.
- > Including shared studios and artist-led workshops in community accessible spaces, a regional / remote exchange studio, live-streaming, online education, and services to connect to the world.
- > Attracting State and Federal funding for exhibition programmes, a regional remote exchange program and renewed infrastructure.
- > Developing strategic partnerships with the Department of Communities, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA, and the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce, to engage with community and local business to stimulate and support a vibrant community of arts practice and local tourism.
- > Developing partnerships with corporate sponsors to support programs to provide equitable opportunities for diverse artists.





Positional Statement

In accordance with our strategic aims and actions, we provide relevant services and professional development, focusing on issues of collective importance to artists, and we work to constructively influence and achieve positive change.

We recognise that our position in society is located between individuals and stakeholders who may have opposing ideologies, world views, motivations and agendas: those of artists may be opposite to those of funding bodies or donors. We acknowledge our responsibility to impart knowledge to artists in a way that is transparent, not hidden. Discourse is encouraged about potential or actual conflicts with opposing ideologies, resulting in activation of artists, though knowledge, empowerment and choice. In balancing these opposing viewpoints, we recognise that pragmatism and meeting points are required.

We honour the artist's desire to envision the world and work towards creating the world in accordance with that vision. We commit to providing artists with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes for empowerment and success in current market and economic realities, while working towards creating new ones.

As a servant-leader, we aim to bring about social justice and positive social change for artists by:

- > inspiring rather than managing
- > supporting the strengths, talents and passions of our members
- > helping our members out of their problems and mentoring them towards solutions
- > establishing high standards of performance
- > addressing weaknesses and building strengths
- > providing a platform which serves and causes the talents, energy and excitement of artists to be unleashed
- > providing opportunity for collective critical discourse on social and political issues
- > advocating through education, for conditions to improve artists' present and future working lives.

We encourage artists to push the boundaries of their approach and practice in challenging times and look for new opportunities to fund their passions and livelihoods.

We believe that artists create their own destiny and are as equally responsible as other stakeholders, for improving the arts and society.

We encourage collaborations between artists (including those outside the visual arts) where they create increased opportunities and innovative business models.

We believe in a positive future for the visual arts but understand it won't happen without a lot of hard work by industry bodies and the artists themselves.

We believe passionately in the critical importance of the arts and the urgency for artist action now, to broaden and excite community support and engagement.

We seek to break down old borders and barriers in the arts in order to establish new and profitable avenues to sustainability.

Finally, we honour and respect the intrinsic motivation that we believe is the artist's nature, through our humanistic approach. Our belief is in the basic goodness of artists and the contribution they make. We support the artist in control of their own destiny, with freedom of choice, and responsibility.

To this end, we identify priorities that permeate our actions, and these are economic sustainability, social cohesion, inclusion and diversity, and health and wellbeing. We aim to bring about social change, for artists and for the artistic and cultural community at large.

Our Board

Margaret Teusner, is a visual artist and educator with allied experience in small business and public art project management. She was instrumental in establishing Artsource, co-founded the artist collective Aeon Design Studio, has exhibited nationally, and taught visual arts in schools. She is interested in leadership in arts professional development, critical issues in the arts, policy, and improving the working lives of visual artists.

Director/Chair
Margaret Teusner

Sara Walker is a visual artist, curator and arts manager living in regional WA. She worked for Artsource from 2015-2017 and has been a member since 2013. Sara's interests are in improving representation for regional/remote artists and young artists under 30. Her experience encompasses work in commercial and public galleries, including Tjukurba Art Centre in Wiluna and Geraldton Regional Art Gallery.

Director
Sara Walker

Fred Chaney is an architect and Director of Taylor Robinson Chaney Broderick. The work of the practice is guided by Fred's abiding interest in achieving excellent public and community outcomes, and the creative processes that underpin those objectives. Fred has delivered award-winning projects and has taught at architecture schools around Australia. He is the Chairman of the Australian Urban Design Research Centre, Perth.

Director/Deputy Chair
Fred Chaney

Tim Burns has had long and productive associations with artist-led groups and organisations since 1970. With an experimental practice that has seen his work placed internationally including New York, London, Tokyo, Adelaide, Melbourne and Fremantle. Tim's interests are in standing up for the marginalized, the unrepresented, and for artists who battle, through a calling to stay true to the rigours of their practices.

Director
Tim Burns

Vincent Allegre is passionate about the arts and its' role in society and is an advocate for increasing artist's income. He studied engineering and is a corporate executive in the energy industry. Born in France, Vincent lived and worked on all the continents, migrated to Perth in 2003, and became an Australian citizen in 2017. His experience in leadership and governance includes oversight of implementing strategic initiatives.

Director/Treasurer
Vincent Allegre

Will Axten is a multimedia artist who has been engaged in activating heritage venues and artefacts through artworks that combine sound, film and theatre and incorporate the venue into the work. Will formed the arts collective Genrefonix to undertake this work which involves engagement and relationship building with Local and State Government stakeholders. He brings experience and learnings of engagement with this sector.

Director
Will Axten

Debbie Gilchrist combines a skill set of artistic and business experience. A Chartered Accountant with many years experience in the not for profit sector, Debbie recently completed a Fine Art degree at UWA. Forward-thinking with a passion for creative art practice with a social change focus, she has interests in the art and art history of China and Indonesia and exploring exhibition possibilities with our near neighbours in Indonesia.

Director/Company Secretary
Debbie Gilchrist

Steven James Finch is a writer and independent community artist who lives and works on Whadjuk Noongar country. They are the Project Coordinator for Lotterywest Story Street at CAN. They have a migrant settler background with English and Cantonese heritage, and they will not refer to themselves as Australian until Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations have their sovereign rights over these lands.

Director
Steven Finch

Acknowledgment



A work in progress

This plan was created during the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, it is anticipatory and looks forward into an unknowable future with optimism and hope, but with the knowledge that Artsource is agile, has adapted to difficult circumstances, and has unprecedented support and backing of its membership. We proceed in strength, cognisant however, that as the situation evolves our plans and aspirations may necessarily change and are dependent on resourcing and the benefaction of others.

CREDITS



Page 2

Greg Barr, *Kwilana* (detail), 2020. Acrylic on canvas. Photographer: Garry Wilcox.

Page 4

Kayako Nakasima, *Sleeping with the Sun*, 2019, for Fremantle Biennale at Old Customs House. Photographer: Duncan Wright.

Page 6: Attendees at *Making: A Living* symposium in partnership with UWA Cultural Precinct, Fremantle Biennale, supported by Future Now and Chamber of Arts and Culture.

Page 8

Greg Barr, *Steve Irwin* (detail), 2019. Acrylic on canvas. Photographer: Susie Waller.

Page 9

Greg Barr, *Charles* (detail), 2020. Acrylic on canvas. Photographer: Susie Waller.

Page 10

Greg Barr, *Leopard* (detail), 2020. Acrylic on canvas. Photographer: Susie Waller.

Page 12

Kayako Nakasima, *Sleeping with the Sun*, 2019, for Fremantle Biennale at Old Customs House. Photographer: Duncan Wright.

Page 14

Ian Mutch, *At the drive in*, 2020. Paint on bitumen land mural at Busselton Drive-In. Photographer: Christian Fletcher.

Page 16

Portrait of artist Kayako Nakasima, *Sleeping with the Sun*, 2019, for Fremantle Biennale at Old Customs House. Photographer: Duncan Wright.

Page 21

Sam Bloor, *The Billboard Project* (installation view), 2019, for Fremantle Biennale at Old Customs House. Photographer: Duncan Wright.

Page 22

Paula Hart, *JACARANDA*, 2019. Lacefence, Mt Pleasant. Client: Woolworths. Art Consultant Maggie Baxter. Image courtesy of the artist.

Page 25

Men of the West performing at *High Visions* opening at Old Customs House, (background) artwork by Zora Kreuzer, 2018. Photographer: Christophe Canato.

Page 26

Portrait of artist Greg Barr in his studio at Bathers Beach Art Precinct. Photographer: Susie Waller.