

# WHAT IS COMMUNITY ARTS & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT?

Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) involves artists working collaboratively with communities for the purpose of social change through art and culture.

CACD provides opportunities for all people to express themselves and share their stories while developing their cultural knowledge and artistic skills. As a practice, CACD has demonstrated its ability to have positive impact on the health and wellbeing of communities and stimulate artistic innovation and vibrancy.

## WHAT DOES A COMMUNITY ARTS AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT LOOK LIKE?

### CACD Projects:

- Are community driven, inclusive and participatory.
- Respect and support community voices, artistic vibrancy and authenticity.
- Employ many art forms and cultural traditions.
- Acknowledge and embrace the humanity of all cultures.
- Vary in length from a few days to a number of years.
- Believe in the capacity of individuals and communities to pursue artistic excellence.
- Engage artistic specialists and cultural experts to inform, lead and share skills.
- Connect people in a shared space.
- Often include intergenerational transfer of cultural and artistic knowledge and skills.
- Use artistic processes that are culturally appropriate and considerate of the skills and knowledge of participants.

Art created  
by, with  
and for the  
community

CACD Projects aim to activate and develop individuals and communities through artistic and cultural practice. Development is defined by positive change as CACD projects work towards improving people's capacity to practice culture and pursue the right to quality and excellence within their communities.

### The artistic manifestations of CACD projects can include:

- A renewal or revival of a cultural performance or activity such as traditional dance or basket weaving with a focus on passing on skills to the younger generation.
- An exhibition in a gallery or other public space.
- A community festival or event.
- The publication of a book, magazine or digital media work.
- The creation of an online cultural repository.
- The presentation of a performance including circus, theatre, dance, music and visual art.
- A campaign which promotes awareness of a particular issue, misconception or prejudice.
- A permanent or temporary installation of an artwork in a public space.
- The screening of a film or digital media work.



# CACD PROJECT EXAMPLES

The following examples are not actual projects but indication of the types of projects that are being undertaken in the CACD sector.

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

A regional community has recently dealt with a significant natural disaster. A creative writer works with families who have experienced loss and shares skills that enable them to document their experiences of the event and the recovery process. A book is published with images and stories from the survivors.

Outcomes include decreased social isolation, reduced mental trauma for those affected by the disaster, an increase in services that cater to the specific needs of survivors and improvements in the emergency response process by local services.

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Projects that improve peoples lives

## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

An artist leads a series of workshops with individuals suffering from mental illness. The workshops enable participants to communicate the challenges they face when dealing with day-to-day life. Together the group develops a series of short films that tell their stories, which are then launched publicly at a

community screening and made available online as a broader campaign around awareness.

Outcomes include better health and improved communication skills for participants who feel validated and more self-aware. This also leads to less reliance on health services and improved interactions in social and professional settings with a greater level of understanding and respect by others when dealing with people who are suffering from mental illness

## INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

A youth focused CACD organisation has been established in a community for 10 years. It specialises in the intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge and skills using new media technology. An emerging new media artist is invited to take up a residency in the community for 12 months to work with the young people teaching them film production and animation skills. The young people work with community cultural leaders to record their stories. The young people then produce short films which are published on a website and screened at a community festival.

Outcomes include growing interaction and respect between young people and their elders; increased cultural pride and artistic and technical skills for the young people and a new archive of cultural knowledge. The emerging artist increased their ability to share their artistic and technical skills under the umbrella of a CACD organisation.



It can take a few weeks or a few years

## NEW MIGRANT PROGRAM

New migrant women are feeling socially isolated and are not enrolling their children in schools or using local health services. A cultural practitioner leads a series of art and craft workshops in the local neighbourhood centre to encourage the women to come in and share their cultural traditions including craft and singing. The workshops continue over a number of months with a variety of local community workers visiting the sessions providing information about local schools, health care and employment services. An exhibition of work created during the workshops is presented in the local library and a community singing group evolves.

Outcomes include social connections, greater understanding and access to community services for the participants and a greater inclination for the migrant community to enrol their children in schools and to visit local health professionals.



Participation is vital!

