

# National Local Government Cultural Forum

## Communiqué 7

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The seventh National Local Government Cultural Forum was held 28 April 2016, in Melbourne. An initiative of the Cultural Development Network (CDN) with the Australia Council for the Arts, Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), its member state and territory associations and capital cities and the Commonwealth Ministry for the Arts. The objective of the Cultural Forum is to extend the *understanding, quality, reach* and *profile* of local government's contribution to Australia's cultural life.

### National Local Government Cultural Forum Meeting

The seventh meeting of the Cultural Forum agreed to progress the following activities.

1. *Understanding.* A dataset of core information on *inputs, outputs* and *outcomes* was endorsed for trialling prior to the next meeting of the Cultural Forum, later in 2016. This core data will provide a foundation for strengthening understanding of how local government contributes to cultural development across the diversity of Australian municipalities. The trialling of these datasets will be carried out with an aim of greater integration with datasets identified by the two other tiers of Australian governments.
2. *Quality.* The Cultural Forum recognises that the quality of cultural development experiences (across arts, libraries and heritage programs) will impact on the outcomes for a municipality's residents and visitors. The Cultural Forum will continue to develop frameworks for better planning and evaluation and a key stage in this development was the Cultural Forum's endorsement of five measurable cultural outcomes of cultural development which will be trialled and reviewed with sample councils. The Cultural Forum will extend the current research on evidence-based projects and integration with other policy areas, supporting local government as a laboratory for new arts initiatives that can also inform the work of regional and national government.
3. *Reach.* The reach of local government's contribution to Australia's cultural life is represented through more than 560 Australian local governments. The Cultural Forum agreed that a key activity is to continue the work with the sample councils across Australia in developing an online cultural development project building and recording system that will enable benchmarking and exchange of arts projects and artists' data that not only extends the reach of the most innovative programs but increases the consistency of that reach through agreed evaluation methods.
4. *Profile.* The Cultural Forum will focus on raising the profile of local government with all arts agencies and peak bodies, across all three tiers of government. This will be achieved through local government briefings, actively partaking in state-based conferences and forums and interacting with key policy agencies. As the work of the Cultural Forum consolidates it will support the associations in each jurisdiction, and ALGA at a national level, to communicate the achievements of local government's contribution to cultural development in Australia.

The National Local Government Cultural Forum is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body, and managed by CDN in cooperation with ALGA.

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More information, including the Terms of Reference and previous communiqués, is available on the [CDN website](#).