



CREATIVE INDUSTRIES THINK TANK 2021 TWO YEARS ON

Background and Objectives

Fremantle has been identified as one of 8 creative industry hotspots in Australia by the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), and is an identified incubator of creative talent from music, art, fashion, film, design, architecture, literature, photography, sound and audio and AR.

In 2019 the Fremantle Chamber gathered together the creative industry Chamber members and stakeholders for an initial think tank to:

- investigate our current industry, audience draw, history of Fremantle's connection to Arts and Culture,
- collaborate on ways to input into the QUT research project and the City's Strategic Creative and Cultural Planning work
- consider the job sector profile analysis
- look at events and tourism connections
- consider our spaces and infrastructure to support creative industries.

A list of action items were developed from this initial conversation:

- Do more work on defining purpose, industry and what we stand for – both in terms of business to business but also business to consumer
- Define our local cultural industry - \$, #, and type – pull all the information together
- Work with QUT to launch study results here and use them as a way to promote the story in a commercial way
- Review City of Perth Cultural Development Plan, DLGSC Cultural Infrastructure Toolkit + provide formal input into City of Fremantle's Creative and Cultural Plan
- Find and document the local case studies – particularly those with international reach
- Develop an advocacy strategy with identified supports and partners to take it forward
- Conduct further market Research / data on what cultural businesses bring to Fremantle and what we as a city can offer
- Develop investment perspectives document and video

Since 2019, we saw COVID-19 impact our industry, the birth of DESIGN.FREO which is starting to define a brand and bring together the creative industries sector, the release of the final QUT report and the State Government election promise of Fremantle as the new home for a FILM STUDIO on Victoria Quay.



This report brings together our 2021 TWO YEARS on conversation, and in particular explores the questions:

1. What is our vision for the Creative Industries sector in Fremantle in this new world?
2. What are the most significant opportunities to capitalise on?
3. What are the barriers for change?
4. Any ideas for immediate action?

A SUMMARY OF THE GROUNDING PRESENTATION

Kathryn Taylor, Manager Arts & Culture, City of Fremantle

+ FREMANTLE – A CREATIVE HOTSPOT

- + The City's cultural ecosystem makes a powerful contribution to our identity, our happiness and wellbeing, our lifestyles and our economy. We have a responsibility to examine those conditions that contribute to a thriving and vibrant arts scene in order to ensure it prospers.
- + We need to understand our role, and that of artists, and enhance arts and culture in an enabling way without threatening that elusive thing that makes it so incredible.
- + Creative strategy development is underway but it needs to consider some of the changes and principles of the work currently being undertaken in this fluid landscape.
- + Fremantle has been said to have a "New Orleans" DNA with a strong work ethic and embraces fluid boundaries and takes risks & dares to be different, how do we build on this and not stifle its organic development.
- + Understanding conditions and listening to creatives to find out what is needed to thrive and protect eco systems is essential.
- + Geographic, Migrants, Port City all helped shape and define our cultural identity
- + 10 Nights in Port, Hidden Treasures, Biennale and Street Arts Festival show what can be achieved in site specific and relevant curation.
- + How do we leverage our assets, festivals and events to create a year-round calendar of opportunities?
- + Where are the quite simple and relatively achievable opportunities to leverage our unique DNA and cultural heritage? Idea of developing a once a month Fremantle Art Night

+ ROLE OF OUR HERITAGE AND BUILDINGS

- + Maintenance of heritage buildings and our spaces is an important factor to continue to feed the Fremantle brand in this space.
- + If we discover gentrification is causing rising prices which in turn makes space unaffordable, we need to hold on to existing and create more subsidised arts spaces. Afterall, we'll not be an arts city if artists can't afford to work here.

+ CULTURAL PLANNING



- + The City of Fremantle's aim is to have a Cultural Plan finished by end of 2021. This will include Desktop Research using the hotspot report and data provided by the DLGSC, the think tank data and a survey of creative practitioners into spaces currently being used and the gaps as of present to form part of this research.
- + The Government's recent WA Cultural Infrastructure Framework to 2030+ presents an excellent toolkit that can become a resource to assist local governments and decision makers to assess cultural infrastructure needs and priorities.

- + **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**
- + According to research by Jude Van Der Mere, City of Fremantle invests more in Arts and Culture pro rata than any other WA council, however the rate base in low for the City and resourcing internally is limited to 1-2 people within the area.
- + Fremantle Biennale is an example of maximizing external funding both Government and Private. City of Fremantle provided a small seed fund and this has been used to leverage significant partners and Fremantle wins with a sophisticated arts outcome, audience and national/international media coverage.
- + City of Fremantle has been successful in securing a federal government grant to provide support and advice to local start-ups on how to grow their business. The Emerging Industry Cluster Support project has been awarded a \$48,480 grant from the Australian Government's Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources as part of their Entrepreneurs' Programme - ISI Expert in Residence
- + Fremantle Arts Centre generates millions of dollars per year for artists. It attracts large crowds that come and spend their money in Fremantle.
- + Fremantle International Street Arts Festival brings in over \$5.6 million in Economic Development over its four days.
- + Game-changing election promise of the \$100 million screen infrastructure investment in Fremantle in the Film Hub Proposal at Victoria Quay

- + **CITY OF FREMANTLE'S CULTURAL AND CREATIVE PLAN OBJECTIVES**
- + A shared vision and agreed coordinated actions to achieve that vision over the next 5 years.
- + A healthy creative economy will be recognised as one of the key pillars to a thriving and sustainable community.
- + A leadership role will shape growth and development including investment from external sources coordinated across Council.
- + Increased strategic investment from both the private sector and other tiers of government.
- + No duplication and new opportunities to add value across Council investments.
- + Strengthen our city's unique identity, encourage visitors and support growth of creative industries.
- + Greater visibility and recognition of Fremantle's unique creativity enhancing lifestyle, tourism and investment opportunities.
- + A city which contributes to the creative identity of WA and Australia and exports its creativity and ideas to the world.
- + Foster community involvement and participation in the arts, culture, education and ongoing awareness in Fremantle's aboriginal culture and settlement heritage.



REFERENCES & BACKGROUND RESOURCES

<https://research.qut.edu.au/creativehotspots/>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/3x9ar5c9o893jam/Creative-Hotspots-WA-Fremantle-Report-FINAL-v20-17-July-2020%20copy.pdf?dl=0>

<https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/culture-and-the-arts/cultural-infrastructure-toolkit>

<https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/department/publications/publication/western-australian-cultural-infrastructure-framework-2030-summary>

Chamber Creative Industries Think Tank Results 2019

<https://fremantlechamber.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Creative-Think-Tank-FINAL.pdf>