



INVESTING IN ARTS AND CULTURE POSITIVELY CHANGES COMMUNITIES:
AN IMPACT STUDY OF RADF SUPPORTED ARTS PROJECTS IN WESTERN
QUEENSLAND.

A Thesis submitted by

Margaret Ann Power,

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Abstract

Regional Australia is undergoing change. Communities within regional locations are under varying degrees of pressure from: threats to local and regional economies; socio-economic disadvantage; population migration to urban centres; environmental degradation; and aging populations. This process of change is exacerbated by globalisation which has direct detrimental impacts on the micro-economies of small communities, resulting in economic hardship and disadvantage.

Academic research here in Australia and internationally suggests that community arts participation can make significant contributions to community wellbeing. Yet the arts sector in Australia remains relatively silent in respect to the active role it could play in changing the perception of policy makers regarding the contribution community arts participation could make to support regional communities undergoing change. While community arts are one of a number of developmental activities policy makers have available to fund, little is known about the impacts of this government investment on regional Australian communities.

Responding to this lack of knowledge about regional Australian arts and cultural participation, this research explores and describes community arts impacts at the community level. The knowledge generated in this study will inform government planning, and provide an empirical evidence base to direct policy decisions toward developing arts and cultural strategies ensuring the ongoing resiliency of regional communities. This study benefits Federal, State, and Local Government arts funding policy makers who seek to support regional community development, prosperity, and resilience.

This study uses a qualitative methodology to describe community arts impact and draw out the processes driving this change. A case study approach is used to explore impacts made by the Queensland Regional Arts Development Fund initiative, which is a partnership program between state and local government. An examination of in-depth evidence gathered from key stakeholders and archival documents from the Western Downs Region is investigated.

The results of this study establish that community arts engagement is a powerful tool to direct collective agency towards changing community development trajectories and resiliency. Four impact themes including developing arts and culture, wellbeing, social connectedness, and capacity building were identified through the study.

Community arts impacts have multiple dimensions that aggregate across four levels of a community in a process that is cumulative over time. These cumulative impacts demonstrate links to a community capacity building process and the development of seven community capitals activated by participation. Evidence from this research reveals that, over time, the sum of multiple community arts impacts can make significant contributions to the wellbeing and resiliency of regional Queensland communities through building community capacity, developing community capitals, and facilitating the communication of community culture.

The three new frameworks developed in this study contribute to knowledge about community arts practice, community development, and Social Science theory. This study adds to what is known about community arts impacts in regional Australia, and provides a robust evidence base for informing policy maker decisions and community arts practitioners arguing for greater arts funding for the regions.

Thesis certification page

This Thesis is entirely the work of Margaret Ann Power except where otherwise acknowledged. The work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where acknowledged.

Principal Supervisor: Doctor Rebecca Scollen

Associate Supervisor: Professor Lorelle Burton

Associate Supervisor: Professor Michael Cuthill

Student and supervisor's signatures of endorsement are held at the University.

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Chapter 1: Outline of Research

Investing in Arts and Culture Positively Changes Communities: An Impact Study of Regional Arts Development Fund Supported Arts Projects in Western Queensland.

Regional Australia is undergoing change. Communities within these regional locations are under varying degrees of pressure from factors like: threats to local and regional economies; socio-economic disadvantage; population migration to urban centres; environmental degradation; and aging populations (Faulkner, Robinson & Sparrow 2013). This ongoing process of change is exacerbated by globalisation, climate change and the longer-term impact of the Global Financial Crisis (Faulkner, Robinson & Sparrow 2013; Gray & Lawrence 2001). The interconnectedness of globalised trade flows can have a direct detrimental impact on the micro-economy of small communities, resulting in economic hardship and disadvantage (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton 1999). This hardship has social and cultural dimensions. Regional communities can be left to find their own solutions with little human, material or financial resources (Anwar McHenry 2011a; Burnell 2013; Kay 2000).

Over the past two decades, research has been directed at the changing social, environmental, and economic situations existing in regional Australia (Anwar McHenry 2009; Sonn 2002). Yet the government development strategy of community regeneration, in vogue in the 1990s, has seemed to have lost political favour despite the ongoing need for regional community resilience (Ross, Cuthill, Maclean, Jansen, & Witt 2010). The arts sector in Australia has remained relatively silent regarding the active role it could play in changing the perception of policy makers regarding the contribution community arts participation can have to the social wellbeing and resiliency of regional communities (Anwar McHenry 2009). Despite the arts sector's lack of engagement in government policy development concerning the regions, academic research here in Australia and internationally suggests that arts and cultural participation can make significant contributions to community wellbeing, resilience, and capacity (Burnell 2013; Mills & Brown 2004;

Mulligan, Humphery, James, Scalon, Smith, & Welch 2006; Sardu, Mereu, Sotgiu, & Contu 2012).

To sustain regional communities in an ever-changing economic, social, environmental, and political milieu requires the three levels of government to invest in long term, wide ranging developmental strategies (Anwar McHenry 2009; Cuthill 2010; Hawkes 2001). Community arts projects, programs and processes are some of a number of developmental activities policy makers have available to support regional communities (Anwar McHenry 2009; Hawkes 2001). However, little is known about the impacts of this government investment on regional Australian communities (Anwar McHenry 2009; Kingma 2001).

The main body of evidence outlining the impacts of the arts in Australia and internationally, has been procured through evaluations, funding reports, and research into the larger metropolitan based arts organisations and programs (Mission Australia 2009; Raw, Lewis, Russell, & MacNaughton 2011; Wright, Davies, Haseman, Down, White, & Rankin 2013; Wright & Palmer 2007). While this body of evidence is of value and informs this research, it lacks the theoretical and contextual understandings necessary to give a clear picture of what is happening in regional Australia (Anwar McHenry 2011a; Mills & Brown 2004; Velasco 2008). Contextualising rural community impacts will provide clarity about arts and cultural participation on regional communities.

Responding to this lack of knowledge about regional community impacts, this research explores and describes the cumulative impacts of community arts in regional Australia at the individual to community level. The knowledge generated in this study will inform government planning and provide an empirical evidence base to direct policy decisions toward developing arts and cultural strategies which ensure the ongoing resiliency of regional communities. This study benefits Federal and State Government arts funding policy makers and Local Government who seek to support regional community development, prosperity, and resilience.

Locating the Researcher in the Context of this Study

Over the last 25 years regional community sustainability has been a concern for me as a secondary school art teacher and artist living and working in regional

Queensland. As a community artist, my practice aims to empower participants to become active communicators of community culture, and agents in social change within their local communal settings (Kester 1999, 2005). Through this artistic engagement with regional communities, my practice methodology has endeavoured to connect people with visual arts practice within a safe creative environment, or 'third space' where creative exploration can take place (Badham 2010; Bhabha 1994). My passion for arts and cultural development in regional communities is tied to my personal philosophy that arts and culture are a vital part of individual and community life.

As a regional community arts practitioner and teacher, I have seen firsthand the short-and long-term individual and communal benefits derived from arts projects. I recognise the un-tapped potential of creative projects in delivering social, cultural and community building outcomes. My experience and research knowledge built over years of practice has shaped and informed the focus of this research project.

The Focus and Approach of the Study

The specific focus of this research is to describe and explore the impact of community arts activity on regional community life and understand how arts engagement produces community change.

This qualitative study uses a case study approach to explore and describe the impact of community arts participation. Informing this research is a constructivist epistemological view to knowledge which holds that human knowledge is constructed through an individual's own experience of, and relationship with, the world around them (Gray 2009). This methodological approach is appropriate to exploring impact because it gathers in-depth knowledge about stakeholder experiences of community arts participation. Chapter 3 details the study's methodology and epistemological viewpoint.

This study examines the impacts of community arts engagement by focusing on a Queensland Government regional arts and cultural development initiative. The Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) aims to initiate locally determined arts and cultural priorities with the goal of developing regional arts and culture across Queensland (Arts Queensland 2006). The RADF initiative develops arts and culture

by delivering modest funding grants to community initiated arts development projects run by professional artists (Arts Queensland 2011). Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive description of the RADF partnership program between state and local government.

The two research questions underpinning this study include:

(1) What are the impacts of community arts programs in regional Australia?

(2) What is the process of change through which arts impacts are generated?

This research contributes to a tradition of existing community arts impact research of Williams (1996), Mills and Brown (2004), and Mulligan and Smith (2011) by gathering evidence the field requires to build a robust impact evidence base. RADF is used in this study to collect information about community level impacts. The empirical evidence collected will support an evidence base that can inform arts and cultural development policy decision making by Local and State Government. This study supports rural communities through regional research into community arts impact.

A conceptual framework using the *Theory of Change Framework* of Fulbright-Anderson, Kubisch and Connell (1998) is developed and tested in this study to understand community arts impact. The flexible framework developed contributes to the field by identifying and describing the inputs and processes of change involved in community arts projects and their resulting impacts which bring about community development. Chapter 2 provides details about the *Theory of Change Framework*, and Chapter 3 outlines how it is applied in the data analysis.

In addition to strengthening the impact evidence base, this study aims to innovate the community arts field by applying the Social Science theoretical frameworks of Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004) and Chaskin (2001) as further analytic tools to build theory. Chapter 2 gives an outline of Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) *Community Capitals Framework* and Chaskin's (2001) theories of community capacity building. Chapter 3 describes how both frameworks are used to analyse the data corpus.

Applying these frameworks to arts impact findings contributes to knowledge in the community arts and Social Science fields. Impact findings provide evidence to support a revised theoretical understanding for community arts engagement and its ability to build community capitals. The following section of this introduction chapter defines regional Australia, community arts, impact, and regional community life in relation to this study.

Contextualising the Research

In the context of this research, five key concepts need defining from the outset. These definitions form boundaries around the research topic and help to delineate the research focus. These five concepts include: regional Australia; the Western Downs community; community arts; impact; and processes of change. The following sections describe these key concepts.

1. Regional Australia

The first of these key concepts is the definition of regional Australia. The term Regional Australia is problematic and ill-defined (Martin, Richards & Woolcock 2005). Scholars such as Henningsgaard (2007) and Gray and Lawrence (2001) argue the notion of 'regional' to mean the space surrounding and at the edge of dominant metropolitan areas. Gray and Lawrence (2001) suggest that a tension exists between regional and metropolitan Australia in that the dominant social, economic activities, and political decision-making takes place outside of the 'regions'. This tension between regional and metropolitan places shapes the perception of the regions as disadvantaged and lacking in cultural resources (Gray & Lawrence 2001). This study defines regional as the geographic location outside of metropolitan areas.

Like regional Australia, defining what a community is holds similar challenges. Scholars such as Walmsley (2006) argue the term community has been used excessively with limited meaning attributed to it. Art researchers Martin Mulligan et al. (2006) argue the term community is used repeatedly and 'interchangeably' with 'neighbourhood' and can be determined by multiple modes of interaction, for example by profession, online or through religious identity. The study of Mulligan et al (2006) defines communities through the structure of their social bonds, ways of living, and how they relate to one another. Within the boundaries of this research a

community is characterised as people coming together in face to face relationships that share commonly held attitudes and practices, within a geographic setting (James, Nadarajah, Haive, & Stead 2012). Using these definitions, the case site of the Western Downs Region can be considered a typical regional Australian community.

2. The Western Downs Community

The regional community of Western Downs is the representative case study site chosen for this research. This local council region is characterised as a place based community that is geographically situated in the south-east corner of Queensland. It is approximately 210 kilometres west of the metropolitan city of Brisbane. The region is a predominantly rural district made up of inner, and outer regional townships and farming areas. The Warrego highway forms a link from the east edge of the region to its western boundary. The council region covers an area of 38, 039 square kilometres, and has a population of 30,180 people (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). It is one of the top twenty largest council regions in Queensland, and is made up of a collection of 100 communities, most of which are small (SGS Economics and Planning 2011). The Western Downs Region (WDR) encompasses three large towns including Dalby, Chinchilla, and Miles with approximately 10 850, 4 800, 1 200 residents respectively.

The WDR communities, encompassed in this geographic region, share commonly held attitudes, practices, and an awareness of communal life and personal ties (Walmsley 2006). However, these shared community characteristics are slowly evolving across the region. This change is due to the impact of climate change, the Global Financial Crisis, and population migration (Gray & Lawrence 2001). Considerable changes have taken place in WDR over the last five years and these have impacted on community life, and overall community wellbeing (Walton, McCrea, Leonard, & Williams 2013). Key impacts reported by Walton et al. (2013) include: gas and coal mining exploration; population migration; reduced health service provision and housing (Carrington & Pereira 2011; Petkova, Lockie, Rolfe, & Ivanova 2009).

The municipality of WDR has a thriving arts sector with multiple cultural organisations spread across the region. The region has one council run art gallery in Miles and five community run galleries in Chinchilla, Dalby, Bell, Kogan, and

Wandoan. Each of the larger communities in the region support historic villages or museums and the region has a variety of arts and cultural events such as opera at Jimbour House and the Western Downs Regional Artists Exhibition. The region hosts numerous community celebrations throughout the year such as town shows and festivals like the Tara Festival of Culture and Camel Races and the Chinchilla Melon Festival. Arts and culture in WDR are supported and nourished by the community arts projects funded by the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) initiative.

3. Community Arts

The scope of the RADF initiative and the projects funded under this program form a structure in which to define community arts. Defining community arts in this way highlights the manifestation of a geographically based community's own expression of culture (Williams 1996). The RADF initiative guidelines provide conceptual and ontological parameters around arts and cultural activity. The guidelines place limits on what can be subsidised under the program's funding policy and provide a definition of community arts for this research. Chapter 2 provides more information about the funds focus and guidelines.

A fundamental theoretical problem underlying the community arts evidence base has been the ontological instability of the concept of 'the arts'. The 'arts' are ever changing notion that are socially and culturally constructed. The very nature of the arts causes ongoing disagreement, debate, and contention (Belfiore & Bennett 2007b, 2010). The contention over arts definability lies at the heart of criticisms levelled at arts impact research regarding poor interpretation and concept definitions (Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005; Reeves 2002). In the absence of clear definitions to pin down concepts to be measured, building theories, and testing them becomes difficult.

Defining the academic field and practice of community arts in Australia has been an evolving thirty-year process (Badham 2010). An exact elucidation of the field thus far remains elusive because the practice has been labelled in multiple ways. For example, socially engaged arts, arts for social justice, (Badham 2010), participatory art, dialogical practices (Kester 2005), and community cultural development (Goldbard 2006a). The Australian writer Graham Pitts (2002) argues that contemporary community arts practice is not an art form as such. But is instead, a

‘process’ that is delivered through diverse mediums and methodologies. Likewise, American scholar Arlene Goldbard (2006b) classifies community arts practice as a collaborative process between artist and community where arts engagement combines activism and community development practices.

In this research, community arts are defined *as the collaborative process established between artist/s and community members that builds a working relationship in cultural production* (Williams 1996). This process creates an intersubjective space within community based projects that becomes the focus, the medium, and the artistic inquiry itself (Kester 1999). Community arts in this instance combines this collaborative process with community cultural development practices. Community cultural development is defined by the Australia Council for the Arts website (Australia Council for the Arts 2018) as ‘collaborations between professional artists and communities based on a community’s desire to achieve artistic and social outcomes.’ This means that a community’s expression of culture, such as local history and other forms of arts and cultural activity, can be included within this definition of community arts.

Therefore, community arts are the collaborative process established between artist/s and community members as the expression of community culture. The key element within this arts and cultural activity is participation. In answer to the definitional and ontological issues discussed earlier, the scope of this study focuses specifically on the arts and cultural activity outlined in RADF policy guidelines (Arts Queensland 2006). A copy of the arts and cultural activities found in the Arts Queensland (2006) RADF guidelines can be seen in Appendix K.

4. Impact

Selecting the RADF initiative to define and determine the creative engagements found in arts and cultural activity has helped to address criticism of definitional and ontological issues found in community arts research. Terminology and meaning surrounding impact has also been a vexing issue in arts impact research (Australian Expert Group in Industry Studies 2004; Badham 2010; Guetzkow 2002; Raw et al. 2011). Arts researchers have found defining and measuring impact difficult (Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005). Critics of arts impact research have noted that reaching a consensus on impact terminology has also continued to plague the field (Galloway

2009). A clear majority of arts impact studies identified in the literature use the posited definition by Landry et al. (1993, p. 6) to define impact (Galloway 2009; Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005).

Drawing from the literature review three key authors definitions of impact have guided the definition used in this research. First, Landry et al. (1993) states that impact is an active and changing concept that focuses on an association between cause and effect derived through policy outcomes. Landry's (1993, p. 21) definition of impact is well suited to the parameters of this research project because impacts are from the actions generated by an initiative. Second, Matarasso and Pilling's (1999) define arts impact within the context of a community arts project as the total amount of outputs (what we do) and outcomes (what differences) that may evolve over time as events unfold.

Combining Matarasso, Pilling (1999), and Landry's et al.'s (1993) definitions situate impact within a temporal framework that is structured around the effects of processes involved in community arts engagement. These affects can be immediate, short-term (weeks or months), and long-term (over one, or multiple years). Impact affects can also be continuous and constantly changing. Third, Guetzkow (2002) agrees with both Matarasso and Pilling's (1999) and Landry et al.'s (1993) definition of impact, however, he contends that it can be better understood and measured by greater clarification of who is impacted, and to what degree (Guetzkow 2002, p. 13).

Landry et al, Guetzkow, and Matarasso and Pilling's definitions of impact all have merit. Therefore, this study has integrated these determinants of impact into one hybrid definition. Impact is defined as:

.... a dynamic concept which pre-supposes a relationship of cause and effect. It can be measured by first identifying who is impacted and to what degree. The impact of a project is the sum of the outputs and outcomes, and an overall analysis of its results. Project impact has temporal dimensions that may change over time as subsequent events unfold.

Identifying and describing impact also requires a close examination of the mechanisms of change embedded within community arts activity and the effects they

have on participating communities and their members. Revealing these processes of change is an importance aim of this current research.

5. Processes of Change

This study chronicles the change processes activated by participation and organisation of community arts projects. Change processes in the scope of this research are bound by their connection to RADF project engagement and can be direct or indirect (Vogel 2012). Change processes that are direct and indirect are experienced on both an individual or community level. Process that bring about change occur over both short and long-time frames (Retolaza 2011). The community changes made through these creative processes can be identified in the series of actions or steps required to achieve project impacts (McGarvey 2006; Vogel 2012). Identifying the actions and steps necessary to bring about community change is one of the aims of this research. Change processes can be identified in complex community impacts as in the development of leadership skills involved in creative project collaborations.

Identifying the agents of change who are active in, and instigate change is important in describing and understanding community arts impact and developing a robust evidence base for the community arts field. This research aims to identify and describe the actions of these change agents through the use of a conceptual framework based on Theory of Change by Fulbright-Anderson, Kubisch and Connell (1998). The *Theory of Change Framework* will assist in linking change processes and their mechanisms to impact. This linking is vital to understanding community arts impacts and its potential role in developing resilient regional communities. The next section of this chapter maps out the entire thesis.

Thesis Overview

The thesis contains five chapters including this introduction. Chapter 2 begins with a brief historical view of Australian arts funding policy and a detailed review of the community arts literature. This provides a contextual background in which to understand the choice to utilise the RADF program in this study. In addition to this, a summary of claims made from the community arts literature is discussed which presents the research background to the field. Criticisms of community arts research

are examined and the reasoning behind research design decisions are discussed. The field's lack of a theoretical underpinning is revealed and descriptions of possible theoretical frameworks outlined. The decision to use a *Theory of Change Framework* to conceptualise and analyse research findings is debated, which is followed by summary of key points.

Chapter 3 describes the constructivist epistemological research approach used to answer the two research questions detailed on page 4. The chapter presents the reasons for using a case study site and the four-stage data collection strategy undertaken in the study. This chapter details the three data collection methods, sample frames, and procedures used to gather qualitative information from the case study site. The final three sections in this chapter explain the thematic analysis of the three data sets and a preliminary interpretation of findings. The first stage of the *Theory of Change Framework* employed in the study is outlined, followed by a self-reflection statement and conclusion.

Chapter 4 presents the findings from the thematic analysis which focuses on four interdependent impact themes that include Wellbeing, Social Connectedness, Developing Arts and Culture, and Building Capacity. The first theme describes the Wellbeing impacts identified in the case site which focuses on fun, enjoyment, and entertainment provided by community arts engagement. This section also examines the Wellbeing affects, both short, and longer-term, experienced by regional participants.

The second theme explores the Social Connectedness impacts created through community engagement in arts and cultural projects. This section highlights evidence about the supportive environments created by community arts projects that produce gains in community social capital. The theme illustrates how community arts engagement enhances a sense of community, improves cohesion, and encourages communal reciprocity. Community arts engagement generates social connectedness by providing meaningful participatory experiences for residents that develop community capacity and arts and culture in regional areas.

The third theme Developing Arts and Culture, highlights areas in which WDR is expanding local residents' knowledge of arts and culture. This theme describes how

community arts engagement builds community vision, identity, and local culture. The evidence outlines the short-and long-term influences involved in developing arts and culture, including building human, social, and political capital in regional townships.

The fourth theme describes the Capacity building impacts established through community arts participation. This theme explores the complex and non-linear evolution of capacity developed throughout WDR, with a special focus on two different community arts organisations. The concluding section of Chapter 4 consolidates the evidence presented across the four impact themes into the *Theory of Change Framework*. This framework, developed as part of this research, provides a concise summary of the inputs, processes of change, and impacts of community arts engagement in WDR.

Chapter 5 offers a discussion of the thematic findings and links them to the community arts and community development literatures. This chapter highlights the implications of the findings for community arts theory, community stakeholders, and government policy makers, and makes recommendations for future research. The chapter examines three study outcomes and establishes their contribution to the field of community arts and community development theory. Outcome 1 discusses the cumulative impacts of community arts engagement and how it activates the dynamic process of community capacity building. Outcome two explores the merits of using the theoretical frameworks used in the study for underpinning community arts impact. Outcome three describes the *Community Arts Theory of Change Framework* developed within this study and its potential development as an analytical tool for community and government stakeholders.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The previous chapter introduced the research problem, and located the researcher within the context of this study. It outlined the study's focus on community arts impacts, the two research questions, and the approach used to gather data to answer these questions. This was followed by a contextualisation of the study which formed boundaries around key research concepts. A description of regional Australia and the community of Western Downs provided a setting for the study. Definitions of community arts, impact, and community change processes clarified what the study is investigating. The concluding section of this chapter gave an overview of the thesis.

This literature review explores community arts as collaborative process and practice that resides within the larger notion of a community culture and community development. The first section of this review describes the influence arts funding policy has had on community arts and community cultural development. The second section summarises claims made in research focused on community arts benefits within a broad range of community arts related literature sets that include: health and wellbeing, mental health and social inclusion, civic participation, community development, and regeneration. The third section discusses the criticisms made of arts impact research. The fourth section discusses the need of the community arts field to develop a theoretical underpinning for understanding community arts impact. Section 5 outlines the *Theory of Change Framework* and its possible application to conceptualise and analyse community arts impacts. The concluding section provides a summary of the key claims made in the literature.

Defining Community Arts

Defining community arts is problematic because of the diverse ways in which art can be created within a community context (Guetzkow 2002; Hawkins 1993; Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005; Reeves 2002). This can be exemplified by the small but important prepositions used to describe how arts are operationalised, for example, for, in, of, with and by (Pitts 2002). Arts exhibited, or performed 'for' community excludes community in its co-creation and positions the community as audience. Arts created 'in' the community also places the community as the passive consumer by the artist who controls all aspects of its creation. Whereas, arts created 'with', 'of'

and ‘by’ the community places the artist as a collaborative partner in the art making process, giving the community varying degrees of decision making power and artistic control. In the context of this research art making ‘with’ community is how community arts processes can be defined.

The artistic practice of making art ‘with’ community has been called multiple names including: community art or participatory arts (Badham 2010); socially engaged arts (Kester 1999); arts for social justice (Sullivan, Petronella, Brooks, Murillo, Primeau, & Ward 2008); relational aesthetics (Bourriaud 2002); participatory art (Bishop 2006); dialogical practices (Kester 2005); and community cultural development (Goldbard 2006a). The extensive list of labels illustrates the lack of consensus on a definition for the practice and its creative processes by art critics and academics. The disagreement also reflects the broad underlying ontological tensions existing within the understanding and discourse of ‘the arts’ and ‘aesthetics’ more generally (Belfiore & Bennett 2010; Hawkins 1993). The following paragraphs will draw together the key elements of arts discourse on the processes and aesthetics of arts made within a community context to formulate a working definition of community arts for this research project.

Art critics and academics have directed their attention to describing the processes and aesthetics of art made ‘with’, and ‘of’ the community, in the hope of forming a definition of socially engaged, or relational art practices, such as community art. In the search for a definition, art critics highlight the importance of understanding the intersubjective space, or social framework between artist, participants, and community, in which relational art practices occur (Bishop 2006). Critics argue that the intersubjective space created through these community based projects becomes the focus, the medium, and the artistic inquiry itself (Bishop 2006, p. 179).

Therefore, the creative processes and working relationships activated within the community environment, along with the art project participants, the artist and the community members becomes in a sense the art of ‘intersubjective space’. Bishop (2006) argues that intersubjective space of relational arts practice is more concerned with the creative rewards of group collaboration, than the aesthetic deliberations of the art works produced. Like Bishop, other academics like Kester (2005) focus on

the intersubjective, or relational location of arts engagement in their attempt to define the practice of making art within a constituency.

Other academics have also focused on the relational location of socially engaged arts in the search for definitions. The term dialogical aesthetics, argued by Kester (2005) attempts to pin-down community arts by describing the processes and practice aesthetics of dialogical artists who work with communities. He describes dialogical artists as ‘performative, process-based practitioners’, who are ‘context providers rather than content providers’. Like Bishop (2006) Kester (2005) sees the artist’s creative collaboration with community and the context this provides as the focus of the art investigation. The collaborative encounters with community that dialogical artists work through, are created beyond the pacifying confines of institutional spaces such as art galleries and museums (Kester 2005). Both Bishop (2006) and Kester (2005) agree that emphasis needs to be placed on the dialogical processes and creative contexts involved in community art making, and not the art produced as a by-product of those processes when defining community arts (Bishop 2006).

Hawkins (1993) and Pitts (2002) in their attempt to define community arts also focus on the processes involved in the practice and the important role the artist plays in the coproduction of creative outcomes. Arts commentators define contemporary community arts as a practice, where artists apply collaborative art making processes within a community setting, which situates the artist within the community as the ‘cultural worker’ (Hawkins 1993; Pitts 2002). They also suggest that artists working with community form a method of art making that promotes a more genuine relationship and form of communication between artists, collaborative participants, and the community (Braden 1978). The artist or cultural worker coproduces creative works through a collective process and practice, where authorship is deemed immaterial (Hawkins 1993). The artist is a key component needed to activate the intersubjective space and dialogical processes necessary to creating art within a community context, and therefore the artist or artist/facilitator needs to be included in a definition of community arts.

Forming a definition of community arts necessitates a strong understanding of the community and its contextual environment. Arts researcher Deidre Williams (1997) argues that creating art within a communal context produces art as an expression of

that community's culture. Creating art within this context engages people in communicating shared ideas and values using creative tools such as 'the intuitive, the symbolic, the non-rational and the mythical' (Williams 1997, p. 4). An example of symbolic expression is evident in murals painted as part of a town's streetscape which depicts a local war hero as part of an Anzac centenary project.

Artist/facilitators involved in creating art with community make choices about artistic practices and collaborative processes that are strongly influenced by its context. Community culture and context also shape the intensity of intersubjective relationships and artistic outcomes generated through the arts projects. Therefore, community culture and context have a powerful influence on artistic practice, processes, and outcomes. Both elements need consideration when defining community arts.

Community arts when viewed through this lens of community culture lures the definition of the practice into the realm of community cultural development.

Scholars like Goldbard (2006a), Williams (1996), Mills and Brown (2004) define the community cultural development process where cultural democracy can be realised within an environment of social interaction and artistic production, it is a place where community artistic expression can communicate community difference, values and aspirations while developing a sense of place and community identity.

Williams (1997, p. 5) suggests that community cultural development:

...is a process concerned with fostering an environment in which cultural democracy can occur. This process recognises the importance of community as a fundamental to cultural expression, along with the space for social interaction and resources for artistic production. It values community artistic expression as an important way in which communities: can create a sense of place; affirm their values; assert their differences; and communicate their aspirations.

However, Hawkes (2003) views the process of community cultural development as a normal phenomenon that communities participate in while being, or becoming a community. The professional practice of community arts or community cultural development are seen to enhance this natural process of cultural development

through artists collaborating with communities to facilitate this process (Goldbard 2001). Together, the practice and the process lead constituencies to greater access and participation in cultural production, and to broaden the debate about defining community arts.

Government funding of community arts has granted considerable access and participation in cultural production for a variety of different constituencies.

Government funding of the arts has shaped arts policy and influenced the way people value and experience the arts in Australia (Hawkins 1993). Funding policy has also influenced the discourse and practice of community arts practice more specifically (Hawkins 1993).

Setting the Scene Through Arts Funding Policy

Throughout history patronage of the arts has been a domineering force in shaping peoples valuing and understanding of art (Hawkins 1993, p. 4). Patronage of the arts in its contemporary form of public funding, continually defines and redefines ‘what is art’ by funding what government determines to be of value (Hawkins 1993).

Australia’s public patronage of the arts has been controlled by the Australia Council for the Arts (Australia Council) since 1967 (Hawkins 1993). The Australia Council controls who receives arts funding and support at a federal government level, and is the Australian Federal Government’s arts funding and policy advisory body. Public funding for arts and culture has evolved in Australia over the last three decades. This evolution has resulted in State and Local Government funding partnerships, and given both levels of government more control in defining and valuing arts and culture across the nation.

Australian arts funding policy across the three tiers of government has shaped what we understand art to be, and placed government completely responsible for supporting and enabling its development (Hawkins 1993). The early public funding of the arts by the Australia Council divided the arts into two oppositional forms, one being ‘high’ art forms or high culture, and the other deemed ‘mass’ or low culture. Funding policy has placed the ‘high arts’ in an elevated position, as a superior form of culture, granting those who can discern its value high status (Hawkins 1993). An example to illustrate the difference between ‘high and ‘low’ arts, as defined by Australian arts funding policy, would be to compare Opera Australia’s production of

Carmen and a song writing and performances produced through a community arts project designed for disadvantaged youth. Elevating the arts above other forms of cultural expression has situated the 'arts' within a cultural class structure with the 'arts' elite at the top and 'mass' culture at the bottom, resulting in 'cultural dualism' (Hawkins 1993).

In the late 1960s and 1970s a shift in thinking away from cultural dualism took place within Australian arts funding policy. The change in thinking moved toward a 'democratised vision of the arts' and away from an 'elitist art tradition' (Gressel 2008). During this period of transition, questions about Australia's public funding of the arts were raised across the nation. Ideas of cultural pluralism and cultural rights were being championed by members of the Australia Council around this time. In 1973 this environment of cultural democracy helped create the Community Arts Committee which directed the Community Arts Program (Hawkins 1993). Democratising the arts in this way extended access to arts and cultural expression for all Australian citizens, specifically for those who had social, economic or cultural barriers preventing their participation (Badham 2010; Hawkins 1993).

The Community Arts Committee challenged the privileged position and notion of arts 'excellence and elitism', by extending access to arts and culture participation to all Australian people. Funding the Community Arts Program had a transformative effect on arts funding structures in Australia (Hawkins 1993). The Community Arts Committee focused the funding guidelines and direction of the program toward concepts such as: cultural access, participation, and cultural disadvantage.

This policy direction meant that funding became available to a wide range of geographic, economic and institutional forms of community, such as 'social welfare organisations, city councils, regional and community festival organisations, trade unions, prison authorities, migrant and community organisations, service clubs and societies' (Special Projects Fund, Minutes, 18-4-1973 as cited in Hawkins 1993, p. 36). Committee funding of projects that addressed cultural disadvantage in these community settings tied the identity of community arts practice to a social welfare rhetoric and influenced the developmental trajectory of the field (Hawkins 1993).

During the 1980s Australian politics embraced multiculturalism, and Australian society underwent significant economic, social, and cultural change which influenced thinking about arts and cultural funding in Australia (Hawkins 1993). This change mirrored amendments made to the Australia Council which underwent transformations in its developmental trajectory. In 1987 a new committee called the Community Cultural Development Committee replaced the Community Arts Committee, which saw a notable change in arts funding policy direction (Hawkins 1993). Donald Horne, the chairperson of the Australia Council, during this policy transition period, argued the merits of investment in cultural development (Horne 1988). The notion of arts funding as an investment in Australia's 'common cultural heritage', reframed the arts policy debate away from cultural duality toward a new focus of 'cultural rights' (Horne 1988).

The new arts policy debate addressing the 'cultural rights' of all Australians to access, celebrate, and participate in their 'common cultural heritage' set the scene for a momentous change in arts funding policy. Horne's influence brought community cultural development and the subsumed community arts, from the periphery onto centre stage of the arts funding policy debate (Horne 1988). Taking advantage of its new-found celebrity and armed with a new philosophical direction, community cultural development broadened the direction of community arts practice, and heightened the cultural, economic, and social outcomes it could achieve (Badham 2010). Community cultural development retained community arts' central principle of recognition of cultural diversity, and embraced the new objectives of community empowerment and community organisation (Hawkins 1993).

Community cultural development's new objectives for community empowerment and organisation opened the way for Australia Council for the Arts (ACFTA) to deliver cultural democracy to all Australians. Discussion of partnerships with State and Local Government and other non-cultural organisations, placed cultural matters at the forefront of local organisational agendas and opened new avenues of access and cultural democracy (Hawkins 1993). Donald Horne once again exerted his influence by enacting the principles of cultural democracy. His policy leadership forged stronger strategic partnerships between the Community Cultural Development

Committee, community arts practitioners, and other non-cultural organisations, like State and Local Government.

The strategy to promote arts and culture to Local Government by the Australia Council gained traction. During the late 1980s local government's awareness grew of the vital part culture plays in community life, and of the transformative effects of arts and cultural activity on the image, attractiveness, and liveability of the local council areas, together with its subsequent impact on economic development (Local Government and Arts Task Force 1991). In January 1991, the Local Government and Arts Task Force produced a report titled the *Local Government's Role in Arts and Cultural Development*, which documents the recognition Local Government gave to arts and culture as a catalyst for developing creative and culturally diverse communities, to affirm and assign value to cultural identity (Local Government and Arts Task Force 1991). The report recommends that partnership arrangements are the key to overcoming any perceived governance constraints, and Local Government is best placed to develop arts and culture at the local level (Local Government and Arts Task Force 1991).

The community cultural development Committee's plan to focus on State and Local Government proved a successful strategy that unlocked access and participation to arts and cultural activity for Australians including those in the regions. Mobilising partnerships with Local and State Governments dramatically recast the traditional system of patronage of the arts, and promoted the benefits of community cultural development to local councils and other organisations (Hawkins 1993). Though Federal Government remains in control of arts and cultural funding, an updated version of the patronage system capitalises on Local Governments' access to communities.

Dissemination of arts and cultural funds at the local level resulted in a greater proportion of Australian citizens having the opportunity to participate in locally determined arts and cultural activity. Marketing of arts and culture to local councils also allows culture to be viewed as a community resource which can deliver a range of economic, social, and environmental outcomes. Community cultural development became seen as a vehicle to generate new industries, jobs, tourism, and as a tool to develop local identity (Hawkins 1993).

Regional Arts Development Fund

In this environment of shaping new arts funding partnerships, the scene is set for the Queensland State Government to build and deliver a community cultural development program and funding agreement with Local Queensland Government Councils. In late 1991 the Goss Labor Government launched the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) initiative to support regional Queensland community cultural development.

The RADF is a Queensland arts funding program that has been operating for the last twenty-six years across the state. Arts Queensland (AQ) is the Queensland Government organization that oversees the RADF funding program. AQ supports the Queensland Arts Minister by facilitating the delivery of arts and cultural priorities such as the RADF for the Queensland Government (Arts Queensland 2011). Within the boundaries of this research the projects supported by RADF are interdisciplinary in nature and include activities that are expressions of local community culture and art making. Creative engagement like this helps to bring firm footings to ontological instability of ‘what is community arts’ and to construct a typology of community arts and cultural activity within a Local Government municipality.

The six overarching principles listed below regulate the eligibility of project applicants and provide an overview of the policy direction. These principles support the development of arts and culture across the regional areas of Queensland (Arts Queensland 2006). The six principles include:

- 1) professional artist/facilitators and arts workers;
- 2) locally determined arts and cultural priorities outlined in Government corporate plans;
- 3) regional arts development in Queensland;
- 4) cultural activities not supported by other State Government funding;
- 5) participation of regional community members in arts development projects; and
- 6) assist complementary Federal Government arts funding.

The eight funding categories listed below provide more specific criteria for applicants to obtain funding and help to shape arts and cultural development in regional Queensland. The RADF categories include:

- 1) developing regional skills;
- 2) building community cultural capacity;
- 3) interest-free art loans;
- 4) cultural tourism;
- 5) contemporary collections and stories;
- 6) regional partnerships;
- 7) concept development; and
- 8) art policy development and implementation (Arts Queensland 2006, p. 2).

The six-overarching RADF principles and the eight funding category guidelines help to structure the concept of community arts within a Local Government municipality.

Measuring the Value of Community Arts

The Australia Council's promoting of arts and culture to Local and State Government through key arts funding partnerships like the RADF initiative, has brought about the fervent acceptance of a community paradigm of arts and cultural participation and propagated cultural democracy in Australia (Hawkins 1993). However, selling the social, economic and community development benefits of the arts, combined with the pressure of economic rationalism and arts funding cuts, have established non-aesthetic criteria for valuing community arts and community cultural development benefits (Hawkins 1993).

The combination of political ideology and non-aesthetic benefit rhetoric has influenced arts funding structures, and framed community arts research around predominantly social or instrumental outcomes (Badham 2010). While research into community arts benefits have claimed multiple instrumental and community development outcomes, it has come at the expense of arts' intrinsic and aesthetic qualities of value.

Government funding of arts and cultural activity has greatly influenced how outcomes to individuals and communities are framed and valued. Academics who research community arts practice argue the discussion around arts and cultural value

is dominated by a rhetoric driven by a radical welfare agenda (Hawkins 1993). This social welfare rhetoric has cast community arts practice in a fixed position, framing how the practice is applied, known, and understood by those outside of the field. Social welfare claims from government funding program evaluations in turn maintains the status quo, and continues to drive arts and cultural policy funding goals for community arts projects and programs (Badham 2010; Hawkins 1993; Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005).

Community arts commentators and practitioners suggest the field needs to move away from non-aesthetic measures of value towards a renewed focus on intrinsic artistic and aesthetic values (Badham 2010; Belfiore & Bennett 2007b; Hawkins 1993). While this tension between non-aesthetic and aesthetic measuring of community arts value exists within the field, community arts activity takes place within a community context outside of the aspirations for arts excellence. Therefore, a better balance in reporting both non-aesthetic and aesthetic measuring of impact is required to provide a clear picture of community arts benefits.

Defining Community Arts Literature and Their Research Claims

Though research interest has grown regarding the intrinsic benefits of community arts participation and community cultural development, the need to establish an empirical evidence base for the field has also gained momentum (Merli 2002). In the search for evidence to describe community arts impacts, research has made claims of benefits across five interlinking and interdependent literature sets (Jermyn 2001).

The areas include:

- (1) Arts and Wellbeing Research;
- (2) Mental Health and Social Inclusion Research;
- (3) Community Empowerment Research;
- (4) Community Regeneration and Cultural Development Research; and
- (5) Social Impact Research.

However, it is by no means an exhaustive list of all research findings of community arts. The following section presents a succinct overview of the benefits of arts in each of the five literature sets which are of interest to this research project. Each of the five research areas details the points made by key Australian and international studies.

1. Arts and Wellbeing Research

A plethora of studies, program evaluations and literature reviews have been written in Australia and internationally concerning the wellbeing and health benefits of participation in arts and cultural activity. Studies in this area define wellbeing using the World Health Organisation's (1946, p. 100) statement on health: 'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'.

Australian research into community arts participation and its improvements to wellbeing and health has claimed evidence of individual and community level benefits. Studies by Mills and Brown (2004), Mulligan et al. (2006) and the literature review of Ware (2014) all claim findings in these two areas. Mills and Brown's (2004) study of art and wellbeing focuses on a social and environmentally sustainable view of health. Findings from the case study reports participation in community cultural development activity fosters: trust; creates knowledge; and builds social capital through collective cultural processes. Mills and Brown highlight the importance of building social capital between localised groups and specialised agencies in community arts programs in the form of bonding capital (trust and shared values) and bridging social capital (ties among people that connect groups). Developing social capital in this way builds more successful community arts programs and achieves greater levels of wellbeing.

Mulligan et al. 's. (2006) study titled *Creating Community: Celebrations, Arts and Wellbeing Within and Across Local Communities*, is an in-depth project that compares four diverse Victorian communities over a three-year period, focusing on the complex interconnections between community-based arts activities and wellbeing. Mulligan et al. (2006) argues that impacts such as wellbeing are difficult to measure and constrained by the overreporting of only instrumental outcomes. However, their research findings lay claim to individual benefits such as: reducing

social isolation; building individual skills in self-expression and communication; and creating new narratives of meaning and direction to individuals and communities.

Benefits on community level wellbeing include: team work; project goal delivery; creating community optimism; giving voice to those rarely heard; new community connections; fostering cultural vibrancy and a sense of belonging; and creating environmental awareness and appreciation. The study by Mulligan et al. (2006, p. 148) suggests that the depth of community arts impact is more important than the breadth of its impact when identifying longer-term benefits of arts and cultural activity. However, they also found that measurement of impact breadth is easier than arts and cultural impact depth. The researchers suggest that it is misguided to look for only single causal links or direct benefit links between project inputs and outcomes.

Ware's (2014) study, *Supporting Healthy Communities Through Arts Programs*, is a synthesis of research findings from 30 independent studies of indigenous communities in Australia, and internationally. Ware's study reports on the 'powerful and transformative' nature of participatory arts and cultural activities. Like Mulligan et al (2006), benefits and impact are associated with the indirect effects of program activity like the reduction of anti-social behaviour among youth. This is attributed to the diversionary nature of arts and cultural activities that provide safe environments for risk taking.

The impact findings from these populations are compatible with the listed benefits reported by Mills and Brown (2004) and Mulligan et al. (2006). Ware's (2014) study identifies impacts such as: improved physical and mental health; increased social inclusion and cohesion; improved social and cognitive skills; and importantly increased connection to, and maintenance of indigenous culture. A review of findings from Australian studies undertaken as part of this literature review has shown consistent claims of social, human, and cultural impacts.

International studies of wellbeing and health impact reported similar findings to their Australian counterparts. Studies by Clift, Hancox, Morrison, Barbel, Kreutz, and Stewart (2010b) and Clift and Hancox (2010a) which both focus on choral singing participation, reported significant individual wellbeing and health benefits across

singing groups with diverse community populations. Both studies directly link participation in community choral singing with wellbeing and health impacts. Identifying links between causal mechanisms and community arts benefits like those made in Clift's studies have addressed criticisms levelled at participatory art impact studies. Findings from these studies have shown gender impact differences, suggesting women are more likely to 'endorse' wellbeing benefits generated by participation than their male counterparts (Clift et al. 2010b). Six generative mechanisms were evident in both study findings suggesting links to choral singing and wellbeing, they include: positive affect on feelings of wellbeing; focused attention; deep breathing; social support; cognitive stimulation; and regular commitment to the activity (Clift & Hancox 2010a).

Similarly, the wellbeing benefits reported in Swindells, Lawthom, Rowley, Siddiquee, Kilroy, and Kagan's (2013) study were focused on outcomes to individuals involved in community arts projects such as visual arts, writing, and performative arts activities for older people and adults with a mental health diagnosis. Swindells et al. (2013) study applied an innovative approach to the analysis of qualitative data collected called the eudaimonic model of psychological wellbeing. Like Clift et al. (2010b), Swindells et al. (2013) reports that program activities supported: cognitive and creative challenge; and a sense of purposeful occupation.

However, unlike Clift et al. (2010b), Swindells et al. (2013) observed and reported on intrinsic and aesthetic benefits like autonomous self-expression and heightened concentration created through engagement in creative processes which produced affects called 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi 1992). Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1992) flow theory determines the outcome of an experience to be positive if the activity possesses opportunities for new skill acquisition that matches challenges to skill level and personal capacity, that results in skill building and increased self-esteem. These types of intrinsic benefits were reported in both the studies of Clift et al. and Swindells et al who reported improvements made to cognitive skills and communication, together with self-expression. Importantly, participants in the Swindells et al (2013) study reported the need for 'sustained' or

long-term engagement in the creative activities for psychological wellbeing impacts to be maintained.

Impacts identified in arts and wellbeing studies such as Mills and Brown (2004), Mulligan et al (2006), Ware (2014), Clift et al (2010b), and Swindells et al (2013) show strong similarities in the type of social and human capital effects they produce. For example, social capital impacts like increased social inclusion and cohesion, and human capital benefits such as improved cognitive skills, self-expression, and communication. Equally, scholars like Mulligan et al (2006) highlight the need to measure the depth and breadth, together with, direct and indirect impact effects of community arts participation.

2. Mental Health and Social Inclusion Research

A substantial amount of public funding has been invested into researching the impacts of mental health programs in Australia. The claims made from the research into mental health and social inclusion overall, are like those found in wellbeing. Studies of community arts participation in mental health programs have focused on individual benefits in four areas of common interest including: mental health recovery (Parr 2006; Spandler, Secker, Kent, Hacking, & Shenton 2007; Van Lith, Fenner, Schofield, Pawson, & Morgan 2009); personal empowerment and social inclusion (Hacking, Secker, Spandler, Kent, & Shenton 2008; Spandler et al. 2007; Wright et al. 2013); personal development and creative skill building (Heenan 2006; Stacey & Stickley 2010); and mental health and wellbeing (Stickley 2008; Syson-Nibbs, Robinson, Cook, & King 2009; Wright et al. 2013).

Australian research into mental health and recovery has been informed by the key study of Van Lith et al. (2009), this study gives a comprehensive overview of claims made by participatory community arts programs in mental health recovery. Van Lith et al.'s (2009) research has a therapeutic orientation that describes individual level mental health benefits through a conceptual framework that describes the relationship between: an individual's recovery; the art making process; and the context this takes place in. The framework represents the fundamental understanding of individual mental health recovery using community arts approaches, and presents future pathways for recovering individuals to integrate into the wider community and maintain mental health wholeness.

Likewise, Lawson, Reynolds, Bryant, and Wilson (2014) focused on impact at an individual level, however this study reports on findings from a two-year community arts project in a non-therapeutic community setting. Individuals reported improved mental health in six areas, they include: improved self-worth; recreated self-images away from illness labels; development of a sense of belonging; development of creative and other skills; found meaningful occupation; and improved self-management of mental health. While these claims were beneficial to participants, there were negative impacts reported by Lawson et al. (2014) study. These negative impacts include anxiety produced from project closure; frustration or pressure over meeting expectations; stress from judgements placed on creative work by others; and exposing emotions used to generate art works. Such findings are similar to those reported by Stacey and Stickley (2010). Both studies reported negative impacts, but these studies are in the minority. This appears to suggest that either few community arts programs have negative impacts or they are not being reported in the data. Scholars such as Merli (2002) and Reeves (2002) are highly critical of art impact claims remain apprehensive that few community arts based studies report negative impacts. Their concern stems from what they consider is a lack of balanced reporting of impact which suggest research bias (Merli 2002). This current study will approach impact with a balanced view to reporting both positive and negative impact. However, individuals overall reported significant positive benefits from mental health programs and projects that used participatory arts across all studies reviewed. This suggests that participation in the arts promotes social inclusion and improved mental health.

3. Community Empowerment Research

Community empowerment is defined as a process where people can organize themselves to bring about social and political change. The process is a dynamic continuum that allows people to progress from individuals acting alone, to small groups where people can work together and mobilise resources in collective action (Laverack 2001). The positive benefits claimed by arts research into civil participation and community empowerment overlap with research findings from wellbeing, mental health, and social inclusion. Australian research by Mills and Brown (2004) is an example of the interlinked, or even inter-dependent findings claimed by researchers. This study highlights how community empowerment and

civic participation generated through arts and cultural participation, can create community wellbeing. This suggests that community empowerment and wellbeing benefits are interlinked.

A synthesis of the literature written by researchers focused on community empowerment can be categorised into three overarching claims, including: community capacity development (Mills & Brown 2004; Mulligan et al. 2006; Sardu et al. 2012); promoting civic dialogue (Anwar McHenry 2011b; Kelaher, Berman, Dunt, Johnson, Curry, & Joubert 2012; Sardu et al. 2012); and the development of community resilience to change (Anwar McHenry 2011c; Burnell 2013).

Mills and Brown (2004) argue that community capacity development claims can be attributed to the transformational approaches used by community arts. Community arts approaches foster the creation of community knowledge, trust, and active citizenship which are necessary for joint decision-making about complex social, environmental, and economic issues. Equally, Anwar McHenry's (2011c) study of the remote Murchison Region in Western Australia, highlights how community arts participation promotes civic dialogue by facilitating better communication between government and community.

Likewise, the international study of Sardu et al. (2012) argues the benefits of community arts projects in promoting civic dialogue. The Italian villagers of Ulassai in Sardu's study acted together to affect bottom-up decisions that built organisational and community capacity by aiding citizens to think, communicate, plan, and act as a community. Sardu et al.'s (2012) study used Laverack's (2001) operational domains as a framework to measure community empowerment impacts. This suggests that frameworks from other research fields like community development are useful when investigating community arts impacts on a community level.

Like Sardu et al. (2012), Burnell (2013) argues that cultural action, accessed via the arts, is a resource that can release latent community assets and capacity. Burnell (2013) goes further, by suggesting that empowering communities through civil participation builds agency and competency, leading the community to develop adaptive capacity and resilience to change. This suggests that claims of community

empowerment and civil participation are underpinned by a process that is activated by community arts.

4. Community Regeneration and Cultural Development

The government development strategy of regenerating communities, popular in the late 1990s, became common place internationally and across Australia (Kingma 2001). Regenerating communities is about empowering communities to find solutions to locally based issues. Arts and cultural projects can facilitate the economic, social, and environmental revitalisation of a geographic area through the development of a community's unique culture (Kay 2000). Evans (2005) confirms the importance of culture in the process of regeneration. Evans highlights the unique ability of the arts to reach the parts of the regenerative process that other activities are unable to reach. He argues it is the symbolic potential of the arts to assist the regenerative process by harnessing community heritage, identity, and cultural expression (Kay 2000).

Community cultural development activates cultural expression and utilises the creative capacity of individuals and groups in processes that unify and empower communities. Cultural development projects build social connections, create innovation, and regenerate communities (Kingma 2001). Equally, community cultural development projects produce wide-ranging economic, social, and environmental impacts, which have ongoing multiplier effects in regional communities (Kingma 2001).

The Kay (2000) study of four arts projects in Scotland suggests, arts and cultural activity can be used in training and employment as they are attractive to young people, are versatile, and wide ranging in forms of activity; are non-threatening to the marginalized; encourage economic investment; develop active citizenship, and promote volunteerism. Arts and cultural activity generates community consultation; involvement; and ownership, all vital aspects of the regeneration process (Kay 2000). This suggests that participation in community arts activity promotes communal problem solving and creates project environments that are supportive and attractive to community members.

5. Social Impact Research

Research into the impact of community arts has been an ongoing process over the last three decades. This type of research became popular in the UK in the 1990s during a period of significant government investment in arts regeneration projects and programs. Demands for evidence of impact by government decision makers to inform policy and funding decisions, initially focused on economic impact. However, this research focus changed over time to consider the social impact of the arts. Research into understanding community arts outcomes has changed emphasis from the term 'benefits' to that of 'impact' as a way of broadening research direction to encompass both positive and negative effects.

Within the social impact research literature two definitions of impact are used repeatedly. Multiple community arts impact studies use the definition of Landry et al. (1993) and Matarasso and Pilling (1999). Landry et al. (1993) proposes the idea of a continuum of impact effects from positive to negative brought about by arts and cultural activity on individual people and their communities. Landry's findings suggest that community arts impacts have multiple dimensions. Landry et al. (1993, p. 8) defines impact as:

...a dynamic concept which pre-supposes a relationship of cause and effect... it can be measured through the evaluation of the outcomes of particular actions, be that an initiative, a set of initiatives forming a policy or set of policies which form a strategy.

Matarasso and Pilling's (1999, p. 25) definition of arts impact states that:

The impact of a project is the sum of the outputs and outcomes, an overall analysis of its results: unlike the outcomes, the impact of a project may change over time as subsequent events unfold.

As stated in Chapter 1 this research draws on these two definitions to form an integrated definition of impact. Combining these definitions has brought the

knowledge of key community arts studies together into one broad explication of impact.

The broad ranging evidence gathered in Williams' (1996) Australia Council study, suggests long-term social, educational, economic, and artistic impacts can be identified through arts and cultural participation. The international study of Matarasso (1997) however, focused only on social impacts which became a good counterbalance to the dominance of economic impact studies funded by the UK government in the 1990s.

Research conducted by Williams (1996) and Matarasso (1997) of public arts intervention programs describe numerous social and community impacts. The study by Williams (1996) identified thirteen long-term social impacts, these include: hope; optimism for the future; fun and entertainment; active citizenship; inclusiveness; social connectedness and community cohesion; creative thinking and imagining. Likewise, Matarasso (1997) identified similar social impacts, but this study claims over fifty different types of short-and long-term social impacts. In addition to the social impacts, Williams (1996) defines other community impacts that are inter-dependent, and which overlap with other research discussed previously. They include: people-place connections; cooperative problem solving; skills and capacity building; mental and physical health benefits; along with community and personal wellbeing. This suggests that impacts gathered from both studies are predominately positive, indicating that community arts processes brought multiple benefits which are integral to active participation.

A consistent issue within social impact research has been the debate about the overreliance on reporting instrumental impact of arts and cultural participation. The *Australian Expert Group in Industry Studies (AEGIS) Stage Two Report (2004)* on social impacts of arts and cultural activity, reports that researchers in the cultural sector are wanting to redirect understanding and measurement of arts impact toward intrinsic benefits and value. The report states that by changing the focus from just the instrumental impacts to the intrinsic a complete picture of impact evidence may be revealed (AEGIS 2004).

The McCarthy, Ondaatje and Zakaras (2004) study focuses directly on this debate of intrinsic over instrumental impacts of the arts, presenting a convincing argument against the current policy approach of valuing only instrumental impacts of arts participation. Finding a mid-ground, or a more holistic notion of impact reporting is a current argument taken up by scholars in the field such as: Badham (2010), Galloway (2009), and Ramsey White and Rentschler (2005). All four scholars agree that a holistic approach to impact research will provide a more precise and balanced understanding of arts impact.

Researchers argue the measurement of community arts impact is framed through a bureaucratic lens which frequently ignores the difficult to measure intangible, intrinsic or aesthetic benefits (Badham 2010; McCarthy, Ondaatje & Zakaras 2004). Arts researchers argue that the intrinsic impacts of the arts are innate within the aesthetic encounter, or personal experience of the arts (McCarthy, Ondaatje & Zakaras 2004). An example of this would be the measurement and reporting of employment orientated skills which are instrumental impacts, in contrast to intrinsic impacts such as the reporting of intellectual and emotional absorption called 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi 1992). Government policymakers view arts and cultural activity as a vehicle to deliver social policy agendas, such as health, community well-being and development outcomes (Australian Government 2013; McCarthy, Ondaatje & Zakaras 2004), rather than necessarily producing aesthetic impacts. Public funding accountability and scarcity of arts funding has led arts advocates to justify its value through instrumental impacts to secure public resources (Reeves 2002). This has come at the cost of an unbalanced and underdeveloped evidence base tipped firmly in favour of reporting only instrumental impact (Kelly & Kelly 2000; Reeves 2002).

The study by McCarthy, Ondaatje and Zakaras (2004) has developed a continuum framework for understanding both intrinsic and instrumental benefits to rectify this imbalance. The McCarthy, Ondaatje and Zakaras (2004) framework is significant because it opens the way to build a more holistic understanding of both the intrinsic and instrumental impact. This study takes on board the recommendations of McCarthy et al (2004) by attempting to identify intrinsic and instrumental impacts

using the *Theory of Change Framework*, together with describing and aggregating both types of impact at the individual, organisational, and the community level.

Australian and international impact researchers agree that measuring social impact of community arts is a complex task, which has resulted in heavy criticism of the research field (Belfiore 2006). Critics of arts impact research are vocal in their condemnation of methodologies used to measure and understand impact. They argue it is plagued by numerous problems and perceived flaws (Belfiore 2006; Merli 2002). The complexity of art impact research exists in understanding and measuring the interplay between people and their creative expression of culture, which so far remains just beyond the reach of inquiry using conventional evaluation processes (Jermyn 2001; Matarasso 1997; Reeves 2002).

An example of this is Belfiore's (2006) questioning of Matarasso's (1997) research claims and methodology. Belfiore (2006) argues that much of Matarasso (1997) fifty impact findings are 'fuzzy', and at times 'obscure'. Claims such as 'provide a route to rehabilitation and integration for offenders,' or 'give people influence over how they are seen by others,' are vague (Belfiore 2006, pp. 25-6). However, Galloway (2009) argues the difficulties and complexities experienced in arts impact research are common problems reflected in other social impact research. The complexity of social milieus in which interventions take place mean that study results are very rarely repeated. Therefore, this study will use a research approach that has a philosophy which holds that human knowledge is constructed through a person's viewpoint and experience of the environment around them (Gray 2009).

Summary of Community Arts Research Claims

Reviewing the five broad literature sets suggests that an evidence base about the field of community arts is evolving. The claims presented in each sub-section have common themes that demonstrate arts and cultural participation impacts on people at both an individual and community level. Evidence from the literature also suggests that benefits and impacts interlink, overlap, and are at times interdependent, making measurement and understanding of the benefits a complex task. The interlinked nature of impacts suggests an underlying process at work within community arts activity.

A distinct lack of literature pertaining to community arts impacts in regional Australia suggests more research needs to be completed to fill this gap in the evidence base. The lack of empirical studies into arts impacts in regional settings in Australia (Anwar McHenry 2009), and more specifically regional Queensland, is notable within the literature. The current research draws upon this literature to redress this gap and establish a contextualisation of regional community arts impacts, identifying how these impacts affect community organisations and community structures in the short-and long-term (Reeves 2002; Shaw 1999). Equally, the study's approach will focus on the broader community level rather than just the individual (Anwar McHenry 2009; Guetzkow 2002). This study will explore impacts from an economic, social, and cultural perspective, and report on both positive and negative community arts impacts as suggested by Reeves (2002). In addition to this, the study will analyse the data in search of intrinsic, as well as, instrumental impacts, as a balanced approach is suggested by arts scholars McCarthy, Ondaatje, and Zakaras (2004). Scholars from within and outside of the field have been critical of important aspects of community arts research such as study design, methodology, and theory.

Criticisms of Arts Research

Community arts research over the last thirty years has come under heavy criticism for methodological issues inherent in past research and program evaluations. At present research into the social impact of the arts has no universally accepted methodology (Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005). The AEGIS (2004) study notes that arts impact research inadequately reports the methodologies used in studies, and research measures are ill-defined. The effect of this deficiency in reporting means that the research is criticised for its lack of rigour, and poor structures in which to make results comparative across different studies (Merli 2002; Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005). Other critics highlight the issues of small sample size (Guetzkow 2002; Jermyn 2001; McQueen-Thomson, James & Ziguras 2002), and the need to analyse well defined representative samples (AEGIS 2004; McQueen-Thomson, James & Ziguras 2002).

Scholars from within and outside of the arts field have been critical of research into the impacts of community arts. The following section will highlight the key

criticisms and issues of the research field. The areas of criticism found in the literature include:

1. The lack of theoretical frameworks for understanding community arts impact;
2. The lack of a conceptual framework for underpinning community arts impact; and
3. Research design and methodology issues.

1. Lack of a Theoretical Framework for Underpinning Community Arts Impact

Australian and international scholars agree that the field of community arts lacks consensus on a clearly defined theoretical framework, thus diminishing the ability of the field to form a robust academic discussion about arts impact (Clift et al. 2010b; Kelaher et al. 2012; Mulligan et al. 2006; Raw et al. 2011). Merli (2002) argues that research into the social impact of participation in arts has little theoretical grounding, resulting in what he describes as a field that lacks methodological rigour.

Weaknesses such as a clear theoretical framework may in part explain the constant criticism levelled at research claims by academics (Raw et al. 2011).

Raw et al. (2011) and Kelaher et al. (2012) suggest that interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks may best serve to accommodate the methodological complexity of the practice. However, Belfiore and Bennett (2010) argues that a ‘one size fits all cure’ approach to theorising arts impact may only prove to over simplify what is a complex task. The literature suggests that by changing the epistemological model used to underpin arts impact research a clear theoretical framework may emerge that will accommodate community arts practice-based methodologies (Belfiore 2006; Belfiore & Bennett 2007a; Galloway 2009). The following section presents these suggested theoretical approaches and examines their merits regarding this research.

Humanities-based Approach to Understanding Impact

Belfiore and Bennett (2007b) argue a rethinking of arts impact research is necessary. They posit a humanities-based theoretical approach to understanding arts impact (Belfiore & Bennett 2010). They suggest a critical-historical examination of the traditional intellectual notion of the ‘transformative powers of the arts’, as a source of knowledge to better understand the aesthetic experience involved in arts

participation (Belfiore & Bennett 2007b, 2010). Belfiore and Bennett (2007a) argue that the combination of ‘social, cultural and psychological factors’ are involved in shaping the aesthetic experience.

A humanities-based approach focused on the individual’s aesthetic experience suggests three types of ‘determinants of impact’ (Belfiore & Bennett 2007a). They include those that are ‘inherent to the individual who interacts with the artwork; those that are inherent to the artwork (or arts experience); and those that involve all the environmental factors’ which are extrinsic to both the individual and the artwork (Belfiore & Bennett 2007a, p. 227). All three determinants of impact make up the individual’s overall experience of the arts. The individual’s quality of aesthetic experience and the characteristics of that contact are all key considerations when investigating impact (Galloway 2009).

However, in this research setting the arts experience is in a community context which adds further layers of complexity to the aesthetic experience of an individual. Therefore, to investigate community level impact the approach used needs to explore more than just the individual’s aesthetic experience. It needs to examine groups involved in shared experiences and all the environmental factors that operate around and within the community arts activity itself. Belfiore and Bennett (2007a, 2010) argue that for any worthwhile discussion to take place around the measurement of impact, a more advanced understanding of the ‘interaction’ between the individual, and the arts experience needs to be developed. However, McCarthy (2004) points out that little scholarly attention has been paid to understanding community level engagement in arts and cultural activity. Likewise, Galloway (2009) agrees with this assessment and suggests that understanding community arts impact can be accomplished through the input of Social Science fields of research.

The humanities-based approach advocated by Belfiore and Bennett (2007) is primarily focused on the individual’s aesthetic experience of the arts which is not entirely suitable for understanding impacts attributed to community arts engagement at the community level. This approach lacks the theoretical complexity needed to flesh out what processes are taking place within community and their resulting impact.

Social Science Theoretical Approaches

The search to identify a robust framework that can accommodate the complexity of community level interactions found in community arts engagement has led to the examination of four Social Science frameworks. The four theoretical frameworks considered include: *Six Attributes of Social Resilience* by Maclean, Cuthill and Ross (2013); *Dimensions of Community Resilience Framework* by Magis (Magis 2010), *Building Community Capacity* by Chaskin (2001); and the *Community Capitals Framework* of Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004). The following discussion highlights the merits of each framework regarding this research and the reasoning behind decisions to use two of the four frameworks to inform this study.

Social Resilience Frameworks

Six Attributes of Social Resilience by Maclean, Cuthill and Ross (2013) and the *Dimensions of Community Resilience Framework* by Magis (2010) were two frameworks explored during the initial stages of the research. These frameworks were examined because they investigate the complex interactions taking place within communities that lead to community change and adaptability (Maclean, Cuthill & Ross 2013; Magis 2010). Whilst the emphasis of these frameworks was not directed at arts and cultural engagement itself, their focus on community social dynamics and capital resources development such as social capital, were important to understanding the processes at work in community level arts impact.

The first of these studies to be examined was that of Mclean, Cuthill, and Ross (2013). This study provided six attributes of social resilience which informed this study's understanding of the complex dynamics at work within a community when they work together to cope with change. Understanding about these six attributes presented similarities and links to community arts engagement benefits claimed in the arts research literature. An example of the attributes suggested by Maclean, Cuthill, and Ross (2013) include community networks which involve the social processes that support individuals and groups in a geographic place (Maclean, Cuthill, & Ross 2013). This attribute of social resilience is similar in effect to those of Mills and Browns' (2004) and Mulligan et al. (2006) arts and wellbeing studies which demonstrated how community arts built community networks, capacity, and renewed community optimism by focusing collective efforts toward a common goal

like a theatre performance event or celebration. Further examples of the synergy between social resilience attributes and community arts is evident in projects that improve community participation in local governance and communal empowerment (Sardu et al. 2012), and facilitate people-place connections and community identity (Mulligan et al. 2006).

The interconnections identified in the six attributes framework of Maclean, Cuthill, and Ross (2013) resonate with the *Dimensions of Community Resilience Framework* of Magis (2010) and the findings from the community arts literature. Magis (2010) suggests that the dimensions assist the complex operation of community resilience to change. The dimensions include the existence, development, and engagement of communal resources, together with the community members believing they can instigate change and improve wellbeing through collective action. Collective action that improves wellbeing requires planning and implementation with a strategic vision that has equity and social justice at its heart. Magis' (2010) dimensions of Community Resilience share multiple connections to community arts practice, processes, and outcome benefits argued by Goldbard (2006b) in her book about community cultural development.

The social resilience frameworks of Maclean, Cuthill, and Ross (2013) and Magis (2010) do provide a strong underpinning for community change processes, however they lack the detail required to make explicit theoretical connections between community arts and the development of community capitals. Both frameworks of Maclean, Cuthill and Ross (2013) and Magis (2010) have drawn heavily on community development theory which appears to provide the detail necessary to underpin community arts impact. These studies have influenced the decision to explore Chaskin's (2001) definitional framework for understanding community capacity and Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) *Community Capitals Framework*.

Chaskin's Community Capacity Framework

Chaskin's (2001) *Community Capacity Framework* makes explicit the processes taking place within a community. Chaskin's framework considers the resources both human and material found in individuals and organisations of a community. The framework takes into consideration the social network relationships, leadership, and mechanisms necessary to communal participation in collective action and problem

solving. Chaskin's (1999) definition of capacity is understood at the community level and involves the reciprocal actions of human and social capital working together through organised efforts to problem solve collective issues which result in community wellbeing benefits.

Chaskin's (1999, p. 4) definition of community capacity states:

Community capacity is the interaction of human, organizational, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of a given community. It may operate through informal social processes and/or organized efforts by individuals, organizations, and the networks of association among them and between them and the broader systems of which the community is a part.

This flexible framework can help to identify and describe the processes underpinning community arts practice methodologies and will assist in highlighting community level impacts.

Community Capitals Framework of Flora, Flora and Fey (2004)

The Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004) framework was examined in this literature review because it identifies the interrelationships that exist between the social system of a community and the environment around it. Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) theoretical framework is structured around seven different, but interrelated community capitals, which identify community resources as assets that can change and strengthen communities. The following paragraphs will provide a brief description of each of the seven capitals, and presents a concise summary of how community capitals theory relates to arts impact. The community capitals illuminated in Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004) theoretical framework captures the complex nature of regional communities, and the community resources that they have at their disposal.

(1) **Natural capital** encompasses the geology, soil, air, water and living things or ecosystem goods of a geographic location, including the ecosystem services like waste assimilation that human life depends upon (Costanza, d'Arge, de Groot,

Farber, Grasso, Hannon, Limburg, Naeem, O'Neill, Paruelo, Raskin, Sutton, & van den Belt 1998; Goodwin 2003). Natural capital is shaped by human activity both individual and collective, with a growing awareness of the interdependent relationship between human welfare and our natural environment (Magis 2010; Pretty & Ward 2001). Community arts can provide opportunities to raise awareness about environment sustainability and community wellbeing (Mills & Brown 2004; Williams 1996, 1997) through projects that link cultural capital building with natural capital assets found in ecosystems of geographic communities like a lake.

(2) **Built capital** comprises the built infrastructure and physical assets of a community, for example homes, roads, public buildings, and water supply systems. Built capital is created through the investment of financial capital in enterprises that have human welfare outcomes that develop human capital resources like knowledge and skills (Butler Flora, Flora & Fey 2004; Goodwin 2003). Community arts activity can produce aesthetic impacts to infrastructure enhancing the use and look of public buildings and spaces, which in turn influences community wellbeing (Mulligan, 2006).

(3) **Financial capital** includes the financial resources available to civil and social entrepreneurship that invests in an activity that produce goods and services (Goodwin 2003). This capital measures the financial circumstances of a community and appraises how a community can leverage external resources for future projects (Fey, Bregendahl & Flora 2006; Goodwin 2003). Financial capital helps activate the productive activities in advance of their returns back to the economy (Goodwin 2003). Access to financial capital is necessary to initiate community arts activity, which provide financial and other benefits back to the community, like cultural tourism (Hawkes 2001).

(4) **Political capital** indicates the level of access to power, resources, and political leadership a community, group or individual possesses (Fey, Bregendahl & Flora 2006; Turner 1999). This includes the ability of groups or individuals to affect policy-making and legislative change (Fey, Bregendahl & Flora 2006; Turner 1999). Political capital demonstrates people's ability to articulate ideas and be agents of change that contribute to community wellbeing (Aigner, Flora & Hernandez 2001). Social and economic capital influences the production of political capital within a

community by connecting community development with Local Government and private investment (Turner 1999). This means that if an arts organisation has strong political influence within a community they have greater access to resources, both economic and social, that they can mobilise to bring about change (Aigner, Flora & Hernandez 2001; Turner 1999).

(5) **Human capital** is the embodied attribute possessed by an individual or collectively as individuals in a community, that includes traits such as: skills, abilities, intelligence, training, health, experiences, and judgment; both inherited and learnt (Becker 1962; Goodwin 2003). These attributes are a collective resource that can be directed toward accessing outside financial and material assets including knowledge to develop community (Butler Flora, Flora & Fey 2004; Chaskin 2001). Leadership is a component of human capital which reflects a leader's ability to be conciliatory, inclusive, and participatory (Becker 1962; Butler Flora, Flora & Fey 2004). Leadership skills can be focused toward developing community resources and proactively shaping the community's future (Becker 1962; Butler Flora, Flora & Fey 2004). This is confirmed in Radbourne's (2003) study which argues that arts leadership that is inherently collaborative, creative, and visionary, and that works to maintain community cohesion can help to sustain regional communities who face social and economic decline.

(6) **Cultural capital** exists in the way people 'know the world'; their values, beliefs, and assumptions about how things operate within their society. For Bourdieu (1986) cultural capital can be linked to the appreciation and consumption of types of culture that classify people into differentiated class groups. He argues that cultural capital possesses three distinct manifestations which he describes as embodied, objectified, and the institutionalized state. Embodied cultural capital (or habitus) is defined as the system of inherited characteristics, tastes, and actions of an individual that is associated with social class (Bourdieu 1986, p. 47). Cultural capital is evident in symbolic or objectified forms such as language, books, and art, and can be observed in rituals, ceremonies, and traditions (Bourdieu 1986, p. 47).

In its institutionalised state, cultural capital demonstrates the value placed on an individual through the awarding of an academic qualification (Bourdieu 1986, p. 47). Cultural capital shapes what voices are heard, and the power to influence

proceedings within the social or class group (Butler Flora, Flora & Fey 2004; Jeannotte 2003). It also refers to an individual's social mobility and social influence (Bourdieu 1986; Butler Flora, Flora & Fey 2004; Jeannotte 2003). Creativity and innovation are manifestations of cultural capital which require nurture and support (Emery & Flora 2006). Jeannotte's (2003) study suggests that cultural participation involved in community arts reinforces links between individuals, which encourages norms of behaviour, a willingness to collaborate with others, civil engagement, and social capital building. This cooperation among individuals fostered by cultural participation are key elements to maintaining and enhancing social cohesion within communities (Jeannotte 2003).

(7) **Social capital** is a complex concept which highlights the connections forged among individuals, groups, organisations, and communities. It is the 'social glue' that holds relational activity together resulting in positive or negative outcomes (Coleman 1988; Putnam 2000). Social capital promotes social norms of behaviour that encourage co-operation between people and civil society. Norms such as reciprocity, trust, honesty, and reliability all constitute social capital (Fukuyama 2001; Woolcock & Narayan 2000).

Three forms or dimensions of social capital exist within community groups (Woolcock & Narayan 2000), they include: bonding, bridging, and linking capital. Bonding capital describes the close ties between like-minded people, such as friends and family, that reinforces homogeneity (Granovetter 1973). Bridging capital denotes the loose ties between people from different walks of life that connect organisations together in heterogeneous groups (Granovetter 1973; Narayan 1999). Linking capital conveys the connections between groups or organisations with those in positions of power and authority who have control over greater resources. This type of capital requires multiple connections to organisations across different sites and promotes heterogeneous social ties (Aldrich & Meyer 2014; Woolcock & Narayan 2000).

The multiple capitals of the Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004) theoretical framework interact in complex community social processes which reflect the complications involved in measuring impact and community change. Emery and Flora (2006) tested this framework on a community change process initiated in

Nebraska. Applying the framework allowed researchers to understand the interconnections between capitals, and to observe the impact of these capitals on the community. Emery and Flora (2006) argue social capital is the key component of the *Community Capitals Framework*, which can shape the growth or decline of the other community capitals and facilitate the process of capitals building upon each other.

The *Community Capitals Framework* demonstrates how community capitals, as community resources, can be leveraged to solve community problems such as reducing graffiti, or invested in shared community objectives like fostering local leadership (Emery & Flora 2006). The interplay of these community capitals reflects the complex processes embedded within communities (Emery & Flora 2006). A simplified example of this interplay of community capitals, can be illustrated in the introduction of group singing workshops by a local arts organisation. The singing workshops encourage the learning of skills and the gaining of new knowledge. Learning new skills triggers the building of confidence within the individual resulting in human capital gains. The workshop environment allows individuals within the community to meet socially over an extended period. The relationships and networks formed in the workshops build trust and increased communication among community members, resulting in social capital gains.

The transformative power of learning, like that suggested in the example, can trigger effects and gains in other community capitals. Applying this capitals framework to analyse impacts helps to clarify the complexity of impact effects on community level arts engagement and provides a strong theoretical underpinning for community arts processes and practice (Butler Flora, Flora & Fey 2004; Magis 2010). Figure 1 below illustrates the impact of community arts engagement on Butler Flora, Flora, and Fey's (2004) *Community Capitals Framework*.

Chaskin's (2001) *Community Capacity Framework* was applied to the findings in this study and adapted to reflect how community arts engagement builds community capacity. Figure 2 details Power's *Community Capacity Building Community Cultural Development (CCB CCD) Framework* which developed as a result. Chaskin and Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) frameworks work well together to locate and elucidate community change processes and impacts. The *Community Capitals Framework* is a tested theoretical structure in which to understand the complex

interconnectedness of community capitals at work in community arts engagement. Both frameworks deliver a breadth and depth of theoretical knowledge in which to understand community arts impacts and the complex processes at work in creating community change.

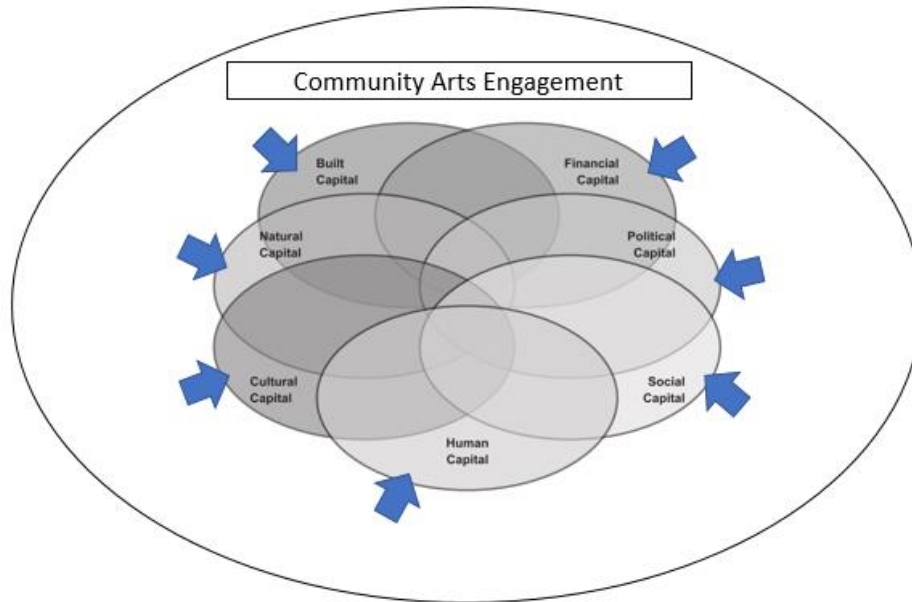


Figure 1 Power's (2018) Community Arts Engagement Impacting on the Community Capitals Framework of Butler Flora, Flora, and Fey (2004).

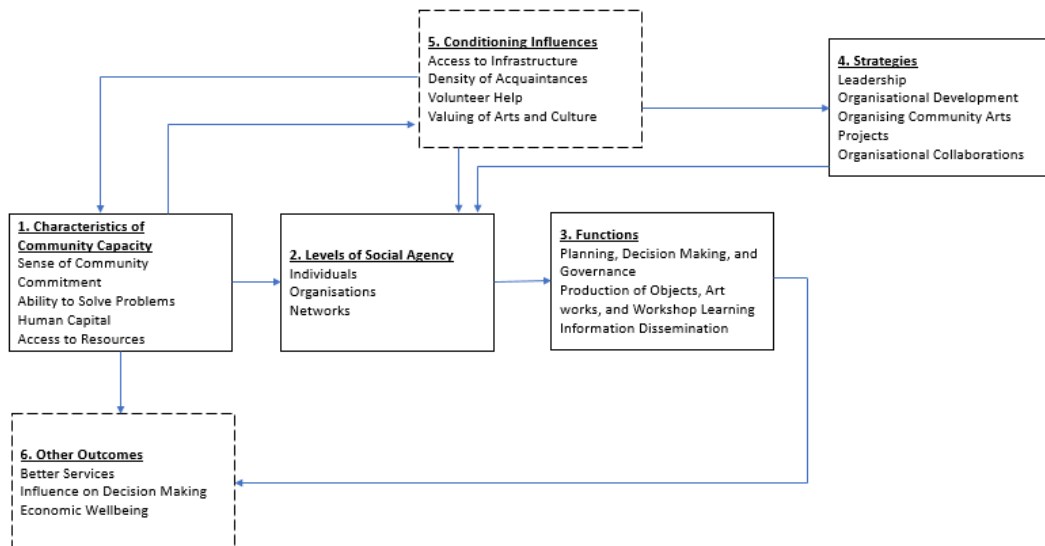


Figure 2 Power's (2018) Community Capacity Building Community Cultural Development (CCB CCD) framework.

Chaskin (2001) and Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) frameworks provide the flexibility to accommodate community arts diverse practice methodologies, project

scopes, and community applications. Both frameworks inform the research design of this study and support the analysis of research findings. In the context of this study, focusing an analysis on community capitals and community capacity building provides a way to tease out the interconnected processes operating in and between capitals triggered by the community arts activity funded by the RADF initiative. Making sense of the impacts generated by the RADF initiative requires the application of a strong theoretical underpinning and a sound conceptual framework.

2. The Lack of a Conceptual Framework Understanding Community Level Arts Impact

Scholars from the arts impact field have called for the exploration of possible interdisciplinary conceptual frameworks to be employed in addressing the complex and wide-ranging community arts practice applications and program contexts (Badham 2010; Raw et al. 2011). Galloway (2009, p. 133) suggests theory based evaluation (TBE) approaches may present ‘an ontologically more robust research orientation’ for studying arts impact. The ontological foundation of the TBE approaches are founded within the realist tradition of the Social Sciences. An important component of these approaches brought from realism is its ‘stress on the mechanics of explanation’ (Harré 1972; Pawson & Tilley 1997, p. 55). Theory Based Evaluation approaches evolved from Harre’s (1972) theory of causation called the ‘generative or realism model’ of causation (Pawson & Tilley 1997, p. 55).

The generative view of causation underpinning TBE approaches can be encapsulated in the phrase: ‘what works, for whom, and in what circumstances’ (Galloway 2009, p. 133; Pawson & Tilley 1997). This view of how change is generated may be the missing link to establishing a conceptual framework for arts impact research and understanding community change (Galloway 2009; Pawson & Tilley 1997). Galloway (2009) argues that TBE approaches are the way forward in addressing research issues of context complexity, and practice methodology inherent in arts impact. Over the last decade interest in using TBE approaches for researching social impact has steadily increased (Belfiore & Bennett 2010; Galloway 2009).

Supporters of TBE frameworks maintain that these research approaches address social intervention complexity, and help to explain how and why social interventions may, or may not bring about social change and impact (Birckmayer & Weiss 2000;

Galloway 2009). Scholars agree that TBE approaches carefully examine the assumptions underpinning a program, or intervention, and make explicit the series of smaller theories that support and deliver a program's change process in action (Birckmayer & Weiss 2000; Weiss 1997). This is achieved by tracking all the steps along the route that bring about change within a program or intervention (Birckmayer & Weiss 2000; Weiss 1997). Birckmayer and Weiss (2000) argue that each research context has its own diverse set of characteristics such as geographic place, time, participants, and projects. They suggest that repeated research findings will build a 'corpus of knowledge' around mechanisms that produce community change and impact (Birckmayer & Weiss 2000).

Developing a corpus of knowledge linking causal mechanisms triggered by arts activity will provide a robust evidence base for understanding community arts impact. Theory Based Evaluation approaches embrace the concept of cumulation of change theories over the concept of generalisability (Birckmayer & Weiss 2000). Drawing together multiple primary studies implementing TBE approaches can be applied to the development of a community arts evidence base (Galloway 2009). This will illuminate a cumulative understanding of how and why impact and change processes occur, and allow comparisons between studies to be made (Birckmayer & Weiss 2000; Galloway 2009; Pawson & Tilley 1997).

Galloway (2009) argues that theory based evaluation (TBE) approaches may be the way forward in addressing the complexity found in measuring and understanding the impact of arts and cultural programs. Over the last two decades TBE approaches have evolved into two different forms: (1) the Realistic Evaluation (RE) of Pawson and Tilley (1997) developed in the UK; and (2) the Theory of Change established in the USA by Fulbright-Anderson, Kubisch and Connell (1998). Both approaches have been used in community arts research over recent years in the UK and USA.

Within the international community arts literature four UK studies have used TBE approaches to research impacts in community arts initiatives. All four studies highlight how TBE approaches developed, tested, and refined different theories of change taking place in community arts initiatives. This suggests TBE approaches are suited to measuring the impact of social policy interventions that use community arts and cultural processes (Galloway 2009). However, limited discussion in formal

literature about the utilisation and Theory of Change approach exists within Australian community arts research circles. Over the last decade Theory of Change and similar approaches have been reported in community arts literature (Cultural Development Network 2016). However, Australian arts literature contains limited formal debate about the use and value of Theory of Change approaches in the study of community arts impact. Those studies that have used program logic and theory of action approaches have been led by researchers outside of the community arts field such as Kelaher, Dunt, Berman, Joubert, Curry, Jones, Stanley, and Johnson (2007) and Wright et al. (2013).

International development organisations and other related development fields have used this approach to explore how change takes place (Vogel 2012). This approach has clarified thinking about the importance of community context to the process of change (Loveridge 2011; Pawson & Tilley 1997; Vogel 2012). A fundamental part of the Theory of Change process is the existing connection between activities, impacts and contexts (Retolaza 2011; Taplin, Clark, Collins, & Colby 2013). Theory of Change can be utilised as an analytical tool to understand the change process and can be used reflexively to evaluate each step of the process (Vogel 2012). This is of particular interest to this current research as the *Theory of Change Framework* will assist in exploring the processes of change involved in the impact of community arts projects that have occurred in the past.

Understanding how arts and cultural engagement can change communities requires arts impact researchers to explore causality. Community arts wide ranging practice-based frameworks and methodologies, together with complex program contexts have made identifying and comparing causal findings difficult (Galloway 2009; Raw et al. 2011; Sullivan 2009). Arts researchers such as (Coalter 2001), (Putland 2008), (Wright et al. 2013), and (Macnaughton, White & Stacy 2005) contend that replication and comparison between studies is problematic because of the following variabilities of: art forms and practice; project contextual environments; experience and skill of artist/facilitators working with community; project duration, project resourcing; intended projects or programs outcomes. Together these factors make determining causation a messy and highly complicated task. However, this complexity may be accommodated by the application of a *Theory of Change*

Framework which will be tested in this current study (Galloway 2009; Raw et al. 2011).

The Theory of Change approach has limitations like any other. Funnell and Rogers (2011) discuss the shortcomings of Theory of Change models and caution against using them when highly complex initiatives with multiple stakeholders are involved. The greater the number of stakeholders they argue, the more perspectives on expected impacts and the ways these impacts can be achieved. Funnell (Funnell & Rogers 2011) also warn against the excessive use of feedback loops which make models too complex to understand and use. While taking account of this perceived weakness, Theory of Change maps are understood to be helpful in describing the complex processes of 'actors', chains, linkages and 'learning loops' (Stein & Valters 2012, p. 7). This suggests Theory of Change can be accommodating of community arts complex sets of variables like artist/facilitator input, art form, practice context and participant groups.

Critics of this approach however, argue that it is unable to capture the complexity of a programs impacts and is by its very nature reductionist (Cultural Development Network 2016; Goldbard 2010). Goldbard (2010) is critical of the capacity of this approach for encompassing all the aspects of effective arts projects and the incompatibility of pictorial models in representing community arts practice methodologies (Goldbard 2010). Community arts practitioners also remain sceptical of this approach and remain dependant on their intuitive assumptions and practice-based knowledge (Etherton & Prentki 2006). Whilst Goldbard (2010) remains critical of the Theory of Change approach, she concedes that it has value in raising questions for stakeholders to critically reflect on, such as articulating what is to be accomplished, what is needed to achieve these outcomes, and what are the impacts anticipated.

Analysis of the five theoretical frameworks and the *Theory of Change Framework* has resulted in the decision to use Chaskins (2001) and Butler Flora, Flora, and Fey's (2004) frameworks as analytical tools to describe and explore community arts impacts. Both have been chosen because they have detailed theoretical structures for understanding the complexity involved in community arts impact. The *Theory of Change Framework* of Fulbright-Anderson, Kubisch and Connell (1998) will be

tested in this study to identify its use as a conceptual framework for understanding community arts processes of community change and the impacts linked to them. Further analysis of the arts research literature has identified issues which weaken the rigour of arts impact studies (Coalter 2001). The following section discusses these weaknesses and suggests how this study will address them.

3. Research Design Issues

Critics of arts research argue that six methodological issues need to be dealt with in future research, they include:

- (1) The lack of longitudinal dimensions of impact (AEGIS 2004);
- (2) The excessive reliance on case study evidence (AEGIS 2004);
- (3) No aggregation of levels of impact (Guetzkow 2002);
- (4) Changing epistemological approaches to understanding community arts impact (Galloway 2009);
- (5) Change mechanisms linked to causation (Merli 2002); and
- (6) Identifying cumulative community arts impacts (Guetzkow 2002).

Issues 1: The lack of longitudinal dimensions of impact

Scholars such as McQueen-Thomson, James, and Ziguras (2002) are critical of the lack of longitudinal studies undertaken in arts impact research. They urge other arts researchers to conduct additional larger scale studies, with more developed and transparent methodologies (AEGIS 2004; Coalter 2001; McQueen-Thomson, James & Ziguras 2002; Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005). The AEGIS (2004) study reported that arts case study research lacked a proper theoretical framework which diminished its credibility. Critics' expectation that all the questions surrounding impact can be answered by one longitudinal study is both unrealistic and problematic (Galloway 2009). Funding for long-term art programs and longitudinal research is limited, so Galloway (2009) suggests the answer may lie in learning from the aggregation of smaller case studies. However, other critics argue that case studies are also problematic (AEGIS, 2004). Therefore, this research will provide a longitudinal

dimension to measuring impact by examining a long running community arts initiative where both short-and long-term impacts can be identified.

Issue 2: The Excessive Reliance on Case Study Evidence

The overreliance on case studies is seen by critics as a design weakness in arts impact research (AEGIS 2004). The over use of small case studies is also associated with case selections seen to be non-representative and poorly described (AEGIS 2004; Jermyn 2001). Academics are also critical of studies that fail to adequately describe how and why case studies are selected (Jermyn 2001; McQueen-Thomson, James & Ziguras 2002). Justification for those case study choices also lacked representation in a broader theoretical context (AEGIS 2004). Scholars also criticised the aggregation of impact levels found within community art research. The decision to use a case study approach in this current study is based on recommendations by other researchers to use a clearly defined representative case.

Issue 3: Studies Lack an Aggregation of Levels of Impact

Arts impact studies are frequently directed at the micro-level impacts of the individual (Guetzkow 2002). Problems arise when studies fail to link these micro-level impacts to macro-level impact experienced at the organisational and community level (AEGIS 2004; Coalter 2001; Guetzkow 2002). A study's failure to aggregate these levels of impact will have great difficulty demonstrating the 'tipping points' at which individuals and organisational level impacts start to produce community level effects (Gladwell 2000; Guetzkow 2002), and the extent to which social ties and networks are created between individuals and organisations which influence community goals (Guetzkow 2002). This study will search for impact evidence that will highlight the aggregation of impact effects between individuals, organisations, and community networks in response to this criticism.

Issue 4: Changing Epistemological Approaches to Understanding Impacts

Utilising different interdisciplinary frameworks to fit the needs of flexible practice methodologies and complex contextual applications requires the field to embrace different epistemological approaches and models (Cowling 2004; Galloway 2009). An epistemological model aside from the dominant, experimental medical model presently used to underpin research requires exploration (Galloway 2009). The

experimental medical model is a broad term given to the studies undertaken in humans in which all risk factors are under the direct control of the investigator using suitable model systems (Medical Research Council 2017). Much of the discussion by commentators around arts impact is directed at establishing causation, and the implied acceptance that this can only be achieved using the experimental medical model (Galloway 2009; Rapport, Wainwright & Elwyn 2005). Scholars in the community arts field suggest this may not be the most suitable model for understanding impacts (Galloway 2009).

The epistemological weakness of the experimental medical model in understanding impact and change in real world interventions, such as community arts programs, explains why experimental studies generally produce variations in findings and inconclusive evidence (Belfiore 2006; Galloway 2009). However, arts impact research is not alone in this regard as other areas of public policy highlight similar weaknesses (Davies, Nutley & Smith 2000; Galloway 2009). Community arts researchers and practitioners agree that looking at community arts impacts through this epistemological lens is problematic, and is indeed heading in the wrong direction if understanding the impact of arts processes on community is the end goal (Cowling 2004; Galloway 2009). Therefore, this study will use a constructivist epistemological position to explore and describe community arts impact. Developing a rigorous evidence base for the field requires an understanding of the mechanisms of change involved in arts engagement and their links to causation.

Issue 5: Change Mechanisms Linked to Causation

The harshest criticism of community arts impact studies has been the ‘no evidence’ verdict. This has been attributed to the lack of ‘proof of causation’ between community arts participation and impacts (AEGIS 2004; Belfiore 2006; Merli 2002; Reeves 2002). While this criticism seems heavy handed, arts researchers have focused little attention on analysing the causal mechanisms by which artists working in community facilitate change (Merli 2002; Raw et al. 2011). Past studies have been perceived by critics as ‘part measurement, part description and part judgement’, making proof of causation difficult (Clements 2007). The approach and methods typically used in community arts research makes identifying and articulating causality problematic. However, Galloway (2009) argues that finding clear ‘evidence

of causation' has proved problematic to all impact research into social policy. Therefore, this study will use the *Theory of Change Framework* to help identify the elements that go into community arts projects, the change processes activated by the arts and cultural activity, and their impacts to the community. Teasing out the processes generated within community arts will provide information about causal mechanisms and community change. This approach has the potential to develop further methods and analytical tools to better understand causal mechanisms, and ultimately an holistic approach to the measurement and description of community arts impact can be developed.

Issue 6: Identifying Cumulative Community Arts Impact

Few studies within the literature report on the cumulative impact of arts and cultural activity (Guetzkow 2002). This gap in knowledge was described as an important focus for future impact research in the AEGIS (2004) study. McCarthy, Ondaatje and Zakaras (2004) report that in general both intrinsic and instrumental impacts build over time and can be considered a long-term process. The cumulative process of impact is first experienced at an individual participation level, and then at a community level (McCarthy, Ondaatje & Zakaras 2004). This process involves both intrinsic and instrumental impacts.

An example of the cumulative process on individual level impact could involve a scenario such as: a person attending a choral singing workshop improves their communication skills and confidence by singing on stage with others (instrumental impact); and experiences elevated levels of captivation and pleasure in the process of singing (intrinsic impacts). The experience is positive for this person and they continue attend singing workshops over the next year (cumulative impact). Research that reports on cumulative impact will enhance understanding of arts and cultural participation and the benefits it brings to individuals and communities over time.

While few studies within the community arts field report on cumulative impact findings a great deal of research focused on cumulative impact has been developed in the Resource Industry over the last decade. Studies such as Franks, Brereton, and Moran's (2010) Coal Industry research reports on the social impact and its ability to be direct, indirect, and cumulative. Therefore, this study while describing impact will

look at the potential identification of community arts cumulative impact if it exists within the case study data

Chapter 2 Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review has set out to summarise the academic research findings in Australia and internationally which suggest that arts and cultural participation can make significant contributions to community wellbeing, resilience, and capacity. The first section of the chapter defined community arts and contextualised it within government cultural policy. Government funding of the arts was found to have locked community arts within a social welfare paradigm where debate about its value, and research of its benefits, are tightly bound to instrumental impacts instead of aesthetic experience.

The chapter then provided an overview of the Australian and international arts impact research and compared impacts made across multiple studies. Analysis of the five literature sets highlighted gaps in knowledge regarding community level impact and the lack of understanding of long-term government funding initiatives in regional Australian settings. This identified gap has influenced the decision to explore and describe community level impact in regional Queensland communities. Comparisons drawn from across these literature sets suggest impacts are overlapping, interlinked, and interdependent, making impact measurement a complex task. Therefore, this study will explore impact from an economic, social, and cultural perspective, and report on both positive and negative, as well as intrinsic and instrumental community arts impacts.

The final section of Chapter 2 delineated and discussed the extensive list of criticisms levelled at community arts research. The first criticism highlighted the lack of theoretical frameworks for underpinning community level arts impact. The literature suggested the use of interdisciplinary frameworks, five were examined and two taken forward to be used in this project. The *Community Capacity Framework* of Chaskin's (2001) was chosen because it identifies the processes underpinning community arts practice methodologies and assists in highlighting community level impacts. The *Community Capitals Framework* of Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004) was also selected because it provides a tested theoretical structure in which to understand the complex interconnectedness of community capitals at work in

community arts engagement. Both frameworks will be used as analytical tools to identify and articulate community change processes and impacts by providing the breadth and depth of theoretical knowledge in which to understand complex community development processes.

The second criticism described the field's lack of a conceptual framework for understanding community arts impact that is able to accommodate community arts complexity and multidisciplinary nature. The *Theory of Change Framework* of Fulbright-Anderson, Kubisch and Connell (1998) was chosen for this study because of its flexibility, its focus on causal mechanisms that trigger change, and because it makes the change process explicit. This study will test the suitability of the *Theory of Change Framework* in conceptualising community arts processes and impacts.

The third criticism chronicles the key research methodology and design issues identified across the literature such as longitudinal dimension to measuring impact and overuse of case studies. Developing a rigorous evidence base for the field requires the results of comparison of findings from multiple case studies and an understanding of the causal mechanisms involved in impact. This study will examine short-and long-term community arts impacts using a long running community arts initiative which has multiple potential case study sites. This case site will be chosen for its representativeness as a clearly defined regional Queensland community. The study's analysis of impact will examine cumulative effects and benefits, as well as the aggregation of impacts and their tipping points between individuals, organisations, and community networks in response to this criticism from the literature.

Chapter 3 details the methodology and analysis used in this study. This chapter situates the study in a constructivist epistemology which will use an interpretivist approach to describe and explore the impacts of community arts engagement. The study will collect qualitative data from a regional case study site using three different data collection methods. Chapter 3 will detail the two research questions and the three-stage data collection design employed to gather information. This chapter describes the five-step thematic analysis undertaken and discusses the further analysis of the data corpus using the *Theory of Change Framework*, the *Community*

Capacity Framework, and the *Community Capitals Framework*. The final section of the Chapter 3 provides a self-reflection statement and a chapter summary.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Analysis

In the last chapter, a review of the community arts literature sought to define community arts as a collaborative process and practice. Providing a definition of community arts is essential to understanding the two research questions at the centre of this study. A discussion of Australian arts funding policy locates the RADF initiative as a community development program that provides access to arts and cultural expression in regional Queensland. The last chapter sought to provide a summary of beneficial claims made by researchers in the field and to discuss research design weaknesses and criticisms. The lack of a theoretical underpinning and clear conceptual framework for the field has influenced the direction of this research toward using two Social Science theoretical frameworks and a *Theory of Change Framework* (ToC) to conceptualise and analyse research findings. This study aims to identify and describe the impacts of community arts engagement on regional municipalities.

The problem at the centre of this research involves the development of an empirical evidence base to support the utilisation of arts and cultural activity as a strategy to change the developmental trajectory of regional communities. Responding to this lack of knowledge about regional community impacts, this research explores and describes the cumulative impacts of community arts in regional Australia at the individual to community level. Strengthening regional communities is a priority for all three levels of government as our nation moves forward in an ever changing economic, social, and climatic environment (Faulkner, Robinson & Sparrow 2013). The knowledge generated in this study will inform government planning and provide an empirical evidence base to direct policy decisions toward developing arts and cultural strategies which ensure the ongoing resiliency of regional communities.

Investing in arts and culture can change communities, but policy makers require empirical evidence to substantiate this claim. This study has sought evidence to answer these two research questions:

(1) What are the impacts of the community arts activity supported by the Regional Arts Development Fund in the Western Downs Regional Council area?

(2) What is the process of change through which arts impacts are generated?

This study uses a qualitative research methodology to find evidence to support a response to the research questions through the data gathered from the RADF initiative operationalised in the Western Downs region. This chapter presents the methodology employed to collect, analyse, and interpret arts and cultural impact data from the WDR locality. Also included is a discussion of the constructivist epistemological position in which this study is located, and a detailed description of the strategies used to establish trustworthiness and research rigour. Following this section is an explanation of why a case study approach was utilised in answering the research questions and a detailed account of research ethics and procedures provided. Next, an outline of the four-stage data collection design is presented detailing each of the three data collection methods, procedures, and sample frames used. The final sections expand upon the analytical approach applied in the study. A self-reflection statement and conclusion follow this.

Constructivist Epistemology

The design of the study originated from the constructivist philosophy which holds that human knowledge is constructed through an individual's own relationship with, and experience of, the world around them (Gray 2009). This constructed view of reality contrasts with objectivist epistemology which contends that reality is both objective, and independent of our awareness of it (Gray 2009). The constructivist view to knowledge is well suited to the current research problem of identifying, describing, and exploring arts impacts.

Identifying and describing impact is a complex task that requires a broad cross-section of views concerning the nature of that impact, and the effects this impact has on people's lives. Therefore, the impact described in this study requires RADF stakeholders, and participants involved in the arts and cultural projects to report on their personal observations, and constructed understanding of impact effects. By

taking this research position the study has endeavoured to describe the impact of the initiative on the individual, organisational and community level.

Interpretative Paradigm

To fully understand the constructed reality of stakeholders and participants, this study will take an interpretivist theoretical perspective, which has significant links to constructivist epistemology (Gray 2009). Interpretivism is defined as the study of humanity's socially constructed interpretations of social reality (Crotty 1998). Reality within this theoretical paradigm is derived from an individual's cultural, and historical situatedness in the social world, and their subjective understanding, and interpretation of it (Crotty 1998; Neuman 1994). From this interpretivist position, the research describes and analyses the social action and behaviour ignited by the community arts activity funded by the initiative. Focusing on RADF stakeholders' social behaviour and the subjective meaning attached to that behaviour, this research endeavours to describe and explore the processes of change inherent in community arts impact. Identifying impact and the processes of change at work in it will strengthen the evidence about impact sought by scholars and practitioners in the field of community arts (Galloway 2009).

The epistemological influences of constructivism and interpretivism have informed the qualitative research approach used in this study. Their influence has also contributed to decisions made about the study's data collection methods, sample selection, and data analysis. The choice to collect data from focus groups and semi-structured interviews, all pertaining to different stakeholder viewpoints of RADF impact, was based on the need to interrogate the subjective understanding, values, and meaning derived through people's involvement. The decision to use archival material is also based on project applicant's subjective observations of community arts impacts on the community. Importantly, each of the interview participant's subjective opinions of impact was of equal value to the study which was in keeping with a constructivist interpretivist epistemology, together with a qualitative research approach.

Qualitative Methodology

The study uses a qualitative methodological approach to explore and describe community arts impacts. The choice to use a qualitative approach is based on the decision to collect a wealth of rich empirical data enabling a rigorous and comprehensive examination of RADF impact on the WDR. The decision to use a qualitative methodology is based on the broad nature of research Question One, which endeavours to create a wide-ranging description of the under-researched community level arts impact (Guetzkow 2002).

Data collected using this methodological approach generates in-depth evidence from a range of participant perspectives and a variety of data sources from within the WDR. To identify the impacts and tease out the processes of change that take place within this impact a wide range of empirical evidence is gathered from WDR. Qualitative research also offers flexible data collection methods, that provide the how's and why's behind the impacts of this intervention (Gray 2009). The data collected from multiple qualitative methods provides evidence to both strengthen and deepen understanding of the RADF initiative impact on regional communities.

Researching community arts impact is a complex process that requires a research methodology that is in-depth and flexible. This study contends that a qualitative approach to methodology best suits arts impact research, because it is adaptable and able to capture contextual factors (Galloway 2009; Gray 2009). Qualitative research is contextual, and is therefore well matched to investigate complex social interventions such as RADF (Galloway 2009; Gray 2009). This research approach provides more than a snap-shot of events, it provides rich contextual data of a long running regional intervention (Gray 2009). A rich contextualisation of RADF impacts is achieved by incorporating multidisciplinary projects across multiple community contexts, together with stakeholder perceptions of community arts participation (Gray 2009). This immediacy to field contexts advantaged a qualitative methodological approach over quantitative research, and strengthened the research by making it highly contextualised (Gray 2009).

A qualitative methodological approach is appropriate for this study because it employs the researcher as the instrument of measurement, interpretation, and analysis (Denzin & Lincoln 2008; Patton 2002). Patton (2002) suggests that in qualitative research the researcher applies his or her skills, experience, and aptitude

to rigorous research practices that are directed at understanding the everyday social world. Data collected within this qualitative study, as suggested by Patton (2002), has been interpreted through an iterative process that brought together knowledge from arts impact literature, theory, and the reflective practices of the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln 2008; Gray 2009). The qualitative methodological approach and constructivist philosophy used to underpin this research was suitable for the study of community arts impact.

Developing the Trustworthiness

Qualitative research with an interpretivist epistemology has been criticised for its subjectivity, and perceived lack of research reliability and generalisability (Gray 2009). Criticisms of qualitative research's reliability are unfounded because research rigour has been proven by qualitative researchers through a range of strategies designed to build research 'trustworthiness' (Gray 2009; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Trustworthiness is built through strategies that promote credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Gray 2009; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Qualitative researchers have proposed that the research investigator's ability achieves 'trustworthiness' to convince the reader that the findings derived from the study are reliable and true (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

Qualitative researchers create reliability through the development of trustworthiness in their research findings. Trustworthiness is achieved by four key questions being answered in the research inquiry (Lincoln & Guba 1985). If these questions are answered successfully then research trustworthiness has been established (Lincoln & Guba 1985). These questions include:

- (1) Can the research demonstrate credibility by demonstrating true findings?
 - (2) Are the study results transferable to other contexts and research participants?
 - (3) Can dependability be established by replicating research findings with similar study participants in similar contexts?
 - (4) Can confirmability be recognised through unbiased and neutral findings?
- (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

The following sections provide a brief discussion about how this study's design and implementation addresses research trustworthiness via credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Further detailed information of how these criteria have been operationalised in the study are provided in each of the three data collection sections titled: semi-structured interviews; archival document material; and focus group.

Credibility

This section focuses on how trustworthiness is established through a range of methods built into the research design which ensure credibility of findings (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Qualitative researchers suggest the use of the following four research design methods safeguard the credibility and interpretations of findings (Lincoln & Guba 1985). These four methods include: (1) prolonged involvement and purposeful observations of research context and participants; (2) triangulation; (3) member checking the numerous subjective realities of the phenomenon given by participants; and (4) testing the research findings and interpretations (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p. 238). All four methods work toward establishing credibility in research findings and all four methods are implemented in this study.

First, this study aimed to establish credibility through the prolonged involvement with the inquiry participants and purposeful observation of WDR communities as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985). This involved investing sufficient time engaging with research participants from five WDR communities involved in the study. Prolonged engagement with these communities has aided the development of participant trust, provided a greater understanding of community life within each township, and enabled direct observations of RADF project impacts, such as painted murals and workshop exhibitions. Purposeful observations of RADF committee meetings, arts organisation facilities, RADF projects, and cultural festivals throughout the study has allowed for a broader understanding of the significance of impact generated by the RADF initiative in the WDR.

Second, the study employed multiple sampling strategies to triangulate data to ensure credibility. The sampling strategies used triangulated data across three aspects of the case site, these included: data gathered from different communities in the WDR (space triangulation); data collected from projects granted funds from 2013 to

2015 (time triangulation); data obtained from multiple stakeholder representatives who have different links to the RADF initiative (person triangulation) (Gray 2009; Patton 2002). Data triangulation strategies employed in the study have ensured credible interpretation of research findings.

Third, member checking and testing the research findings and interpretations were the final methods implemented in the project to boost research credibility. This strategy was utilised to include research participants in the inquiry and interpretation process. A summary of the research findings has been included in a written report that has been emailed to all interview participants. The participants were invited to give their feedback on the interpretation of findings, again via email, which was the preferred method of delivery for participants because of their limited time, and the distance for them to attend another focus group at the nearest town. Feedback from participants has informed the final write up of the research findings, and has added weight to the credibility of the findings and recommendations.

Dependability and Confirmability

Building trustworthiness in qualitative research requires the establishment of a study's credibility through the implementation of various research design decisions. Whilst credibility is important, trustworthiness in research also requires dependability and confirmability of study findings (Gray 2009; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Research scholars suggest dependability and confirmability are produced by the establishment of a reader's trust in the conclusions and recommendations made in a study (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

Dependability and confirmability have been established within this research by systematically outlining the analytical and interpretation process undertaken in the study from the raw data to final conclusions. This interpretation process began with the methods, procedures, and decisions used to collect data in WDR. The process entailed a further four steps that included: (1) the detailed description of methods used in data reduction, for example the use of maximum variation sampling methods; (2) data synthesis methods, such as the coding methods utilised in the Nvivo 11 program; (3) writing and rewriting reflexive notes and preliminary conceptual models to make sense of the themes; and (4) generating a summary report of findings for member checking (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Descriptions of these

interpretation processes are detailed within the interview, archival material, and focus group methods sections, together with the analysis, and self-reflection statement presented in the final sections of this chapter.

Transferability

Demonstrating transferability, like dependability, confirmability, and credibility enhances trustworthiness in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

Transferability can be defined in qualitative research as the extent to which research findings can be relocated to comparable settings. Transferability in qualitative research is enhanced by describing comprehensively the study context, assumptions, and working hypothesis (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The degree of transferability is determined by the qualitative researcher who wishes to replicate the study in another context (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

This research has established transferability through the development of both a working hypothesis of RADF impact which evolved through multiple iterations (Lincoln & Guba 1985). A thick description of the Western Downs regional community context in which this hypothesis was generated also provided research transferability (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The thick description supplied a comprehensive description and contextual meaning to the environment from which these impact findings came from (Lincoln & Guba 1985). By doing so, this research has the necessary requirements to enable the transfer of this study methodology and findings to another research project in the future (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

The purposive sampling implemented in the study produced data from a diverse range of interview participants and RADF documentation sources which are strongly connected to the case site and the RADF initiative impacts (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The data generated from this purposive sampling has contributed to the potential transferability of this study (Lincoln & Guba 1985; Patton 2002). This sample yielded a broad range of RADF projects and generated in-depth data about community arts impacts, thus enhancing the study's potential transferability.

Case Study Approach

Informed by the need to build research trustworthiness, a case study approach was employed in this study to examine community level community arts impacts. The

Queensland wide RADF partnership initiative that operates in the geographic boundaries of the WDR forms the scope of the case study site. The phenomenon of community arts impact at the heart of the inquiry can be identified in projects funded by the RADF initiative that exists in the complex community setting of WDR (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield 2007; Yin 2013). The RADF 'pool' of money available for project grants comes directly from the partnership between Queensland State and Local governments. The guidelines for the allocation of funding grants is derived from two levels of policy made at a state and local government level. Each local government council is encouraged to embed their RADF investment into their own unique cultural plan and policy. To truly understand the complexity of community arts impact, the interactions of both RADF funded projects and the contexts in which they exist requires detailed exploration (Gummesson 2000; Patton 2002).

Case studies aspire to create a holistic perspective of a phenomenon (Gummesson 2000; Patton 2002). This research has sought to understand the complex nature of impact through the utilisation of an in-depth case study of a representative local Queensland regional council RADF program. The choice to employ a representative case such as WDR allowed the study findings to describe the more general problem of describing community arts impact on regional Queensland communities. (Flick 2009). The transferability of this study, and the replication of it over multiple regional Queensland Local Government Councils will potentially create an evidence base of aggregated case studies (Galloway 2009; Gummesson 2000). Therefore, a claim of transferability can be made if more than one case is revealed to maintain the same theory as those proposed in this representative study (Yin 2013).

The need to address research design and methodological issues found in community arts research discussed in the Research Design Issues section of Chapter 2 has also informed this study's decision to utilise the RADF program operating in the WDR. Critical discussions found in the literature on research design issues like: community arts impact in regional Australia (AEGIS 2004; Anwar McHenry 2009), case study design (AEGIS 2004), longitudinal dimension (Coalter 2001), impact aggregation and cumulative impacts (Guetzkow 2002), holistic understanding of impacts both intrinsic and instrumental (McCarthy, Ondaatje & Zakaras 2004), and ontological instability of defining the 'arts' (Belfiore & Bennett 2010; Ramsey White &

Rentschler 2005; Reeves 2002) have influenced this study and the choice to explore the RADF initiative.

The WDR provides a representative regional community contextual and geographic boundary for the inquiry. By narrowing the parameters of the study to the WDR case site, the study seeks to address methodological criticisms such as the identified gap in knowledge concerning the short-and long-term impacts of community arts in regional Queensland, and more broadly regional Australia (AEGIS 2004; Anwar McHenry 2009). This study contextualises regional community arts impacts and expands the range of case studies included in the field's evolving evidence base. A regional study such as this brings further clarification to the theoretical underpinning of the practice and aids the development of evidence in support of the field. This impact study explores and describes the community arts processes and practice, together with the cultural development impact of community arts facilitated by RADF in a community setting (Anwar McHenry 2009).

The RADF initiative was chosen as a representative case because the program encompasses a wide range of community arts projects and arts forms. These wide-ranging projects contain similarities to one another in ways that support their representativeness, they include: (1) similarity of intended project outcomes that focus on benefits to the community; (2) similarity of project environments and town contexts; and (3) arts organisations and artist/facilitators that use the funding have similar organisational resources, for example volunteers. In addition to this, other regional councils that share similar funding RADF pools (grant money) and population size, can be used as future comparison to this study.

RADF has been operational in Queensland regional areas over the last twenty-five years. The decision to use a municipality with a twenty-year history of involvement in the RADF initiative meant the data collected from focus group participants and interviews contained in-depth knowledge and long-term experience of community arts impact. The research design however does not draw directly on all 25 years of RADF operation in WDR. However, the initiatives longevity adds a retrospective longitudinal dimension and an insight into the cumulative effects of impact findings.

Regional Arts Development Fund projects funded in WDR from 2013 to 2015 and stakeholders from the region form the case study boundary for describing and exploring community arts impacts at the community level. Aggregation of impact evidence from these sources can reveal the spill-over effects to individuals, organisations, and the wider community. Impacts described in this case study site provide a way to build a complete picture of impact (McCarthy, Ondaatje & Zakaras 2004).

The present study utilises a more ‘holistic approach’ to researching impact by identifying and articulating the instrumental, aesthetic/intrinsic, and cumulative impact found in the WDR RADF program. The decision to undertake research of the RADF initiative was in part due to the program’s long-term operation in the region, and because the funded projects offered activity that could potentially generate cumulative aesthetic/intrinsic and instrumental impacts.

Merli (2002) argues that a failure by scholars in the field to critically engage with negative impacts infers that community arts projects and programs produce only positive benefits. This study is informed by the need to be aware of potential advocacy bias, and the need to critically engage with unsuccessful RADF projects and the negative impacts of the program (Jermyn 2001; Matarasso 1997).

The decision to use the RADF initiative in the WDR as the case study in which to describe and explore community arts impact addresses the ontological instability associated with defining the arts (Belfiore & Bennett 2010; Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005; Reeves 2002; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield 2007).

The RADF initiative provides a typology or definition of community arts activity, properties, and interrelationship of parts through the program principles and funding categories that underpin this arts policy. The Western Downs communities who participate in the funding initiative offer a contextual boundary which also contributes to the ontological definition of community arts involved in this study. The decision to use a case study approach to describe and explore impact was influenced by criticisms made by Belfiore and Bennett (2010) and Hawkins (1993). By designing this research as a single, holistic case study the inquiry embraced an elevated level of complexity both within the phenomenon and its interactive context,

making this choice of approach suitable for this specific study (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield 2007).

By addressing the criticisms and gaps in knowledge highlighted within community arts literature a robust evidence base can be developed (Belfiore & Bennett 2007b; McCarthy, Ondaatje & Zakaras 2004; Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005). All research approaches have certain limitations, and case study research is no different to any other approach in this regard, the following section discusses case study limitations.

Case Study Limitations

Scholars agree whilst case studies provide a holistic and in-depth approach to understanding a specific phenomenon, this approach also generates vast amounts of documentation which are time consuming to interpret (Flick 2009; Gray 2009; Gummesson 2000). This study produced an immense amount of data from both the archival materials and interview transcripts. Whilst time consuming to organise and code, the utilisation of the Nvivo 11 management software will help to alleviate part of this time burden (Bazeley 2013).

Researchers also acknowledge that generalising from case study research findings is problematic (Flick 2009; Gray 2009; Gummesson 2000). Collecting and analysing data from only one case study site places potential limits on these research findings. However, conducting future research of the same type in different contextual settings and comparing the findings overcomes this limitation. The decision to study RADF program impacts permits a higher level of research transferability, because of the potential comparability for future research of approximately 70 other Local Government municipalities (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

This research has sought to understand the complex nature of impact through the utilisation of an in-depth case study of a representative local Queensland regional council RADF program. With the case study site chosen, three methods to collect qualitative data from the case site were chosen.

Three Stage Data Collection Design

This qualitative study incorporated a simple three stage data collection process in the case site of WDR. The three-stage design used three triangulated collection methods that included:

- (1) semi-structured interviews;
- (2) archival material; and
- (3) focus group.

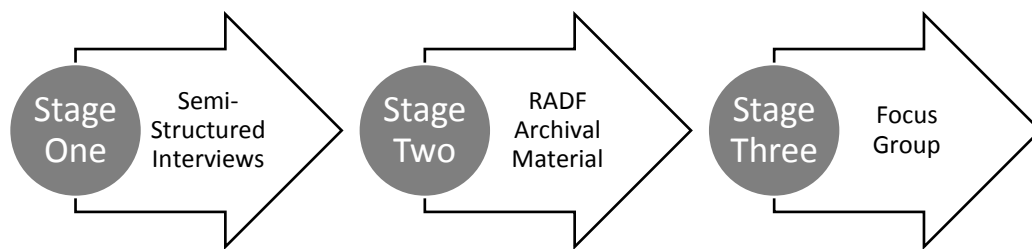


Figure 3 The Four Stage Data Collection Framework

Stage 1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they were a logical approach to use for exploring and describing arts impact on regional communities. This data collection method was ideal for collecting information from the participant's personal perspective and constructed meaning of arts impact (Gray 2009). In-depth interviewing of this type has been used widely by qualitative researchers, because rich responses are generated by the dialogue created between the interview participants and the interviewer (Marshall & Rossman 1999).

The decision to administer the interviews as semi-structured interview was to allow for flexibility in delivery, so that interviews could be adjusted to suit the interview context and individual participant (Patton 2002). Therefore, an interview guide created in advance would need to be employed to allow the interviewer to change from structured questions if they were not able to obtain a good flow within the conversation with the participant (Patton 2002). Using an interview guide would also assist in comparing interview transcripts during data analysis and reduce the effects of interviewer bias (Gray 2009; Patton 2002).

Semi-structured interviews were employed because they are not standardised, and therefore allowed for greater flexibility and informality within interview situations (Marshall & Rossman 1999; Patton 2002). Interviews conducted in an informal conversational style allow the interview participants to relax, and speak freely about their perceptions, in this case of RADF impact and of their role in the program (Marshall & Rossman 1999; Patton 2002). The flexibility inherent in semi-structured interview questioning means the ordering of interview questions can be changed to suit the flow of the conversation, and new probing questions can be added depending on the direction taken in the interview (Gray 2009). This flexible interview approach allows greater clarification of details, and further exploration of participant opinions in interviews (Gray 2009). The flexibility in a semi-structured interview approach allows greater accommodation of joint interviews where pairs or small groups of participants can take part together (Marshall 1999). Marshall (1999) suggests that a group interview, like the focus group, has a more relaxed atmosphere that lessens the exposure to the individual of a one on one interview, making it preferable in different situations.

Interviews conducted using a semi-structured interview format do have limitations that can be addressed whilst managing field work procedures (Flick 2009). Limitations that can be encountered include the time required to analyse less structured interview questions. The addition of probing questions also adds to the time required to analyse and find patterns in the interview data (Gray 2009). Researcher bias can also be a limitation of this interview format, it can however be kept to a minimum by structuring interview questions carefully prior to conducting the interviews. Carefully constructing interview questions and using an interview guide raises the awareness and accountability of the interviewer (Gray 2009). Research bias is also minimised by accurately transcribing interviews and checking the accuracy of their content with interview participants (Gray 2009).

Interview Sample Frame

The decision to construct a key stakeholder group sample was made to pinpoint the key people to speak to in the case study site and to avoid interviewer bias. The key stakeholder group needed to demonstrate a wide variation in group characteristics and perspectives. By forming a diverse sample frame with key stakeholders from a

management perspective (Local Government and RADF committee members), operational project perspective (community organisations and community artist/facilitators who run RADF projects), and participant perspective (a variety of RADF projects), multiple aspects and viewpoints of the RADF initiative within the case study site were given an opportunity to be heard (Patton 2002). Interviewer bias was therefore minimised by interviewing a wide range of people from diverse groups, in different communities, with a multiplicity of connections and experiences of the RADF program in WDR. This first sampling step produced thirty possible interview candidates.

Key stakeholders were identified by using a stratified purposeful sampling technique which identified and sampled five different interconnecting stratum (Patton 2002). The five stratum included participants who: had been involved in the conceptualisation and planning of RADF projects; had knowledge and experience of the application, delivery, and acquittal processes; had participated in RADF community arts projects; held membership on RADF committees; experience and knowledge of the RADF Local Government management and administration of the program. All together these key criteria informed the stratified purposeful sample selection of key semi-structured interview participants.

The stratified purposeful sample can be broken down into five key groups. The key stakeholders incorporated into the semi-structured interview sample include: (1) two Local Government representatives, one regional level community development officer; and one library/gallery officer; (2) three community artist/facilitators from two different communities who facilitate RADF projects; (3) seven arts and cultural community group representatives from five different communities; (4) one (long serving) RADF committee member; and (5) four RADF project participants. Key stakeholders included in the interview sample fulfil multiple roles within the RADF initiative. For example, a stakeholder may identify herself as a community artist/facilitator, a project participant, the president of a community cultural organisation, and as a RADF committee member. The stakeholders identified in the sample have extensive experience and multi-faceted views of the RADF initiative, their transcripts should create a rich data set.

In additions to the stratified sampling, a maximum variation sampling technique was applied to these short-listed stratified interview candidates. Interview data collected from purposive sampling of stakeholder participants is an efficient way to gather evidence to answer the research questions and triangulate information about impact (Patton 2002). Application of this further layer of sampling allowed the best possible candidates to be pinpointed. The second sampling step located participants across four key characteristic variations (Patton 2002). Those maximum variations include: (1) the representation of six different communities, which included Dalby, Miles, Chinchilla, Wandoan, Tara, Moonie and Bell; (2) the representation of different arts and cultural organisations, such as quilting groups, historic societies, and theatre groups; (3) community artist/facilitators from multidisciplinary practices such as visual arts, music, and dance; (4) project participants from a range of projects such as choir projects, craft, and painting workshop projects. The model below illustrates the steps taken in the sampling framework to ensure maximum variation to reduce researcher bias see (Figure 4). Once this maximum variation sampling process was completed twenty potential candidates were identified.

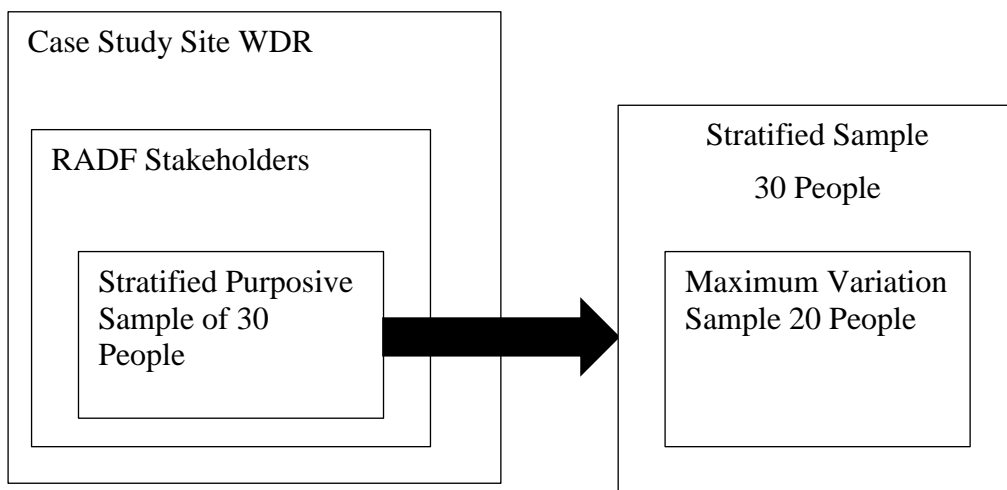


Figure 4 Semi-structured Interview Sampling Framework.

Creating Interview Questions

At the completion of the purposive sampling process, the construction of interview guiding questions was undertaken. Interview questions were developed using three

steps. The first step focused on what interview questions had been asked in prior arts impact studies. Step two took this information and synthesised it in relation to their applicability to this study. Preliminary interview questions were then prepared and an interview guide formulated. The third and final step pilot tested the preliminary questions and refined them, ready to be used in the field. A detailed summary of these steps is presented in the following paragraphs, with an overview of the pilot testing procedure used to finalise interview questions.

Step 1: The Literature

The first step used in developing the semi-structured interview questions was informed by the arts impact literature and the two research questions. Deidre Williams' (1997) Australian arts impact study has informed the structure and content of the semi-structured interview guide. Like this research, Williams' (1997) study measured arts and cultural impact at a community level, and her study reports findings such as the social, educational, artistic, and economic benefits. This study has influenced the decision to ask the stakeholder participants in this study about the effects RADF has had on economic and social activity in their communities.

Step 2: Developing the Interview Questions

In step two six semi-structured interview questions were designed to collect data from the interview participants. The two research questions informed the content of each of six interview questions used to guide the interview format. By inviting targeted participants to contribute their opinions, observations, and experiences, through semi-structured interviews these research questions were answered (Gray 2009). The structure of the questions was designed to promote a conversational style format that would elicit rich information about RADF impact (Patton 2002). The final open-ended questions used in the interviews are set out below with a brief discussion of how they connect to the two research questions.

Question 1- Could you describe your involvement in the Regional Arts Development Fund?

This interview question provided a conversation starter which relaxed the participants and built rapport between the participant and the interviewer. This question allowed the participants to discuss their previous experience of the RADF

initiative, and permitted the participants to outline their multifaceted involvement. Question one was a good segue into the proceeding questions and linked the participants' experience to their description of RADF impacts.

Question 2- What do you think are the major outcomes of the RADF projects? Are they beneficial? If so, how? To whom? If not how? To whom? Can you explain how the RADF projects have impacted on the broader community?

Question two is linked directly to collecting evidence to answer research question one. This question asks participants to describe major outcomes and benefits, or not, of the RADF funded projects to the community. This section of the question and its counterpart also addresses research question two which is focused on describing the processes of community change triggered by the projects.

Question 3- Have any of the Regional Arts Development Fund projects had negative outcomes on the community? If so, how and why? What could be done in the future to change this outcome?

This question addresses any perceived negative outcomes of the initiative on the community and is linked to community impacts sought in research question one. This first section of the question has strong connections to community art practice outcomes, good or bad, and arts organisations delivery of projects. This question pinned down what impact any unsuccessful projects had on the community. This question was informed by criticisms in the arts impact literature of a lack of negative impact reporting in past arts research (Guetzkow 2002; Merli 2002; Ramsey White & Rentschler 2005).

Question 4- Have any of the Regional Arts Development Fund projects impacted on the local economy? If so, how? Can you give an example to illustrate?

Question four drills down further into the impacts of the initiative, specifically the local economic impacts of the fund and the effects this has, or does not have, in the community. Identifying specific types of impact within this research could then be compared with other arts and cultural impact studies which enhances its transferability and trustworthiness.

Question 5- In your opinion do, the Regional Arts Development Fund projects build community networks. If so, how? What impact does this have on the broader community?

Similarly, question five also addresses specific impacts of the RADF initiative by focusing the participant on the social network developments arts and cultural activity may, or may not deliver. The follow-on question asks for a broader view of this impact across the community. This question draws out evidence about impact and the processes of change embedded in it.

Question 6- Are the Regional Arts Development Fund projects of value to your community? If so, how? Key benefits? Challenges? Opportunities? Future directions?

Question six engages the interview participant in a discussion about the value of the RADF initiative to the community. This question elicits specific answers about the value placed on arts and cultural expression and activity within regional communities. By focusing on how arts and culture is valued by the community, a reflection of the impact made by the RADF initiative in the case study site becomes evident. All the six interview questions directly address impact and the change processes involved within it. Therefore, the latent information contained in the answers to these six questions was used to interpret linking mechanisms between community arts activity and impact.

Step 3: Testing the Questions

Step three pilot tested the six original interview questions in the WDR case site one month prior to the commencement of the interviews in August 2015. Three stakeholder representatives participated in the pilot test including: one community artist/facilitator, one project participant, and one community arts organisation representative. Each interview was one hour long and administered over two days (Gray 2009). After each interview, a reflective process was undertaken by the interviewer and feedback about the questions was asked of each pilot interview participant.

Information collected from this pilot testing of interview questions was not used in the final data analysis, but was instead used to refine the final questions used in the

WDR interviews. Observational notes were made throughout the three pilot interviews and reviewed. The observations of the interviewer, plus the feedback given by the pilot participants was used to look for participant understanding of the questions, clarity given in participants' responses and ordering of the questions asked (Flick 2009). This review process informed the restructuring and refinement of the final interview guide questions (Flick 2009). Once the interview questions were finalised ethics approval for the study was sought from the University of Southern Queensland.

Ethics

Before embarking on the case study and encountering the challenges faced during the field work, the study was approved by the USQ ethics committee, application number H15REA168. A copy can be viewed in (Appendix A). Permission to conduct a study in the WDR area was also sought from the local council's Community's Manager; a copy of this letter is included in the appendices, please see (Appendix B). Once the ethics approvals were finalised the field work in WDR began.

Discussions with the Community Cultural Development Coordinator established a working relationship with the local council prior to the start of the study in 2014. The Community Cultural Development Coordinator in Western Downs Regional Council (WDRC) was the contact person in council who managed the RADF program and organised the RADF committees across the region. At the local RADF committee level WDRC coordinated RADF committee meetings through the local development officers, the interview participants and focus group participants were contacted about the study through the generous support of these officers in the towns of Dalby, Chinchilla, and Miles.

Once potential study participants were identified an invitation to participate was emailed out to them by WDRC. Three procedural steps were followed to invite participants for the study. First, the WDRC Cultural Development Coordinator provided work contact phone numbers of council staff to start recruitment process which included: one Art Gallery/Library Officer; one Community Development Officer; and one Community Development Coordinator. RADF committee members

were notified about research participation via an emailed flyer advertising the focus group see (Appendix C).

From this coordinated effort with WDRC, preliminary contact with RADF committee members and various council officers yielded a possible fourteen participants. The contact details of four local community artist/facilitators and ten community arts organisations who had received RADF project grants was obtained and initial contact was made. The community organisations who were contacted about study participation were invited in turn to provide contact numbers of five RADF project participants, who they thought would be interested in participating in the study. This final phase in contacting potential project participants for interview was achieved only after a relationship of trust was developed with the researcher and the community organisations, which took two months to create via email and phone conversations.

Once potential participants had been sourced from various stakeholder groups, interview candidates were invited to take part in the study. Contacting potential interview participants followed this procedure: (1) initial contact was made via a short phone call that introduced the researcher, gave a brief overview of the research project and invited them to participate in the interviews. If invitation to participate was accepted further details of the project were sent via their email address; (2) an email was sent to each potential interview participant with an outline of what was mentioned in the initial Phone call, plus one attached document titled *Participant Information for USQ Research Project Interview* as per USQ ethics guidelines. A copy of this information sheet can be found in (Appendix D); (3) a follow-up Phone call was made a week after the email confirming continued participation and the organisation of an interview date, time, and meeting place agreed upon by both participant and researcher.

Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews

Stages one of data collection involved conducting seventeen semi-structured interviews in the WDR from the 9th of September 2015 to the 27th of November 2015. The semi-structured interviews conducted in stage one of the research design provided focused and in-depth information on RADF initiative impacts to community. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in the following format.

Of the seventeen interviews administered seven were carried out in the town of Dalby, one each in Bell, Tara, Wandoan, and Moonie, and a further four interviews were held in Miles. The remaining two interviews were hosted in Chinchilla. Each of the interviews were carried out in a location that allowed the participants to feel comfortable and at ease, such as participant's homes (Gray 2009). The interview locations were nominated by the participants in consultation with the interviewer.

Informed consent was sought by the interviewer and given in written form by all participants in accordance with the ethics approval granted by the USQ. Written consent was sought from each interview participant before each data collection session proceeded. A copy of the interview consent forms can be seen in (Appendix H). The semi-structured interviews were run over a one-hour time span, and each participant was asked permission for the interview to be voice recorded for transcription purposes. Field notes were written about any key details gathered in each interview, and reflected upon to help inform data analysis and improve interviewing skills (Gray 2009). A copy of the interview questions was emailed a week in advance of the interview date to all participants. This gave participants an opportunity to think about their response to the interview questions and to feel more relaxed about the interview process (Gray 2009; Marshall & Rossman 1999).

Throughout the three-month interview process the collection of RADF archival material was taking place concurrently in WDR. Fifteen interview participants generously contributed copies of their RADF project documents to this second data set as ongoing interviews were conducted in the case site.

Stage 2 Archival Materials

A review of documents found in RADF program archival material was chosen as a data collection method for this research project. A strength of reviewing archival documents is that any results found can be easily verified, and the information contained in them can be analysed and reanalysed without the data being affected in the interim (Lincoln & Guba 1985). This study has collected data sourced through formal documents, such as RADF funding application and acquittal documents. Public record documents such as this provides a level of accountability as to their source and content (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The archival data collected through this unobtrusive method has produced a broad range of information about the RADF

initiative and its impact to the WDR community (Gray 2009). Archival material collected through this method also supports the triangulation of other collected data such as stakeholder interviews (Gray 2009).

Regional Arts Development Fund documentation was selected because they contain detailed information about arts and cultural projects, the organisations and artist/facilitators that operationalise the projects in the region, and the impacts triggered by the projects in the WDR community. Data drawn from details of RADF projects and those who deliver them to the community have been useful in identifying dimensions of impact. The dimension of impact included: (1) the various levels of people who are impacted in the community and to what extent (Guetzkow 2002); (2) how impact changes over time as further projects are undertaken (Matarasso & Pilling 1999); (3) determining the relationship between impact cause and effect (Landry et al. 1993).

The collection of archival documents has strengths (Gray 2009; Yin 2008). However, it has been criticised by research scholars. These weaknesses include accessibility to documentation, confidentiality, and reporting bias (Atkinson & Coffey 2004; Yin 2008). During field work in 2015 direct access to RADF documentation was withheld by WDRC. The decision by WDRC to make RADF project archival material unavailable to the research project caused further constraints on data collection in the case study site. The challenges placed on collecting RADF application and outcome report documents by the local council did limit access to a broader range of arts and cultural projects over a longer time frame. Nevertheless, analysing and interpreting more archival material may not have yielded any potential gains or undue influence over the study findings. While it is understood that field work undertaken in a case site can present limitations and barriers (Wolcott 2004), a solution was found that involved gaining access to RADF project documents via interview participant contribution of RADF grant applications and outcome reports.

The choice to collect RADF project documents from interview participants provided a solution to this challenge and a straightforward way to cross check both statements made in interviews with archival documentation. The decision to collect archival documents from interview participants required changes to be made in the

sequencing of data collection in the field. This meant the focus group and semi-structured interviews were conducted before the RADF project archival material could be collected and analysed. Whilst this situation was not ideal, data collection proceeded in the case site with interview participants being invited to contribute copies of RADF project applications and outcome reports at the end of their interviews. All documents collected were accessed directly through organisations, or individuals involved in projects. This allowed the council to maintain their confidentiality policy and the study to receive valuable data via project documentation.

Reporting bias is a factor to be acknowledged when using archival materials such as those found in RADF application and outcome reports (Yin 2008). This research has endeavoured to be mindful of the bias of those who have written the project proposals, and the researcher bias that exists regarding how these documents were analysed and interpreted (Atkinson & Coffey 2004). Researcher bias is addressed in more detail in the self-reflection statement found later in Chapter 3.

Archival materials are viewed as valid sources of data within qualitative research, and the mixed sampling framework used to differentiate projects has worked to mitigate possible research bias (Atkinson & Coffey 2004; Patton 2002). This study has used a mixed purposive sampling strategy.

Purposive Sampling Framework

The arts impact focus of the two research questions has influenced the choice to use purposive sampling strategies to identify and describe impact in RADF archival material. Purposive sampling strategies were applied to the documents collected from interview participants about RADF projects in the WDR area (Gray 2009). The decision to use a mixed purposive sampling method was contingent on the need for greater flexibility in adapting to a changing environment in the case site, and to triangulate data (Patton 2002). The two purposive sampling strategies employed in the study include convenience and maximum variation sampling. The framework below illustrates how the two sampling techniques were implemented in the study (see Figure 5).

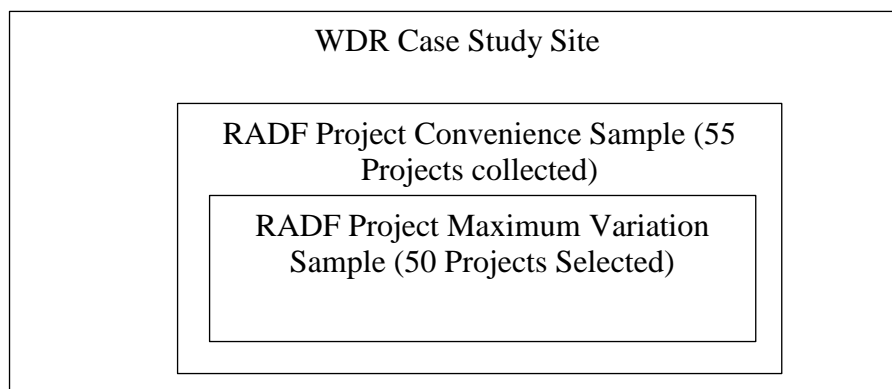


Figure 5 Mixed Purposive Sampling Frame

Convenience Sample Frame

Convenience sampling was implemented in the study due to limitations placed on the collection of RADF documentation by WDR. At the conclusion of each semi-structured interview participants were invited to contribute RADF project documentation to the archival sample (Patton 2002). Whilst this is considered a less robust sampling method, it was utilised in response to contextual constraints experienced during fieldwork in the case site (Lincoln & Guba 1985). This convenience sample collected archival material pertaining to 55 projects during the three-month period of the semi-structured interviews. The 55 project applications and other archival material, such as outcome reports, contributed to this convenience sample. The convenience sampling method employed collected documents relating to fifty-five RADF projects from 2013 to 2015.

This data set has added a longitudinal dimension to impact findings by examining project documentation over a three-year period. Providing a longer-term view of community arts project impact has addressed the short-termism of findings criticised in previous art impact studies (McQueen-Thomson, James & Ziguras 2002; Merli 2002; Putland 2008). This data set provides a historical and contextual understanding of the WDR communities' use of the RADF program grants to initiate arts and cultural activity across the region (Marshall & Rossman 1999).

The documentation contained in each project data item includes: a 12-page RADF application document; artist/facilitator Curriculum Vitae; a letter confirming the availability of participating artist/facilitator and the project outline; an eligibility checklist for professional artists; four letters of support for the arts and cultural project from other community organisations in that district; and an 11-page outcome report document. The convenience sample gathered more than 1000 documents from interview participants.

The collected documents were received either in hard copy form, or digital format via email. Project documents were sourced from three local community artist/facilitators, seven arts and cultural organisation representatives, and one RADF committee member from the WDR case study site. The project documentation was collated into individual projects in preparation for the maximum variation sampling.

Maximum Variation Sample Frame

Once the convenience sample was collated and finalised, a maximum variation sampling strategy was employed to differentiate projects for final analysis. The process to differentiate projects from the convenience sample was undertaken using a predetermined maximum variation criterion (Patton 2002). The guiding principles of the maximum variation sample focused on identifying the impacts of RADF projects in the WDR community, and include:

- (1) projects that are representative of multiple WDR communities, of various population sizes, (for example Dalby with 11 000 residents and Bell with 544 residents);
- (2) projects representative of multiple arts disciplines and cultural outcomes, (for example music, visual arts, and history and collections projects);
- (3) projects that represent a range of funding grant amounts, for example projects under \$2 000 and projects under \$10 000;
- (4) projects that are representative of a range of hosting organisations and artist/facilitators from different communities (for example, the Tara Blacksmithing Group);

(5) projects that are representative of a range of project durations, (for example weekend workshops and month-long projects);

(6) projects that demonstrated a range of targeted participant groups, (for example youth events, people with a disability); and

(7) projects that were completed between January 2013 to June 2015.

These guiding criteria provided a strategy for sampling a range of projects from the original convenience sample gathered from interview participants. The maximum variation sampling applied seven criteria to differentiate potential projects, at the completion of this process fifty RADF projects formed the archival document data set. A description of the 50 sample projects and their codes are available in Appendix J. The RADF projects represented in the maximum variation sample enabled comparability of data items and triangulation of data (Gray 2009; Patton 2002).

Stage 3 Focus Group

The choice to employ a focus group data collection method with a RADF committee was influenced by the need to gather in-depth evidence pertaining to community arts impact. Previous research has shown that using a focus group approach can be employed to enhance understanding about a research topic (Patton 2002). The focus group organised in WDR yielded rich data pertaining to committee member perceptions of the program, and project outcomes and impacts (Patton 2002). Interviewing a local RADF committee via a focus group was a logical decision, because RADF committees make recommendations and determinations about RADF project funding approvals. Therefore, committee members have a wealth of knowledge about impacts resulting from projects reported in project outcome reports. The power of utilising a focus group such as this can be found in its ability to gather data on a specific topic like RADF project impact (Patton 2002). The narrow focus of this focus group sought to elicit reactions from the participants about RADF impact, rather than more complex issues about the initiative like State Government funding allocations (Patton 2002).

Utilising the focus group method was both a time and cost-effective way to gather data about community impact from knowledgeable stakeholders (Marshall & Rossman 1999; Patton 2002). This focus group brought the complexity of group dynamics found in RADF committees to the foreground. Dynamic group discussion allowed access to their shared memories and experiences of the RADF projects and their knowledge of impact to the community, which cannot be achieved in individual one on one interviews (Kamberelis & Dimitraidis 2008; Patton 2002).

Focus groups can corroborate the perceptions of participants from other data collection methods (Patton 2002). Corroboration can be achieved through the social dynamics of group participation, where miscommunication can be instantly addressed by other members in the focus group (Patton 2002). This dynamic could confirm or correct participant perceptions (Patton 2002). The multi-faceted experience of the RADF program that each committee member in the focus group possesses provides a balanced view of impact encountered by the WDR. This study has applied a focus group approach to provide checks and balances on impact perceptions by triangulating data from a range of stakeholder opinion. The focus group transcript permitted comparisons to be made between interview and archival document data sets. By providing a balanced view of impact the quality of data collected in the study will be enhanced and research trustworthiness is reinforced (Krueger & Casey 2000).

Utilising a focus group approach in this research has proved beneficial to stakeholder participant, however focus groups have limitations. The limiting factors involved in conducting focus groups include the perceived freedom of personal expression in a group setting, number of focused questions used in focus group interviews, and their complexity. Earlier research has shown that individuals with minority view points have their ability to share opinions somewhat curtailed in a focus group setting (Patton 2002). Participants can feel that they cannot express opinions for risk of receiving negative feedback from within the group (Patton 2002). This study provided a contingency plan for those participants by providing time at the end of the focus group session for further discussion outside of the group situation (Patton 2002). Thus, counteracting pressures on an individual to conform their opinion.

The field work undertaken in the case site presented limitations to collecting data across all six local WDR RADF committees (Wolcott 2004). While data collection was taking place in late 2015 the RADF program in WDR underwent change which meant that the RADF fund was on hold and the recommencement date for the program was uncertain. The impact of this process meant that four out of the five RADF committees were not meeting to determine funding grant allocations during the data collection phase of this study. The timing of data collection hampered RADF committees' participation in focus groups, which in turn impacted on the data collection sequence. Therefore, a purposeful sampling strategy was needed to identify a typical case sample.

Typical Case Sampling

To identify the RADF committee needed to gather evidence of RADF impact a typical case sampling strategy has been applied to the four-possible local RADF committees that operate in the WRDC municipality. This purposive sampling strategy has been used to choose to a 'typical case' RADF committee that could be described as representative of all the local RADF committees in the WDR case site (Patton 2002).

The Dalby RADF committee has been chosen as a typical case because the group has a high degree of knowledge about RADF project impacts (Patton 2002). The focus group sample is made up of committee members from the Dalby local committee, which include: the Dalby Community Development Officer who is the WRDC representative; three local arts and cultural organisation representatives; and one district community artist/facilitator. Five other Dalby RADF committee members were invited to attend, but were unavailable on that evening. The Dalby RADF committee group can be described as a homogeneous group because they are people of a similar background with a shared focus on the arts in their community (Patton 2002). Collectively the committee possesses a broad range of arts and cultural involvement and experience. For example, a committee member may play multi-faceted roles in the arts such as playing a musical instrument, teaching music, leading choir groups, working as a community artist/facilitator, and representing music based organisations.

The Dalby RADF committee was invited to attend the group session so that their focused reactions to impact could be captured and the members could share and build knowledge about the community arts impact (Gray 2009). Conducting this focus group has enhanced the committee's understanding of RADF project impact via their group discussions and reflected this study's participatory research approach (Patton 2002).

Focus Group Questions

Focus group limitations have been addressed in this research by reducing the number and complexity of questions asked of focus group participants (Patton 2002). This research has endeavoured to restrict the number of questions covered by the group and tightly control the facilitation of the focus group meeting. This placed restraint on individual's question response times. By doing so, this allowed all the participants in the focus group to be heard and kept the group focused on the topic of project impacts (Patton 2002). The questions asked of the focus group also required simple, direct wording that allowed the group to easily understand the questions asked, thus avoiding miscommunication and lost time (Patton 2002). The following paragraphs present what questions were asked of participants and outlines how the focus group was facilitated to minimise focus group limitations.

To minimise focus group limitations, the questions used in the focus group were developed from the study's two research questions and informed by the questions asked in the semi-structured interviews. The group participants had one central question posed to them at the beginning of the focus group session, which was then deconstructed into three smaller parts. The central question asked participants **what effect does the Regional Arts Development Fund have on the Western Downs Regional community?**

To aid the focus of the group to key areas of enquiry, three parts of this question were examined in sequence to build up an overall picture RADF impact. The parts include:

(1) Are RADF arts and cultural projects beneficial?

This question was presented on a power point slide to the group and read aloud to participants. Participants were given ample time to respond and each person

contributed to the discussion. Following this, the next two slides presented further probing questions.

(2) If so, how? If not, how?

This strategy allowed participants to respond with examples of both perceived positive, or negative effects.

(3) To whom are they beneficial or not?

The questions on this slide invited participants to give specific examples of who they perceived benefited from the projects and who did not.

This set of questions asked participants to give their perception of RADF project impacts, which provided data for research question one and two. These questions also helped identify who benefited from the RADF projects, and explored the nature of the benefits. For example, transitory or short-lived benefits, versus the longer lasting or perceived permanent change. The information collected on the nature of project impacts and community change provided data for research question two that focused on what processes of change were activated by the RADF projects. The data generated from focus group questions were compared and triangulated with data sets collected from the semi-structured interviews and the archival material (Gray 2009; Patton 2002).

Conducting the Focus Group

The focus group was administered in the township of Dalby on the 22nd of October 2015. Five members of the Dalby district RADF committee attended the single focus group meeting. The focus group session was held over a two-hour period from 5.30 pm till 7.30 pm, in the WDRC training room of the Dalby Customer Service Centre. The session was structured into five main parts these included: an introduction; general house-keeping information; ethics outline; questions and group discussion time; session conclusion (Patton, 2002).

The session introduction gave a summary of the aims of the research project and its background, together with general house-keeping information for the comfort and protection of the participants via a short PowerPoint presentation. This included

information about the focus group conduct guidelines, for example: no side conversations please as it is important to hear what everyone is saying, and this also interferes with the recording of the group session.

Next, the ethics documents were distributed to the participants, who were encouraged to read and sign the ethics consent forms. Written consent was sought from each focus group participant before the data collection session proceeded. A copy of the focus group participation consent form is supplied in (Appendix I). Once all the paperwork was collected, a power point slide was used to introduce the first question and participants were all given time to respond.

The question and discussion time continued for approximately an hour and the session was wrapped up with a summary of the responses offered by participants. Concluding the session in this way allowed for member checking of participant perceptions of RADF impacts, and provided additional time for participants to add further responses to the question (Gray 2009; Patton 2002). A copy of the focus group session structure and question handout is included in Appendix K.

Once the data collection in WDR concluded, interview and focus group audio recordings were transcribed and archival documents collated. A thematic analysis approach was applied to the data generated by the focus group, semi-structured interviews, and RADF archival material.

Thematic Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a process focused on discerning patterns in data together with analysing, and interpreting themes (Braun & Clarke 2006). The process undertaken in thematic analysis is a messy, creative, and time-consuming task that brings shape and form to what appears to be a chaotic mass of collected information (Marshall & Rossman 1999). The thematic analysis employed in this study initially organised the data, located patterns across multiple data sets, and interpreted findings. The analysis process used in this study endeavoured to identify a general statement about the interconnections and links that exist among categories of data such as themes and sub-themes related to community arts impact within the WDR case site (Marshall & Rossman 1999). The interpretation of those themes was influenced by the researcher

and informed by the arts impact literature (Braun & Clarke 2006; Marshall & Rossman 1999).

A thematic analytical process was used because it is well suited to a constructivist interpretivist epistemology which contends that meaning, experience and knowledge is socially constructed (Braun & Clarke 2006; Gray 2009). The thematic analysis applied in this study has used a constructivist framework to form theory about the impact triggered by the RADF initiative in the sociocultural context of WDR (Braun & Clarke 2006). By focusing on latent themes contained within the focus group, interview, and archival material data sets the study produced a detailed thematic description across the data corpus. The themes produced gave a rich description of impact in the case site (Braun & Clarke 2006). The comprehensive thematic analysis provided by the study has enhanced the evidence base of this under-researched area of community level arts impact.

The thematic data analysis follows a process that is shaped by the dynamic and influential role of the qualitative researcher (Braun & Clarke 2006). Throughout the analytical process the researcher made multiple decisions about what themes were of interest and importance in the data, and how they were to be interpreted (Braun & Clarke 2006). The process of qualitative thematic analysis is neither linear, nor neat. Therefore, the five-step analytical process used in this research, while presented in a linear structure, was in fact a recursive process which moved in iterative cycles (Braun & Clarke 2006; Marshall & Rossman 1999).

The Five Step Thematic Analysis

The following paragraphs describe the five-step analytical process used in this study. Each step briefly discusses justification for all five steps used in this analytical approach.

The five steps include:

- (1) the organisation and familiarisation with each data item;
- (2) generating thematic codes;
- (3) organisation of codes into potential themes and sub-themes;

(4) reviewing and refining candidate themes and sub-themes; and

(5) identifying the essence of all candidate themes and arranging them into an analytical narrative.

Step 1 Organisation and Familiarisation

The first step in the thematic analysis process involved organising project documents and transcribing each of the interview data items and becoming familiar with their content (Braun & Clarke 2006; Marshall & Rossman 1999). The semi-structured interviews were transcribed and de-identified from the seventeen interview recordings. Each transcription was a verbatim account of the recorded interviews, with close attention being paid to follow the original punctuation used in the spoken text (Braun & Clarke 2006; Powers 2005). All transcribed interview scripts were checked against the original recordings to ensure accuracy and punctuation of the written text. Copies of these transcripts are available upon request. At this initial stage chunks of text that were of interest were highlighted and preliminary ideas about them were noted (Braun & Clarke 2006).

The fifty RADF projects which formed the archival document data set were organised using the following procedural phases to carefully compile each data item using the documents received from interview participants. These three procedural phases included: (1) documents in either hard copy, or digital format were scanned and made into Netware Printer Definition Files, or PDFs; (2) these PDF files were imported and used in the NVivo 10 data management software to analyse themes as part of the overall data analysis process; (3) each RADF project in this data set was allocated a data item code, for example RADF project 28, archival document item (ADI 28) which was used to de-identify each of the projects as per USQ ethical guidelines.

In addition to this, data item codes were used to identify the data extracts drawn from project documents. In relation to the reporting of research findings gathered from archival documents, a table was used to display project numbers, a brief project description, and codes used in identifying data items. The fifty RADF projects encompassed in the archival document review provided rich and comprehensive information about arts impact in the WDR.

The transcribed interviews were then given an interview code which ensured confidentiality and adherence to USQ ethics requirements. The codes were numbered 1 to 17, with the capital I used to indicate interview, an example of the codes used include I1 or I17. The codes were used in reporting findings, together with pseudonyms for each participant when a data extract was referenced. Likewise, the focus group recording underwent the same transcription and checking process as the interview recordings. This focus group transcript was also given a code to be used when reporting findings and referencing a data extract, such as FG1, or focus group one.

Step 2 Generating Thematic Codes

Once all the transcriptions and project archival material were organised and imported into the Nvivo 10 program, the second step in the analysis process proceeded to generate thematic codes (Bazeley 2013; Braun & Clarke 2006). This involved utilising a combination of theory driven themes and data driven themes (Braun & Clarke 2006). Initial theory driven themes informed by the arts impact studies of Williams (1996) were created in the Nvivo program (Braun & Clarke 2006). These initial themes included codes such as: social, educational, artistic, and economic benefits.

The benefits identified in Williams' (1996) study formed a theoretical framework to begin the process of systematically coding each data item to a potential theme. This framework was shaped by a set of questions from Williams' (1996) study that prompted the questioning of information found in each data item (Braun & Clarke 2006). An example of the type of question used in the coding process was: what are the educational benefits of RADF funded projects to the individual participants, organisations, and the community overall?

Thematic codes used to make sense of the data included the use of the *Community Capitals Framework* of Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004) which was utilised to produce theory driven themes (Braun & Clarke 2006). The seven community capitals involved in Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) framework were transferred into the Nvivo program as possible theme categories (Bazeley 2013). The community capitals theoretical model formed themes that helped organise data sets such as human capital impacts. All data extracts that referred to human capital impacts were

coded to this theme. This developed a theory driven data set from the semi-structured interview, focus group, and archival document data sets.

Data driven thematic codes were also generated using an inductive analytical approach that created code categories from terms referred to in the collected data sets (Braun & Clarke 2006; Patton 2002). These data driven codes were identified as potential themes, or items of interest and added to the initial code structure set up in Nvivo (Braun & Clarke 2006). These themes were identified in interview transcripts and RADF project documents, examples include ideas such as arts hub, or community liveability. The combination of theory and data driven code creation allowed dominant patterns and sub-themes to be formed across the data corpus (Bazeley 2013; Braun & Clarke 2006).

Step 3 Potential Themes and Sub-themes

After the coding process for each data set was completed, the next step was to organise codes into potential themes and sub-themes (Braun & Clarke 2006). This step took themes and codes brought from the theory based themes and the data driven themes together from across the three data sets to form five initial overarching themes. Each of these possible candidate themes contained multiple sub-themes (Braun & Clarke 2006). The five initial themes included: regional community; arts and cultural development; RADF funding; infrastructure; and project organisation. The sub-themes contained within the major theme of arts and cultural development, for example, included sub-themes such as: developing community organisations; communities of practice; community celebrations; and developing regional artists. These candidate themes and sub-themes were further refined and repositioned as the analysis process continued to reveal interesting data about art impacts.

Step 4 Refining Candidate Themes

Step four of the analytic process reviewed and refined the initial candidate themes and sub-themes. Multiple decisions were made about separating, joining, and collapsing themes and sub-themes by asking questions of the five-initial candidate themes. This was done by questioning and reviewing the evidence supporting each theme in connection to the two research questions (Braun & Clarke 2006). The questions asked of each theme related to the importance this theme had overall. At this stage of the analysis, themes and sub-themes underwent a process of searching

for internal homogeneity (Braun & Clarke 2006; Patton 2002). This meant that themes were checked for uniformity and coherence, an example of this was the bringing together of all data concerning wellbeing (Braun & Clarke 2006; Patton 2002). This was achieved by reading and re-reading over the data extracts contained in each theme and checking to see if a pattern existed (Braun & Clarke 2006; Patton 2002).

Once this task was completed the themes were checked for external heterogeneity, where themes were reviewed in relation to clear differences being evident among them (Braun & Clarke 2006; Patton 2002). During this part of the refinement process coded data and sub-themes were reshuffled, re-coded, moved, and condensed. At the end of this step four identifiable themes became prominent, these include: arts development impacts; wellbeing; social connections; and capacity development. Each of these themes and the sub-themes within them began to tell a story about the impacts of the RADF initiative in WDR (Braun & Clarke 2006).

Step 5 Arranging Themes into an Analytical Narrative

The last step in the analysis process was to find the essence of each of the four candidate themes and establish how they fit together within the overall story found in the data corpus. To achieve this level of understanding about each theme more refinement was necessary to identify what aspects of the data initially drew attention. Once this was understood, further refinement of how these themes were interpreted in relation to the two research questions was undertaken (Braun & Clarke 2006).

At the end of this fifth step a clear definition of each of the themes was established and robust evidence was available to support each theme (Braun & Clarke 2006). Equally, the final themes once identified needed to tell a convincing story about art impact in the case study site (Braun & Clarke 2006). The thematic analysis undertaken in this study was conducted in this way to provide a systematic and robust approach to describing and understanding arts impact in a regional case site. The approach used five iterative steps to organise, immerse, and refine three data sets that provided a conceptualisation and interpretive understanding of RADF impact.

To further enhance the thematic analysis employed in this study a ToC framework was employed to conceptualise the impact of RADF activity on WDR (Galloway 2009). The ToC framework has been used to identify community arts impacts and explore the influences inputs and processes of change initiated in projects have on these impacts. Applying a ToC framework in this investigation of impact will test it as a conceptual tool and develop a better understanding of impact cause and effect mechanisms.

Theory of Change as an Analytical Tool

A ToC framework that could be adapted and applied to diverse types of arts and cultural activity has been utilised as an analytical tool in this study (Taplin et al. 2013). The focus group, semi-structured interviews, and RADF archival material data sets were then used in this ToC framework to understand and map the cause and effect links between RADF program inputs, processes of change, and impact.

Employing a ToC framework has aided the conceptualisation of RADF impact and highlighted the generative mechanism involved in the process of change potentially brought about by arts impacts (Taplin et al. 2013). Examples of inputs, identified within the RADF archival material, included themes and coded data extracts about volunteer time, RADF funding, and project time-lines. Processes of change examples included skill building of individuals, organisational capacity development, and expression of community culture activated through participation in RADF projects. The impacts identified in the ToC included: new social networks, enhancement of community infrastructure, and new artistic works. Information revealed by the ToC framework will contribute to identifying and describing impacts, together with recognizing the community change processes brought about by RADF impact.

This research posits ToC as an innovative application of a tested conceptual framework for understanding the community arts engagement at the individual and community level. It is anticipated that using the ToC approach will achieve two objectives. Firstly, the application of a cross-disciplinary conceptual framework to analyse impact findings, leading to possible arts impact theory development. Secondly, to map links between project inputs, processes of change and impacts, to inform community arts and cultural development best practice. These two objectives answer the call by Raw et al. (2011) and Kelaher et al. (2007) to utilise an

interdisciplinary conceptual framework to analyse mechanisms and processes that facilitate community change.

Once the impacts of the RADF initiative are identified, described, theorised, and mapped the process of change through which arts impacts are generated will become evident. Stage one of the ToC framework in its most basic form, shown below in Figure 6, is used in this analytical process.

Step one in the development of the framework began the process of identifying first the inputs into community arts projects found in the data and then organising them under the inputs heading. Second, the data was examined to find the processes of change activated within the project activities to be listed under the appropriate heading. Third, the impacts created by the projects were described and collated under the final heading.

Step two of the framework presents these findings in a fully developed framework detailed in Chapter 4, Figure 9, page 188.

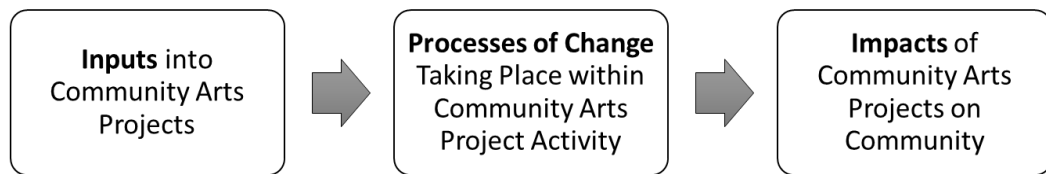


Figure 6 Power's (2018) Step One in Developing the Theory of Change Framework

Theoretical Analysis of the Data

The theoretical frameworks of Chaskin (2001) and Butler Flora, Flora, and Fey's (2004) discussed in Chapter 2 were also used as tools to analyse the data corpus. Both the *Building Community Capacity* and the *Community Capitals Framework* were applied to the impact findings from the ToC and thematic analysis. Detailing how a ToC and the other frameworks have been used as analytic tools has contributed to this study's dependability. The results from this theoretical analysis are detailed within the thematic presentation of the findings in Chapter 4 and discussed further in Chapter 5.

To complete the data collection, analysis, and interpretation process a reflective statement was provided to complete the last step in building research trustworthiness and outlining the personal reflections of the inquirer (Lincoln & Guba 1985). This reflective statement contains an overview of: the influences and personal values which have informed this research; the decisions used to shape this research; and the assumptions brought to this research. A reflective statement such as this situates the research within a context that aids potential researchers in the future to replicate the study, therefore reinforcing research trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

Self-reflection Statement

On reflection however, the decision to focus my research on the impact of community arts projects on regional communities was influenced by my experience as an artist/facilitator working on community projects. This experience evoked my curiosity as to how involvement and participant experience of arts and cultural activity can have profound effects on individual lives and community wellbeing. Finding out how arts and cultural activity benefits individuals and effects communities became the driving force behind my decision to conduct an impact study. Whilst there is a growing amount of research into community arts programs at the individual level, little research has been directed toward community level arts and cultural impact. To my surprise very few studies into arts impact have been conducted in Queensland regional communities. This gap in the field has influenced my decision to research the impacts of the long-term Queensland RADF initiative in WDR.

My personal experience as an artist/facilitator, who has worked on multiple community arts and cultural projects within WDR, gave me credibility and allowed me access to research participants during the data collection process. These prior working relationships may, or may not have influenced what they reported to me in the data collection process. I provided controls to mitigate this potential bias by not discussing anything about the topic of research prior to interviews and ceasing any working relationship which may cause a conflict of interest. However, prior work-related relationships may have allowed interview participants the freedom to share insights not trusted to others unknown to them.

The challenges placed on collecting RADF application and outcome report documents by the local council did place limitations on accessing a broader range of arts and cultural projects over a longer period. However, having more archival material to analyse and interpret may not have had any influence over my final study findings. On reflection however, future research may benefit from the analysis of archival documentation prior to semi-structured interviews to prompt more detailed answers and elicit greater detailed responses about project impacts from interview participants. Collecting RADF project documents from interview participants provided a straightforward way of cross checking both interviews with archival document data items. This provided an avenue to confirm information in documents with what interview participants were reporting about RADF impacts.

Overall interview participants found articulating project impact difficult. Multiple participants expressed that they had not had the opportunity to discuss the impact of community projects in detail. From my observations of interview participation, participants from across the stratified stakeholder sample expressed how the in-depth discussion of RADF project impact as part of this study was beneficial to them. Two community artist/facilitators I interviewed shared how reflecting on previous project outcomes and discussing project impacts within the interviews reinforced to them how their community arts practice was of benefit to their communities. This feedback about interviews highlighted to me the difficulties experienced by isolated practitioners in regional locations.

The theoretical assumptions I took into this research were at first influenced by the findings, claims and recommendations of prior community arts studies. Shaped by this evidence, and a gap in the community arts field for a theoretical framework, I chose to introduce the *Community Capitals Framework* of Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004) and Chaskin (1999; 2001) into the data analysis process. Drawing these Social Science frameworks into the search for a robust theoretical model for understanding arts impact, allowed me the scope to explain how and why community arts practice can support the development of stronger regional communities. The community capitals framework has also offered a way to understand and theorise community level arts impact.

Analysis of RADF impact data was a daunting task. However, undertaking the process of thematic analysis demonstrated to me the active role the analyst plays in determining and interpreting what the data collected means. Making meaning from the varied and subjective views of participants and documents proved challenging. I have been mindful of the bias contained in RADF applications, outcome reports, and other archival materials written by project organisers. I also acknowledge the researcher bias that exists regarding how these documents were analysed and interpreted (Atkinson & Coffey 2004). With this in mind, I recognize that the themes and sub-themes could have been interpreted differently at the hands of another analyst with a different lens on arts impact. The lens I bring to this study is that of a regional community artist/facilitator, who has worked on RADF committees at both a local and regional level. My theoretical lens as an arts practitioner has shaped my views on the internal structure of the aesthetic experience involved in community arts practice and the dynamic interplay between artist/author, the art object, and the role of the art critic. Further theoretical influences acting on my interpretation of the data include my commitment to community cultural development and the cultural rights of regional residents. I would like to acknowledge and celebrate the generosity and community mindedness of those project participants who create arts and cultural opportunities for others and contributed to this study.

Chapter 3 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has situated the research design within a constructivist epistemology that will use an interpretivist theoretical perspective. A constructivist view of knowledge is suited to identifying, describing, and exploring community arts impacts which requires a broad cross-section of views from stakeholders including, Local Government officers, the local Dalby RADF committee members, local community artist/facilitators, community organisations and community project participants.

The qualitative research methodology undertaken in the study has collected empirical data that endeavours to create a wide-ranging description about the under-researched community level impacts of community arts. This study establishes research trustworthiness through a range of methods built into the research design which ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. A case

study approach has been employed to answer two research questions aims to identify and explore the impacts of community arts engagement supported by the RADF initiative in WDR.

The four-stage research design used three triangulated data collection methods including semi-structured interviews, archival material, and a focus group. The final stage of the design involved a thematic analysis of each data set. The data collected has been interpreted through a transparent and well documented data analysis process that was informed by the use of a ToC conceptual framework and the theoretical models of Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004) and Chaskin (1999). The ToC framework applied in this study has sought to establish the how and why this initiative works through the identification of RADF impact and change processes. The first stage of the ToC framework is outlined in this chapter, while the full ToC framework will be presented at the end of Chapter 4.

The next chapter presents and discusses evidence from the analysis of semi-structured interviews, focus group, and the archival documents contained in the data corpus. It describes the six interrelated dimensions of impact identified in community arts engagement. In addition to this, the thematic analysis of the data corpus establishes four impact themes which are presented in detail. The impact dimensions and community capitals pinpointed in the analytical process are explored in each of the four impact themes. The final section of Chapter 4 outlines in full the second stage of the ToC framework developed in this study.

Chapter 4: Thematic Analysis and Interpretation

In the last chapter, the study was situated in a constructivist epistemology that used a qualitative methodological approach to collect empirical data from the case study site of WDR to answer two research questions. The first research question aimed to identify and describe the impacts of community arts engagement on regional Queensland at the individual and community level. The second research question sought to examine the identified impacts in greater detail, exploring the cause and effect processes triggered by community arts projects in the community. A four-stage research design was used to collect data to form a data corpus containing three data sets.

The first data set included transcripts from semi-structured interviews of key stakeholders across the WDR region. The second data set contained archival material from 50 project documents. The third data set incorporated a focus group interview with a RADF committee who are responsible for making important determinations on project funding grants. The qualitative data collected in this study describes the impacts of community arts activity on regional communities in WDR. In particular, it focuses on the short-and long-term effects of project activity on stakeholders involved in the program and the wider community.

The data corpus was interpreted using a thematic analysis approach. In addition to this, the data corpus was analysed and interpreted using a ToC conceptual framework (Fulbright-Anderson, Kubisch & Connell 1998). The ToC framework was used to identify and conceptualise the impacts discerned from the data corpus and map links between: inputs into projects; the process of change involved in community arts projects; and the impact of RADF projects on WDR. The ToC framework is suited to identifying and describing arts and cultural impacts, because of its flexibility and scope to cover the complexity of community change processes, multiple project types, and diverse organisational stakeholders. The ToC framework aided the determination of the dimensions of impact that operate within community arts projects, thus helping to answer both research questions.

The *Community Capitals Framework* of Butler Flora, Flora, and Fey (2004) and Chaskin's (2001) *Community Capacity Framework* were both used to provide a theoretical understanding to underpin the results identified in the thematic analysis. The seven capitals highlighted in Butler Flora, Flora, and Fey's *Community Capitals Framework* have been utilised to identify the complex social processes at work in community arts project impacts. Drawing out the interconnections between community capitals allows for greater theoretical clarity underpinning the community change processes identified in this study's findings. The presentation of findings has been shaped by the thematic analysis, the application of the ToC, and two theoretical frameworks.

Chapter 4 presents and discusses evidence from all three data collection methods. Findings identify that community arts project impacts possess six interrelated dimensions. Additionally, the thematic analysis establishes four impact themes across the data corpus and presents stage two outcomes of the ToC framework tested in this study. An overview of these impact dimensions and how they interact with each of the four impact themes will be included in each of the four theme summaries.

Describing Impact Dimensions

Analysis of the data corpus identified six key interconnecting impact dimensions associated with the community arts projects funded by the RADF initiative in WDR include:

- (1) time;
- (2) levels of impact;
- (3) spill-over effects between levels;
- (4) learning loops;
- (5) two-way impact; and
- (6) cumulative impact.

Dimension 1: Time

The first dimension involves the temporal aspect of impact. Community arts impacts can unfold in the short-term or over extended periods of time. This is dependent on the complexity and duration of the community arts project. Short-term project impacts take place in days or weeks, whilst longer-term impacts are experienced over months and years. To illustrate, immediate or short-term impact begins within the conceptualisation and planning stage of the project. Project organisers meet multiple times to communicate project objectives, plan its delivery, contact artist/facilitators, and prepare a budget. These initial stages of the project before its delivery produce impacts. Short-term impact can extend through the days and weeks following the project delivery (Mills & Brown 2004). Long-term project impacts continue to move outward from the initial project impact like the ripple effect of a stone thrown into a pond (Matarasso & Pilling 1999). This time continuum idea of impact may seem simple, however, within a community context such as WDR the measurement of impact becomes more complex over time (Galloway 2009). When multiple project effects occur in the community over time their impact intensity is increased (McCarthy, Ondaatje & Zakaras 2004). This temporal dimension of impact is closely associated with the levels of community who experience it.

Dimension 2: Levels of Impact

The second dimension of impact is closely linked with the impact dimension of time. Findings suggest that project activity over time affects four distinct levels of the WDR community. The four levels of impact include the individual, organisational, community, and regional levels.

(1) At the individual level, people affected include: project participants, project volunteers, artist/facilitators, and project organisers. Project participants for example, experience impacts to their skill and mastery of arts media through learning new techniques offered in community arts workshop projects (Matarasso 1997).

(2) At the organisational level, are community members who are part of arts and cultural organisations or groups. This level can also involve non-arts organisations who are involved in operationalising projects, project collaborations, and project participation (Williams 1996). Arts organisations for example, can include the local

theatre, quilting, or choir, while non-art organisations may involve a community disability provider or indigenous health service.

(3) At the community level, there are impacts to groups of people who are involved in community arts projects based in a geographic location. Involvement directly in a project can include for example: community wide audience participation, like a festival event or a performance; or direct participation in large project, like painting a mural on a wall in a public space. Impact at this level can also include: indirect affects like improving the morale of a community by beautifying it; diversifying local industry, and supporting local micro-economies through creating cultural tourism events or destinations like local history museums.

(4) At the regional level, impact can be seen as an aggregation of affects across all individual, organisational, and community impact. In the context of WDR this means that impact cumulates through the sum of multiple RADF project effects on individuals, organisations, and communities. An example of this is the capacity development of a theatre organisation who provides regular acting workshops for community members who then deliver regular performances for the community. Contributions made over the last 50 years of operation by this organisation has raised the reputation of WDR as a vibrant arts and cultural hub and altered the perception of its regional liveability and wellbeing (Schirmer, Yabsley, Mylek, & Peel 2016). The levels of impact noted in WDR is closely linked to the spill-over effects between levels.

Dimension 3: Spill-over Effects between Levels

The third dimension of impact occurs through the aggregate effects of impacts that change an aspect of an individual's human, social, and cultural capital (Guetzkow 2002; McCarthy, Ondaatje & Zakaras 2004). Spill-over effects occur when multiple impacts reach a tipping point where they affect other levels in a complex and dynamic process (Guetzkow 2002, Matarasso & Pilling 1999). For example, the change in leadership skills and knowledge of an individual (individual level) can affect change in an organisation through his or her directional influence. At a community level, collaborative community arts projects among organisations build community reciprocity and trust through spills-over effects from sharing resources and a commitment to collective action (Chaskin 2001; Putnam 2000). For example,

at a regional level, choir organisations from three different WDR towns work together to raise individual and organisational singing skills for a combined performance at a large festival. The skills of the individual choir members increase the level of performance of each organisation. This in turn influences the shared experience of each organisation, the level of performance, and the identification of each town choir in region-wide choir identity. The four levels of a community are affected by, these impact spill-overs from one level to another (Guetzkow 2002). This suggests that impact can be a process (Landry et al. 1993). The spill-over effects between levels also involve learning loops and two-way impacts (Vogel 2012).

Dimension 4: Learning Loops

The fourth interrelated dimension of impact identified through the ToC framework analysis is that of ‘learning loops’ (James 2011). James (2011) and Vogel (2012) suggest that the experience of success encourages the desire for further success. Learning loops exist where, for example, the success experienced in one community arts project builds knowledge and learning about project inputs, change processes, and impacts. This knowledge is transferred to future projects, which in turn improves project impact. Figure 7 below illustrates learning loops.

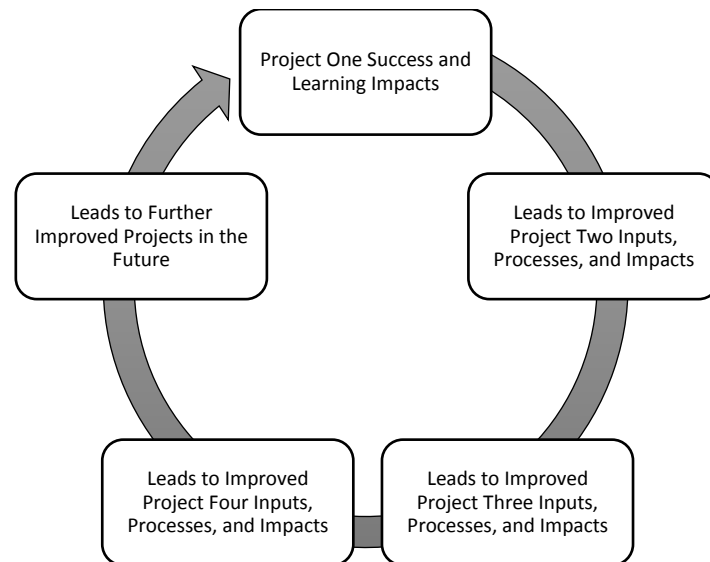


Figure 7 Power's (2018) Diagram of Learning Loops that Influence the Inputs, Processes, and Impacts of Future Projects Identified within WDR RADF Projects.

Learning loops illuminate the cumulative dimension of impact and demonstrate how success builds on success in iterative cycles.

Dimension 5: Two-way Impact

In addition to learning loops, two-way impact effects are also taking place within community arts projects. An example of this two-way impact exists between the artist who facilitates community arts workshops and the people with whom she or he work with in community. In a workshop scenario, impacts to the artist/facilitator can range from improving his or her teaching skills to building new communal networks. Equally, the workshop participants gain new technical skills and knowledge about art media. Other two-way impacts can include artist/facilitator and arts organisations, or an arts organisation working with the local council. In each situation both parties are impacted by the relationships they form and the activities they participate in. Multiple two-way project impacts produce cumulative effects to communities over extended time frames.

Dimension 6: Cumulative Impact

Cumulative impact in community arts can be defined as the repeated use of arts and cultural activity to bring about change in a community. Changes to a community as a result of repeated arts and cultural activity impacts become more prominent than those produced by the first activity impact. The RADF initiative's twenty-five years of operation in WDR has generated multiple project impacts throughout the region.

Findings indicate that impact has time and spatial dimensions that interrelate in complex processes over all four levels of the community. This suggests that cumulative impact is not automatically generated in simple cause and effect pathways (Galloway 2009). Cumulative impact is created through multiple impact sources (projects) aggregated across four levels of the community over extended time frames (Guetzkow 2002). An example of this cumulative process is evident in local festivals where economic impacts are increased with each sequential festival event. All six dimensions of impact have been made explicit in the following thematic presentation of findings.

Impacts of Community Arts Projects

The findings from the thematic analysis of the data corpus identified four impact themes. The four identified themes include:

- (1) Wellbeing;
- (2) Social Connectedness;
- (3) Developing Arts and Culture; and
- (4) Capacity Building.

1. Wellbeing

Theme 1 presents findings on wellbeing which are discussed primarily at the individual level with additional spill-over effects at the community level. Wellbeing impact effects are experienced over the short-and long-term. These findings indicate that impact from projects improves wellbeing through participation in creative activity which brings pleasure, diversion, and mindfulness. Community arts projects enhance regional community wellbeing by breaking down social isolation and by encouraging community members to find better balance between work and relaxation time. Community wellbeing and mental health are supported through community arts engagement during times of drought. Wellbeing impacts are closely linked to building social connectedness and capacity.

2. Social Connectedness

Theme 2 highlights that participating in cultural projects increases individual, organisational, community, and region-wide social connectedness by providing opportunities to bring community members together to communicate, share, and support one another. The creative environments found in community arts projects foster understanding, support, and trust among individuals and organisations which brings about social connectedness. Project activity was found to produce bonding, bridging, and linking social capital which generates a communal cohesion and an improved sense of community. The evidence presented demonstrates that community inclusivity is raised by providing meaningful communal activity that provides positive messages about marginalised community members. The social connectedness fostered in community arts engagement was vital to the development of community capitals including human, cultural, and political capital. Enhancing social connectedness in the community is critical to the building of community capacity and wellbeing.

3. Developing Arts and Culture

Theme 3 describes how community arts activity provides access to new knowledge and the communication of community values, traditions, and history. This type of community cultural expression diversifies local economies by impacting tourism development, social infrastructure, and community identity. Community arts engagement provides access to arts and culture for regional residents. Access and participation in community arts projects have created opportunities for the expression and communication of regional culture. Impacts from projects also build new communities of practice, while providing employment for regional artist/facilitators. The cumulative impact of community arts engagement has changed community attitudes to valuing arts and culture in the region over time. Arts and cultural activity supported by the RADF initiative engages community members in the development of community capitals and the process of capacity building.

4. Capacity Building

Theme 4 outlines how individual, organisational, and community capacity is built through community arts engagement. Capacity building has been identified in this

study as both an impact theme and an ongoing community-wide process. This capacity building is non-linear and complex. Evidence from the data corpus highlights how community capacity building emerges through the collaborative process. This is set in motion by organisations and artist/facilitators who work together to engage others in projects that solve communal problems and actualise community goals. Findings suggest that community capacity building is interconnected with the levels of human and social capital existing in each town. Evidence links the critical role leadership plays in producing capacity impacts. Community arts project engagement enhances community capacity which leads to gains in human, social, political, financial, and cultural capital. Findings show that building capacity is a self-reinforcing cycle which operates over longer time frames. The research findings presented in this chapter provide evidence to support the hypothesis that investment in arts and cultural projects can change and strengthen regional communities.

The ToC framework developed from impact findings is presented in the last section of Chapter 4. This framework was constructed using the dimensions of impact and the thematic findings described earlier in the chapter. The ToC framework found that each successive community arts project improves organisational capacity and resources. Improvements to organisational capacity was also found to enhance the processes of change and impacts generated in each new project. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research findings.

Theme 1: Wellbeing

Wellbeing is one of the four impact themes generated by RADF funded arts and cultural projects in WDR. Within this case study context, wellbeing can be understood as the condition of being well, or content with one's way of life (Eckersley 1998). The welfare or quality of life experienced by an individual or community is increasingly being defined by its wellbeing rather than just the absence of illness or infirmity (Eckersley 1998). Wellbeing or quality of life has multiple interrelated parts which include an individual's physical, mental, social, and spiritual attributes (Eckersley 1998). With this in mind, the notion of wellbeing used in this thematic analysis is used in a broad sense to encompass emotional and social wellbeing, together with psychological wellbeing and mental health.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2013) define social and emotional wellbeing as being a person who is happy, confident, and has good relationships with others. A happy person shows no signs of being anxious, depressed, or antisocial. They also define psychological wellbeing as the ability of a person to be autonomous, empathetic, resilient, and attentive. Similarly, mental health is described by the World Health Organisation (2014) as the:

...state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community

The theme of wellbeing describes how individuals and the community are impacted through participation in community arts projects over the short-and long-term. Three sub-themes are contained in this section. The first sub-theme examines how the intrinsic impacts of creative engagement in community arts enhances social and emotional wellbeing. The second presents the psychological wellbeing impacts experienced through project participation. The third explores the mental health support provided by community arts engagement.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing Benefits

Evidence contained in the interview transcripts strongly linked project participant engagement in creative processes with improved social and emotional wellbeing and quality of life. The creative processes undertaken in RADF projects were identified by interview participants as having positive short-and long-term wellbeing impact. Short-term social and emotional wellbeing impacts for individuals included experiencing feelings of: pleasure, enjoyment, empowerment, confidence, happiness, inspiration, and satisfaction. Project participant impacts are linked with project experiences such as problem solving, imagining, visualising, trusting, role playing, risk taking, lateral thinking, experimenting, communicating, deconstructing, and intuition. Individual's experienced long-term impacts on their wellbeing when participating in multiple project over longer timeframes. Project participants described complete captivation while engaged in the act of creating. This level of engagement was reported by project participants, community organisation

representatives, and community artist/facilitators from interview and archival document data sets.

RADF Project 15 illustrated how artistic expression found in workshops supported the emotional wellbeing of women working on drought stricken farms. This RADF project participant detailed how absorption in creative decision making and artistic problem solving has brought them renewed hope and respite from the stress and hardship of farm life. The project participant's engrossment in design problems such as fabric colour, texture, and pattern provided experiences of pleasure and diversion from stress. Letter of support from Project 15 stated:

For one day, I forgot about the rest of life, and engrossed myself in the many and wonderful choices of colours and fabrics to make a quilt. I find myself picking bright and cheerful colours to brighten my life. The artistic expression and the chance for me to colour my world. [ADI 22]

Kate, who is both a community artist/facilitator and project participant described how participants in her workshops experienced feelings of heightened pleasure when engaged in the act of creating art. She also highlighted the social and emotional wellbeing benefits gained from coming together with others in creative projects. Kate stated:

The biggest benefit is... the bringing of people together, the connection, the communication, the creativity, the chat, the dialogue, it's just the...coming together and doing something fun and enjoyable. [I 8]

Interview participant Jill, who is an active member of a visual arts group committee, spoke of the pleasure experienced through creative engagement. The intrinsic impacts that support emotional and social wellbeing were in her view difficult to measure, or quantify. This impact she believed was of great value to project participants. Jill stated:

So, that [creativity] is a great wellbeing thing... you can't and don't put a price on, do you? [I 6]

Analysis of interview transcripts suggested that multiple participants had difficulty expressing or articulating what took place in intense creative engagement. This reflected the lack of theoretical knowledge surrounding community arts intrinsic impacts by organisations who deliver RADF projects in a regional community setting.

Interview participants and archival documents from the data corpus also described how longer-term wellbeing benefits, beyond the initial workshop, were experienced by participants through the act of creating. Long-term wellbeing benefits were experienced through the simple act of keeping a created object from the arts workshop, and later remembering the intense and satisfying experience encountered. Kate believed reliving the feelings of pleasure project participants encountered in the workshop held longer-term wellbeing benefits. Kate stated:

They get to take that [mosaic] home and put it in the garden, or in their house, and they can enjoy it. They can look at it and think, remember when I did that, it was fantastic, I had a great weekend. That to me is priceless, I think that is a long-term benefit. [18]

Together with providing stress relief and emotional wellbeing impacts, community arts projects highlight how the overall wellbeing of project participants was enhanced through building confidence and group belonging. Interview participant Kate also emphasised how the arts can help people feel better about themselves. She spoke of her observations of workshop participants and their feelings of empowerment brought about by the realisation of their new skills, capacities, and confidence gained in the act of creation and artistry. Kate stated:

For some people, it is their first experience with art or creativity ... who have come along and said, 'I am not artistic, I am no good at this stuff and I am hopeless'. I say to them no, it's fine, everyone can do it, have a go... They think they suck at it, but they don't, and that is empowering people short-term and long-term. [18]

Project participants' sense of life satisfaction and emotional and social wellbeing increased through building new skills and knowledge within a safe and supportive group environment. Project 18 exemplifies how participants gained confidence and a sense of belonging through skill acquisition and performance experience. The indigenous and non-indigenous youth involved in this project worked collaboratively with five facilitating musicians to write, produce, and perform original pieces of music. The short-term impacts reported in the project's acquittal suggest participants experienced elevated happiness. The acquittal document also reported positive impacts including an increase in emerging artists' confidence. The project application document stated:

We feel that this project will lift the confidence of local emerging artists to enable them to pursue their careers more successfully, therefore adding to their quality of life... this project is aimed at those wanting to write a song or play an instrument for pleasure, elevating the happiness and confidence of those attending ... [ADI 26]

Additionally, the application and acquittal documents suggested long-term impacts of enhanced confidence can enable participants to pursue musical careers. This indicates that building human capital through arts education boosts self-confidence which in turn has short-and long-term wellbeing impacts. The five artist/facilitators involved in the project supported young indigenous people to develop a sense of belonging to a group of other like-minded musicians in their community. Indigenous young people involved in the project have gained political capital through their inclusion in this group of musicians. Building social capital through connecting individuals to new social networks raised participants' feelings of happiness and improved their quality of life. Their inclusion in the project and the group suggests short-and long-term emotional and social wellbeing impact.

Further archival documents detailed how improving the social status of individuals and groups within the community increased social and emotional wellbeing. Project participants' quality of life was enhanced in both the short-and long-term through the social connections they made and the group belonging they experienced. The national youth week music project (Project 20) reported improvements were made to

quality of life experienced by participants. The project documentation reported that these young participants repeatedly encounter marginalisation in their regional communities. Documentation also highlighted how young people in regional communities who are creative, sensitive, and different frequently feel outcast amongst their mainstream peers. The project acquittal report suggested that the young participants bonded with others in newly developed social networks and found a place of acceptance within the projects. Document ADI 28 stated:

Being a young person in regional Queensland can be challenging...once they engage in a creative project it can...allow them to be themselves, accepted, listened to, and respected. [ADI 28]

Project participant engagement in creative problem solving, like writing a song about personal experience, allowed participants to have a voice and feel accepted within the participant group. Development of singing, writing, and performance skills provided young people with opportunities to build self-esteem and confidence. This suggests that projects like the national youth week music project built human and social capital for individuals and the indigenous community in both the short-and long-term. Building human and social capital has enhanced individual level social and emotional wellbeing. Impacts from Project 20 had spill-over impacts to community level social wellbeing, as noted by the positive messages about the indigenous community generated through the project outcomes.

Community Wellbeing Benefits

Enhancing individual level wellbeing through community arts activity can have spill-over effects on families and the community. Findings from interviews and archival documents suggest that improving the emotional and social wellbeing of individuals can influence the individual's family and friends. The aggregation of these individual level wellbeing impacts over time will produce spill-over effects at the community level. An example of this was shared by interview participant Ruby, who as a district family support officer at a local neighbourhood centre, has observed the ripple effects of improved wellbeing move from RADF project participants to the wellbeing of their families. Ruby stated:

...for every one of those who are accessing that funding, there's families and that around them, so when [their] wellbeing is improved quite often the wellbeing of their family is improved. [I 14]

Individual level wellbeing impacts spill-over into community level wellbeing because individuals are part of small and large networks of people that have influence on others throughout the community.

The fund helped to support community wellbeing through community arts activities incorporated into local festivals, town shows, and community celebrations. For example, community arts projects embedded in local festivals provided wellbeing impacts to the community through performance and exhibition spectacles that promote fun, enjoyment, and creativity. A considerable number of the projects sampled appeared to positively influence community wellbeing by adding fun and entertainment to community life. Community member participation in workshops and audience attendance at project performances (community plays), showcases (choir performance) and exhibitions (sculpture exhibitions) helped to alleviate social and geographic isolation. This in turn built communal bonds and enhanced community health and psychological wellbeing.

Psychological Wellbeing Impacts

Like emotional and social wellbeing, maintaining psychological wellbeing is of equal importance to regional community members. Focus groups, interview participants, and archival documents reported that engagement in community arts projects brought about positive psychological wellbeing impacts. Interview participants reported short-term psychological wellbeing impacts such as pain management and mindfulness, together with long-term impacts such as improved physical health, and a better balance between work and relaxation. Interview participant Jill has observed multiple workshop participants and explains the pain relief benefits experienced through arts participation. Jill stated:

members will come with arthritis [pain]... say that once they get behind that easel then all that goes, because you are concentrating on what you are doing... so that is a great

*well-being thing ... it's like occupational therapy isn't it?...
art is known as a great stress reliever. [I 6]*

Project participants' short-term psychological wellbeing and health benefits, like pain relief, appear linked to keeping the mind busy while concentrating on a creative task. Creative engagement such as this builds and maintains human capital. Cloe, who has twenty years of experience with the RADF initiative in WDR, noted that long-term participation in singing helped her maintain a positive sense of self-acceptance which kept her feeling young. Cloe stated:

*... singing will keep you young, you know you can do without
a lot of things but you can't do without music. [I 4]*

Likewise, choir participant Lisa, recounted her experience of singing in a community choir as having great benefits to both her physical and psychological health. She described the notion of singing and mindfulness, as living in the moment. Lisa associated this with a positive state of mind and happiness. Lisa and Cloe's physical health and wellbeing benefits appear maintained through continued participation in arts activity. Lisa stated:

*I am going to be in that chapel singing, and...from that time
tonight I'm going to be in the moment, you know
mindfulness, I am going to be in the moment living right
now... that must have great benefits for my personal health,
my physical and psychological health. [I 10]*

A third interview participant, Tess, who is a project participant and visual art facilitator, discussed her observation of aged care patients involved in a community arts project. Tess highlighted that patients' participation in arts activities over a two-month period had a positive influence on their psychological wellbeing. She believed project processes got participants' minds active through creative decision making, increased communication, concentration, and manipulation of media. Project participation provided a social activity that was meaningful to clients. During her interview, Tess shared how the group was at first reluctant to take risks and attempt new things. Tess felt participants' behaviour changed as trust grew between them and the artist/facilitators involved in the project. Tess stated:

They... were very reluctant at first to trying new things. They just had no concept at first of the project outcomes, you can't just come in and take over, you must build a relationship with them... art does that, ...now they are around a table and there is laughter, ...and they are trying to do the activity...the next week you come back they have done five more. [I 17]

Aged care clients maintained wellbeing impacts over multiple workshops conducted in a two-month period. Long-term wellbeing impacts to aged care clients continued past the end of the project through the efforts of aged care staff who received professional development as part of the project.

Community arts projects produce psychological wellbeing impacts by supporting individuals in creating a better work-life balance in regional settings. Interview participants expressed the notion of 'finding a better work-life balance' was associated with psychological wellbeing. Interview participants acknowledged the need for people to spend time having fun and experiencing enjoyment away from daily home and work stress. Participants suggested engaging in creative pursuits gave people an opportunity to take a break from their daily routines and re-energise. Sue who is an artist/facilitator, details how taking a break from the normal routine helps participants to enhance skills in evaluating problems and making decisions. Sue suggested that project participation provided a space for people to gain different perspectives on personal issues at home. Sue stated:

...having a break from normal routine, it gives you a new lease on life I think, it helps generate a better work-life balance, because when you focus on being creative in a relaxed manner...it gives a positive mind shift...it's just having that mental break...thinking about something else for a while you're better at dealing with any problems... [I 15]

Interview participants highlighted the need to take a break away from work on the farm, which was vital to changing their 'mindset' or frame of mind. Taking time away from farm work to attend weekend workshops was reported by interview participants as having the same effect as having a short vacation without 'physically

leaving town'. Interview participants believed they received psychological and emotional respite through workshop participation. Regular project participant Macy, who is active in a local arts organisation, reported her community arts project participation alleviated feelings of isolation and dispiritedness. Macy detailed how participating in workshop projects helped her re-focus energy towards developing an arts practice and away from farm work. Macy stated:

It is good to have these workshops, because it makes you stop, and follow through with your project...having those two days is just like going on a little holiday. [I 12]

Maintaining psychological wellbeing by restoring work-life balance is particularly important to sustaining and supporting remote farming families. Participants like Macy and Sue believe engaging in creative processes restores the work-life balance and brings psychological and emotional wellbeing benefits in the short-term and allows them to sustain better health over the long-term.

Mental Health

Interview participants from multiple communities across the region suggested that community arts projects impact individual level psychological wellbeing and mental health. Participant Tess disclosed her personal struggle with long-term mental health issues and the benefits experienced through engagement in visual arts. Tess finds painting an outlet for her anxiety and depression and an aid to maintaining mental health. Tess stated:

I have anxiety and depression; long-term art is my saviour. It really is. It's an outlet that I can't live without. [I 17]

Tess suggested that participation in RADF workshops were a good informal therapy method that was easy to access. Further to this, she suggested that community arts may provide a support to poorly resourced mental health services in regional towns. Tess stated:

...They say suicide has got really bad in our community, but how are we going to fix it? They are not aware that the arts could help. [I 17]

The focus group participants were unanimous in their belief that community arts activity provided an avenue for what they called ‘cheap therapy’ for the ‘mental [health] issues that’s happening in the region.’ The focus group gave an example of this regarding the social isolation experienced by older community members in a small regional town. One focus group participant outlined how the social interaction found in RADF projects positively impacts the emotional and psychological wellbeing of older community members. Other focus group members agreed this was important because it provided creative activities to break through the social isolation which can exist for older people in small communities. The focus group stated:

I've seen the benefits...that social benefit [to] the individual...growth in themselves...[to] do something you would not have thought possible, and to share it with somebody else...benefits a whole community. But communities are made up of those individual people, and if there's one person not feeling good about themselves, it doesn't help the community. [FG 1]

Rural families living and working on farms are isolated geographically and socially. The hardships they experience, like droughts and floods can exacerbate this isolation. The financial adversity experienced during these events further compounds the effects on individual and community wellbeing. Evidence found in the archival documents and interview transcripts suggests that arts participation can help to remedy the impacts of isolation and environment hardship.

Social Isolation and Mental Health

Interview participant Kent, a long-term theatre organisation committee member, believed RADF community arts projects can provide mental health support for individuals in regional areas. Kent recounted an experience with a local farmer during a drought in his local district. The farmer’s participation in a performance project helped him to maintain positive mental health in a time of personal duress. Performing in the play allowed him an avenue out of his personal hardships and feelings of powerlessness as a farmer during the drought. The performance project brought the farmer into the affirming environment of a theatre production, which

encouraged him to make positive connections with others involved in the play. Kent stated:

David, one of the local farmers was in our play 'The World Bra Unclipping Competition'. David honestly and openly says that getting involved in the play has kept him sane, because it...got him out of his own little world and connecting. [I 7]

Shared creative experiences in positive project environments, like the theatre performance workshops connected participants together, allowing them opportunities to communicate and seek support for personal hardship and emotional distress. Building social capital in this way develops relations of trust and reciprocity among community members in both the short-and long-term.

Macy who is an arts organisation representative living in a remote area of WDR, described how women who are frequently isolated on farms in the district take a day out to come to the arts group to participate in RADF project workshops. She highlights how seeing other women in a supportive atmosphere, created in the RADF projects, helps to maintain mental health and wellbeing across the district. Macy stated:

People are just sick of being at home all the time on the farm, it can be fairly isolating ... working day in and day out ... to be able to come [to the group] and see other women is a big thing...some people are suffering serious mental health [issues]...our group is very supportive...[we] help to hold them together. [I 12]

Equally, interview participant Tom who has 30 years of experience working within a WDR Regional Arts Council branch, highlighted the need for people to come together and share their concerns with others in their community. By sharing their experiences of heartache and tribulation with others, community members were able to find support. While this type of support can be found in other communal activities, Tom felt strongly that the plays were a way to start discussions around sensitive mental health issues. Tom spoke passionately about the social, emotional,

and psychological supports provided by arts and cultural projects during times of community crisis and personal hardship. Tom stated:

...If things are going a bit hard...they will all come together at these functions, it's not so much looking at the play... it's the fact that they...are together and they can...talk to each other, which is what you have to have if things are going a bit hard, you've got to have people who come together and who talk. So, if...I'm on the verge of putting a gun to my head, I can talk to you and you can say, 'Oh look we've got the same problem'.... if you can spread it out it solves some problems. [I 16]

Similarly, archival documents from Project 47 illustrated the importance of RADF projects to project participants in rural communities in drought. The letter of support written by a participant spoke of the positive atmosphere generated by the quilting workshop and how it provided inspiration and hope in a time of distress. The letter of support stated:

[The project is an] opportunity to get off the farm and do something positive...the drought consumes everything we do, it takes a toll on our spirit and mental health...to be able to do something positive when everything is so miserable is inspiring...that social interacting, chatting, and laughing, alleviates feelings of being isolated and alone...the quilt at the end of the day is a shining beacon of positivity that inspires hope...attending helps improve the mental health of rural women. [ADI 64]

Additionally, members of the RADF committee participating in the focus group FG 1 spoke emphatically about how RADF played an important part in enabling people within the community to get out of their homes and interacting for the good of their mental health. Focus group extract FG 1 stated:

It gets people out of the house, that's a big thing at the moment with the mental health issues happening in the region. [FG 1]

Interview participants gave heartfelt descriptions of how arts and cultural project participation created an environment where people bonded with each other through a shared creative experience. Project environments broke down social isolation and enabled companionship to flourish among participants. This allowed new community networks to be formed. Examples of the positive environments created in projects included theatre rehearsals, painting classes, quilting workshops, and festival lantern making. Community arts projects appeared to improve mental health in participants across WDR by providing activities that act as a catalyst for renewed optimism, inspiration, and support for community members.

Wellbeing Summary

In summary, emotional, social, and psychological wellbeing impacts have primarily affected WDR at the individual level. Individuals were found to influence friends and family which created spill-over impact at the community level in the short-and long-term. Evidence from the data corpus suggests that community arts engagement provides fun, enjoyment, and entertainment to WDR communities. Creative activities delivered within the community provided an opportunity for communal members to balance work commitments with relaxation. The evidence also indicated that community level wellbeing is supported in times of hardship through the social, emotional, and psychological support produced in meaningful activities that brought people together to share stories of hardship. Engaging in community arts activity was seen to reduce emotional stress and social isolation.

Community arts projects provided opportunities to develop human capital through building personal confidence and skills, together with individual and community level health benefits. Findings suggested community arts project participation supported the mental health of WDR individuals by supplying an outlet for anxiety and depression. Community arts projects broke down the social isolation that exists for older people in small communities through creative engagement and social interaction. Project participation appeared to remedy the impacts of isolation and environmental hardship experienced by farmers during natural disasters like

droughts and floods. Participation of this type has the potential to be a cost saving measure to government mental health services in regional communities. The next thematic section presents findings on the social connectedness generated by the RADF initiative in WDR.

Theme 2: Social Connectedness

Social connectedness is a prominent theme identified in the data corpus. This section is divided into four main subsections which include: supportive project environments; creating community cohesion; building a sense of community; and developing community reciprocity. Each of the four subsections discuss the social connectedness impacts of RADF projects associated with social capital theory.

The theme of social connectedness examines the social networks interacting within communities that can be underpinned by social capital theory. Social capital as a concept can be defined as an individual's family, friends, and contacts that can be called upon in times of emergency and enjoyed for the communion these relationships bring (Putnam 2000). Equally, these close relationships can also be leveraged for monetary or political gain (Woolcock & Narayan 2000). Communities enriched with an abundance of varied social networks and community associations will have greater access to resources and be more resilient to change (Woolcock & Narayan 2000).

Social connectedness is therefore facilitated through networks of people who cooperate and work together for the common good of others (Healy, Field, Helliwell, Cote, & Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development & Centre for Educational Research and Innovation 2001). Pretty and Ward (2001, p. 211) describe social capital through four different dimensions that include: 'relations of trust; reciprocity and exchanges; common rules, norms, and sanctions; connectedness, networks and groups'. By applying these four dimensions of social capital to understanding how community arts projects impact WDR, it becomes clear that the projects funded by RADF enhance and maintain social connectedness within the region.

Supportive Project Environments

Community arts projects are catalysts that developed and maintained social connectedness in WDR. The findings suggested the inclusive and non-competitive environments created within arts and cultural activity provided fertile ground in which to nurture social connections that bond, bridge and link people, organisations, and communities together (Hawkins & Maurer 2009). The environment created in RADF projects played a key role in generating impacts to individuals and communities by providing a reason to bring people together. An example of a project environment would include an arts organisation's inputs into a project such as: the arts/cultural form (choir singing); hard infrastructure (community hall); resources (equipment); project scope (weekend workshop); and the final public performance. Inputs into project environments are detailed in this study's ToC framework at the end of Chapter 4. In addition to these inputs, the community participants and the artists/facilitators played a part in fostering a creative milieu. Forty-four out of the 50 RADF projects included in the sample involve community arts projects with direct artist/facilitator and community participant involvement, while the remaining six projects did not.

Interview participants reported that supportive project environments allowed individuals, from diverse types of social and economic groups with similar interests in the arts, to share learning experiences in workshops and performance events. Project 4 highlights how a weekend painting workshop brought like-minded people together in a friendly and inclusive setting. The project application stated:

Participating artists will have the opportunity to share experiences and enjoy learning in the welcoming environment of like-minded people. [ADI 7]

Similarly, Project 36 emphasises the key role community arts workshop environments play in nurturing social connectedness and bonding capital in regional towns. Project 36 involved a series of arts workshops focused on poetry recital, singing, song-writing, guitar and ukulele playing, which culminated in performances at the local community festival. Like the painting workshop discussed previously, this project offered participants a safe, non-judgemental environment in which to be self-expressive and build friendships through participatory arts experiences. Social

connections formed in inclusive and supportive environments impact individuals and the community. Project 36 data item stated:

These [workshops] offer the opportunity for self-expression without judgement, the building of friendships, confidence is strengthened, and self-esteem lifted. [ADI 49]

Bringing people together within the positive environment of arts and cultural activity provided a space for community members to discover shared values and develop relationships with others of different gender, age, race, and professions. Kent described the benefits of involvement in a local drama production as an opportunity to break down barriers and open communication channels. Kent, who has observed multiple workshop participants, reported involvement in the theatre production allowed project participants opportunities to meet and form new connections with a diverse range of community members. Kent stated:

People involved in our plays come from a wide range of people within our community ... this year in our plays we had a truck driver, a young mum, a couple of teachers, and a retired couple, so there is a broad range of people involved in the plays. They say ... in the de-briefing at the end of the play... 'you know what, I never would have known you if not for being involved in this production' ... 'I see you around, but I would not have known you as a person,' It has been great in breaking down ... or opening up all those sorts of communication channels and connections, that is always good in these sorts of small communities. [I 7]

The plays allowed individuals to breakdown social barriers, share common values, and foster common interests in the safe environment of a community arts project. The shared experiences made available in supportive project environments opened new opportunities to develop networks previously unimagined in the community. Strengthening the connections made between individuals participating in RADF projects developed networks that bonded people together and bridged groups across the community. Interview participant Ally, who is a RADF committee member and

WDRRC arts development officer, reported how projects developed individuals while concurrently encouraging new friendships and connections within the community.

Ally stated:

I don't think there is any doubt that they [RADF funded projects] are valuable... Right from just getting people together to make quilts or paint pictures, all of them encourage friendship and connection with community... It helps people individually, socially and the community as a whole [across] ...all those barriers of distance, drought and isolation. [12]

Community arts projects appeared to provide supportive environments which encouraged social connectedness in WDR and created two-way impacts between the artist/facilitators and the communities they work within.

Arts Facilitators Working with Communities

The presentation of findings so far has focuses on the impacts community arts projects have had on members of the WDR community. However, the community arts project facilitators also experienced direct and indirect effects from this two-way impact. Community arts facilitators feel the direct impacts of engaging with community through the complex processes at play within this creative endeavour. When facilitators engaged in community arts projects they acquired communication, planning, grant writing, and collaborative teaching skills. This enhanced their artistic practice beyond that of a practitioner like a musician, or sculptor. Artist/facilitators who worked with communities developed knowledge and skills in community development practice through their collaborative practice with others. The employment generated and the income gained through project facilitation is also an impact of this two-way engagement.

Benefits to Facilitators

Kate as a community artist/facilitator reflected on her experience as a workshop facilitator. She described the quality of relationship established between herself and the project participants. Like Kate, other WDR artist/facilitators Maria, Sue, and

Tess emphasised three key elements to developing a relationship with participants, they include:

- (1) building participants' trust in the artist/facilitator's knowledge and skill;
- (2) developing participants' confidence in their abilities and that of the artist/facilitator; and
- (3) encouraging participants to come together, share, and have fun.

Kate described her observations of this process, she stated:

People ... come along and say, 'I'm not artistic, I'm no good at this stuff, and I am hopeless'. I say to them 'no, its fine, everyone can do it, have a go, I'm not going to let you go home with a disaster'. They learn to gradually begin to trust you and know. It is about building that trust, and I guess building that sort of confidence in people. [I 8]

Likewise, interview participant Maria, who is also a community arts facilitator in WDR, discussed the importance of building trust within the artist/community participant relationship. Maria stated:

They trust me and know who I am, and that I live here, and I am here for the long-term. They come and they open up, and they just want whatever I have on offer. They come and want to grasp all of it. [I 11]

Kate recounted the feelings of empowerment she experienced when participants rely heavily on her artistic knowledge and skills at handling media which she shares with workshop participants. Kate stated:

But for those people who have never done it before, the ones that really rely on you heavily... That is really nice to experience when people really value you as an artist and your skill, and it's nice to share that skill, and for me

professionally as an artist to share my knowledge and skill set is really empowering. [I 8]

Additionally, Kate highlighted the diverse ways participants work creatively with the media and how this has influenced her methods of working. She stated:

For me as a tutor, I gain just as much as they do, there is no doubt about it. Just in the little things people do differently, ... I had not thought to do it like that, wow! I could use that idea ...

Kate reported the most important benefit she received from facilitating is feeling the joy of drawing people together in an environment where people solve artistic and creative challenges. Kate stated:

... as an artist ... in delivering workshops the biggest benefit I get ... is seeing the joy in people coming together, joining in, and challenging them. [I 8]

Facilitators' developed relationships of trust with arts organisations through the two-way impact embedded in community arts projects. Community organisations in WDR have built longer-term relationships with artist/facilitators who have delivered multiple workshop projects in their communities. This continued connection builds trust within community organisations which reassures the group that the artist/facilitator will deliver the outcomes it requires. Kate described this trust relationship built between facilitators and organisations. She stated:

In regional communities ... for instance the art groups that put in for the same artists to come back, and they have had that tutor over and ... over again ... when people build a relationship within regional communities they connect with people, its comfortable to stay with the same person [facilitator] that you know. [I 8]

While mindful of the relationships built between artist/facilitators and communities, Leah a local council officer questions the benefits of having the same artist/facilitator conducting multiple workshop projects. Leah stated:

Your little sewing workshops that happen every year by the same tutor, year after year, ... you have got to question whether that's of any significance, you know is there great benefit it that? I don't know. [I 9]

Quilting workshop Project 35 may help to clarify how repeat projects with the same facilitator is of benefit to the arts organisation and workshop participants.

Application documents from this project acknowledged the repeated teaching of this facilitator in previous workshop projects. However, the skills, knowledge, and techniques used in each subsequent project built on knowledge previously obtained by the group. The organisation wanted to engage this tutor for the project because her teaching style and experience suited the needs of the participant group.

Organisations recognised the importance of matching artist/facilitator suitability to their participant group's needs. The application document of Project 35 stated:

The tutor [name withheld] was well received in 2014 when she first taught us. She ... will bring more knowledge, different ideas and techniques... this tutor is able to modify her classes to teach a variety of skill sets, essential to a small club with a range of skills from novice to advanced. [ADI 48]

Overall, the interview participants remarked on the positive and meaningful relationships forged between artist/facilitators and communities, these relationships were of prime importance to artist/facilitators and those communities involved in community arts projects.

Creating Community Cohesion

Community arts projects strive to create supportive environments that build new community networks and enhance community trust and cohesion. Local Government Association (2002, page 6) defines a cohesive community as one where:

...there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued; those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

Community arts projects created community cohesion by bringing people together to share and communicate a common community vision. Arts projects built trust and a sense of belonging between diverse individuals, groups, and organisations as they worked toward achieving collective goals. Project environments provided avenues to build trust and 'bridging' social capital between groups and community organisations which is a key dimension of social capital (Falk & Kilpatrick 2000; Putnam 2000).

The evidence suggests that RADF projects supported the building of trust amongst community members in the short-term with multiple project impacts over time leading to enhanced community cohesion. Community arts projects link different ethnicities, socio-economic groups, genders, and age groups together by utilising a creative or cultural outcome such as a lantern parade, musical performance, or historical re-enactments. The creative process provides a place within the community for all people to explore differences and to build opportunities for greater acceptance and awareness of others. Community cohesion and inclusiveness were key areas of focus for three diverse projects, these included: Project 1, a visual arts project; Project 18, a music and song-writing project; and Project 2, a craft based project. All three projects utilised the arts to deliver community development outcomes. Each project is discussed further in the following paragraphs.

Project 1 provided opportunities for the community to build trust and community cohesion. The project design encouraged the one local community to participate in the National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week through multiple creative workshops that built positive relationships across different age and racial groups. The project culminated in a visual arts exhibition as part of NAIDOC week 2013 celebrations. Workshops from Project 1, delivered over a two-

week period focused on indigenous groups and young people. These workshops established positive relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous youth, visual artist/facilitators, and the wider WDR community.

The exhibition event provided positive media coverage of indigenous youth during NAIDOC week through the art gallery Facebook page. This allowed the voice of the indigenous community to be heard and political capital to be built. Findings highlight that positive messages publicised in the community about marginalised members improved community wellbeing and inclusivity. The project established connections between community organisations and indigenous health services. Whilst the immediate impact of this project is building trust and relationships, the affirmative images and stories disseminated within the community has residual and longer-term impact. The outcome report for Project 1 details short-term impacts of the project by stating:

Children were able to learn, understand, and experience indigenous culture...how technology has changed cultures and how cultures have intermingled. It was wonderful to see parents and grandparents spending quality and creative time together with young participants. [ADI 1]

Additionally, a young man who was participating in the project, as part of a rehabilitation program for disengaged youth, experienced the positive and accepting environment of the workshops. He engaged in the art making processes with other indigenous men who were leading the workshops. The outcome report states the two artist/facilitators were excellent role models for this participant. His unexpected engagement with indigenous artist/facilitators caused a positive transformation which was described in the document as ‘magical’. The outcome report stated:

Another positive outcome was the attendance at a workshop by a young indigenous man being assisted by the Youth Justice system officer [names withheld]. This disengaged youth, after a settling in period, began to engage with others... [the two artists] were excellent role models for him and included him by demonstrating naturalness in their

manner to everyone at the workshop. The transformation on [name withheld] face by this unexpected engagement was magical. [ADI 1]

The project impacted the community by building trust and understanding between individuals, organisations, and the community overall. Over the longer-term this type of project provided opportunities for the development of community cohesion.

Like Project 1, music based Project 18 involved the indigenous community and culminated in showcasing musical talent in NAIDOC 2015 celebrations. The series of workshops built positive relationships of trust between artist/facilitators, young people, indigenous organisations, and the broader community. Social media coverage of the workshop and performance event in NAIDOC week provided affirmative images and stories of indigenous community health organisations and youth to the wider WDR community. Like Project 1, Project 18 produced community cohesion through the presentation of positive stories of indigenous youth development, and trust between arts and indigenous organisations through project collaborations. The repetition of these projects has long-term cumulative impacts on WDR's community cohesion and social connectedness. Documents from Project 18 stated:

We believe this project will lift the profile of our organisation [the indigenous health service] through the effective media coverage, and having a professional publicist on the team...covering all the media opportunities that will come from the workshops and showcase. [ADI 26]

Project 2, in collaboration with disability services, is another example of RADF projects that focus on enhancing trust and bridging social capital between organisations and the broader community. Project 2 incorporates disability services and their clients in a craft based project involving skill building components for participants, service staff, and volunteers. The project focuses on developing trust relationships, through workshops and a fund-raising event.

Project 2's application and acquittal forms described the project's aim to create a 'third space' where community cohesion is enhanced by bringing people from

diverse groups together towards achieving a common creative outcome. The third space within the project is the sharing, learning, problem solving, and creating that took place among the disability clients, staff, volunteers, facilitating artists and the wider community. The project document stated:

This project is designed to enhance community cohesion by creating a 'third space' where community members and groups who normally would not interact to do so in a productive manner, and with a positive, creative, and public outcome. [ADI 3]

Projects 1 and 18 have short-and long-term impacts to community cohesion. Equally, these projects have produced organisational level impacts by providing opportunities to develop trust between community organisations through creative collaborations.

Evidence supporting the building of trust and community cohesion are confirmed by focus group and interview participants. The focus group participants agreed that project partnerships between arts and non-arts organisations built a sense of community by enhancing community cohesion. One focus group participant stated:

...It's a great way for arts organisations and non-arts organisations to get together...bringing them into the art world which I think is hugely beneficial for social cohesion...that sense of belonging then flows through the community and creates that cohesion in the community...it's that network, and sense of...belonging. [FG 1]

Additionally, interview participant Sue reported a similar sentiment when she discussed the importance of building community cohesion through social processes embedded in community arts projects. Sue suggested the development and activation of a safe, non-discriminatory environment, or what she calls a 'third space' within arts projects, is necessary to engage with different demographic groups. Sue stated:

The 'third space' had the [art gallery organisation] here [participant uses a left-hand gesture to show one place] and [the non-arts community organisation] over there [again a

right-hand gesture to indicate another place], and then, there in the middle is the 'Third Space' project where neither of us had really ever been. [I 15]

The trust and reciprocity created by forming project collaborations was a new organisational 'third space' where neither group had previously ventured. Together, the evidence suggested that:

- (1) community arts activity can activate the building of trust and community cohesion;
- (2) community arts projects provide supportive project environments where people can explore the differences and similarities between them on an individual and community level;
- (3) projects provide opportunities for community organisations to enhance trust by working in partnerships toward solving communal problems; and
- (4) the community cohesion and trust enhanced through arts and cultural projects contribute to the building of a sense of community in WDR.

Building a Sense of Community

Community arts projects developed trust and cohesion which contributed to the building of 'a sense of community' (McMillan & Chavis 1986). The experience of, or sense of community can be understood through the feelings of belonging that individual members feel toward the group (McMillan & Chavis 1986). For members to belong they need to feel that they matter to each other and to the group overall. Members of a community have a shared faith in the notion that theirs' and other members' needs will be met through their obligation to work cooperatively for the benefit of the group (McMillan & Chavis 1986). Essentially, 'a sense of community' has four key elements which include: membership, influence, reinforcement, and emotional connection (McMillan & Chavis 1986). The development of a sense of community was a community arts impact which effected WDR at the individual, organisational, community, and regional level. The following subsection highlights how membership, influence, reinforcement, and emotional connection are identified in community arts activity and how these elements impacted WDR.

Community arts projects provided a context for participants to come together to enhance their sense of belonging and membership within the WDR community. The project sets in motion a process that built trust in, and knowledge about, others within the community. By initiating this process projects broke down social barriers and found common values among project participants and community organisations. These project processes strengthened a sense of belonging, or membership within individuals by bringing people together.

Participant Lisa, who has been involved in multiple projects, discussed her feelings of belonging and sense of personal relatedness to the members of a community choir. She reported that the choir, which formed after a RADF singing project, brought together varied ethnicities, socio-economic groups, age groups, and genders. Lisa described the choir participants as a diverse group of people who at first felt they 'didn't fit in'. She explained how they found a connection with the group, made new friends, and shared a sense of belonging to the choir. Lisa emphasised her feelings of joy experienced when connecting with the group, whilst engaged in the creative process of singing. Lisa states:

The coming together, the sense of community...all these odd-bods coming together and singing...people from all sorts of ethnicities, socio-economic groups, ages, and genders...the coming together...for the pure joy of connecting with these people and singing. [I 10]

Projects provide a focus for individuals to work cooperatively to express themselves as a group, aiding the formation of a perceived notion of a shared community identity. Together with enhancing a sense of belonging, RADF projects present people with an opportunity to feel a sense of making a difference to both the group they are a member of and the WDR community.

For members to have a sense of belonging they need to feel that they matter to an organisation or group, and that the organisation matters to its members (McMillan & Chavis 1986). To feel one matters is the first part of the process in building a sense of community (McMillan & Chavis 1986). Projects presented avenues for individuals to establish community membership through the construction of new

networks and group associations such as choirs, theatre groups, and visual arts clubs. Membership in groups, networks, and organisations provided opportunities for community members to volunteer or contribute to the group (McMillan & Chavis 1986).

Findings indicated members of arts and cultural organisations are vital to the delivery of RADF projects and the subsequent impacts they have on a community. To illustrate the importance of an individual's commitment to membership in an arts and cultural organisation, Kent highlighted the strong commitment and valuable volunteer contribution made by theatre group members to productions and performance night events. Commitment to the theatre performances ensured the fun and entertainment value of live theatre can continue in the community. Kent stated:

And you know people are there from early on the production nights, they start in the early afternoon and go home at midnight, multiply that by 12, and that's commitment to do it.
[I 7]

Equally, the organisations that run projects show their appreciation for members who contribute their time and energy to benefit the organisation and the community. Barb, a community organisation representative, emphasised the importance of the emotional connection and feelings of belonging experienced by members who volunteer their time to community projects. 'Lairy shirts' and 'dirty big badges' provide volunteers with physical symbols of belonging to the group and their contribution to the event. Barb stated:

It's that valuing that I think increases that opportunity for being a volunteer... I think we've got to make the volunteering fun. I think that it's got to be something that people feel that they get something out of ... you can give them something that is a bit of a buzz. Either they've got to have this lairy shirt that they're very proud of, or a dirty big badge... [I 3]

Projects provided community organisations and their members with two-way impacts that produced feelings of belonging in members and opportunities for

members of organisations to provide community arts experiences to the community. The two-way impact of belonging and contributing to the benefit of the community built a sense of community.

Participation in Project 31 reinforced to community members the benefits of belonging to a group and working cooperatively. Participating artists and art galleries from across the region have built strong relationships in these regional exhibition projects, which lead to a sense of belonging to a WDR artistic community. The high-profile group exhibition showcased individual artistic talent and expertise using the institutional resources of the Western Downs regional galleries. Gallery resources provide individual artists with avenues to further their artistic careers through the support they give. Gallery projects such as this provided resources like high quality public hanging spaces, experienced gallery staff, connections to local and outsider art collectors, and extensive media coverage of the event. These resources extended what is available to emerging regional artists. Letter of support from Project 31 stated:

This exhibition is an ideal occasion to showcase Western Downs art and artists ... The concept of a collaborative artistic regional enterprise will help strengthen our regional cultural identity and showcase Western Downs artists to their local and Queensland artistic communities. [ADI 41]

Individual level impacts produced in Project 31 include improving communication between artists, gallery staff, and the wider artistic community. The project strengthened a sense of community between artists by bringing them together in mutual support of each other's work and in celebration of the group's achievements at the public exhibition. Project 31 built social network connections among the region's artists, art gallery staff, and gallery committees, and reinforced already established relational ties across the region. Letter of support from Project 31 stated:

Support Letter (2): This project will appeal to... regional artists ...with a focus on bringing together and linking all our communities. [ADI 41]

At an organisational level the project developed stronger network or bridging ties between three different galleries' organising committees from WDR towns. This was achieved through the sharing of gallery resources such as staff expertise and equipment. The project also developed linking capital with an external exhibition curator who arranged and wrote about the artworks, and a catalogue photographer who recorded and catalogued all the paintings in the exhibition. The linking capital built with the outside curator and photographer increased the cultural reputation of the region and its artistic community. Letter of support from Project 31 stated:

Support Letter (1): This exhibition [project] is an ideal occasion to... strengthen ties between the art galleries within the WDR ...

At a community and regional level Projects 31, contributed to the building of a community cultural or artistic identity within and outside of the region. Social connectedness across the region was enhanced through the new networks created and the strengthening of existing peer (artist) and organisational relationships (galleries). Impacts at each of these four levels reinforced the importance of sharing collective resources made available through membership in a community.

Community Reciprocity

Findings from archival documents and interviews highlighted how projects created opportunities for members of WDR to form reciprocal relationships and strengthen trust within the community. Reciprocity is defined as doing something for someone if they in turn do something for me (Putnam 2000). Generalised reciprocity is a social norm of greater value that expands on the original definition by suggesting that 'I place my trust in others' so that further down the track they may do something for me (Pretty & Ward 2001; Putnam 2000).

Findings suggested community arts projects focused on developing regional skills produce impacts such as building community reciprocity while developing human and cultural capitals. Four projects received funding to assist artists from the community to attend professional development courses, these included: Projects 27, 28, 38, and 29. These types of projects enabled individual artists and arts organisations to send representatives to participate in special training. This

developed the human capital of arts organisation members and the wider community. One community organisation applied for project funding on behalf of three of its members. Projects 27, 28, and 29 formed three-way reciprocal relationships between the artists, the organisation, and the community. Figure 8 below illustrates this reciprocal relationship.

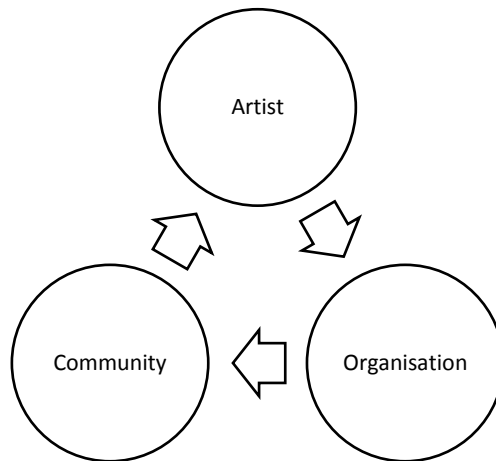


Figure 8 Power's (2018) The Three-way Reciprocal Relationship

In this case the professional development projects enhanced the skills of individual artists and built human capital. The artists in turn reciprocated by creating two-way impacts by improving the expertise held by the voluntary art gallery organisation and sharing their knowledge with other members. The gallery organisation absorbed these skills and provided community members with access to additional services, such as specialised arts workshops facilitated by the artists who received the professional development. Members of the community directly reciprocated by supporting the gallery's new workshops, and indirectly through local governments commitment to the RADF funding partnership.

Reciprocity was developed between the artist/facilitators and the organisation through the organisation placing trust and confidence in them to share the expertise, knowledge, and skills they acquired over time. The application document from project 28 stated:

This [project] will further our own interests and skill with art and dedication towards the gallery ... by enhancing and furthering our skills, we can pass our knowledge along to the

public who wish to attend workshops through the gallery.

[ADI 38]

The following data extract from Project 27 also supported this relationship, it stated:

As [arts organisation] is non-for profit and run by volunteers, by broadening our skill set, we can offer more and a wider variety of opportunities for our community. [ADI 37]

Community reciprocity identified by interview participants suggests reciprocal relationships developed between community organisations and their members. Ally reported visual artists and quilters personally benefited from professional development projects, and felt a sense of obligation to give back to organisations and the community by sharing their newly acquired knowledge. Ally described the ways in which beneficiaries gave back to others and how this reciprocity strengthened local communities. Ally stated:

Artists are of the mind that you have been in receipt of these opportunities and benefits...feel an obligation to take up opportunities to share those talents...they have helped out painting community murals and judged school art competitions... and strengthened local community...by sharing their skills. [I 2]

The findings suggested reciprocity triggered in professional development projects have short-and long-term impacts to artists and community organisations. The cumulative impact of this type of project impacted the community by building individual level human capital in the form of artistic skills, knowledge, together with leadership skills to facilitate future workshops. Social capital is built at an organisational and community level through artist/member and organisations sharing knowledge and building trust and reciprocity. Spill-over impacts at a community level produced cultural capital gains through improved knowledge of arts and culture and increased community access to arts workshops by trained artists/facilitators. Reciprocity is also expressed through the letter of support given by organisations who endorse other group's community arts projects.

Organisational Support

Letters of support contained in the archival documents provided RADF committees with evidence of the community support for projects seeking RADF funding. Community organisations developed community level reciprocity by advocating for one another's RADF projects. The archival documents sample contained multiple letters of support for projects. Letters of support have three functions: (1) to show wider community support for a project idea; (2) to promote the project within the community; and (3) to publicise the RADF funding program. The letter of support from Project 37 illustrates the type of support offered by community organisations to each other. Project 37's letter of support stated:

The [name withheld] Community Kindergarten enthusiastically supports the [RADF project] application. If the [group] is successful in their application, this project will not only support the school students, but offer both an artistic opportunity to the students at the kindergarten and a chance for them as future students of the school, to create a memorable, lasting artwork. [ADI 52]

The grant application process itself fostered community reciprocity by requiring organisations to garner support for their projects from other community organisations. By sharing the obligation of writing letters of support community organisations hope to receive reciprocal support for their funding grant applications over time. Organisations who form creative collaborations in community arts projects also improve community reciprocity.

Project Collaborations

Utilising collaborative project approaches built relationships and reciprocity between different community organisations. Organisations who worked collaboratively on community arts projects exercised reciprocity by developing each other's skills and knowledge, together with sharing organisational resources such as: facilities, infrastructure, equipment, and human expertise. Organisations who shared and collaborated trust that each will benefit from supporting one another.

Barb highlighted how joint participation in Project 23 cultivated reciprocal relationships between the local festival and gallery committees. The project aimed to enhance the skills of local gallery committee members and community participants in the short-term through lantern design and construction skill workshops. The long-term plan behind this project was for the festival committee to hand over the planning and delivery of the festival lanterns to the gallery committee. The reciprocity exercised by both organisations places trust in the gallery committee to bring the skills and expertise learnt in this project to the continued running of the festival lantern workshops in the future. While the festival committee will provide much needed funds to the future running of the gallery by paying the gallery committee to deliver the workshops, Barb stated:

What we're probably hoping might happen is that we'll get the art gallery group to take that lead role... it's our own local artists who will step up into the role of the tutoring group. [I 3]

The reciprocity developed in collaborations between the two organisations enabled the two-way support for each other's arts and cultural activities now and into the future. Reciprocity between individuals and organisations builds social connectedness and a sense of community.

Social Connectedness Summary

In summary, building social connectedness is a short-and long-term impact of community arts activity in WDR. Bonding, bridging, and linking social capital developed in community arts projects built social connectedness at the community level.

Community arts projects provided supportive environments where people could explore the differences between them on an individual and community level. Community arts participation activated the building of trust required to improve community cohesion. Project environments allowed diverse groups within the community to form social connections through shared interest in arts and cultural pursuits. Supportive environments fostered in projects enhanced social connectedness by providing opportunities for community organisations to enhance

trust. This was achieved by working in partnerships toward solving communal problems which united community members.

The community trust and cohesion enhanced through arts projects contributed to the building of a sense of community in WDR. Projects provided community organisations and their members with opportunities to contribute to the community and feel a sense of belonging. Community arts projects offered a focus for individuals to work cooperatively aiding the formation of a shared community identity. Community arts activity developed community reciprocity. Organisations endorsed professional development for artists, and placed trust and confidence in those artists to share expertise, knowledge, and skills with others. Community organisations support for each other's projects demonstrated community reciprocity. Project activity built social connectedness through the cumulative impact of human and cultural capital. Conversely, arts and culture is developed through community participation in project activity. The next impact theme presents evidence from the data corpus about the arts and culture developed in WDR.

Theme 3: Developing Arts and Culture

Developing arts and culture is one of the four impact themes produced by RADF funded community arts projects in WDR. The change process activated within arts and cultural activity is both deep and wide ranging. Arts and culture in a community context can be defined broadly as the communication and expression of the traditions, values, and aspirations of a group of people residing in a geographic location (Bourdieu 1986). A community will express culture for example, through symbolism and ritual, which can involve the mythical and the non-rational (Williams 1997). Community cultural expression develops community identity and a sense of place, and aspires to create a milieu in which cultural democracy is embraced and affirmed (Williams 1997). An example of community cultural expression from WDR could be found in a local quilters exhibition inspired by indigenous mythology and the natural landscapes of the region.

Expressing Local Culture

Community arts impacted WDR at an individual, community, and regional level by improving the agency of regional communities to express the values, beliefs,

traditions, and shared history found in local culture (Emery & Flora 2006). Projects developed diverse forms of local arts and highlighted unique aspects of community culture. At the community level expressions of culture can be seen for example in festival, song writing, choir singing, and photography exhibition projects. The following paragraphs describe three diverse projects that provided a means to express the local community culture of the Wandoan and Miles townships.

History research Project 49, exemplifies the expression of local culture through the study of Wandoan ANZAC history. Project 49 aimed to preserve the history of soldiers who enlisted in World War 1 from the Wandoan district. The project involved the collection of oral history and collation of photographs and letters gathered from project participants. The project expressed the importance of preserving small town history and celebrating local and national traditions of ANZAC sacrifice during its centenary year. Additionally, the project demonstrated the value placed on local history by community members through the interest generated in the community, and the presentation of the research at the district's centenary celebrations. Monthly story updates in the local town newsletter inspired multiple community members to participate. Information booklets and other historical resources were produced in the project, which the community has full access to via the town's historic village. The project application stated:

Project aim: To preserve and provide access to the history of [name withheld] soldiers who enlisted in World War 1 from [name withheld] and tell the story of their return to [name withheld] ... booklets will be accessible at the [name withheld] Heritage Society. [ADI 67]

Kate emphasised the importance of projects such as this in sharing and preserving the significant stories that have shaped a community and its culture. Kate highlighted the need to define what makes our regional communities special through significant historical objects and stories. Funding, she believed played a vital role in supporting the expression and preservation of local culture. Kate stated:

Sharing culture...that is sharing the significant stories that make up a community. What is it we can share about our

community? Sometimes it is very hard to say what makes us special and often we don't think of objects or stories as being special per say, but museums are a great tool...to share that.

[I 8]

Likewise, visual arts Project 50, is a clear example of projects that presented opportunities to express local culture. Project 50 explored the economic and social transformation of the local Wandoan community brought about by the resource industry investment in the district. The changing community identity was captured in visual representations of the community's past, present, and future. The project produced a series of painted designs that were first exhibited in the local gallery for public discussion and consultation. After this process was complete seventeen brightly painted rubbish bins were produced which formed a streetscape gallery. The images used aided the community to identify with local stories and articulate a new vision for the community's future. The streetscape gallery provided a way to broaden the engagement of regional Queenslanders in the visual arts. This project outcome report stated:

The community orientated, iconic imagery used in the bin paintings has made it easy for many groups within the community to identify with the key concepts of project, which explores the community's past, present and future. Helping to bring together and promote community wellbeing, through the shared identification with the Wandoan community story.

[ADI 68]

Interview participant Kent emphasised the significant impact of a long running national playwright competition project initiated in the Miles district. Kent felt the plays produced in the project helped capture the Miles district's sense of community identity. The project ran over a four-year period, producing hundreds of short one-act and radio plays. This collection of plays was utilised in the continued tradition of performances held within the local community over the last decade. The content of these plays resonated strongly with community members and provided an opportunity to bring community members together to celebrate. Kent stated:

... we got over 100 scripts for each of the competitions, we ended up having a fantastic resource of Australian stories told by Australians, ...it gives us tremendous material to work with our local productions... we are still using those scripts... especially the radio play scripts... we perform them live and... they have been complementing all sorts of functions in the community. [I 7]

Additionally, Tom stated the collection of plays provided an avenue to hear the Australian voice through the telling of stories which people from the district can share an emotional connection with what it means to live in Australia. Kent stated:

... [plays] that use the Australian voice I suppose, they seem to connect well with the audience... the issues dealt with within those scripts are quite relevant to the audience members. They are responding to that Australian voice. [I 7]

All three projects developed local culture by providing a creative context in which to mobilise local communities' expression of values, traditions, beliefs, and shared history. Multiple projects of this type, over the two decades RADF has been operating in WDR have had a cumulative impact on the region. These projects expressed local culture and demonstrated the value local community members hold for their unique community identity. Equally, cultural projects of this type developed the confidence and leadership of community members.

Access to Arts and Cultural Experiences

The aim of the RADF initiative is to develop arts and culture in regional Queensland. Interview participants and focus group members outlined how RADF funding of projects provided equal opportunities for regional community members to participate and experience arts and cultural content. Interview participant Cloe emphasised the greater one's community geographical remoteness, the poorer one's access to art and cultural experiences. Cloe stated:

The further out you go the less opportunity you have, to have those sort of experiences... [I 4]

Focus group participants agreed that by bringing specialised arts and cultural knowledge, to local regional venues, access to arts and cultural skills and training for individuals in isolated communities is enhanced. Data item FG 1 states:

The further out you go...[in] lots of little places like that...RADF organised gatherings are the only artistic gatherings that some people would ever get to...[or] hope of getting to.

Equally, interview participant Ally described how funding of arts and cultural projects equalises access and opportunities for isolated communities. Ally stated:

People are going to be helped enormously by having access, the financial help provided by the funding makes accessing workshops and gaining skills greatly equalised. [I 2]

Ally also highlighted funding of community arts projects added to the variety of activities available to regional people, which she compared to the importance of funding sport. She also emphasised the value of funding both the arts and sport, because it offered regional people a variety of new experiences and interests. Ally stated:

[RADF] adds to the variety of cultural activities available... in the town because ... it helps to give opportunities to things other than sports... it gives an opportunity for both sides of the coin to be developed...alongside each other... it just adds to the mix of interesting things that people can do...creating new experiences for everyone to share. [I 2]

Cloe explained how RADF provided subsidised access to arts and cultural knowledge and experiences through the funding of projects. Cloe suggested this cost saving to community members removed the financial barrier to access and participation. Cloe stated:

One thing that RADF does do, it does bring the price down... so that if price is the reason that they're marginalised which

*it often is, that's part of the barrier that's broken down...
because it's subsidised by RADF. [I 4]*

Two craft based projects, focused on applique and quilting techniques are good examples of how the funding allowed regional communities to remove barriers to participation and access. Project 17 provided an opportunity for members of a small community to access the knowledge of an internationally recognised quilting tutor. Access to this knowledge impacted quilting participants in the district by improving their skills, confidence, and artistry. Knowledge brought in from overseas aided the development and application of new artistic styles of quilting among participants. Project 17 application document stated:

*Opportunity to bring international quilter to [town] to teach a workshop... quilters for surrounding areas will... learn new techniques and styles... to be taught by internationally renowned tutor is usually not available outside of the city.
[ADI 25]*

Project 35 like the previous activity is a quilting workshop with a nationally recognised tutor, who brought new knowledge, ideas, and techniques to artisans across four different Western Downs districts. Document extract from Project 35 stated:

*Participation ... will encourage more interest in the art of patchwork ...we need to look after the cultural needs ...
RADF funding will keep the costs to a minimum and allow greater access to all parts of the community, including those who may have to travel some distance ... she is a nationally recognised tutor ... [ADI 48]*

Both funded projects provide access to community members over multiple WDR districts, contributing to the knowledge, artistry, and quilting style development of the region. This impacted WDR's levels of human and cultural capital at an individual level by improving arts knowledge. Projects also created impact at an organisational and community level by developing the arts practice of organisation members who share this knowledge with other quilting organisations in the district

and across the region. Access to arts and cultural learning, participation, and experiences is key to maintaining an elevated level of interest in arts and culture in the regions.

Project workshops with professional artist/facilitators have impacts that influence or spill-over from the individual to the community level. Interview participant Kate highlighted the nurturing experiences gained by artists in WDR through community arts workshops with professional artist/facilitators, which is then shared with the community through local exhibitions or performances. Kate identified the effects of ongoing individual artistic development and its positive influence on the broader community. The development of artist's talents impacted the quality of their work and the longevity of their career. Kate stated:

They [artists] take on board skill sets that they then share with others through exhibitions or performances, so ... local artists [and] performers ...benefit from these things and ... their skill set being encouraged, nurtured, or strengthened, that has a flow on effect back to community. [1 8]

Like Kate, interview participant Ally agreed that RADF investment in artistic development has benefited the community by providing regular local artist exhibitions for the gallery. Local artist exhibitions provided cost effective content for regional galleries by not having to purchase exhibitions from outside of the region. Regular exhibitions by local artists provided opportunities for developing artistic talent, encouraging local community participation in the arts, and lessening the running costs of regional galleries. Ally stated:

It has certainly upskilled artists who exhibit in our galleries... a number of local artists ... every two years have an exhibition that has come into our gallery... If there had not been opportunities to foster the talent of local artists, you would not have anyone who was coming through ... who could hold exhibitions. By having this, council and therefore the community would not have to pay for an exhibition for

the gallery. The artists who ...benefit from RADF grants are very generous with their help in the gallery. [I 2]

The RADF fund has supported the development of professional artists and diverse art practices. RADF's funding of community arts projects helped people overcome the barriers of isolation, long distance travel, and monetary costs associated with accessing arts and cultural knowledge, learning, and experience. Access to community arts has translated into impacts for artists and the community. In addition to breaking down barriers and improving regional access, community arts projects support the emergence of communities of practice.

Developing Communities of Practice

Projects draw like-minded people within the community together to participate in workshops, such as painting or quilting. Workshops can generate interest in art forms and provide opportunities to form new social networks. When these informal groups form after a workshop project it links a shared passion for an artform with a desire to learn more about it (Wenger 2002). Wenger (2000) described communities of practice (CoP) as the 'basic building blocks' of social learning systems. At the heart of this social enterprise is a group of like-minded people who wish to learn and continue to develop their understanding infused with 'a spirit of inquiry', in this case about an artform (Wenger 2000). Community arts and cultural groups formed CoPs in WDR through this shared interest. In the community context of WDR, CoPs are formalised into organisations which allow them improved access to funding like RADF. The title of CoP can in this context be used interchangeably with 'organisation' in a regional community setting like WDR.

Interview participant Leah, who worked as a community development officer, described how community arts projects generated interest in artforms and brought people together to create informal groups. These informal groups are linked through a shared desire to learn about an artform and develop skills. These groups continue to work together, forming CoPs and organisations. Leah stated:

[RADF projects] ...give people the platform to come together that may not have otherwise...people from all walks of life

who have that same interest...a shared interest they didn't know they had. [I 9]

Likewise, interview participant Lisa recounted her experience of becoming a member of a choir which formed after a community arts project. Lisa stated:

Initially when I started singing in the choir I didn't think I would be able to go and sing and perform at all the things, or that I might even want too... But I do want to... I now feel that I can identify as being part of the Dalby Reconciliation choir, I feel it has given me a different identity within the community. [I 10]

Additionally, Lisa emphasised the need to be committed to the group. Without the commitment of each member of the group the choir would not have formed and continued to practice together after the initial workshop. Lisa stated:

By biting the bullet and saying "yes", I was going to commit to doing this choir business, it probably reinforced to me that I can do that. [I 10]

Equally, Lisa highlights the importance of leadership within a group to drive and nurture its continued formation and ongoing practice. In this case, the choir continued to form and become established under the leadership of the local artist who facilitated the initial project. Lisa stated:

It has been sustained... thankfully by [name withheld] pushing it, keeping it together, her facilitation. [I 10]

The development of CoPs is an impact of community arts workshop projects in the community. The immediate effects of this impact are identifiable at the individual level with past participants wanting to continue to work together and learn greater skills. This impact level has spill-over impacts that influence the formation of groups and associations at the community level. Three key elements, highlighted in the interview transcripts of Lisa, Maria, and Jill, need to be present for CoPs to form after the initial RADF projects. All agreed that leadership in the form an organiser,

commitment of those interested in forming the CoP, and a genuine interest of members in the artform need to be present in the group for a CoP to emerge.

In addition to forming CoPs in one location, community arts projects built interest in an artform within other neighbouring WDR townships. An example of this is a community choir project started in Dalby which was then taken up by the neighbouring WDR community. Interview participant Maria described the ripple effect of impact, instigated by a single choir project she facilitated on behalf of the local indigenous health centre in Dalby. The original project triggered the emergence of a CoP which expanded interest in choir singing across two WDR communities. These two additional projects have subsequently formed two new community choirs, who have built strong bonds across three townships and bolstered membership of an emergent CoP in each one. Maria highlighted how one community arts project prompted other people in the region to start new community choirs. These three choirs have evolved into a network which fosters the learning and sharing of singing techniques and performance skills. Maria stated:

My [name withheld] choir... was the starting point for me to use RADF, and to create more community choirs... I did work with ... people that just desperately wanted to have a singing group, and they... did a lot of performances, and in fact are still performing together. [I 11]

Additionally, Maria explained how these choir projects evolved over a two-year period into a group of forty people who regularly rehearse and perform together at WDR events such as the Chinchilla Melon Festival. Maria stated:

My projects... will just morph into a whole range of things... people want to do stuff together... way past the grant finishing, we are engaging with each other... this year, at the Chinchilla Melon Festival I had my choir members from all those three regions. I had forty people on stage from about five different towns... all performing. [I 11]

Equally, the choirs have also taken part in other community projects facilitated by Maria. An example of this is Project 22, which involved a collaborative musical

project with a disability service provider. The Reconciliation choir members from Dalby were involved in providing their support and encouragement to nurture Project 22 participants. Involvement in the project created positive two-way impacts for both participant groups, which included building confidence and sharing knowledge. The participants with a disability from the project received the support, contact, and joy of singing with others outside of their regular social networks. Project 22 provided a creative context into which both groups could come together, learn, and perform as a choir. Maria stated:

Because they feel a sense of community... I took my choir to sing with the guys from [name withheld] My guys ended up coming over to [Project 22] each week just to sit and sing. They loved it. Would they have done that without this project? [I 11]

All three community choirs formed strong bonds across WDR, with each town choir energetically supporting the other's community events and celebrations. Community arts projects impact individuals and the community by fostering the creation of CoPs like these community choirs. The emergence of new CoPs demonstrates the vital role RADF funded community arts projects play in developing arts and culture in WDR.

Maintaining Communities of Practice

Community arts project activity formed new communities of practice, while ongoing project participation maintained and strengthened their continued communal practice. Interviews and archival documentation suggested that maintaining community involvement is necessary to continuing CoP development. Projects brought professional development, mentoring, and training opportunities to CoPs which maintained social learning environments, allowing CoP to grow in knowledge and strengthen social bonds (Wenger 2000). Workshops sustained interest and energised members of the CoP, maintaining the focus and passion of the group.

One such CoP operates in the Bell district of WDR. This visual arts group has been proactive in developing their CoP over the last 50 years. The group has utilised RADF funding on a regular basis over the past 20 years to deliver workshop projects with professional artists from outside WDR. Projects 4, 5, 6, and 7 directly engaged

CoP members in sharing and learning opportunities. This visual arts CoP has regular studio practice, group exhibitions, and art competitions which develop the artistry of its members and the wider community. Strong leadership in this group has played a key role in its development.

Interview participant Jill, as a leader in this CoP, has maintained a high level of learning within the group by organising regular community art workshops for CoP and community members. Jill, like others in the CoP organising committee, recognise and address perceived gaps in the group's knowledge. As a leader Jill is open to new practice directions put forward by other CoP members and used every opportunity to advance the CoP's visual arts skills and aesthetic knowledge. Jill stated:

I try to seize that opportunity when a funding round comes out, that I have something new and fresh with professional tutors from city areas, just to keep everyone's appetite whetted. [I 6]

Likewise, interview participant Ruby emphasised the fluidity in which members from different quilting organisations or CoPs engaged in workshops organised by different quilting groups in neighbouring townships. Fluidity among workshop participants means that skills and knowledge is shared from one CoP to another through these associations that link, support, and strengthen the development of this artform across WDR. Ruby stated:

We've been to [workshop events] in Chinchilla that the Chinchilla group have done; we've been to Moonie that the visual artists [quilters] have done, it brings new skills and those skills are transferable...I've just been to this workshop and a friend of mine has just bought a particular quilting machine, and I said "Okay I will give you the exercises that we had to do to get used to doing all this free motion stuff", so the skills are transferred throughout the community. [These are] long-term benefits because, the majority of people who go to RADF are in other groups, and not

necessarily the same interest groups but they speak to people in those interest groups. [I 14]

Community arts projects support the formation of CoPs and help maintain them over the long-term. The impact of CoP development affects WDR at the individual level by developing human capital. At the organisational and community level WDR is impacted by building social and cultural capital. Arts and cultural CoPs use community arts workshop projects to maintain interest in their arts practice which has the cumulative impact of developing arts and culture in the region.

Supporting Organisational Sustainability

Funded community arts projects helped maintain organisational sustainability by generating income. RADF projects impacted the community at an organisational level through funds raised by project outcomes such as performances, exhibitions, and showcase events. Interview participant Kent emphasised the additional financial benefits of having a professional director to produce local theatre performances. The professional director is subsidised within the workshop project to improve the level of performance by local theatre group actors and to mentor the organisation's local directors. Improved directing and actor performance meant a greater number of the community attended each night the play was performed. The money raised from small admission fees charged to audience members, and through selling food and beverages at these events, generated money for the theatre group allowing them to remain sustainable over the long-term. Kent stated:

We make good money on running our own local productions and if we can get the directors to come out here and [RADF] covers the costs of the directors, well we can make money out of it. If we had to pay for the director, then we would not. This helps to keep us sustainable, we would not be surviving without it. [I 7]

Likewise, Jill described how workshop projects assisted the organisation she belongs to through creating community interest in the group and their arts practice. Interest generated in this way appeared to attract greater numbers to participate in workshops, which influenced the number of new members attracted to the

organisation. Increased and continued membership within organisations produces income for the group and is vital to their viability. Jill stated:

We are always getting new people in for these RADF workshops...some of them join the art group...it keeps the group going. [I 6]

Similarly, interview participant Cloe described the indirect financial support produced from community arts projects which provide ‘knock-on effects’ such as art sales at exhibitions which become ways for producing income for artists, arts organisations, and regional galleries. Cloe stated:

It’s... a knock-on because... the gallery’s now going to get 20% of that [art sale] which will help fund something else that the gallery does. But in some of the performance type things, I mean that’s a knock-on effect in that eventually there’s a concert or a performance of some sort comes out of whatever workshops that people have been doing and that will bring money into those organisations. [I 4]

Community arts projects indirectly supported organisations’ sustainability by sharing the costs of artist workshop facilitators and entertainers for festivals and town shows. Community organisations utilised funded projects to help offset the costs of ‘outsider’ entertainment for town shows and festivals by involving project participants in performances that generate entertainment. Exemplars of these types of projects from archival documents include Projects: 16 (circus skills workshops); 23 (festival lantern workshops); 36 (music and poetry workshops); 12 (festival music workshops and performances), and 43 (multicultural festival workshops).

Project 23 illustrates the indirect support community arts projects contributed to arts and cultural organisation financial sustainability, whilst multiplying its development impacts. Project 23 was a circus skills and whip cracking performance workshop project which involved the upskilling of local youth by professional circus performers. The project provided circus training to young people and attracted community members to performances. The grant offset the show committee’s

entertainment expenditure by sharing circus performers fees through RADF workshop funding. The project's letter of support stated:

It is a struggle... to both find and afford quality entertainment for shows and festivals so the proposal to use the interest and talent from within the community is to be praised... a significant number of young people will learn... skills...and how to present these to a large outdoor audience... the Show Society has struggled to retain locals in the community over a long weekend ... this is a positive approach to encourage local young people to engage... and their families... to attend the show... swelling [attendance] numbers. [ADI 23]

Additionally, Project 23's application documents detailed the cultural developmental aspects of the project. The stock whip cracking and knockabout acrobatic techniques delivered in the workshops pass on traditional skills to young community participants. This had two-way impact effects that both endeavour to keep the Australian Agricultural Show traditions alive by teaching skills to others, and by the continued performance of those cultural traditions at regional town shows. The application stated:

We know that passing on these skills to the youth has many benefits...these are traditional skills of Australian Country culture and as such need to be passed on to ...be kept alive... ensuring these children and their families come to the show and are a part of the Australian Cultural Tradition of Agricultural Shows. [ADI 23]

This type of project multiplied the impact of the funding through:

- (1) opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge;
- (2) an event to showcase local emerging talent;
- (3) cutting entertainment cost savings for local event organisers;

(4) encouraging greater community participation in the event; and

(5) providing an avenue for the expression of community culture.

Community arts projects such as this multiplied the effect and impact of the initial funding by reducing expenditure, passing on community culture and tradition, together with producing income for local theatre organisations and art sales from gallery exhibition. These types of community arts project supported organisational sustainability in WDR and enhanced access to arts and cultural knowledge and spectator experiences.

Economic Benefits of Developing Arts and Culture

Community organisations impacted artist/facilitators by creating employment opportunities within regional towns. Analysis of the 50 RADF projects show payments of approximately \$167 000 were made to artist/facilitators and arts workers involved in the delivery of these projects. However, artist/facilitators who live within the region earned approximately \$42 000 of that total amount, compared to approximately \$126 000 being paid to artist/facilitators and arts workers outside of the region. This means therefore, a substantial amount of RADF funding paid to outside artist/facilitators is not reinvested back into the local economy. More broadly the WDR funds paid to artist/facilitators has contributed to the development of arts and culture across Queensland.

Focus group participants agreed that employment for artist/facilitators in regional areas is somewhat limited. However, the group believed RADF provides opportunities for community artist/facilitators to gain regional employment in their field. One focus group participant stated:

I think it's employment for artists who, in a regional area it's not always easily gained, employment as an artist, so it provides opportunities that way. [FG 1]

Local WDR artist/facilitators stated their appreciation for the employment opportunities RADF projects offered them. However, artist/facilitators in the region struggled to earn enough money to live on in local regional towns. Local facilitators Maria, Holly, and Sue described in positive terms their involvement in community

arts projects. Nevertheless, each of these participants claimed they struggled to survive on the small and inconsistent amounts of money they earned as arts professionals living in a regional location.

Interview participants Holly and Sue felt that local councils lacked an understanding of the extra time and effort put into relationship building between artist/facilitators and non-arts organisations in their communities. Developing collaborative relationships within the community required extra time which project budgets and payments to artist/facilitators did not cover. Holly expressed the perception of others in the community that artist/facilitators ought to donate their time without proper monetary compensation. Holly stated:

They often say to the artists, 'oh you can come and donate your time', but they are not prepared to pay the artist. [I 5]

Likewise, interview participant Sue described the same issue of paying artists properly for the work they do in the community. Sue stated:

Because everyone else gets paid why shouldn't artists. If they want these community projects to build the cohesion, and have exciting things happening in the community, then you need to pay someone to do it. It is as simple as that... I want to be recognised and to be paid like everyone else is paid. [I 15]

These artist/facilitators felt undervalued by the local council, yet the positive impacts they brought to individuals and communities are the main reason they continued to work in the field. The issue of valuing through monetary compensations for skills, knowledge, and time is the frustration all three artist/facilitators shared. Sue stated:

Unless I am valued, why would I give up work to do it. I am a lot better off at work where I am being paid to be there... not that you would live on an income from RADF, but it is enough to make it worthwhile doing. It is some recognition... [I 15]

Facilitator Maria emphasised her disappointment with the limited amounts of funding directed toward developing arts and culture in the region. Maria perceived the lack of funding for community arts projects meant artist/facilitators like herself are unable to make a decent living in regional areas and therefore need to supplement their income with other paid employment. Maria stated:

I'm limited in what I can do, I wish I could do more ... if I had more funding available to me, or the ability to host more things then I think it would be better. I would like more cohesion in what I do as well. It is often just running from one thing [project] to another. I think it makes it disjointed and it's hard for me sometimes to just make ends meet. [I 11]

Community arts projects impact artist/facilitators both positively and negatively. Undervaluing of local facilitator's time spent in developing collaborative community projects, and the lack of consistent paid work were negative impacts felt by facilitators. Positive impacts for facilitators included developing close relationships with the WDR arts community who supported their continued involvement in community arts projects. Importantly, the work artist/facilitators and arts organisations do in WDR is gradually changing attitudes about the value of arts and culture in the region.

Impacts of Cultural Tourism

WDR has seen the rise of cultural tourism projects that market the unique expression of local community culture. Funding invested in this way developed both community culture and affected local community economies by enhancing infrastructure and attracting tourists to the region. For example, infrastructure projects like the 'Lake Broadwater Display' Project 26 and the 'Miles Historic Village' Project 41. Projects identified in archival documents illustrate how the expression of local community culture can be used to enhance cultural tourism. Festival workshop projects were one type of community arts activity that developed community culture and provided a means to market these unique cultural qualities. An example of this type of project include: Project 43 the 'Tara Camel and Multicultural Festival'.

Local festivals celebrate the unique aspects of each rural community, creating community identity and economic benefit (Duffy 2000; Gibson & Connell 2012). Festivals communicate important community values and develop community capacity by bringing together local business, community organisations, and community volunteers to work together to plan and host the event (Gibson & Connell 2012). Project 43 involved a multicultural festival that promoted cultural tolerance and understanding. As part of the project festival participants are encouraged to take part in community arts workshops and performances, while learning about other cultural practices. The festival and its creative workshops focused on the town's unique cultural places and ethnic migration history.

Project 43 impacted individual participant knowledge of local history and appreciation of local ethnic diversity and heritage. The project also impacted organisations and the wider community by providing financial benefits like increased income for business and employment for locals. This was brought about by the thousands of tourists visiting the town and consuming goods and services during the festival event. The festival expression and communication of the district's unique local culture and history had impacts to the local community by attracting tourists and at the regional level by developing WDR's reputation as a tourist destination. The project application stated:

The [festival] is an opportunity to promote tolerance and understanding of various ethnic cultures to the...district and to the thousands of visitors to the region...focusing on [name withheld] unique culture... and significant cultural places to visitors who ... have had a genuine country experience...2013 figures indicating attendance of over 12 000 people. Local community groups benefit... local businesses benefit by way of increased demand due to ... visitors... whom arrive up to a week in advance. [ADI 59]

Project 26 the 'Lake Broadwater Display' is an example of cultural infrastructure projects developed to enhance WDR tourism and express local culture. This infrastructure project focused on showcasing the significant natural features and cultural destinations of the WDR. The interpretive display highlighted noteworthy

community historical and ecological collections, significant architectural buildings, local lifestyle information and the natural fauna and flora of the region. Information provided in the display encourages tourists to stay longer in the region and therefore maximise their spending. Project 26 documentation stated:

This space is designed to showcase our region and the cultural tourism product we have available...the interpretive display... improves their forward planning of self-drive tours, maximizing their length of stay and their spending.
[ADI 36]

Project 26 impacted, and continues to impact, the tourist market and economy of the region in the short-and long-term. The project has preserved and displayed a unique collection of extinct fauna and flora from Lake Broadwater which would have otherwise remained hidden from public view.

Project 41 was a cultural tourism infrastructure project which enhanced the Miles Historic Village facilities and Miles' cultural heritage, while providing opportunities for local industry diversity. This project impacted local cultural development through the improved preservation and presentation of historically significant collections and objects. Project document stated:

This project is designed to make the ... collection items and stories more accessible to visitors by professionally presenting the objects and associated information in different ways: physical object display, interpretation panels, booklet, and virtual delivery... allowing visitors to engage with the objects properly for the first time. The... collection has been identified as significant, [many] individual items ... have local significance ... some having national significance in terms of cultural and social heritage. [ADI 56]

Project 41 impacted the community in the short-and long-term by enriching knowledge of community stories and enhancing community identity. Additionally, the project improved access to and understanding of historical artefacts and their symbolic expression of WDR culture. In the context of this project, the symbolic

expression of culture can be described as the presentation of text, illustrations, and photographic images about important objects and community stories.

The short-and long-term economic impacts of infrastructure Project 41 increased tourist income and delivered indirect financial benefits to community businesses via increases in the supply of goods and services. Evidence from interviews suggested cultural tourism and infrastructure projects supported the development of the region's economy. Interview participants Leah and Tom agree these cultural tourism projects make a significant contribution to local economies. Leah highlighted Project 41 as a case in point, she acknowledged the benefits of the community run historic village to the economy of the Miles community. Leah stated:

The historical village, anything they do down there brings tourism into our community. It is a huge economic benefit to our community. [19]

Equally, Kent described the long-term benefits, to both tourism and community, of sharing significant stories and objects that express WDR cultural heritage. Kent stated:

[The museum] project I spoke about...will have far reaching benefits. Not just direct to community, but to tourists coming through. That [project] has a direct roll on for many generations, through those significant objects and their stories being shared with people. [17]

To summarise, cultural tourism projects develop and market the unique ethnic diversity, natural capital attributes, and cultural heritage of local communities in the region. Preserving local community culture and investing in cultural infrastructure helps to diversify local economies and create resilient regional communities. Investment in local community culture has long-term cumulative social, cultural, and economic capital impacts on WDR.

Impacts of Cultural Infrastructure

Within regional settings cultural and social infrastructure closely interlink to provide health, wellbeing, and economic benefits to communities (Queensland Government

2007). Social infrastructure brings people together to develop social and human capital, while maintaining a community's quality of life (Queensland Government 2007). Social infrastructure is the interconnection of facilities both hard infrastructure like roads, water, sewerage, electricity grids (Fulmer 2009); and soft infrastructure which includes community programs and services that supports those facilities (Butler Flora & Flora 1993). Equally, the community networks that build, maintain, and improve this interplay between facilities and services are important (Butler Flora & Flora 1993; Flora, Sharp, Flora, & Newlon 1997; Sharp, Agnitsch, Ryan, & Flora 2002). Social infrastructure is an essential element of community arts projects because they utilise hard infrastructure such as local galleries, skate parks, and community halls to operationalise projects. These facilities accommodate and support the projects' creative processes and outcomes, providing space for workshops, art exhibitions, music events and theatre rehearsals.

WDR's social infrastructure is supported by RADF community arts activity. Projects generated rental income for social infrastructure like town halls, show grounds, and performance spaces. While this may appear to be a minor impact to WDR on a regional scale, the provision of a small-town halls may depend on RADF projects' usage and rental income to keep this type of infrastructure viable. Rental income helped to offset building maintenance and other expenditure.

Community arts projects also animated community spaces and impacted the design and aesthetics of streetscapes, parks, show grounds, and natural open spaces through murals, banners, mosaics, festivals, and community celebrations. Projects supported art gallery programming, or soft social infrastructure, through community arts workshops which inspire creativity in the community. The following paragraphs will present the direct and indirect impacts community arts projects have on hard and soft social infrastructure at an organisational and community level. This section further details the five infrastructure projects mentioned in the cultural tourism section.

Community arts directly and indirectly impacted hard social infrastructure. Community arts projects have shown a high usage of community halls and community centres, this illustrates the direct effects the project activity has on potential rental income and the demand for town halls, and community centres for arts and cultural pursuits. Table 1 below details what types of hard social

infrastructure are impacted. The table contains three columns which describe the type of infrastructure used, the projects that use them, and the total number using this type of infrastructure.

Table 1 Types of Hard Social Infrastructure Impacted by RADF Projects

Infrastructure Description	RADF Projects Data Items (ADI) from Archival Document Data Set.	Total Number
Community Halls	ADI: 15,19, 22, 25, 27, 29,40, 48, 55, 57, 64	11
Community Centres	ADI: 1,3,7,8,10,12, 26, 30, 35, 36, 61	11
Local Art Galleries	ADI: 16, 20, 21, 41, 54, 14,13	7
Local Show Grounds	ADI: 23, 49, 59, 60	4
Historic Village	ADI: 53, 56, 67	3
Youth Spaces (Skate Park)	ADI: 17, 28	2
Local Town Streetscape	ADI: 18, 68	2
Natural Open Park Spaces	ADI: 31	1
No Infrastructure Used or Professional Development Projects Outside WDR	ADI: 32, 35, 6,37, 38, 39	6

Table 1 demonstrates the wide range of hard infrastructure facilities utilised in community arts workshops. Out of the 50 RADF projects sampled only six did not use hard social infrastructure. Of these six projects, four were professional development projects directed toward the soft social infrastructure needs involved in art gallery public programming. The remaining two projects were for the

preservation of arts and cultural objects, like the lamination of family history documents.

Hard social infrastructure appeared to play a role in supporting and enabling arts organisations to create this activity in the community. Project funding directly paid for the hire of community halls and workshop spaces in community centres and communal club houses. Macy described the importance of locating funded projects in the local club hall which serves as a key communal meeting place for the small rural community. The local club hall, as a self-funded community space, is heavily reliant on rental income generated from community activities such as RADF workshops and project outcome events. Like self-funded meeting places, projects that used public funded spaces also raised money for infrastructure maintenance through rental income they generate. Macy stated:

If we didn't have the RADF funding we would not do as many workshops, and the sports club would not be used as much, [the RADF projects] help to support the club...[by] cover[ing] the cost of the sports club hall for the weekend... and it is through little groups like ours and RADF helps to keep our group going, and helps to keep that facility going for the good of the whole community. [I 12]

More broadly, this indicated that RADF support of organisations' community arts activity has an interdependent relationship with maintaining hard social infrastructure in WDR.

Community arts projects also directly enhanced buildings, streetscapes, and communal spaces by modifying them using creative project processes. An example of this type of activity is present in a youth project focused on the local skateboard park. Project 11 involved a project component directed at painting a graffiti mural on the skate bowl at the site. Whilst the project immediately enhanced and altered the infrastructure, the rationale behind the project had longer-term impact objectives. These objectives included developing a sense of ownership and pride for the skateboard park in the local youth community and other project participants. The imagery used in the mural artwork provided visual representation of local youth.

This both acknowledged the value of young people to the community and gave voice to local youth culture. The project acquittal document stated:

[Outcomes achieved]: Development of a sense of ownership and pride over the skate park facilities encouraging safe and respectful use of the facilities ... Providing the local community and tourists with a display of artwork that is an aesthetically pleasing visual representation of our local youth community. [ADI 17]

Project 11 also highlighted another interdependent relationship between hard social infrastructure and social impacts of community arts activity. The project directly impacted the aesthetics of the hard infrastructure, in this case the local skateboard park. The spill-over impacts to the community are generated through the social capital gains of community identity, ownership, and pride experienced by young community members. Therefore, the contributions made by community arts projects to infrastructure and to social capital gains can have a cumulative effect on how regional community members value arts and culture.

Valuing Arts and Culture

Twenty-five years of RADF investment in community arts activity has had a long-term cumulative impact on community participation, expression, and appreciation of arts and culture. Favourable attitudes to arts and culture is a long-term impact identified in the data. Increased access to arts and cultural participation shows greater demand for arts experiences in local communities. The flourishing CoP in the region demonstrate continued interest in arts and cultural participation. Arts and cultural organisation sustainability over the long-term also indicated how community members value and supported arts and culture in their communities. Growth in the number of local festivals across the region is a clear indicator of increased interest in local community culture. Long-term changes in the communities' attitudes was evident in the increased investment in RADF funding and development of arts and cultural infrastructure by local government.

Interview participants reported RADF community arts projects have a cumulative impact on WDR by positively altering communal attitudes to arts and culture.

Interview participant Jill recounted her observations of the 1981 introduction of the initiative in WDR. Jill described the struggle artists and arts organisations underwent to change people's perceptions toward valuing arts and culture in the community. Jill stated:

In 1981 RADF started, Wambo Shire Council and the Dalby Town Council got together to be able to access this funding ... it was a struggle to start with, because it was believed then that art did not have very much potential, and here where you see that it has been built on, and people have grown with it and how important it is now, not only for the artistic endeavour, but from the economic point of view. [I 6]

Jill identified the importance of community members learning about arts and culture, which over the long-term developed a growing appreciation for it in the community. She acknowledged that not everyone in the community will change their opinion, but over time arts and culture has become a valued part of the community. Jill stated:

It all comes back to a lifetime of learning, for those that are actually involved, but [there] is appreciation for it in the community I am sure of that. I feel there has been a change, but some will never change. ... It is much more accepted as ... being a valued part of the community... that is where integration sort of comes in. [I 6]

Kent and Barb highlighted the integration of their organisation's arts and cultural activities into the everyday life of the community, as a progressive change in community attitudes towards arts and culture. Kent stated:

The expectation that the performing arts are part of our community, it seems quite a natural facet of our community, people say, 'so when is the next production?' ... people always see our productions as a valuable part of the yearly calendar, so they quite often want to schedule it into some sort of function ... so they are value adding onto something that they are doing. [I 7]

Barb described how community participation in, and appreciation of, community arts activity is an acknowledgement that the arts contribute greatly to community life.

Barb stated:

For me... [the arts are] about bringing diverse groups of people together...to create something together that's of value and is appreciated within your community. It doesn't happen ... in the week or the fortnight ... It takes time to build ... that sense within a community that the lanterns are here, the lanterns are great, and ... the lanterns are going to continue to merge into bigger, better, different. [I 3]

The cumulative impact of community arts activity in WDR over twenty-five years has resulted in progressive changes in community attitudes and appreciation of arts and cultural engagement. The change in attitudes identified in WDR suggest the RADF initiative's funding of community arts is developing arts and culture in WDR's regional communities.

Developing Arts and Culture Summary

Project activity impacts the developing of arts and culture in WDR at an individual, organisational, community, and regional level. The impacts identified across those four levels have effects that are immediate, long-term, and cumulative. This indicates that the development of arts and culture through community arts participation is an ongoing impact process that is not linear.

Findings from this research suggested funding of community arts activity provided greater access to arts and culture in regional communities which has had a significant effect on the emergence of new CoPs. Continued access to community arts projects supported the sustainability of arts and cultural organisations in regional townships and built cultural capital. Investment in community arts projects unlocked local community cultural expression by: (1) assisting arts and cultural organisations' agency to express symbolic forms of local values, beliefs, traditions, and shared history; and (2) passing on skills and experiences to individuals that support and maintain Australian cultural traditions.

Funded projects encourage the growth of arts and cultural knowledge, skills, and training. The attainment of knowledge, skills, and training has long-term effects on individuals, such as the development of emerging and professional arts practice. Building individual capacity through repeated workshop projects over the long-term has spill-over effects to the development of informal arts groups, arts organisations, and CoPs. The flow-on impact of developing artists and CoPs over the long-term is the increased need for more cultural infrastructure, such as art galleries and performance spaces. The need to accommodate increased numbers of exhibitions, live musical performances, and theatre within the community is driving the expansion of cultural infrastructure in WDR.

The evidence suggested community arts projects required hard social infrastructure to enable and support community arts activity. In turn, arts and cultural activity animated a diverse range of social infrastructure which is not immediately recognisable by Local Government. Findings suggest infrastructure shaped the creative direction of community arts projects, which in turn impacted the community by enhancing the aesthetics of hard social infrastructure. Arts projects activated social processes that formed connections between enhanced social infrastructure and community identity.

Community arts projects multiply the impact of small project grants by providing long-term economic benefits, such as cultural tourism and employment of artist/facilitators and arts workers. Cultural tourism projects developed and marketed the unique ethnic diversity, natural capital attributes, and cultural heritage of local WDR communities. Preserving local community culture and investment in cultural infrastructure helped to diversify local economies and strengthen regional communities.

Artist/facilitators working with communities provided two-way impact to both the community and the facilitator. The two-way impacts between artist/facilitators and communities identified in this study describe how creative outcomes are achieved in community. Specifically, it enabled the benefits to artist/facilitators and community participants to be explored through this mutually-beneficial relationship.

The data indicated that long-term investment in community arts has produced cumulative change in regional community attitudes to valuing arts and culture in WDR. The changed attitude to valuing arts and culture in WDR indicates that community arts is developing arts and culture across the region. However, continued investment is needed if arts and cultural development is to be sustained.

Theme 4 Capacity Building

This theme describes the impacts of community arts on capacity building in WDR. Capacity building is a complex process which is dynamic (Chaskin 1999). The theme of Capacity Building is both an impact of community arts activity acting on the WDR, and a cumulative process. The dynamic nature of this process means that the effects of multiple impacts acting on one level, in turn, have spill-over effects to another. The spill-over effects of impact are evident in the capacity building process across all four levels of the WDR community over the long-term. The impact of a stone thrown into a pond creates an image of ripples moving outward. This powerful image provides an analogy for the spill-over effects that occur between individual, organisational, community, and regional level capacity building over time. Viewing the capacity building process through this lens aids in understanding its complexity and interconnectedness.

Individual Capacity Building

At the individual level, community arts projects appeared to impact community members by improving their human capital, or personal capacity, through the development of knowledge, skills, and experience. Project 5 highlights the skills, knowledge, and training provided through a two-day visual arts workshop using mixed media. The artist/facilitator of the workshop encouraged participants to discover innovative ways of working with mixed media by discovering how the media behaved through experimentation. Informal learning situations used in workshops developed new skills and knowledge. Equally, the workshop artist/facilitator encouraged participants to develop their own unique style of working with the media through in-depth discussions about artistic methodologies. Discussing style development elevates the learning from basic training to utilising higher order thinking. The application document from Project 5 stated:

The tutor will help students discover new ways of sketching in pen, adding a wash, or producing a full watercolour. Students will be encouraged and tutored to discover their own unique style... in depth discussions regarding determination of ideas, techniques, and materials. [ADI 8]

Likewise, Project 7 provided workshop participants with visual arts learning experiences that extended past learning basic skills towards mastering higher-level skills that allowed them to take artistic risks. Arguably, artistic risk taking can be the foundation for discovering new styles or methods of working. Project 7's documentation stated:

Students will be taken on a journey of self-realisation taking them out of their comfort zone and encompassing the unknown. [ADI 12]

In addition to discovering innovative ways to develop personal style, Project 6 offered participants of all skill levels an opportunity to expand on their repertoire of visual arts skills and knowledge by building confidence in their own unique art practice. The letter of support from Project 6 stated:

The [project] proposal will provide an opportunity for local artists of all skill levels...to expand on their repertoire... allowing them to gain confidence and competency in their individual art practice. [ADI 10]

Therefore, participating in RADF workshops enhanced individual level capacity and human capital through the discovery of new creative methods, skills, and higher order thinking. Continued participation in theatre workshops with professional directors has improved the individual capacity of community members involved in the theatre organisation. Kent described how mentoring by professional directors, over the last 10 years has established three young amateur directors and progressed the skills of organisation members involved in backstage lighting and sound. Kent stated:

They [the members] have really grown over time ... we now have three young directors, Sally, Tanya, and Maria, so we have got a real future ... We have also made great progress in our technical side, in our lighting and sound over the years through the support and the directorship of these guys and their mentoring of us. [I 7]

Individuals from within organisations involved in operationalising community arts projects have built individual and organisational capacity through writing grant applications and managing projects. Grant writing involved individuals in learning a diverse range of skills and acquiring new knowledge. Conceptualising and planning community arts projects expanded the communication and interpersonal skills of individuals. The written application process required writers to articulate their project proposal with clarity and precision, formulate an accurate project budget, and demonstrate a detailed understanding of project planning. Application writing also involved gaining knowledge about workplace health and safety, public liability insurance, and relevant copyright and licencing requirements. Jill described grant writing as a special skill set that is learnt over time. She also highlighted the personal confidence developed through grant writing and assembling project budgets. Jill stated:

It is a special skill set to actually write for the grant ... but you learn it, and then you try to pass it onto others... writing the grants is a confidence building thing... you have to know your figures and your budget and all of that. [I 6]

At the completion of all community arts projects a RADF acquittal report is written by project organisers and submitted to WDRC. Within the acquittal process, individuals are required to describe how the project achieved the results outlined in the original application. This written account entails the use of reflective thinking and communication skills. An example of the reflective thinking and written communication required to fulfil this task is illustrated in Project 1. The writer of the acquittal document details what took place in the project and what impacted individual participants, volunteers, and project partner organisations. The extract stated:

Having the workshops at [local community centre] allowed many opportunities for other organisations using the centre to learn about the [gallery committee] and its goals. It is hoped that future partnerships and funding opportunities will eventuate from... these chance meetings. It gave [gallery] volunteers many opportunities to promote WDR, RADF, [community centre], and [gallery] to people who may not [be]... aware of the value of the Arts ... [ADI 2]

Strengthening grant writing skills represents a key outcome of arts project engagement. Individuals and organisations who have been successful in securing consecutive grants gain confidence from the experience, and proceed to apply for larger more complex government grants. Jill described the skills she and others have gained through applying for RADF grants. She also spoke of the experience and confidence gained from the successful delivery of projects which has been leveraged by this arts organisation to apply for larger more complex community grants. An example of these grants included the upgrading of a disused railway house into a community art gallery and studio space, and air-conditioning for the local community hall. Jill stated:

And through the skills of our grant writing people..., driven by Ruth... the hall upgrade that was our first success in 1988 when we got air-conditioners for the hall, and I think our second big grant writing thing was the railway upgrade to a gallery... [I 6]

The spill-over effects from building individual level capacity, such as developing artistry and grant writing, translates into capacity gains for community organisations and the community more broadly. Jill reflected on the skills acquired by the art organisation and how this has positively impacted the community. Jill stated:

It would be interesting to add up all the money we have gotten as volunteers ... she has accumulated those skills through grant writing for the art group... and we have brought a lot to the community over the years. [I 6]

Interview participant Cloe confirmed the sentiment of Jill in her observations of the cumulative impacts of project activity. Cloe highlighted the cumulative impact of one art group in the small town of Bell. She described how repeat community arts projects have developed the artistry and capacity of this art organisation. Cloe stated:

The Bell Art Group are just amazing, the amount of workshops they have, and the art work that they have; I mean they've ended with a whole art gallery out of it, they've ended up with a whole community centre which that community centre would not be there if there was not a really, really strong art group because that art group got that community centre built... it's just amazing what is happening in Bell, that little art group is... the instigator of a lot of that happening. [14]

Under the leadership of the art group, the Bell community with a population of 274 people was able to leverage their human, organisational, and social capital to convince WDRC to build a new community centre and art gallery in the town. The community centre provided a solution to collective issues faced by the community, such as an aging population, reduced volunteerism, and diminished public services. Building individual capacity and human capital leads to gains in organisational capacity. By building organisational capacity, community capacity is subsequently strengthened. Organisational capacity building increases agency within a community to change its future and improve overall wellbeing.

Organisational Level Capacity building

Findings indicated that different arts and cultural organisations deliver community arts projects to their communities using different leadership approaches. However, community arts activity impacts build capacity at the organisational level in four key areas:

- (1) community cultural leadership;
- (2) improving organisational and community resources;
- (3) developing collaborative partnerships; and

(4) improving organisational networks.

Community Cultural Drivers

Community arts projects impacted individuals in community organisations by providing avenues to develop their leadership skills and organisational capacity. Leadership, as an element of human capital, grew with confidence and experience gained from project delivery. This type of leader or Community Cultural Driver (CCD) is heavily involved in project conceptualisation, grant writing, and project delivery. Project leadership offered CCDs opportunities to develop their organisation's capacity and their community's resources. CCDs used collaborations with other arts and non-arts organisations to establish new organisational relationships. RADF funding of community arts projects gave local CCDs agency to focus their organisation's resources towards positively shaping their community's future by investing in projects that celebrate and express community culture.

The four key areas of capacity building are discussed in the following subsection by examining the operational and leadership approaches of two community organisations. Each organisation demonstrated their CCD leadership qualities by regularly applying for grants and delivering projects in their respective WDR towns. The following sections on organisational capacity building describe the impacts delivered by both community organisations' projects and highlight the approaches used to achieve impacts.

Community Organisation A (COA) is geographically situated in the town of Dalby which has a population of 10 850 people. The organisation is caretaker of the newly refurbished 'Gallery 107' and the group have been operating since 2013. COA's leadership has delivered several projects between 2013 and 2015 in the Dalby district, however this subsection will discuss only three of seven projects which include Projects 1, 2, and 33. Project 1 has been discussed previously in the Social Connectedness theme regarding its impacts on community cohesion. This project is a good example of a collaborative partnership developed between COA and a local indigenous health organisation. Likewise, both Project 2 and 33 also utilise the

organisation's strategy to develop collaborative partnerships between COA and other non-art community organisations.

Sue who is a member of the COA, described the community engagement approach used by COA and compares it to the leadership approach used by neighbouring Community Organisation B (COB) in Chinchilla. As a CCD within the COA, Sue's leadership approach sought out non-arts organisations through her social networks and community contacts. Once the initial contact was made Sue met with the non-arts organisation and worked with them to conceptualise a community arts project that addresses the organisation's needs. Sue also highlighted that COA's projects built new social networks and community cohesion by partnering with non-arts organisations to deliver workshops that provided access to arts and cultural knowledge and experiences. Creative collaborations like this brought artist/facilitators into contact with groups of people who they would not normally have interactions with. Sue stated:

Where I tend to seek out ... not arts- organisations, and convince them to be part of it... that all takes time, and that is networking. That is community cohesion. That is working with who you know, and that is something that builds up over a long period of time. Well if you just say we are doing this, you can come and learn how to paint poppies, people just turn up and that's it. Students and teachers and that's it. Where as to me the type of projects I like to do are more community orientated. Trying to build that cohesion and that networking. [I 15]

Sue described how she initiated these collaborative partnership projects to introduce non-arts organisations to the benefits of being involved in the arts, and how this type of activity could integrate clients who are marginalised in the community. Sue highlighted how community arts could offer new activities for service providers to improve the social and emotional wellbeing of their clients. Sue stated:

Projects that involve non-arts organisations... broadens the scope of the gallery...[and] enlightens the non-arts type

people to actually realise that they can be involved in art... It gets arts into... what that organisation is doing, for example, ... [the disability support services] and [the age care provider]. Neither themselves considers that they are interested in art, but ... [I] enlightened them... showing them new ways of getting their clients to be integrated into the community, or more productive, or having better self-esteem, and... learn new skills. [I 15]

Project 2 was the first project developed using this type of collaborative approach for both the disability service and the COA. Sue, as the CCD initiated contact and mentored the disability service provider throughout the entire project. Sue reported the need to reassure and coach the disability service project partner who had never participated in the organisation and delivery of a community arts project. Sue expressed the importance of building trust within this new collaborative relationship by carefully communicating project needs and objectives. She stated:

I approach the non-arts organisations and say, “how about we do a project together, and here are my ideas” ... what would you like to do?... “Yeah, my goodness, we never thought about that! How would that happen?” ...I spent some time explaining what would happen, what they would need to do, and what we would have to do, and how it would work ...I have mentored them through the RADF application process... to employ artists... to conduct workshops at their place of business for the benefit of their staff and clients... whereas they would never had thought to do it themselves. [I 15]

Sue emphasised the need for CCDs to teach non-arts organisation staff how to fill out and submit applications and outcome reports, keep records of event attendance, and take photographs to promote the activity. Sue stated:

I could do project management that is say 5 hours, that includes explaining the whole concept... Filling out all the

forms with them, toing and froing to get the forms to how they want it, telling them how to submit it, teaching them how to keep records of the photographs and attendance and all those sorts of things. Doing the outcome report, it is way more than 5 hours. But from a council point of view [non-arts organisation] should be doing it themselves, somebody needs to mentor them. [I 15]

The organisational resources of both the COA and the disability organisation are improved throughout the mentoring and teaching process. The COA mentor gained teaching skills and experience throughout the project. The service provider's staff who were mentored gained knowledge about the RADF initiative and skills to conceptualise, plan, and deliver a collaborative arts project.

The disability service provider involved in Project 2 appeared to demonstrate their gains in organisational capacity by initiating a new collaborative community arts project with another artist/facilitator in the community in the following year. Project impacts from COA's collaboration with the service provider were of benefit to both organisations because they were willing to commit further time, money, and resources to other funded partnership projects. An example of a repeat collaborative project is evident in the 'The Joy of Music' Project 22 which utilised a different artform and artist/facilitator. The disability service provider's improved internal organisational capacity developed in Project 2, is consolidated in the subsequent project by repeating a similar collaborative experience.

The disability service provider took the positive experience, learning, resources, and capacity of staff developed in the initial project (Project 2) and used them to inform and influence how they managed Project 22. The learning loop created from Project 2 to Project 22 indicates the impact and process of capacity building in this organisation. The disability service continued to enhance their service capacity to clients throughout Project 22 by developing the performance and musical skills of both the disabled clients and service staff, together with improving the service's teaching and learning resources. Project 22 data extract stated:

[artist 1] and [artist 2] working with our staff and clients will broaden the scope of work already mastered...and create a unique set of songs, music books, and backing tracks for this project and we will be able to keep these for future use...teach us to make our own... home-made instruments... the project will develop the musical skills of our clients...and learn about performing in a group...event. [ADI 30]

Likewise, the COA has leveraged the learning and organisational capacity developed in Project 2 and transferred it via another learning loop into subsequent projects. Sue confirmed the ongoing involvement of COA in collaborative partnerships and highlighted the willingness of those non-art organisations who have been through the collaborative process to participate in further projects. She felt this willingness stemmed from a better understanding of project processes and their benefits. Sue stated:

I think it has changed the outlook of the non-arts organisations that I have worked with... [disability service], [age care provider] and the indigenous people they are a lot more willing to be part of it now that they have been through the process... they are... more willing to engage with a group like the gallery because they understand a little bit more about how it all works. [I 15]

Impacts from these projects appeared to strengthen organisational capacity, however, as Sue explained this interaction between arts and non-arts organisations would not occur unless CCDs initiated first contact and developed relationships with new collaborators. Sue emphasised that WDRC would not initiate these collaborations between community organisations because they believed this type of activity is to originate from within the community. Sue stated:

Interactions between different arts organisations and non-arts organisations that would otherwise not normally occur...I am not sure that council would initiate projects... they certainly wouldn't do that sort of inter-community group

sort of thing. I think that councils see that that has got to come from the community, if the community want it then the community has to initiate it. It is often the artists that initiate the contact with the non-arts organisations or groups to get all that happening. [I 15]

Impacts from community arts projects appeared to strengthen organisational capacity by: improving CCD leadership approaches of arts and cultural organisations via collaborative projects; developing organisational resources like human capital; and building new social networks and relationships between diverse community organisations like the COA and the disability service. Therefore, the leadership of CCDs and the collaborative nature of community arts projects appear to be key elements in the development of organisational capacity in this community arts context. However, it must be noted that other community developmental activities may have the same effects on organisational capacity building. Multiple projects over the twenty-five-year history of RADF in WDR have delivered organisational capacity building impacts like those presented in this subsection. Therefore, the cumulative influence of multiple projects has spill-over effects on organisational capacity building in WDR at a community level. The spill-over effects of cumulative impact will be examined in the next section focusing on the leadership approach and project impacts of Community Organisation B.

Community Level Capacity Building

Community Organisation B (COB) is located in the town of Chinchilla, which has a population of 4 800 residents. COB have a long-standing volunteer committee who manage the Lapunyah Art Gallery facility in the heart of the town. As key CCDs in the Chinchilla district, the COB's leadership approach differs from that of COA in that they are primarily focused on developing artists in the district, from school aged students to emergent professional artists. COB have delivered multiple community arts projects over last twenty-five years. Four key projects focused on community capacity building are explored in the following paragraphs.

Project 8 was a visual arts facilitator training project that was an augmented part of the COB's 'Arts on the Grass 2014' workshop series. The project provided mentoring to a local ceramic artist wanting to develop her teaching knowledge and

skills. Expanding the teaching, planning, and communication skills of local artists provides opportunities for future project employment as facilitators. This enhances the gallery's organisational resources and the capacity to deliver a broader range of community arts projects in the community. Project 8's archival documents highlighted the long-term strategy of COB to develop the teaching and planning skills of artists/facilitators in Chinchilla. The extract stated:

The artist will: Establish connections with the local community as an educator in the visual arts, leading to future employment...enhance her reputation as an artist... gain additional skills... in planning workshops... in managing processes for successful outcomes... writing grant applications under guidance... [ADI 13]

Likewise, the arts business workshop Project 48, focused on developing the individual capacity of emerging visual artists and arts organisations by building skills and knowledge in marketing principles, pricing, distribution, and promotion of artist's work. Workshop participation also provided artists and arts organisations from across WDR with an overarching concept of how the art world operates, and how to better understand consumers and exhibition audiences. Project 48 improved the business prospects of artists and arts organisations by encouraging the use of marketing plans and strategic thinking. Archival documentation from Project 48 stated:

This workshop aims to... introduce... the essential principles of marketing provide a better understanding of the art world, arts audiences, and arts customers... pricing, distribution, and promotion ... identify market opportunities, prepare for the marketplace, and enhance business prospects... [ADI 14]

COB's leadership approach to developing the artists and arts organisation's business knowledge have impacts, such as building a community cultural reputation which identifies the artistic excellence found in the district. Moreover, the long-term cumulative impact of this project is to shape how WDR arts and crafts are regarded

locally, across the state, and nationally. This develops the cultural identity of both individual communities and the region. Project 48 documents stated:

artists and arts organisations will... develop a marketing plan... to expand their business/ marketing beyond the local context... shaping how Western Downs arts and crafts are seen regionally, state-wide, and nationally. [ADI 14]

Importantly, Project 48 was an augmented part of the regional artists exhibition Project 10, which is another strategic activity aimed at building WDR's artistic community and regional capacity detailed on page 182. COB have demonstrated their leadership as CCDs by initiating further projects that have delivered capacity impacts at an individual, organisational, and community level.

Project 14 was a visual arts and design project collaboration established between COB and the WDRC. Unlike COA's collaborative projects, the WDRC was the initiator of the project who approached COB to form a collaborative partnership. Project 14 was aimed at producing a series of large scale banners to celebrate the history, values, and diversity of the Chinchilla community. The design phase of the project provided design knowledge and skills which impacted individual project participants. The banner designs once completed were exhibited in the Lapunyah Art Gallery as part of a public consultation process. The consultation process impacted the community by providing a means of exploring, articulating, and visualising community identity. Communal consultation raised the significance of the project and promoted a sense of community. Project 14 archival documentation stated:

This grant will...produce a collaborative 'exhibition' of artworks ... displayed in public spaces ...[that] celebrate community values ... diversity, history, and lifestyle ... artworks will be displayed for public comment ... [project objectives] to: encourage participation in arts activities ... foster a sense of ownership and pride for local community identity ... stimulate cultural tourism ... within CBD. [ADI 20]

The banner project developed community capacity by producing collaborative partnerships between COB and local council. The collaborative relationship created in the project impacted the capacity of both organisations' representatives who learnt to plan cooperatively, communicate ideas, and express symbolic representations of Chinchilla's history, values, and community diversity. The project also created organisational capacity through community members gaining an experience of, and skills in, community consultation processes. Equally, community capacity is expanded by community members exploring, visualising, and articulating community values and identity while working toward a communal goal.

The 'Regional Artists Exhibition' Project 10, held in 2015, was an annual exhibition event held in alternating WDR townships. Project 10 was the second of two-regional artist group exhibition projects from the archival sample. Project 31, the other 'Regional Artists Exhibition' is discussed earlier in the Social Connectedness theme of Chapter 4. Project 10 improved the capacity of individual community members through encouraging skill and knowledge development. Project 10 enhanced the artistic reputation of participating artists among peers within the region and boosted the recognition of WDR artists more broadly. This positively impacted both the human and cultural capital existing in the WDR artistic community. Project 10 documentation stated:

The regional artists exhibition is a vehicle to showcase the talents of Western Downs artists...build... artists profiles as well as ...the regional profile in the arts world... [ADI 16]

The curator and professional photographer employed within the project made notable contributions to the significance of the exhibition and the development of the exhibition catalogue, which are key tools in creating a national artistic presence. Project 10 documentation stated:

A professional exhibition catalogue is a tool to promote the exhibition and the selected artists beyond the perimeter of the Western Downs and into the wider community... [contributing] to individual artist's portfolios as evidence of... recognition at a regional level. [ADI 16]

Underpinning this regional exhibition was COB's vision to develop its organisational leadership, resources, capacity, and social networks, together with promoting regional talent, and progressing the profile of WDR artists in the art world. Strategies that promoted a regional artistic profile in the art world enhanced individual, community, and over the longer-term regional cultural capacity. Strategic projects like these repeated over the long-term produced cumulative impacts that improved human, cultural, and social capital. Both COB and COA are prime examples of arts organisations that demonstrate the importance of leadership in the development of community cultural capacity and the shaping of the region's future.

Regional Level Capacity Building

COB and COA's impact on the local communities they operate within has a cumulative effect on cultural capacity over time. The capacity enhanced by community arts projects in each WDR community is evolving through different organisational leadership approaches over differing time spans. This suggests the cultural capacity built through community arts projects in WDR is an ongoing impact process that is complex and not linear. Multiple community organisations are delivering numerous projects in WDR communities over the long-term. The cumulative impact of these projects feeds into this dynamic capacity building process which has implications for the region's cultural capacity as a whole.

Using the example of the two community organisations and the data collected in the data corpus, a glimpse of this complex and dynamic process can be seen like the ripples in a pond moving slowly outward. The multiple RADF projects instigated by COA and COB use different leadership approaches which have appeared to improve organisational capacity in their communities. COA works toward forming collaborations with non-arts organisations and mentoring them through the process of working together. Mentoring others through collaborative projects begins a process, the first ripple, that changes capacity first at the individual and then the organisational level, as discussed earlier in projects 1, 2 and 33.

The second ripple in the process continued to move from these original projects outward. This can be identified in the non-arts organisations reaching out to other community artist/ facilitators or organisations to form new collaborative projects. The second generation projects formed from previous collaborative relationships can

be identified in projects 18, 22, and 23. Each of these projects have direct links to the organisational capacity built from earlier projects in the community.

Interview participant Barb discussed the capacity outcomes of Project 22 in relation to the future third generation of projects anticipated from the informal partnership formed between COA and the local Dalby festival committee. Barb described how the organisational capacity created throughout Project 22, the third ripple effect, will continue to develop as organisations trained in the project will in turn become the tutors for future lantern building workshops in subsequent festivals. Barb stated:

This year we used schools, scouts, community groups... that are well established and likely to stay within the community and be available so that next year they'll be our tutors. Although what we're... hoping might happen is that we'll get the Art Gallery group to take that lead role... it's our own local artists who will step up into the role of the tutoring group. [I 3]

The process of community capacity building brought about by projects have a cumulative effect over time. The spill-over influences of organisational capacity on the community has implications for impact on cultural capacity at a regional level. Regional level capacity building, like community level capacity increased over the longer-term. This suggests that RADF project impact can be understood at this level as dynamic and not linear. Findings also indicated that the learnings from the success of one project encourages the desire for further success, which helps shape the next project (Vogel 2012). Learning loops present in the impact findings suggested engagement in community arts is a self-reinforcing cycle. The net effect of impact at each level could indicate that the overall cultural capacity of WDR is expanding over time.

Capacity Building Section Summary

In summary, the key findings presented in this section indicate that capacity building is a complex process which is dynamic and non-linear. Capacity building is both an impact of the funding initiative acting on the WDR region, and a cumulative, self-reinforcing process activated by community arts activities. The dynamic nature of

this self-reinforcing process means the impact of capacity building is evident across the individual, organisational, community, and regional levels. Impacts aggregated at one level created spill-over effects to the next level over the long-term.

Based on the evidence identified in the data corpus, impacts from community arts projects appear to generate capacity through processes like: problem solving collective issues; the expansion of social networks and associations; opportunities to develop CCD leadership; and the enhancement of individual and organisational agency. However, producing these impacts is not guaranteed. The development of community capacity produced gains in social capital by building new networks among organisations and institutions, such as the WDRC. Gains in political capital are evident in organisations who combine social network connections (social capital) and resources (financial capital) to mobilise projects that bring about community change.

The RADF funding of community arts projects supported organisational capacity building by providing grants that cultivate leadership and operationalise community arts projects. Community arts projects produced a nexus in which to enhance individual and organisational capacity. Leadership by CCDs provided the community with opportunities to explore, visualise, and articulate their values and identity. CCDs enabled organisations to leverage their capacity to solve community problems. Based on evidence from interviews and archival documents, the leadership of arts and cultural organisations plan strategically to improve the human capital of community members, build new community network associations, and enhance wellbeing. This appeared to have the cumulative effect of building community capacity over time.

The capacity built through community arts project impacts in each of the WDR communities is evolving in various ways and at different rates through a complex process over time. This was due to the human and social capital existing in those settings. Multiple community organisations are delivering numerous projects in WDR communities over the long-term. The cumulative impact of these projects feeds into this dynamic capacity building process which has implications for the region's capacity as a whole. This suggested that leadership in the form of CCDs is critical to the strategic development of community capacity. Without CCDs to plan,

initiate, and support the delivery of community arts projects in regional settings, community cultural capacity development would be impeded.

Step 2 Development of the Theory of Change Conceptual Framework

Scholars from the arts impact field have sought to build an empirical evidence base to understand complex impacts of community arts participation (Clift et al. 2010b; Kelaher et al. 2012; Merli 2002). In addition to this, scholars are calling for the exploration of possible interdisciplinary conceptual and theoretical frameworks to be employed in developing this evidence base (Badham 2010; Raw et al. 2011). This study has set out to test the ToC conceptual framework to explore its possible application in understanding community arts practice complexity and impacts. The framework has been used as a tool to analyse the data corpus and to articulate and understand the inputs, processes of change, and impacts involved in community arts change processes (Vogel 2012).

The second step in the development of the framework evident below in Figure 9 draws out the inputs into community arts projects and highlights the processes of change identified within the study's impact findings and presents them in a concise and simplified format. Step 2 of the TOC framework details the conceptualisation of community arts impacts and change processes. In addition to this conceptualisation of community arts impacts and change processes, the ToC framework provides the evidence needed to develop and build a new model adapted from Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) *Community Capitals Framework*.

This section of Chapter 4 presents the *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* developed in this study and discusses: firstly, the inputs into community art projects; secondly, the processes of change identified in impact findings; and thirdly, the short-and long-term impacts of community arts engagement.

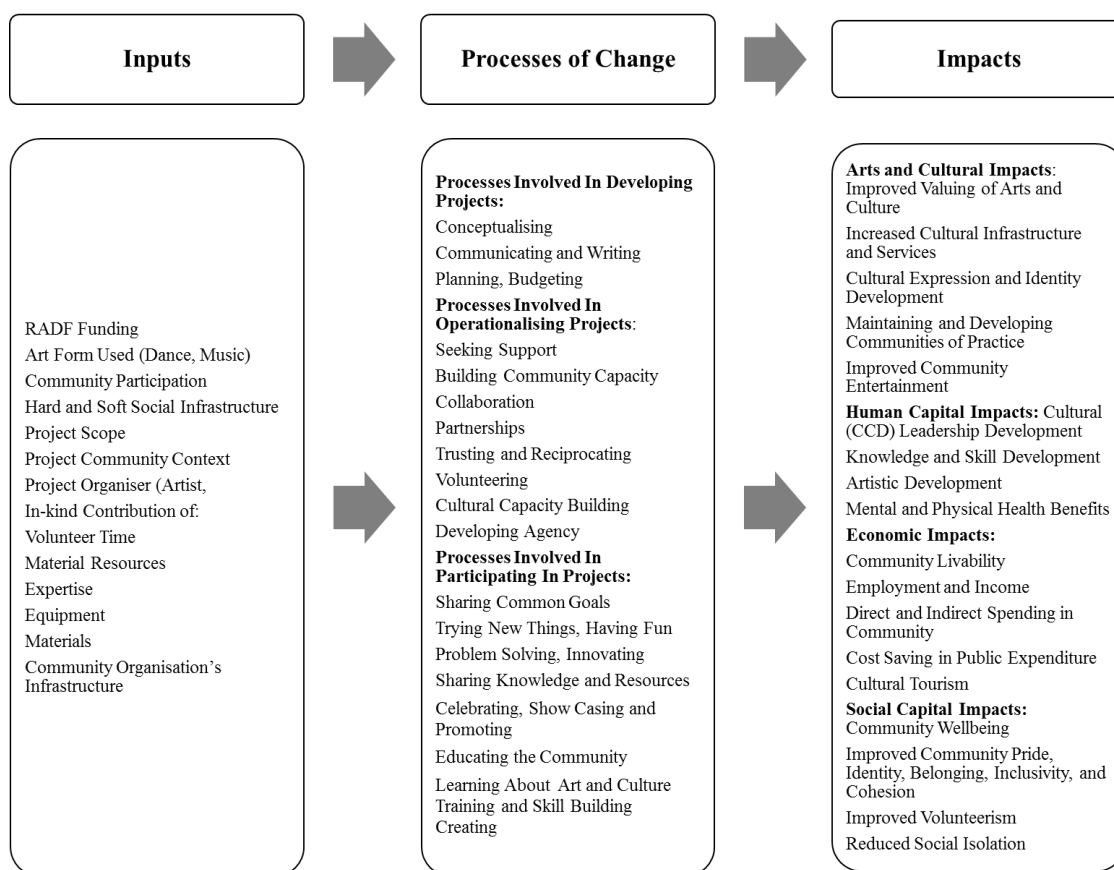


Figure 9 Power's (2018) Step Two of the Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework.

Inputs

The following paragraphs provide an overview and brief discussion of the framework findings. Evidence from the data corpus previously presented in the thematic analysis and interpretation of impact findings have been used to develop this framework. The inputs into community arts projects are grouped into seven interrelated elements which influence community arts impact, they include: RADF funding; artform; community participants; hard and soft social infrastructure; project scope; project organiser contribution; and community context. The inputs delineate the capacity and resources required by community organisations, artist/facilitators, and project participants to activate community arts projects in their communities. Understanding inputs focuses attention on the planning, funding, resources, human capital, and other inputs required to undertake and operationalise community arts

activities (Taplin et al. 2013). Project inputs have influence over project process of change and its subsequent impact.

The RADF funding provided a means to access specialist artist/facilitators, expertise, and knowledge and bring it to regional communities. This gave agency to organisational leadership. The arts or cultural form used in the projects moulded the artistic or cultural parameters of the project, which has flow on effects to the participants involved and the project scope. Community participants contribute their time, money, materials, and existing skills into support for, and running of, the project. The project scope provides the structure, project timelines, and project outcomes.

Social infrastructure, both hard and soft, supported the delivery of projects and at times shaped the artistic direction and outcomes of community art projects, like commemorative school mosaics. The project organiser, CCD, or artist/facilitator who initiated projects contribute their leadership, vision, expertise, material resources, infrastructure, and volunteers to support the operation of the project. The project's community context has a considerable influence over all the inputs described in the inputs of Figure 9, because a community arts project organiser takes the existing human, social, and political capital within the organisation and leverages it to successfully operationalise and acquit a project. All seven interrelated inputs influenced the project's aims and direction, together with the project's impact on the community. The framework findings suggested that inputs of project organisers improved and increased with each subsequent project, through the learnings from project processes that bring about community change. This appeared to corroborate the finding from the thematic analysis presented earlier in Chapter 4.

Processes of Change

The processes embedded in community arts projects are complex (Belfiore 2006; Mulligan et al. 2006) dynamic, and interrelated (Galloway 2009). Findings suggested that change processes generated in community arts activity are not linear. This means changes at all four levels from individual to regional level take place on a time continuum from short-to long-term time frames. This corroborated findings from the thematic analysis presented earlier. What has become evident is that processes brought about by change agents have activated learning loops which

appear to improve community capacity over the long-term. Figure 9 presents a simplified description of the processes at work within community arts projects.

The processes of change can be organised into three interconnecting groups. These three groups provide an overview of the dominant processes evident in the data, which include: processes involved in developing projects; processes involved in operationalising projects; and processes involved in participating in projects.

First, the processes activated in the development of community arts projects funded by RADF centre around the conceptualisation and communication of projects by individual CCDs, artist/facilitators, and community organisations. CCDs identified in the data corpus are community artist/facilitators and key members of arts and cultural organisations. CCDs use a variety of approaches to develop community arts projects that: improve organisational and community resources; operationalise collaborative partnerships; create organisational networks; and develop community cohesion in WDR. Included in the conceptualisation of projects is the planning of both short-and long-term by organisations and CCDs. The reflective processes required at the completion and acquittal of projects examines the success and failures of project processes.

The operationalising or delivery of projects involved processes generated by running projects and the collaborations between CCDs, artist/facilitators, local council, and community organisations. Within this group of processes project organisers built capacity on an individual level through the need to problem solve project planning and delivery issues. At an organisational and community level, capacity can be built by project organisers sharing material resources and knowledge, as well as, seeking support for their activities from other organisations, who in turn trust that they will reciprocate.

Participating in community arts projects set in motion processes that are intrinsic to the individual: such as creating, having fun, innovating, volunteering, and celebrating. Instrumental processes also unfold in projects and are experienced at the individual level through gaining skills and knowledge. At an organisational level instrumental processes, formed collaborative partnerships which built better communication between organisations, and strengthened social networks and

communal ties. Community level change processes can include finding innovative solutions to collective problems that provide ways of expressing and communicating community culture. The processes mobilised by community arts activity produces impacts that are cumulative across the community.

Impacts

Four types of impact identified in the data corpus are consolidated within the ToC framework and presented as: human capital impacts; economic impacts; social capital impacts; and arts and cultural impacts. The impact findings presented are inter-linked with one another and complex. The list of impacts included in the tables are in no way an exhaustive list of all possible project impacts. The impacts created from community arts processes show evidence of all six dimensions of time, levels of impact, spill-over effects between levels, learning loops, two-way impact, and cumulative impact. A detailed account of community arts impacts on WDR are provided throughout the thematic analysis presented in Chapter 4.

Human Capital Impacts

The human capital impacts are embodied attributes possessed by individuals such as: skills, abilities, intelligence, training, health, experiences, and judgment, both inherited and learnt (Becker 1962; Goodwin 2003). The skills, training, and abilities developed by community arts engagement is adding to aesthetic knowledge, skills, and artistry of regional people. The benefits of instrumental and intrinsic impact identified in community arts engagement have appeared to increase the social, emotional, and psychological wellbeing of regional residents and their communities. Evidence from interviews and archival documents indicate that human capital impact gains have been identified at the individual level. Furthermore, these attributes have been found to be a collective resource that have accessed financial resources like RADF funding and material resources found in community organisations to develop the community. Leadership is a component of human capital which reflects a leader's ability to be conciliatory, inclusive, and participatory (Becker 1962; Butler Flora, Flora & Fey 2004). Leadership development is a key human capital impact gained by planning and delivering community arts projects. Different leadership approaches utilise financial capital, like RADF funding, to strategically develop cultural capacity within community.

Economic Impacts

The economic impacts experienced in WDR are both direct and indirect across all four levels of the community. Economic impacts at an individual level occur through employment of artist/facilitators and arts workers, and through subsidised access to arts and cultural skill building. At an organisational level, project events can generate income and increase group membership which boosts organizational resources. On a community and regional level, long-term economic impacts are experienced through increased cultural tourism, infrastructure development, and community livability.

Social Capital Impacts

Social capital is the ‘social glue’ that holds relational activity together and forges connections among individuals, groups, organisations, and communities (Coleman 1988; Putnam 2000). Community arts engagement impacts individual level social capital by building social networks among communal members and reduces social isolation in regional communities. At an organisational level, impacts such as increased volunteerism, bridging capital between community organisations, and links formed with outside arts and cultural institutions are evident. While at a community level, reciprocity, responsibility, trust, and greater commitment to communal endeavours have been identified. Equally, improvements in community pride, identity, belonging, inclusivity, and cohesion are also evident.

Arts and Cultural Impacts

The arts and cultural impact of community arts activity in WDR are also experienced at each of the four impact levels. At the individual level, arts and culture is developed through the enhancement of artistic skills, cultural knowledge, and CCD leadership. Arts and culture is expanded at the organisational level with the formation of CoPs, and collaborations established between arts and cultural organisations. Community level impacts are influenced by organisational level spill-overs which have increased the expression of community culture and improved community cultural capacity. Other community level impacts included the development of new art objects, artforms, and cultural experiences, which in turn increased the demand for cultural infrastructure. The spill-over effects from community to the region have influenced access to arts and culture knowledge,

training, and experience, together with positively changing communal attitudes to arts and cultural value.

Theory of Change Conceptual Framework Summary

In summary, the second stage framework now tested has brought together the inputs, processes of change, and impacts of community arts engagement. Findings from the second stage framework suggested that engagement in community arts has instrumental and intrinsic impacts. Project organiser inputs into projects, and the community change processes they generated, influenced and affected these impacts. Multiple project impacts over time produced important community and cultural development.

Chapter 4 Conclusion

In conclusion, four impact themes identified in the data corpus are interdependent and interrelated. The impact themes include Community Wellbeing, Social Connectedness, Developing Arts and Culture, and Capacity Building. All four themes impacted WDR to various degrees at an individual, organisational, community, and regional level.

Community arts participation affects the wellbeing of individuals in the WDR in both the short-and longer-term. This is evident in the wellbeing benefits reported by community members regarding the fun, enjoyment, and entertainment gained through participation. Engagement in community arts in the short-and long-term provided a balance between work commitments and relaxation. Community arts engagement produced social and emotional wellbeing benefits, together with positive mental health support, during times of individual and community hardship.

Social connectedness at an individual, organisational, and community level was improved through bonding, bridging, and linking social capital initiated in project engagement. Community arts projects afforded supportive environments for community members united in pursuit of common communal goals which enhanced cohesion, reciprocity, and an overall sense of community. The social capital gained in community arts engagement was vital to the development of human, cultural, and political capital evident in impact findings. This social capital was also critical to the building of community capacity.

Regional community participation in community arts projects developed arts and culture across the region in the short-and longer-term. This development has occurred through greater access to arts and cultural skills, knowledge, and appreciation. This engagement over the longer-term created and maintained CoPs and allowed arts and cultural organisations in the region to remain sustainable. Access and participation have unlocked the communication of regional cultural expression which has impacted cultural tourism, employment of artists and art workers, and the economy of WDR. The cumulative impacts of community arts engagement have changed community attitudes to valuing arts and culture in this region. The successful utilisation of arts and culture as a means of building community capitals and capacity is evident in the study findings.

The findings suggested that community arts participation built the capacity of individuals, organisations, and communities in WDR. Capacity building has been identified as both an impact theme and an ongoing impact process. This capacity building is complex and non-linear in its evolution across multiple WDR communities. The capacity built through community arts project impacts in each of the WDR communities is evolving in various ways and at different rates through a complex process over time. Findings indicated that the human and social capital existing in each town influenced the building of community capacity. Leadership by CCDs presented the community with opportunities to explore, visualise, and articulate their values and identity through community arts activity. CCDs played a critical role in building individual, organisational, community, and regional capacity. Initiating capacity building through community arts projects produced gains in human, social, political, financial, and cultural capital. Engagement in community arts activity appeared to build capacity by producing learning loops, which suggested the process of capacity building is a self-reinforcing cycle developed over the long-term.

Five dimensions of impact are present in the thematic findings. Identifying and describing these impact dimensions helped to explore impact complexity. Findings about impact dimensions suggested community arts impacts at the individual and organisational level are easier to identify because project impacts directly affect people and are typically short-term. Impacts at the community and regional levels

are more difficult to identify because impact is cumulative and experienced over longer time frames. The extended time span needed to develop community and regional level capacity suggests the process is not linear. The image of ripples in a pond created by the impact of a stone, is a powerful analogy of the influence spill-over effects that occur between each level have on the net effect of regional cultural capacity development.

The second stage of the conceptual framework developed and tested in this study supports the finding that improved inputs and processes into each successive community arts project influences the intensity of project impacts. Findings from the *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* suggested that engagement in community arts activity was a self-reinforcing cycle, however this requires further testing.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the key findings in each of the four themes regarding the existing community arts and community development literatures. This chapter describes the model developed in this study which underpins cumulative impacts generated by community arts engagement. The chapter presents a concise discourse of the community capitals building taking place in WDR, and the contribution this study makes to the *Community Capitals Framework* of Butler Flora, Flora, and Fey (2004). The impact knowledge produced in this study has implications for government cultural policy which are discussed together with recommendations for further research into community arts impact. Chapter 5 provides a succinct statement drawing together impact findings and outlines the contributions made by this study to community arts and community development theory.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

In the last chapter evidence from the thematic analysis of data collected from the WDR case site was presented via four interrelated impact themes. Each of the four themes supported the contention that engagement in community arts projects produced impacts of varying intensity, which affect people at four different levels of the community in the short-and long-term. In addition to the thematic analysis, the data corpus also underwent further examination using three community development frameworks discussed in Chapter 3's section titled Theory of Change as an Analytical Tool and developed in Chapter 4's section titled Development of the Theory of Change Conceptual Framework.

The first framework involved unpacking the inputs, change processes, and impacts from community arts projects using a ToC conceptual framework. Findings from this analysis informed the development of the *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* which was presented at the end of Chapter 4.

The second framework explored the combined findings from the thematic analysis and the ToC by applying Chaskin's (2001) framework, in order to pinpoint the latent process operating within cumulative community arts impacts. This resulted in the development of the *Community Capacity Arts Engagement Model*.

The third model developed in this study called *The Community Arts Capitals Framework* used Butler Flora, Flora and Fey (2004) framework to analyse findings and investigate the possible links between impacts and community capital gains.

This chapter provides an interpretation of the four impact themes in relation to how they operate within the process of cultural capacity building. These findings are linked to existing community arts and community development literatures to broaden the knowledge in both fields. The chapter presents a model developed in this study to understand cumulative community arts impact and posits a theoretical framework to underpinning these impact findings. The impact knowledge generated in this study can inform government planning and provide an empirical evidence base to direct policy decisions toward developing arts and cultural strategies which ensure the strengthening of regional communities. The implications of these findings and

recommendations for further research into community arts impact is also discussed. The closing remarks of Chapter 5 provide a succinct statement addressing impact findings and outlines the contributions made by this study to current community arts and community development theory.

The Process of Cultural Capacity Building

This study contributes to community arts theory by suggesting community cultural capacity building is a long-term cumulative process and an impact of community arts engagement. The complex process of community cultural capacity building links the four impact themes presented in Chapter 4 together in what appears to be a self-reinforcing cycle. This self-reinforcing cycle is made up of complex chains of events that are reinforced via project learning loops (Vogel 2012). Figure 10 below illustrates the process of cultural capacity building brought about by engagement in community arts projects. The *Community Capacity Arts Engagement Model* developed in this study demonstrates in simple terms the complex process at work in community. This model has been constructed using stage two of the *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* and the findings from the thematic analysis presented in Chapter 4. The *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* will be discussed later in Chapter 5.

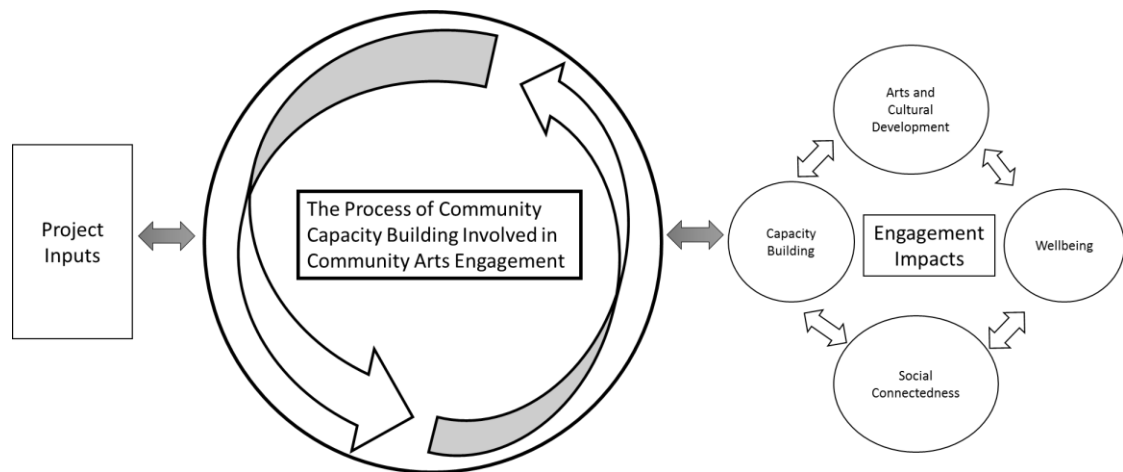


Figure 10 Power's (2018) Community Capacity Arts Engagement Model.

The basic structure of this model mirrors the *Community Arts Theory of Change Conceptual Framework*, in that it depicts inputs into community arts projects, the

process of community capacity building involved in community arts engagement, and the impacts that come from this engagement. The testing of the ToC framework in this study has led to this understanding of community arts impact.

The process of community capacity building involved in community arts engagement identified in this study links with Jermyn's (2001) research conclusions that impacts interconnect and are interdependent parts of an underlying process. Jermyn (2001) however, stopped short of describing this underlying process. By identifying and describing the process of community capacity building this study has made a contribution to the fields of community arts and community cultural development by creating a theoretical underpinning for community arts practice in regional settings.

In addition to these fields, the *Community Capacity Building Arts Engagement Model* makes a contribution to community development theory by employing Chaskin's (2001) framework to build theory underpinning community arts impact. The study provides empirical evidence of the changes arts and cultural engagement can have on regional community wellbeing and social connectedness. The process of capacity building provides a strong conceptual base for understanding the interconnectedness of community arts impact dimensions. These impact dimensions, explained earlier in Chapter 4, include time both short-and long term, spill-over, two-way, learning loops, and cumulative impact, as well as community arts impact experienced across four levels of the community. The *Community Capacity Building Arts Engagement Model* has three interrelated sections.

The Community Capacity Building Arts Engagement Model

At the far left of Figure 10 the inputs into projects outline the capacity and resources needed by community organisations and artist/facilitators to activate projects. These resources shape the capacity building process set in motion by community arts projects. The seven interconnected elements detailed at the end of Chapter 4 include: RADF funding; arts/cultural form; community participants; hard social infrastructure; project scope; project organiser contribution; and community context. The two-way arrow between inputs and the capacity building process symbolise the

cycle in which the learnings from one project in turn influence the inputs, process, and impacts of each subsequent project.

The middle section of the model illustrates the community capacity building process which affects individuals and organisations within a community. Over the long-term the capacity built at these levels has spill-over effects at a community level, which results in gains to the existing human, organisational, and social capital of that community. The cumulative impact of these capital gains, made by multiple projects in numerous communities, produces regional level improvements in existing human, organisational, and social capital. For example, projects educate and promote collective problem solving while providing access to economic, human, physical, and political resources found in the community setting (Chaskin 2001). Funding to operationalise projects enhances the social agency of individuals and organisations to act on identified community needs and to bring about change (Coleman 1988; Putnam 2000). Community arts processes, such as collaborating and trusting, build a sense of community by providing people with opportunities to explore their shared history, values, and traditions which express the commitment among community members to each other (McMillian & Chavis 1986).

The process section of the model links to Chaskin's (2001) four dimensions of community capacity building by identifying community arts activity as a process of participation through which community members can solve problems, take communal action, access existing resources, connect to social networks, and activate leadership. The interconnecting arrows between input and processes, and processes and impacts, represents the self-reinforcing cycle of learning loops that exist between inputs, processes, and impacts.

Capacity Impacts

The final section of the model identifies the four thematic impacts described in Chapter 4. The first thematic impact found in the model is Capacity Building. This theme is both an impact of community arts activity acting on the WDR and an overarching process. As an impact Capacity Building can manifest itself at the individual level by building arts and cultural knowledge, skills, and leadership abilities. Community capacity building impacts were also reported in the research findings of Mills and Brown (2004), Sardu (2012), and Mulligan et al. (2006). Like

findings from this study, they recognised community capacity building as an impact of community arts engagement. However, unlike this study they did not identify capacity as a process that has cumulative impacts.

As a process, engagement in community arts over the long-term produces impacts to community capacity via the development of Community Cultural Driver leadership skills and strategic vision. CCDs active in arts and cultural organisations build organisational and community capacity by fostering collaborative relationships between community organisations. CCD leadership approaches focus on different aspects of community development such as education, community wellbeing, and community inclusivity and cohesion. This focus is dependent on the human capital existing in the organisation or CCD. This study, like Radbourne (2003), argues the importance of arts leadership to regional community sustainability which has links to community capacity building. Community arts engagement provides a community development activity through which community capacity can be deliberately built via strategic planning.

This finding has implications for Local Government who actively support community capacity building. Local Government can develop the capacity of community organisations by strategically working to develop their leadership. This can be achieved by providing mentorship programs that support and develop CCDs to plan and deliver complex collaborative projects. Developing CCDs in this way can help address the uneven distribution of human capital in regional communities, where a lack of CCD leadership to conceptualise and deliver projects exists. Sharing the leadership skills of experienced CCDs who can operationalise projects and mentor organisations within these weaker communities will significantly improve organisational agency, develop local culture, and build community capacity.

Arts and Culture Impact

The second impact theme of developing arts and culture, details the medium through which the process of engagement takes place. This research indicates that arts and cultural funding, via RADF has delivered extended access to community cultural expression for regional citizens who have geographic, social, and economic barriers to participation. By democratising access to arts and culture in this way, participation in local culture is extended and the idea of what is ‘culture’ is no longer owned and

dominated by one societal group (Badham 2010; Bourdieu 1986). Therefore, by opening the notion of ‘what is culture’ to individuals and groups, the communication and development of community culture can take place, as evidenced in community arts projects focused upon in this study. Decentralising arts funding decisions and diverting them to a Local Government level has produced an environment where arts funding is disseminated more broadly and allows community cultural expression to flourish (Duelund 2001).

Placing funding decisions at the local grass-roots level has given voice to those frequently unheard in regional communities and gives community members the authority to determine what is of cultural value. An example of this is explicit in the Dalby indigenous music workshops and performance (Project 18), which gave voice and recognition to indigenous and non-indigenous youth through the collaborative production and performance of original music. The project presented music valued by young people in the Dalby community. Multiple examples within this study demonstrate that arts and cultural content produced within a community context has aesthetic and artistic merit, because the people of the community are given the authority to fund what they deem important and of value. This authority gives regional people autonomy to express their representation of community culture, which over the long-term adds to the Australian national cultural identity (Horne 1988).

Collaborative cultural production is about the negotiation and creative decision making taking place between artist/facilitator and project participants. The end product of these processes is representative of WDR community culture. On the surface of this decision-making process people, like the CCDs discussed in Chapter 4, are not explicitly seeking to find representations of community culture. CCDs involved in community organisations in WDR are wanting to draw people from their communities into these collaborative processes to share the experience and pleasure of creating. The art forms, whether they be choir singing or quilting, are negotiated on the grounds of interest, available resources, and the needs of the participatory group at the heart of the project. However, the creative negotiation between and among artist/facilitators and participants, is an essential component within the artistic endeavour that expresses and represents community culture.

This study suggests that State Government cultural policy objectives are being fulfilled through RADF. The governance priorities of the program have allowed greater access to arts and cultural participation in WDR, and have built community capacity. The six overarching principles of the initiative which underscore cultural development have been achieved through the long-term funding commitment of State and Local Government. This has positive implications for ongoing State Government funding of regional arts and cultural initiatives.

Findings support the view that professional artists, artist/facilitators, and arts workers are benefiting from regional employment. However, this area requires more strategic planning at the Local Government level if professional artists and artist/facilitators are to be retained in regional settings. Locally determined arts and cultural priorities, as seen in WDR are articulated in Council corporate plans and activated in regional communities. Most importantly, the initiative is underpinning regional arts development and the expression of community culture in Local Government regions like WDR. Findings from interview participants indicate that the actual costs and gains to Local Government who participate in the RADF funding partnership is under-researched. This study recommends further research be carried out regarding the cost-benefit analysis of regional arts and cultural development initiatives and their impact on communities such as wellbeing.

Wellbeing Impacts

The third impact theme of Wellbeing examines the effects community arts engagement has on reducing social isolation among individuals via arts and cultural participation and entertainment events in regional settings. Like Anwar McHenry (2009) and Ware (2014), this study has identified a strong belief among stakeholders that engagement in arts and culture is key to improving community wellbeing by bringing individuals together to share creative experiences in supportive community environments. Therefore, individual social wellbeing impacts have positively influenced community level wellbeing by the aggregated spill-over effects from one level to the other. This means that when multiple individuals experience these effects in one place there is ongoing positive impact encountered at a community level. This current study has identified the spill-over impact of community art engagement highlighted by Guetzkow (2002).

This study suggests that emotional wellbeing can be improved via the immersion of the project participants in the act of creation, or ‘flow’ which Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1992) argue is an intrinsic impact brought about by intellectual and emotional absorption in activities like the arts. This is particularly relevant in relation to psychological wellbeing support provided by community arts participation to individuals during times of hardship. For example, problems caused by the financial stress farmers experience during extreme environmental conditions, like drought. McManemey (2009) found arts and cultural expression provided a vehicle for people to tell stories of traumatic experiences, while at the same time receiving psychological wellbeing benefits via this creative expression. This study identified the positive individual and community level wellbeing impacts made through creative engagement in art and culture, like those reported by McManemey (2009).

Findings of improved social, emotional, and psychological wellbeing from this study have implications for Local Government support of regional communities during and after natural disaster. Connections found between participation and wellbeing suggests that community arts activities can provide easy to access and low-cost projects which support community wellbeing in regional areas undergoing environmental stress. Equally, community arts engagement during the recovery phase after these environmental events warrants further investigation. Future research into how arts and cultural engagement can support psychological wellbeing during times of hardship and community recovery is recommended by this study. Knowledge from this study can inform Local and State Government policy planning via the development of arts and cultural strategies which focus on building community cultural capacity and strengthening regional communities.

Social Connectedness Impact

The fourth thematic impact of Social Connectedness indicates that community arts engagement builds and maintains social capital at an organisational and community level in WDR. Engagement in projects stimulate the forming of collaborative partnerships between artist/facilitators and communities; arts and non-arts organisations; and organisations and WDRC. Activities provide opportunities for people to be active citizens within their communities who communicate collective

needs, volunteer to bring about positive change, participate in problem solving, and work toward common communal goals. Impacts at this organisational level are evident in collaborations that improve and strengthen bonding, bridging, and linking social capital.

Findings reveal that the cumulative impact brings about the strengthening of bonding social capital among individual members of arts and cultural organisations and the residents in the wider community. Other relationships are strengthened between individual members of different organisations from arts and non-arts sectors of community. This finding appears to identify the ‘cohesive power of weak ties’ found in relational structures between groups and their members, which move fluidly from workshop to workshop to participate in projects organised by different organisations (Granovetter 1973, p. 1360). Likewise, bridging, and linking social capital is enhanced by encouraging new networks among individuals, organisations, communities, and institutions like Local Government. This supports Putnam (2000), and Narayan’s (1999) findings of the importance of bridging and linking capital within community. Community arts activities utilise social capital building to empower communities.

The bonding, bridging, and linking social capital identified in this study’s findings contribute to knowledge about community arts impact and community development theory, by extending understanding about the role community culture plays in developing the social capital of regional communities. This study provides evidence in support of Jon Hawkes’ (2001) argument that culture plays a key role in public planning and is the forth pillar of community sustainability. Hawkes’ (2001, p.18) position on culture holds that ‘cultural capital is the glue that holds a society together; social capital is the lubricant that allows it to operate smoothly.’ Findings from this study do suggest that arts and culture are powerful catalysts to bring about positive community change and build social capital.

Evidence produced in this study can inform Local and State Government policy making by affirming the value of local cultural expression and identity in building social capital in regional settings. Community arts as a communal activity is perfectly placed to build social capital, maintain community wellbeing, and assist regional communities in adapting to social, economic, and environmental change.

Pinpointing the complex process of community cultural capacity building in the *Community Capacity Arts Engagement Model* provides a conceptualisation of community arts project inputs, the capacity building processes, and impacts. The following section examines how community arts engagement impact builds upon the existing stocks of community capitals found in WDR.

Building Community Capitals

The following table uses the seven capitals from Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) framework illustrated below in Figure 11 as an analytical tool to determine the interconnected capitals existing in community settings. This study has sought to test the Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's framework as a possible theoretical underpinning for community arts impact. The results of this test are provided below in Table 2 *The Community Arts Capitals Framework*. It is important to note that the improvements made in the assets of one capital have interrelated effects and gains on other community capital assets or stocks. This interrelatedness is difficult to illustrate as it is complex and occurs in non-linear relationships, which can be described as flows in invested capital (Emery & Flora 2006).

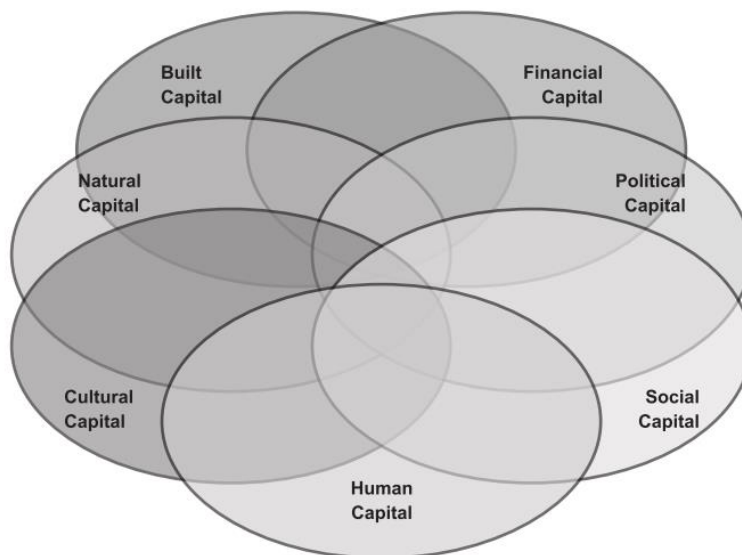


Figure 11 Details Flora Butler, Flora, and Fey's (2004) Community Capitals Framework.

Table 2 below details the gains in capital assets or stocks using community arts engagement as the medium to observe community capital building. Embodied and objectified cultural capital provides the milieu in which people working together (social capital) can express local community culture (Bourdieu 1986). This milieu

facilitates the interaction between two or more capitals where they increase each other's capital assets in a spiralling-up process that builds community cultural capacity. The medium of community arts provides the cultural capital leveraged to increase and sustain the six remaining community capitals via the complex interactions between them.

Findings suggest social capital is often a valuable consequence of cultural activities and is a vital community attribute that can affect, as well as influence, the building of community capital assets or flow between other capitals (Emery & Flora 2006; Putnam 2000). Positive community changes brought about by community arts impacts trigger ongoing exchanges between the seven community capitals. This exchange or flow between capitals can increase capital stocks with each project impact. Continued impact over extended periods of time produces cumulative community development effects (Emery & Flora 2006).

Table 2 Power's (2018) Community Arts Capitals Framework.

1. Building Social Capital	2. Building Political Capital	3. Building Cultural Capital	4. Building Financial Capital	5. Building Natural Capital	6. Building Human Capital	7. Building Built Capital
Engaging the community in collective action and enterprises to solve communal problems.	Increasing the political capital of excluded groups.	Supporting the creation of new art forms, objects, styles, and arts and cultural experiences.	Subsidising access to arts education.	Communicating environmental issues.	Developing individual's skills, knowledge, and training.	Maintaining and improving arts and cultural infrastructure.
Maintaining and building community networks whilst activating bonding, bridging, and linking social capital.	Forming connections to outside arts and cultural institutions.	Expressing and communicating community culture.	Improving arts and cultural organisational sustainability.	Activating, promoting, and celebrating communities' natural assets.	Building leadership knowledge and skills.	Supporting social infrastructure.
Enhancing community inclusiveness and strengthen relationships between diverse groups.	Activating community change, problem solving and wellbeing.	Educating community insiders and outsiders of community history, traditions, attitudes, and values.	Providing financial agency to operationalise arts and cultural projects.	Developing meaningful connections between people and natural assets.	Developing individual confidence and interpersonal communication	Developing and enhancing cultural tourism infrastructure
Developing and maintaining community reciprocity, responsibility, trust, and commitment.	Improving social status of less powerful groups.	Transforming attitudes towards the value of arts and culture within and outside of the community.				
Improving and maintaining community identity.						

(1) Social Capital

Social capital has been identified in this study as the nexus capital that connects and affects the building of all the other capitals [see Table 2 Column 1]. This is because the processes that build social capital such as bonding, bridging, and linking capital are embedded within the development of all the other capitals (Fukuyama 2001; Granovetter 1973). Emery and Flora's (2006) study has likewise reached the same conclusion in the importance of social capital in building community capacity.

(2) Political Capital

Projects can improve the status of less powerful groups by raising their profiles and by having their voices heard in the community, which produces gains in political capital [see Table 2 Column 2]. Likewise, arts scholars Mills and Brown (2004) have also made claim to these political capital gains in theatre based community arts programs. Engagement in community arts can empower the community to take collective action and solve communal needs in an ever-changing natural environment [see Table 2 Column 5]. Anwar McHenry (2009) and Sardu (2012) have reported similar findings about community empowerment and its affects on community adaptation to environmental issues.

(3) Cultural Capital

The cumulative effects of this impact can positively change attitudes towards the valuing of arts and culture within the community and expand the need for, and use of, arts and cultural infrastructure which produces gains in built capital [see Table 2 Columns 3 and 7]. The evidence in Table 2 indicates that community arts engagement improves and maintains community capitals in regional townships. Identifying and understanding how community arts engagement impacts community capitals has revealed that investment in cultural capital has resulted in the increased flow and development of the other six capitals. Knowledge generated about the use of community arts engagement in building community capitals has implications for Federal, State, and Local Government cultural policy regarding the development and operation of strategic arts and cultural initiatives such as RADF. This study describes and explores the impacts of regional developmental strategies and is therefore

useful in understanding how and why RADF works in regional Queensland communities, like WDR.

(4) Financial Capital

Over the long-term, multiple community arts project impacts can improve community wellbeing and resources [see Table 2 Column 1] (Mills & Brown 2004; Mulligan & Smith 2010; Williams 1996). Community financial capital gains can be enhanced using community arts processes through subsidised access to funding of community projects [see Table 2 Column 4].

(5) Natural Capital

Community arts projects can offer opportunities to build collaborative projects which promote environmental sustainability. This in turn enhances community reciprocity, responsibility, and trust [see Table 2 Column 5]. Equally, projects can celebrate the natural assets of the district which promote community identity and liveability (Magis 2010).

(6) Human Capital

Access to small grants provide financial agency for community organisations to operationalise community arts projects that deliver human capital and social capital gains [see Table 2 Column 1 and 6]. The agency provided by small grants fosters leadership and organisational capacity to problem solve community issues and work toward community goals [see Table 2 Column 6 and 1] (Radbourne 2003). Access to knowledge, skills, and training through small grants provides arts and cultural organisations with the means to be financially sustainable [see Table 2 Column 6 and 4]. Organisational sustainability is achieved through increased membership, fundraising at community events, and through the development of human, social, and cultural capital [see Table 2 Column 4].

The *Community Arts Capitals Framework* developed in this study fills the gap in knowledge regarding a clearly defined theoretical framework for underpinning community arts impacts highlighted by Australian and international scholars Clift (2010), Kelaher et al. (2012), Raw (2011), and Mulligan et al. (2004). This study provides a framework that can underpin the

majority of claims made by the five arts research areas of: arts and wellbeing; mental health and social inclusion; civic participation and empowerment; community regeneration and development; and social impact, discussed in Chapter 2. Uniting these research areas into a broader understanding of impact can provide a robust theoretical underpinning for the community arts field. Positing the *Community Arts Capitals Framework* and demonstrating its veracity as an analytical tool for understanding arts impact has made a contribution to the community arts field. Equally, the utilisation of Social Science knowledge in the formation of theory to understand community arts impact has broadened comprehension of cultural capital and its effects on community development theory.

Furthermore, this study recommends that future research be carried out to test the *Community Arts Capitals Framework* in other community contexts to compare findings. Future testing could identify in greater detail how the human, social, political, financial, built, natural, and cultural capitals interact, connect, and build upon each other when arts and cultural activity is engaged to build community capacity (Emery and Flora, 2006).

Understanding Community Arts using the Theory of Change Conceptual Framework

Australian arts and health studies by Raw et al (2011) and Kelaher et al. (2007), together with UK studies of Merli (2002) and Clift and Hancox (2010a) call for the application of an interdisciplinary conceptual framework to analyse creative processes within complex practice methodologies that exist in the field. Raw et al. (2011) argues that analysis of mechanisms and theorising of change processes have received little attention in past arts research. This study has addressed the recommendation of Raw et al by developing a conceptual framework that has been demonstrated to be a successful tool in analysing the complex impact findings of this current study. Formulating the *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* in this study has helped answer this call by linking community arts project inputs with their interrelated causal mechanisms that facilitate community change impacts. Importantly, its structural flexibility means the framework can be applied in multiple community contexts.

The ToC framework is traditionally used in the early planning stages of an intervention or development program to examine and communicate the beliefs both implicit and explicit of how change can occur (Stein & Valters 2012). However, the framework developed in this

study has been applied retrospectively to RADF impact data. The retrospective application of the framework has proved to be a potent reflexive tool in mapping and describing community arts project inputs, processes of change, and impacts. The *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* has highlighted the importance of change agents, like community arts facilitators and CCDs, who use innovative collaborations to build community capacity through the application of their leadership and vision of positive community change. The framework has also revealed the dimensions of impact that relate to time, the four levels of effects across the community and the spill-over effects between them; along with cumulation effects, learning loops and two-way impact.

The framework has allowed small-scale project grants of under \$5000 dollars to be recognised for their enormous impact value to regional communities with populations fewer than 1000 people, like those found in WDR. Arguably, RADF investment in small-scale community arts projects is outweighed by the social, cultural, and financial benefits delivered to regional communities. This means that links between human capital, organisational capacity, and social connectedness existing in communities are factors in determining the scale and complexity of grants applied for by community organisations. Small community organisations with conservative community goals focus on small weekend workshops. These workshops maintain group membership and interest by developing artistry. This type of project fits well with the leadership and capacity level of smaller community organisations because benefits from the workshops were greater than the level of financial risk to the organisation. Workshop projects of this scale are easier to conceptualise, organise, deliver, and acquit for smaller groups with limited organisational capacity. However, the real power of these small projects is evident in the sum of multiple project impacts over the long-term to individuals, organisations, communities, and council regions.

Equally, the framework has highlighted that investment in arts and cultural infrastructure and the services to support them, has cumulative effects on regional communities' human, cultural and financial capitals. The *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* has shown significant findings which have clear implications for Local Government who implement cultural initiatives such as RADF, because the value of these small-scale projects has not been fully explored and described by government. This study however, has identified the

importance of these small-scale projects impact and their cumulative effects on communities, like Bell. The information contained in this study can reassure Local Government that small-scale projects do deliver impacts to regional communities, and are therefore worth funding. Understanding the value and impact from small-scale projects has implications for organisation leadership and artist/facilitators who strategically plan community arts projects for their communities and apply for funding. Knowing the value of, and being able to describe, the impacts of small-scale projects allows grant applicants to better articulate, plan, and deliver desired outcomes.

This framework has contributed to the theoretical knowledge of the community arts field by testing Fulbright-Anderson, Kubisch, and Connell's (1998) ToC framework and adapting it to develop a conceptual model and analytical tool for community arts impact that can inform the future practice for artists/facilitators, community organisations, and Local Government. However, for the framework to be used by these stakeholders in the future further research into developing the *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* will need to take place. Future research could develop the framework as an analytical tool for artists/facilitators and community organisations to reflect on project inputs, change processes, and impacts to bring about better community arts practice, project planning, and delivery.

Research Conclusions

The motivation to commence this study originated from my experience as local RADF committee member in WDR and seeing first-hand the important contributions to community development made by collective engagement in community arts projects. However, it seemed that the benefits of engagement in arts and cultural activity is not fully understood by RADF funding applicants who operationalised community arts projects, or by RADF committee members who decided on the merit of project applications, or by the Local Council who administered the initiative in WDR. It appeared that with only limited knowledge about community arts impact no strategic utilisation of the funding initiative was taking place in WDR. Therefore, in all likelihood WDR is not getting the best possible outcomes from the public funding invested in the initiative for the region. The lack of inquiry into community arts impacts in regional areas generally, indicates that Local Government does not value, nor understand the potential developmental benefits of arts and cultural engagement.

This initial concern prompted an examination of the arts literature in the fields of: arts in health; arts and wellbeing; arts in mental health and social inclusion; community empowerment and community regeneration; community cultural development; arts and social impact research. At the end of this review three key findings were identified that warranted further examination. The literature contained a distinct shortfall in community level arts impact research in regional Queensland communities. The community arts field lacked consensus on a clearly defined theoretical framework, which diminished a robust academic discussion about arts impact (Kelaher et al. 2012). In addition to this, it was also evident in the literature that the field also lacked a conceptual framework that can accommodate the wide-ranging community arts practice applications and program contexts (Badham 2010; Raw et al. 2011). This information indicated that a strong yet flexible theoretical underpinning for the field must be identified, tested, and developed for the field to progress and flourish.

In order to arrive at theoretical and conceptual frameworks that are both flexible and rigorous, the theories of Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) and Chaskin's (2001) were used as analytical tools to understand community arts engagement impacts collected from RADF archival material and regional stakeholder's interview data. RADF stakeholders were

identified among Local Government officers, RADF committee members, community artist/facilitators, arts and cultural organisation representatives, and project participants. In addition to this, the ToC framework of Fulbright-Anderson, Kubisch, and Connell (1998) has been adapted as another analytical device to unpack the inputs, change processes, and impacts evident in the community arts projects funded by the RADF initiative.

The overall findings from the study, indicated that engagement in community arts projects produced community level impacts that utilise the community capitals existing in that community, and leverages them in a process of community capacity building. Capacity building at a community level improved wellbeing, produced greater social connectedness, and provided access to arts and culture. Community arts impacts were found to have multiple dimensions which are cumulative over time and aggregate across four levels of a community. The community capacity building process was also found to be linked to the cumulative impacts of community arts engagement which develop all seven community capitals. The *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* identified the key inputs into projects and how these shaped and influenced the change processes activated by engagement, together with the impacts that result from project activity. Public investment in small-scale community arts projects as revealed in the ToC analysis, appear to provide strong gains in social, cultural, and financial capital of small regional communities with populations under a 1000 people. This suggests links between the human capital, organisational capacity, and social connectedness existing in communities, and the factors in determining the scale and complexity of community arts projects delivered by community organisations.

After adapting and testing the interdisciplinary frameworks as analytical tools, the *Community Capacity Arts Engagement Model* has emerged as a theoretical framework for understanding impacts from community arts engagement. The model successfully merges the learnings from the *Community Arts ToC Conceptual Framework* also developed in this study with the cumulative impacts of community capacity building. In addition to this, the study expands upon Butler Flora, Flora and Fey's (2004) framework to describe the interaction and building of capitals triggered by community arts activity. The community arts contribution to the *Community Arts Capitals Framework* provides a community level theoretical understanding of community arts impacts.

Identifying and describing how community arts activity impacts and changes regional communities is important. Little is known about the role arts and culture plays in the development of community capacity. Comprehending how community arts impacts regional Australian communities will provide an empirical basis for further research and potentially help secure investment from industry, philanthropic, Local, State, and Federal Government agencies for the arts sector. It is anticipated that the knowledge generated in this study will inform government planning and arts policy by providing an empirical evidence base to direct policy decisions toward developing arts and cultural strategies, which will ensure the ongoing resiliency of regional communities. It is also anticipated that evidence presented in this study will inform community arts program evaluation tools and best practice.

To sustain this level of change and development within regional municipalities, continued investment in community led arts and cultural activities by all three levels of the Australian government, like the RADF initiative, is required. Evidence from this research highlights that, over time, the sum of multiple community arts impacts can make significant contributions to the wellbeing and resiliency of regional Queensland communities through building community capacity, developing community capitals, and facilitating the communication of community culture.

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Appendices

Appendix A

OFFICE OF RESEARCH GRADUATE STUDIES
Mr Douglas Eacersall
Acting Student Manager
Office of Research Graduate Studies
PHONE (07) 4631 2576 | FAX (07) 4631 1995
EMAIL orgs@usq.edu.au



3 July 2015

Dear Margaret,

Re: Thesis title: Arts impacts in regional Queensland

Please find attached formal confirmation of your candidature within the Doctor of Philosophy program.

This is a significant milestone in a research higher degree student's journey, and I congratulate you on reaching this stage.

I wish you well in your future studies.

Yours sincerely,

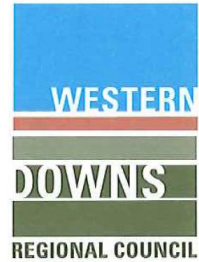
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lester Norris".

Mr Lester Norris
Student Manager, Office of Research Graduate Studies

Copy: Student File 0061022063
Associate Dean (R&RT), Faculty of Business, Education, Law & Arts
Michael.Cuthill@usq.edu.au

Appendix B

Customer Contact
1300 COUNCIL (1300 268 624)
07 4679 4000
www.wdrc.qld.gov.au



OUR COMMUNITIES | OUR FUTURE

ENQUIRIES TO:
Carollee Murphy
P 07 4679 4436

FILE REF:
AD 1.7.1

ECM DOC SET
2827226

CM:KW

26 August 2015

Address all correspondence
to the Chief Executive Officer
PO Box 551, DALBY, QLD 4405
info@wdrc.qld.gov.au

To Whom It May Concern

RE: PROPOSED STUDY "ARTS IMPACTS IN REGIONAL QUEENSLAND"

On behalf of Western Downs Regional Council, I endorse the proposed research study to be undertaken by PhD student Mrs Margaret Power from University of Southern Queensland subject to ethical clearance being granted by the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Committee.

This study will form part of Mrs Power's PhD research training. The research aims to explore and describe the impacts of Community Arts in the Western Downs, focusing on the Regional Arts Development Fund, and to identify possible links to community resilience.

Council may use the outcomes provided from this research to support more effective and efficient delivery of the Regional Arts Development Fund Program and potentially improving Council's strategic cultural planning through better understanding of the Program.

Should you require any further information in regard to this matter, please contact the undersigned on telephone 07 4679 4436 or by email to carollee.murphy@wdrc.qld.gov.au.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carollee Murphy".

Carollee Murphy
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Appendix C

Would you like to be part of an arts research project?



Wandooan Bin Project

RADF Committee Focus Group Session

Would you like to participate in a research project? We are looking for members of the local Dalby RADF committee to participate in a 2-hour focus group session at the Western Downs Regional Council Training Room in the Dalby Customer Service Centre at 5.30 pm on Thursday the 15th of October 2015.

The event will include light refreshments and a chance for committee members to discuss the impacts of the Regional Arts Development Fund in their community.

Marg Power will facilitate the focus group session as part of her PhD research Project. More details of the research project, the focus group session and the focus group questions will be attached to this email.

October 15, 2015 5.30 pm

Dalby Customer Service Centre Training Room
30 Marble Street, Dalby Qld 4405



Participant Information for USQ Research Project Interview

Project Details

Title of Project: Art Impacts in Regional Queensland

Human Research

Ethics Approval H15REA168

Number:

Research Team Contact Details

Principal Investigator Details

Mrs. Margaret Power

Email: Margaret.Power@usq.edu.au

Telephone:

Mobile: 0499 003 330

Supervisor Details

Professor Michael Cuthill

Email: michael.cuthill@usq.edu.au

Telephone:

Doctor Rebecca Scollen

Email: Rebecca.scollen@usq.edu.au

Telephone: (07) 4631 2774

Mobile:

Professor Lorelle Burton

Email: lorelle.burton@usq.edu.au

Description

This project is being undertaken as part of my PhD research training at the University of Southern Queensland.

The purpose of this project is to better understand the positive and negative effects of the Regional Arts Development Fund program on the Western Downs community. From the information provided by you in your interview I will map out the Regional Art Development Fund projects and the pathways they take to bring about possible change within the community. Further to this I am interested in exploring any possible links between the Regional Arts Development Fund effects and the Western Downs community's ability to cope with change (community resilience).

As the lead researcher I request your assistance to help me explore, describe and understand these effects through the sharing of your knowledge and experience in regard to the outcomes of funded Regional Art Development Fund projects in your community.

Participation

Your participation will involve the sharing of your thoughts, ideas and observations in an audio-recorded interview that will take approximately one hour of your time. The interview will take place at a time and venue that is convenient to you.

I will be asking questions such as; how did you become involved in the Regional Arts Development Fund program? What kind of effects have you seen in the community of Western Downs from arts projects funded by the Regional Arts Development Fund program?

The interview will be audio recorded to assist in capturing an accurate record of the discussion. The recording will be stored electronically in Cloudstor+ which is a secure

data storage system for researchers that is located in Australia and is used by many other higher education institutions. The audio recording will be stored in a password-protected file both during, and after the completion of the research project.

I and possibly other researchers under strict supervision will use the data collected in the interview in future research. Allowing further research use of your information ensures the generous giving of your time and information to the project can be utilized to its fullest potential.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. You may also request that any data collected about you be destroyed. If you do wish to withdraw from this project or withdraw data collected about you, please contact the Research Team (contact details at the top of this form).

Your decision whether you take part, do not take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will in no way impact your current or future relationship with the University of Southern Queensland.

Expected Benefits

It is expected that this project may benefit the wider community by helping to inform local and state policy makers about the effects of arts projects on regional communities and add to the established body of knowledge surrounding art impacts.

Risks

There are no anticipated risks beyond normal day-to-day living associated with your participation in this project. The information being collected is volunteered and is neither controversial nor invasive.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All comments and responses will be treated confidentially unless required by law.

As mentioned earlier the interview session will be audio recorded. You will have the opportunity to verify your comments and responses prior to final inclusion through a copy of the written transcription of your interview, which will be emailed or posted to you.

The recording of your interview will be retained as per University of Southern Queensland's Research Data Management policy. The recordings will be de-identified and transcribed. It may be possible to be involved in an interview without being recorded; however, for accuracy purposed it is preferred that an audio recording is made.

The original recording will be stored electronically in Cloudstor+, which is a secure data storage system, and any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely as per University of Southern Queensland's Research Data Management policy. The investigator will not report or publish any of the information disclosed by yourself in your interview if you choose to withdraw from the project.

Consent to Participate

We ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate in this project. Please return your signed consent form to a member of the Research Team prior to participating in your interview.

Questions or Further Information about the Project

Please refer to the Researcher Contact Details at the top of the form if you require any questions answered or to request further information about this project.

You may obtain a copy of the summary report by contacting the researcher via contact details provided on this form.

Concerns or Complaints Regarding the Conduct of the Project

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project you may contact the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Coordinator on (07) 4631 2690 or email ethics@usq.edu.au. The Ethics Coordinator is not connected with the research project and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an unbiased manner.

Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project. Please keep this sheet for your information.



Participant Information for USQ Research Project Focus Group

Project Details

Title of Project: Art Impacts in Regional Queensland

Human Research
Ethics Approval
Number: H15REA168

Research Team Contact Details

Principal Investigator Details

Mrs Margaret Power
Email: margaret.power@usq.edu.au
Telephone:
Mobile: 0499 003 330

Supervisor Details

Professor Michael Cuthill
Email: michael.cuthill@usq.edu.au
Telephone:

Doctor Rebecca Scollen
Email: rebecca.scollen@usq.edu.au
Telephone: (07) 4631 2774

Professor Lorelle Burton
Email: lorelle.burton@usq.edu.au
Telephone: 074631 2853

Description

This project is being undertaken as part of my PhD research training at the University of Southern Queensland.

The purpose of this project is to better understand the positive and negative effects of the Regional Arts Development Fund program on the Western Downs community. From the information provided by the focus group I will map out the Regional Art Development Fund projects and the pathways they take to bring about possible change within the community. Further to this I am interested in exploring any possible links between the Regional Arts Development Fund effects and the Western Downs communities ability to cope with change (community resilience).

As the lead researcher I request your assistance to help me explore, describe and understand these effects through the sharing of your knowledge and experience in regard to the outcomes of funded Regional Art Development Fund projects on your communities.

Participation

Your participation will involve contributing your thoughts and ideas in a group discussion (focus group) that will take approximately 2 hours of your time. However, a further verification focus group session to check the accuracy of my findings will entail a further 2 hours of your time later in the study process.

The focus group will take place at Western Downs Regional Council Training Room in the Dalby Customer Service Centre at 5. 30 pm on Thursday the 15th of October 2015. Questions included in the focus group session are: (1) what are the effects the Regional Arts Development Fund program has had on the Western Downs community? (2) What arts projects have made impacts on the community? Why have these projects generated impacts in the community?

The focus group will be audio recorded to assist in capturing an accurate record of the focus group discussion. The recording will be stored electronically in Cloudstor+ which is

a secure data storage system for researchers that is located in Australia and is used by many other higher education institutions. The audio-recording will be stored in a password protected file both during, and after the completion of the research project.

I and possibly other researchers under strict supervision will use the data collected in the focus group in future research. Allowing further research use of your information ensures the generous giving of your time and information to the project can be utilized to its fullest potential.

If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. As the focus group will be audio recorded, if you wish to withdraw from the study you may do so, however your data will not be able to be removed, instead any comments you made will not be used reported on in the research. If you wish to withdraw from the project, please contact the Research Team (contact details at the top of this form).

Your decision whether you take part, do not take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will in no way impact your current or future relationship with the University of Southern Queensland.

Expected Benefits

It is expected that this project may benefit the wider community by helping to inform local and state policy makers about the effects of arts projects on regional communities and add to the established body of knowledge surrounding art impacts.

Risks

There are minimal risks associated with your participation in this project.

Sometimes thinking about the sorts of issues raised in the focus group can create some uncomfortable or distressing feelings. If you need to talk to someone about this immediately please contact Lifeline on 13 11 14. You may also wish to consider consulting your General Practitioner (GP) for additional support.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All comments and responses will be treated confidentially unless required by law. As mentioned earlier the focus group sessions will be audio recorded. The recording of the focus group session will be retained as per University of Southern Queensland's Research Data Management policy. The recording will be de-identified and transcribed. It will not be possible to be involved in the focus group sessions without being recorded.

The original recording will be stored electronically in Cloudstor+, which is a secure data storage system, and any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely as per University of Southern Queensland's Research Data Management policy. The investigator will not report or publish any of the information disclosed by yourself in your interview if you choose to withdraw from the project.

Any other data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely as per University of Southern Queensland's Research Data Management policy.

Consent to Participate

We ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate in this project. Please return your signed consent form to a member of the Research Team prior to participating in your focus group.

Questions or Further Information about the Project

Please refer to the Researcher Contact Details at the top of the form to have any questions answered or to request further information about this project. A summary report of research findings will be emailed to all focus group participants

Concerns or Complaints Regarding the Conduct of the Project

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project you may contact the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Coordinator on (07) 4631 2690 or

email ethics@usq.edu.au. The Ethics Coordinator is not connected with the research project and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an unbiased manner.

Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project. Please keep this sheet for your information.

Appendix F

Interview Guiding Questions

Could you describe your involvement in the Regional Arts Development Fund?

What are the major outcomes of the Regional Arts Development Fund projects?

Are they beneficial? If so, how?

To whom?

Can you explain how the RADF projects have affected the broader community?

Could you give me an example to illustrate this?

Can you describe any changes to your community that you may have observed around a Regional Arts Development Fund project?

Have any of the Regional Arts Development Fund projects had negative outcomes on the community?

If so, how and why?

What could be done in the future to change this outcome?

Have any of the Regional Arts Development Fund projects affected the local economy?

If so, how?

Can you give an example to illustrate?

In your opinion do, the Regional Arts Development Fund projects build community networks.

If so, how?

What impact does this have on the broader community?

Are the Regional Arts Development Fund projects of value to your community?

If so, how?

What are the key benefits?

What are the challenges?

What are the opportunities for the community?

What are the future directions for the program?

Appendix G

Focus Group Session Discussion Structure

Arts impact in a regional community context:

A forum to discuss the effects of the RADF program on the Western Downs Region.

Research Aims:

The aim of the research is to explore and describe the impacts of the Regional Arts Development Fund program, and how these impacts effect the individual and the community.

Read aloud and discuss consent form.

Collect signed copies of consent form.

Outline focus group guidelines:

Only one person talks at a time

No side conversations: It is important to hear what everyone has to say, and this also interferes with the recording of the session.

Confidentiality is assured. What is shared in the room must stay in the room.

There are no right or wrong answers to questions - just ideas, experiences and opinions, which are all valuable.

It is important for us to hear all sides of an issue – both the positive and the negative

I have copied the questions that will be discussed in the focus group session so that you can jot down any answers, notes, reminders of key things and any project examples that come to mind during the session that will help to capture all the information we can during our discussion.

In 30 seconds could you each let the group know who you are; how long you have been on a RADF committee; and how you have been involved with the RADF program.

Background context to the discussion:

Impact is defined as a marked effect or influence of something on something else.

Impact is the effects, influence, bearing or impression made by the Regional Arts Development Fund program on the community. Impacts can be negative or positive, or put another way destructive or constructive.

Focus Group Questions

What effect does the Regional Arts Development Fund have on the Western Downs Regional community?

Are they beneficial?

If so, how?

If not, how?

To whom are they beneficial?



Appendix H

University of Southern Queensland

Consent Form for USQ Research Project Interview

Project Details

Title of Project: Art Impacts in Regional Queensland

Human Research
Ethics Approval
Number: H15REA168

Research Team Contact Details

Principal Investigator Details

Mrs. Margaret Power
Email: margaret.power@usq.edu.au
Telephone:
Mobile: 0499 003 330

Other Investigator/Supervisor Details

Professor Michael Cuthill
Email: michael.cuthill@usq.edu.au
Telephone:

Doctor Rebecca Scollen
Email: rebecca.scollen@usq.edu.au
Telephone: (07) 4631 2774

Professor Lorelle Burton
Email: lorelle.burton@usq.edu.au
Telephone: 074631 2853
Doctor Rebecca Scollen

Statement of Consent

By signing below, you are indicating that you:

- Have read and understood the information document regarding this project.
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction.
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team.
- Understand that the interview will be audio recorded.
- Understand that you are free to withdraw at any time, without comment or penalty.
- Understand that you can contact the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Coordinator on (07) 4631 2690 or email ethics@usq.edu.au if you do have any concern or complaint about the ethical conduct of this project.
- Are over 18 years of age.
- Agree to participate in the project.

Participant Name	<input type="text"/>
Participant Signature	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>

Please return this sheet to a Research Team member prior to undertaking the interview.



Appendix I

University of Southern Queensland

Consent Form for USQ Research Project Focus Group

Project Details

Title of Project: Art Impacts in Regional Queensland

Human Research
Ethics Approval
Number: H15REA168

Research Team Contact Details

Principal Investigator Details

Mrs. Margaret Power
Email: Margaret.Power@usq.edu.au
Telephone:
Mobile: 0499 003 330

Other Investigator/Supervisor Details

Professor Michael Cuthill
Email: michael.cuthill@usq.edu.au
Telephone:

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Email: rebecca.scollen@usq.edu.au
Telephone: (07) 4631 2774

Professor Lorelle Burton
Email: lorelle.burton@usq.edu.au
Telephone: 074631 2853

Statement of Consent

By signing below, you are indicating that you:

- Have read and understood the information document regarding this project.
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction.
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team.
- Understand that the focus group will be audio recorded.
- Understand that you are free to withdraw at any time, without comment or penalty.
- Understand that you can contact the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Coordinator on (07) 4631 2690 or email ethics@usq.edu.au if you do have any concern or complaint about the ethical conduct of this project.
- Are over 18 years of age.
- Agree to participate in the project.

Participant Name

Participant Signature

Date

Please return this sheet to a Research Team member prior to undertaking the focus group.

Appendix J

RADF PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND CODING

RADF Project Number	Town and Description	Archival Document Code	RADF Project Number	Town and Description	Archival Document Code
1	Dalby NAIDOC Visual Arts Workshops, Exhibition	ADI 1	26	Dalby Lake Broadwater Display	ADI 36
2	Dalby Visual Arts/Craft Workshops, Stalls	ADI 3	27	Dalby Artist Professional Development	ADI 37
3	Dalby Art Gallery Professional Development	ADI 6	28	Dalby Artist Professional Development	ADI 38
4	Bell Visual Arts Workshops	ADI 7	29	Dalby Artist Professional Development	ADI 39
5	Bell Visual Arts Workshops	ADI 8	30	Dalby Quilting Workshops	ADI 40
6	Bell Visual Arts Workshops	ADI 10	31	Dalby Regional Artist Exhibition	ADI 41
7	Bell Visual Arts Workshops	ADI 12	32	Dalby Quilting Workshops	ADI 42
8	Chinchilla Visual Arts Workshops	ADI 13	33	Dalby Disability and Aged Care Service Craft Project	ADI 43
9	Chinchilla Quilting Workshops	ADI 15	34	Hannaford Mosaic Workshops	ADI 47

10	Chinchilla Regional Artist Exhibition	ADI 16	35	Hannaford Quilting Workshops	ADI 48
11	Chinchilla Youth Event Visual Arts Workshops	ADI 17	36	Jandowae Timber Town Festival Music and Poetry Workshops and Performances	ADI 49
12	Chinchilla Melon Festival Music Workshops and Performances	ADI 18	37	Meandarra Mosaic Workshops	ADI 52
13	Chinchilla Festival Planning Workshops	ADI 19	38	Miles ANZAC Commemoration Theatre Directing Workshops	ADI 53
14	Chinchilla Visual Arts Workshops for Street Banners	ADI 20	39	Miles Photography Workshops and Digital Exhibition	ADI 54
15	Dalby Quilting Workshops	ADI 22	40	Miles Millinery Workshops	ADI 55
16	Dalby Show Circus Skills Workshops and Performances	ADI 23	41	Miles Historical Display Infrastructure Project	ADI 56
17	Dalby Quilting Workshops, Exhibition	ADI 25	42	Moonie Quilting Workshops	ADI 57
18	Dalby Indigenous Music Workshops, Performances	ADI 26	43	Tara Camel Racing and Multicultural Festival Workshops	ADI 59
19	Dalby Quilting Workshops	ADI 27	44	Tara Floral Art Workshops, Exhibition	ADI 60

20	Dalby Youth Week Music Workshops and Performances	ADI 28	45	Tara Millinery and Craft Workshops, Exhibition	ADI 61
21	Dalby Soldiers Wife Music Workshops and Performances	ADI 29	46	Wandoan Quilting Workshops, Exhibition	ADI 62
22	Dalby Disability Services Music Workshops and Performances	ADI 30	47	Wandoan Quilting Workshops	ADI 64
23	Dalby Delightful and Delicious Festival Lantern Workshops and Parade	ADI 31	48	Chinchilla Visual Arts Workshops and Community Artist Training	ADI 14
24	Dalby History Society Document Preservation Project	ADI 32	49	Wandoan ANZAC Commemoration History Research Project	ADI 67
25	Dalby Commemorative Quilt Framing	ADI 35	50	Wandoan Visual Arts Street Gallery Project	ADI 68

Appendix K

Copies of pages 1 to 8 of Arts Queensland (2006), Regional arts development fund guidelines, Arts Queensland, Brisbane which have been removed from the AQ website.

General

What is the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) Program?

The RADF Program, established in 1991, is a highly successful state and local government partnership that supports professional artists and arts practitioners living in regional Queensland. The Program focuses on the development of quality art and arts practice for, and with, regional communities.

The RADF Program's key stakeholders are the Queensland Government Department of Education, Training and the Arts, through Arts Queensland and the local councils that participate in the program. These stakeholders support arts and cultural development, RADF committees, regional and remote communities and their arts and cultural workers.

Why do Arts Queensland and local government partner to support the arts?

The partnership between Arts Queensland and local government is important to ensure RADF grants are used in the best possible way to support professional arts outcomes and development in regional Queensland, by following six overarching RADF Principles:

Six RADF Principles

1. Supporting professional artists and artworkers

State Government, through Arts Queensland, has a priority to support professional artists and artworkers, including those working in a cultural development context and living in regional communities, to practise originality and innovation in the development of quality arts activities and initiatives.

2. Supporting locally determined arts and cultural priorities

Local government partners with Arts Queensland through RADF to support locally determined arts and cultural priorities, as stated in local councils' corporate plans, as well as in local arts and cultural policies. Councils can determine priorities for RADF grants from these plans and policies and support the professional arts components.

3. Supporting regional arts development in Queensland

Partnerships across the tiers of government, between arts and non-arts practitioners and organisations, and across local council boundaries are essential to regional arts development in Queensland.

4. Supporting cultural activities not supported by other state government agencies

State Government recognises the value and importance of cultural activities and supports them through a range of government agencies, such as the Community Benefit Fund, Education, Sport and Recreation, Communities, Local Government and Planning and Queensland Events. RADF will not support cultural activities that are the responsibility of other state government agencies, including Arts Queensland. However, RADF can be used to complement other agencies' funding programs where the project is eligible and additional funds, or other forms of support, will enable the initiative to reach its full potential.

5. Supporting the participation of community members in arts development projects run by professional artists and artswriters

Non-professional arts and cultural activities are important to community life. Many local councils support non-professional activities through their own local community grants programs. RADF will support professional artists, artswriters and cultural development practitioners to run developmental projects or activities for community groups who enjoy participating in the arts, but who are not practising professional artists.

6. Supporting complementary federal arts funding

Federal Government supports a range of regional arts and cultural activities. RADF grants can be used to complement federal funding programs through the Australia Council for the Arts and the Department of Communications, Information, Technology and the Arts.

How does RADF operate?

Arts Queensland manages the RADF Program by means of an annual budget for allocations to individual councils and infrastructure support for local councils in their administration of the Program.

Each council has a nominated RADF Liaison Officer and a RADF Committee that is culturally and geographically representative of the community.

Councils bid annually to Arts Queensland for an allocation of funds. The RADF Liaison Officer and the RADF Committee prepare a funding bid to Arts Queensland based on their consultation with the community.

This annual bid is ratified by council.

Arts Queensland invites four local RADF Liaison Officers from across the state to assess the RADF bids submitted by councils.

When assessing bids, the local council representatives consider the competitive strength of the bid in the following areas:

- consultation with the community
- community support
- innovation and diversity of arts activities
- sound planning

- strength of previous annual reports
- relevance to Council's corporate plan and local cultural policies
- promotion of RADF.

Arts Queensland and individual local councils contribute funds to support the local RADF grant program. Each partners' level of funding is determined by a ratio based on the population of individual councils, as shown in the table below:

Class	Population	% AQ	% Council	Class cap ¹ @ \$
1	0 to 5,000	90	10	25,000
2	5,001 to 10,000	70	30	30,000
3	10,001 to 50,000	60	40	40,000
4	50,001 to 200,000	50	50	50,000
5	200,000 +	40	60	100,000

Local councils manage the funding of grants to members of their communities.

The RADF Committee assesses individual RADF applications against their council's corporate plan, arts and cultural policy and Arts Queensland's RADF Guidelines and recommends applicants for funding. The RADF Liaison Officer presents the recommendations to council for ratification. Council can only overturn recommendations made by the committee if the application is ineligible under the Guidelines, or interferes with council initiatives that are already in progress.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the partners?

Arts Queensland's role in the RADF Program is to:

- develop, in consultation with other key players, specific training and development programs and services to support RADF committees, liaison officers and applicants
- develop and provide information, forms and procedural manuals for councils to administer the RADF Program
- facilitate networking opportunities such as conferences, forums, video and teleconferences
- respond to enquiries from stakeholders in the Program
- support councils, RADF liaison officers and RADF committees when difficulties arise in the management of the Program
- facilitate the annual assessment of local councils' bids and make recommendations to the Minister for the Arts
- prepare a triennial report for distribution to all councils highlighting the successes of the RADF Program and reporting on the distribution of funds.

Local councils' role in the RADF Program is to:

- nominate a staff member as a RADF Liaison Officer to support the RADF Committee and the local RADF Program
- establish, implement and review council's arts and cultural policy
- ensure arts and culture are included in council's corporate plan
- establish the RADF Committee and cover its operational expenses
- hold biennial elections for the RADF Committee
- ensure that RADF grants are allocated according to the Principles and funding criteria in the Guidelines
- bid for funds and report funding outcomes to Arts Queensland
- promote the RADF Program locally
- operate within the *Local Government Act, 1993*.

What are the Queensland Government's social justice considerations?

The Queensland Government requires that the RADF Program considers the social justice implications of its decisions. Aboriginal people, Torres Strait Islanders, Australian South Sea Islanders, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD), older people, young people and people with disabilities are among the groups that may need help to make their participation in arts activities possible.

The RADF Program is designed to support the cultural practice of all Queenslanders.

What are the eight categories of funding?

The six overarching RADF Principles listed on pages 1 and 2 determine the eligibility of applicants for all categories of funding as well as each category having its own more specific criteria.

There are eight categories of funding available for individuals, groups or local councils:

1. Developing regional skills

Objective — for individual professional artists and artworkers living in regional Queensland to attend professional development seminars or activities; master classes; mentorships with recognised arts and cultural peers; and placements with recognised arts and cultural organisations.

- RADF grants will support intrastate and interstate activities only
- Arts Queensland's Individual Professional Development grants support international activities.
- Assistance is available for up to 65 per cent of the total costs to a maximum of \$5000 for Queensland travel and \$2000 for national travel.

Councils may also support **Quick-Response Grants** under this category for:

- opportunities for professional development that unexpectedly become available out of the normal local RADF rounds
- applications usually up to six weeks before the event/activity.

2. Building community cultural capacity

Objective — for community groups to engage a professional artist or artswoker to work with them on developing their arts practice or to run arts development workshops or community projects. *Human Capital & Co*

- RADF grants will support travel, accommodation and fees associated with employing professional artists or artswokers to work on community projects or workshops in the local community. *- a gov. of*
- Assistance is available for up to 65 per cent of the total costs of the project or workshop. *- a gov. of*
- This category is also open to councils that wish to assume a co-ordination role for projects. *- a gov. of*

3. Interest-free arts loan

Objective — for arts activities that will generate an income greater than the amount of the loan, and where no other funding source is available.

- RADF Interest-Free Arts Loans will support activities that can demonstrate a prior commitment from a distributor or producer, e.g. a publisher, gallery, record company or venue that can confirm and substantiate revenue forecasts. *3. gov. of*
- The total amount of the loan must be paid back at the conclusion of the activity.

4. Cultural tourism

Objective — for projects and activities that focus on 'communities' locally distinct arts, culture and heritage both for members of that community and for visitors. *4. gov. of*

RADF grants can support initiatives and activities that focus on:

- product development by professional artists, either as individuals, or in partnership with individual community members or community groups.
- marketing of professional artistic product.

5. Contemporary collections/stories

Objective — to preserve and provide access to locally held collections of significance, and collect and tell local stories from the past and the present that can demonstrate state and/or local significance. The priorities for this category are proposals for post-1960 heritage and Indigenous stories that can demonstrate strong community participation and ownership. *5. gov. of*

2. gov. of
3. gov. of
4. gov. of
5. gov. of
CAPO + Pd
TI, Ind.

RADF grants can support:

- documentation, preservation, interpretation projects and collection management training through community-based workshops
- community stories, which can be documented in a variety of forms and mediums, including: plays, videos, artwork, digital exhibitions, education programs, oral histories and publications.

Community organisations such as historical societies, museums, libraries, archives, galleries, Indigenous and migrant community groups which collect and provide public access to their cultural heritage collections are eligible to apply.

Applicants must provide a statement of significance with their applications.

6. Regional partnerships

Objective — to encourage innovative and energising arts projects where artists, communities and councils work together in their community, or in partnership with another community, to achieve enhanced outcomes from RADF grants.

RADF grants will support projects that can demonstrate a partnership between:

- artists and local industry — *Social Capital / Human cap*
- artists and community arts organisations — *Built cap*
- artists and non-arts community organisations
- cross-council collaborations.

This category is also open to councils.

7. Concept development

Objective — to develop arts research ideas and project proposals to the implementation stage and identify funding sources outside of RADF to implement project proposals.

RADF grants will support individuals and groups who wish to engage in professional research and the development of ideas and project proposals to the implementation stage. No specific artform product is required. However, the project should demonstrate how it will contribute to future arts development.

Potential funding sources for the implementation of the project must be identified prior to making an application and must be noted in the application form.

This category is also open to councils.

8. Arts policy development and implementation

Objective — to support councils to:

- develop cultural policy, cultural mapping, visioning and planning proposals
- partner on regional cultural policy co-ordination activities

- cross-regional cultural planning ————— *cultural, Soc*
 - development of cultural tourism plans: ————— *Political*
 - community consultation, facilitation and preparation of the documents (but not publishing) ————— *Economic*
 - RADF Committee training: ————— *Politi*
- Human, Soc*

What are the eligibility requirements?

The following categories of individuals and organisations **can** apply for a RADF grant:

- Individual professional artists, artworkers, cultural workers or project coordinators who:
 - are based in the local council area, or if based outside the local council area are able to demonstrate how the project will directly benefit arts and culture in the local council area
 - are permanent residents or Australian citizens
 - have an Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Incorporated cultural organisations based in the local council area, or those based outside the local council area that are able to demonstrate how the project will directly benefit arts and culture in the local council area.
- Unincorporated organisations, auspiced by an incorporated body, that are based in the local council area, or those based outside the local council area that are able to demonstrate how the project will directly benefit arts and culture in the local council area.

What does RADF not support?

The following categories of individuals and organisations are **not eligible** for funding through the RADF Program:

- Amateur arts activities **EXCEPT** for professional services to amateur arts activity. One of the main RADF aims is to develop professional artists in the regions. NOTE: Emerging professional artists are eligible for funding.
- Artists or artworkers who do not have an Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Applicants who submit unsigned applications.
- Applicants who have failed to acquit previous RADF grants.
- Projects for which artworkers are paid less than the recommended rates.
- Activities that commence before Council approval is given. RADF should not be used as a 'top-up' fund.
- Craft workshops — **UNLESS** a professional artist or artworker is employed to work with a craft group to apply their skills in an innovative way to an arts development outcome.

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- Murals — funding is available for murals from other government sources as part of anti-graffiti programs. RADF grants can only be allocated to murals that adhere to the RADF Principles, eligibility and program criteria.
- School arts activities **EXCEPT** where those activities form part of broader community cultural development processes or are part of professional arts development.
- Framing or freight — only a small proportion of these costs can be covered as part of presentation costs for significant exhibitions.
- Entertainment — funding is not available to pay for entertainment for events, **UNLESS** there is a developmental aspect included, e.g. musicians performing at a community event run a series of developmental workshops for community members prior to the event.
- Competitions — they are prolific and could monopolise funds. The competitive environment does not necessarily nurture emerging artists, as there is generally only one winner.
- Eisteddfods — they are essentially amateur competitions.
- Summer/Winter schools — councils should not support more than two places a year.
- Publishing costs — requests for grants to publish books should be directed to organisations that provide print-on-demand services. A small proportion of printing costs are eligible as part of the presentation costs for significant projects.
- Purchase of capital items e.g. equipment, buildings or vehicles. RADF gives artists and organisations opportunities for employment, professional development and a chance to practise their art. Buying capital items does not necessarily lead to these outcomes. **EXCEPTION:** Capital items can be funded **only** when they are included as part of a project application and when the RADF Committee considers the purchase **integral to that project** and where the item **will remain available for community use**.
- Recurrent funding for arts organisations — operational expenses are ineligible under RADF including wages for permanent staff and office expenses. **However**, local arts and cultural organisations that have regular community activities may apply for funding annually for different projects which have a project management component.
- Accredited study, training or university courses — Arts Queensland does not fund the primary training of artists, only their professional development once they are practising.
- Workshops with arts and cultural service organisations that are part of the organisation's 'core business' — Arts Queensland has already funded these organisations to deliver core services. Please call your cultural service organisations to find out what services they can offer you that are not 'core business'.