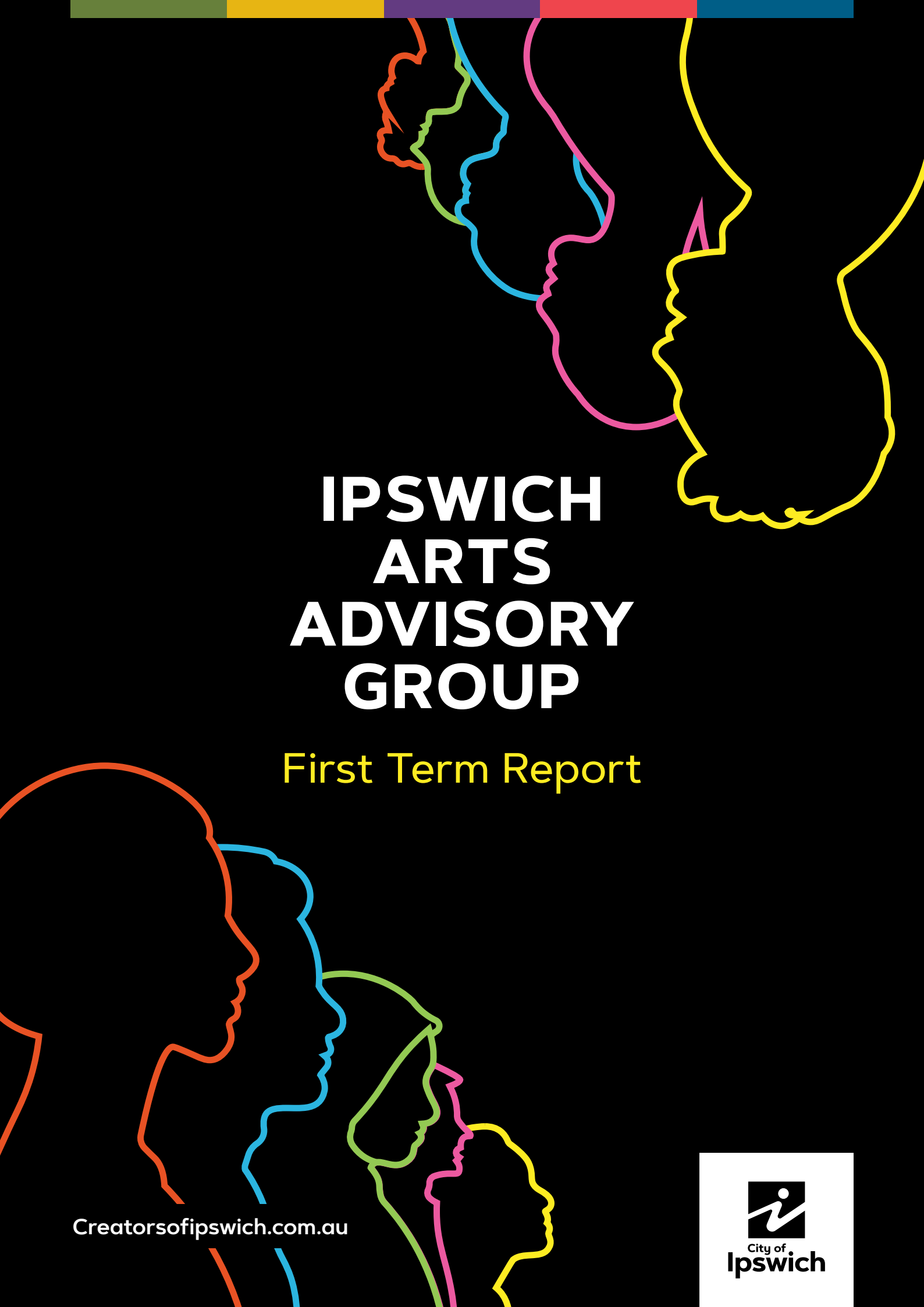




IPSWICH ARTS ADVISORY GROUP

First Term Report

Creatorsofipswich.com.au



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ipswich Arts Advisory Group (IAAG) has made remarkable strides since its inception in 2022, catalysing the evolution of Ipswich's vibrant creative sector. IAAG has embraced a dynamic first two-year term, fine-tuning its approach to maximise impact. The transition to monthly meetings has injected a new level of energy and effectiveness into IAAG operations. These meetings have become a cornerstone for providing Ipswich City Council (council) officers with strategic insights, shaping the trajectory of Ipswich's cultural projects. Despite the occasional scheduling conflict, the commitment of the members has never wavered, ensuring IAAG's momentum is maintained. IAAG's consultative role, coupled with its successful end-of-year networking event, has highlighted its value in the community.

Looking ahead, IAAG is poised for expansion and greater inclusivity, to ensure it has a city-wide focus. IAAG's ongoing initiatives and recommendations are set to further enrich Ipswich's artistic and creative landscape.

BACKGROUND

IAAG was established in response to the inaugural Creators of Ipswich Summit (summit) in 2020. The comprehensive report authored by Dr. Ashley P. Jones and Dr. Margaret Power from University of Southern Queensland summarised feedback and recommendations from the summit participants. The report underscored the readiness of the arts community to assume leadership roles and the critical role of Ipswich City Council (council) in this endeavour. It also emphasised the necessity of forming a leadership structure to steer the growth of Ipswich's creative economy.

In November 2021, council officially endorsed the formation of IAAG, along with the adoption of its foundational Terms of Reference. This endorsement was followed by an open call for expressions of interest, targeting the vibrant members of the Ipswich arts community to apply for membership within the newly established group. The call was met with a positive response, resulting in a total of 37 applications.

The selection process for IAAG was completed in February 2022 after a review of applications by a panel. This panel included two internal council officers, two external arts professionals, and the Chair of the Community, Culture, Arts and Sport Committee, Councillor Andrew Fechner, with Deputy Chair Councillor Kate Kunzelmann also providing valuable input.

In 2022, the inaugural IAAG was established with 12 members, comprising:

- Eight community representatives from diverse artistic practices, age groups, cultural backgrounds and genders
- Three elected officials, including Mayor Teresa Harding, Councillor Andrew Fechner and Councillor Kate Kunzelmann
- Creative Industries Development Officer.

After one year of establishment, IAAG, including the Mayor and councillors, agreed that elected officials should participate as invited guests rather than members, to allow for a more open and candid dialogue with council officers.

It was also resolved that IAAG would not undertake a project due to time constraints of the active community members in IAAG. Instead, IAAG would concentrate on:

- Advocating for the significance of arts and culture to the community
- Offering guidance and feedback to internal council departments on decisions affecting arts and culture, thereby influencing policy and project development
- Facilitating connections among members of the arts community.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Ipswich City Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners as custodians of the land and waters we share. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, as the keepers of the traditions, customs, cultures and stories of proud peoples.

MEMBERS OF IPSWICH ARTS ADVISORY GROUP AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

Chair Melanie Saward: Author and university lecturer

Melanie Saward is a proud descendant of the Bigambul and Wakka Wakka peoples. She is a writer, editor and university lecturer. Her writing has been published in Flock, Overland, Kill Your Darlings, New Australian Fiction 2022 and 2019. Her debut novel Burn was published by Affirm Press in September 2023 and was awarded Queensland Writers Fellowship at the 2023 Queensland Literary Awards.

Secretary Natalie Blacklock: Music writer and media manager

Natalie Blacklock is a local high school teacher, specialising in senior English and legal studies. Natalie is also the co-manager, editor, social media guru and regular content contributor for Good Call Live, a South East Queensland independent music website. Run by a strong team of local women, Good Call Live actively supports local musicians in providing day-to-day media coverage, interviews, live reviews as well as the site's well known Weekly Gig Guide.

Kate Roberts: Visual artist and arts worker

Kate Roberts is an Ipswich based silver smith and artisan utilising multiple disciplines in her arts practice. She exhibits regularly and has been a finalist in the Contemporary Wearables, been acquired by Ipswich Art Gallery and many private collections. Kate has also served on many local committees including the Ipswich Art Awards and is a huge supporter of local Ipswich artists.

Kylie Hill: Visual artist and business owner

Kylie Hill is the owner of KJH Artworks, and a proud Kalkadoon and Waanyi woman, from far North Queensland. Kylie has lived in Ipswich for more than 35 years. Kylie has been painting for over 30 years and in 2019 turned what was a hobby into a successful business. Her artwork has been commissioned by schools, community hubs, interest groups, Indigenous communities and for major infrastructure projects.

Matt Chambers: Musician and community music leader

Matt is a multi-instrumentalist who has passion for helping grow the community music scene. He is in demand as a performer and conductor throughout Queensland. Matt is the musical director for Ipswich RSL Band and Ipswich City Big Band along with his head of department duties helping music teachers across the South East Queensland corner. He has a desire to find performance opportunities for community musicians in the area who play music as a hobby or for the challenge it brings.

Tom Horn: Musician and performer

Tom Thum is a renowned beatboxer/musician who has been performing across the globe professionally for almost 20 years. Tom gained notoriety through his 2013 TEDx performance at Sydney Opera House, becoming the most-watched TEDx video ever with over 114 million combined views. He constantly tries to test the extremes of the human voice whether it be jamming cameras up his nose while performing or fronting the world's first vocally synthesised live band at Google Brandcast.

Wayne McDonnell: photographer and arts advocate

Wayne McDonnell is an award-winning photographer with more than 30 years' experience. His works are displayed in corporate spaces and private homes, and has work acquired by Ipswich Art Gallery. He has officially photographed many events and was the stills photographer on a movie set. Wayne tutors photography at U3A, was the arts columnist in both the Queensland Times and Ipswich Advertiser newspapers and organised Ipswich Art Awards for two decades.

MEETINGS

The initial meeting frequency was established as quarterly. However, this interval presented challenges, as the extended time between meetings led to discontinuity in discussions and progress updates. In 2023, it was resolved to increase the frequency of meetings to a monthly cadence, acknowledging the subsequent advantages:

- **Improved continuity:** Monthly meetings ensure a more seamless flow of conversation and continuous progress tracking, reducing the 'stop-start' effect experienced with quarterly meetings
- **Increased responsiveness:** A higher frequency of meetings allows IAAG to respond promptly to new developments and make timely decisions, fostering a dynamic and agile approach
- **Enhanced engagement:** Regular meetings can lead to increased member engagement, as consistent interaction and involvement help maintain momentum and interest in IAAG activities.

PROJECTS CONSULTED

An important development of the meetings was the consultation with council officers to help develop and progress projects and ideas. This is not an exhaustive list of all meetings but instead key council activities that IAAG were consulted on.

MONTH	PROJECT CONSULTATION	COUNCIL INITIATIVE CONSULTED
June 2023	Creative Industries – FY 2023/2024 project	- Review of Creative Industries Shape Your Ipswich - Analysis of current and future ARTiculate programming - Preparation towards 2023 Creators of Ipswich Summit - The Push – Live Music Careers Expo
	Legacy Roadmap	- Overview of Legacy Roadmap and Ipswich opportunities - Focus on the Cultural Olympiad and the part Ipswich creatives can play
July 2023	Ipswich Community Gallery	- Current state of play for Ipswich Community Gallery - Discussion on new expressions of interest for exhibition callouts - Confirmation of First Nation's priority during NAIDOC to be delivered by Ipswich Art Gallery
August 2023	Ipswich Art Awards	- Comprehensive review of Ipswich Art Awards - Confirmation for date change to avoid Ipswich Show clashes - Vision for Ipswich Art Awards to focus on the cultural tourism benefits and its unique selling proposition as an awards show that display all entries and all work is available for purchase
October 2023	Ipswich Civic Centre	2024 program review and update - Advice from IAAG provided around developing local talent
	Arts hubs	- Consulted on the response to the Notice of Motion – An Arts Hub for the Creative Community Ipswich - Provided guidance on the development of Ipswich Art Workshop (Formerly Jamie's Ministry of Food) - Advocated for the evolution of Fire Station 101 into a multi-use contemporary arts hub to support the creative community
March 2024	Arts Queensland and Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF)	- Analysis of Ipswich's existing RADF program - Discussion on increase funding opportunity and potential new funds available to Ipswich community
May 2024	Arts Hub – Content Creation Room	Engagement session on the design of a Content Development Room at Fire Station 101.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES DELIVERED

- Creation of IAAG resource page in 2023:
 - Identified as a way for people to learn who is in IAAG
 - Showcase activities and projects of members.
- Participation at 2023 Creators of Ipswich Summit:
 - Melanie Seward delivered two workshops on pitching to publishers
 - Wayne McDonnell delivered two workshops on photography.
- 2023 End of Year Speed Networking Event
 - Capitalising on participation of ARTiculate, IAAG hosted a ticketed end of year event attended by 60 people from various art mediums, council officers, local educators and local business
 - The event included participation from IAAG members including:
 - Performance by Tom Thum featuring local musician Paulina
 - Live painting by IPSARI (Ipswich Artist Run Initiative) organised by Kate Roberts
 - Photography of the event by Wayne McDonnell.

OBSERVATIONS FROM FIRST TERM 2022-2024

- Establishing effective practices: During the first year, IAAG dedicated its efforts to a process of trial and error, identifying approaches that were effective and those that were not. This period was crucial for establishing a foundation upon which IAAG could build future success.
- Competing priorities and group dynamics: IAAG encountered challenges when members' priorities and passions conflicted, leading to unnecessary tension within IAAG. It became evident that aligning on common goals was essential to maintain harmony and progress in the functioning of IAAG.
- Meeting frequency and success: The increase in the frequency of meetings proved to be a turning point for IAAG. This change allowed for more consistent communication and collaboration, which were instrumental in driving IAAG's success.
- Contribution to council projects: IAAG's role in providing council officers with critical evaluations and discussions on forthcoming projects and opportunities proved to be of high value. The insights offered by IAAG were considered invaluable in the planning and execution of these initiatives.
- Attendance variability: IAAG faced challenges with attendance at some meetings, as members often had conflicting schedules. Despite the busy timetables, the dedication of the members who were able to attend ensured that IAAG continued to move forward. Two members became disengaged either due to challenging work schedules or personal circumstances.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT IAAG TERM

2024-2026

1. Comprehensive review of Terms of Reference: It is imperative that the Terms of Reference undergo a thorough review process to align with the culmination of IAAG's second-year term. This review should encompass an evaluation of IAAG's objectives, strategies and overall performance, ensuring that the Terms of Reference remain relevant and effective for guiding future activities.
2. Expansion of IAAG membership: To bolster the attendance at monthly meetings and enhance the diversity of feedback, IAAG's membership should be expanded to include up to 12 community members. This strategic increase will ensure a wider representation of community perspectives and a more dynamic feedback mechanism.
3. Inclusive engagement initiatives: IAAG shall initiate and deepen engagement efforts with young individuals, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This endeavour aims to foster a more inclusive environment to ensure that diverse voices and experiences are integral to IAAG's decision-making processes.
4. Creative venue for meetings: Fire Station 101 shall serve as the consistent venue for meetings, capitalising on its reputation as a hub of creativity and innovation. The unique atmosphere of Fire Station 101 is expected to inspire more vibrant discussions and collaborative efforts among IAAG members.
5. Hybrid meeting format: All meetings will adopt a hybrid format, offering both in-person and online participation options. This dual approach will accommodate members who are unable to attend physically, thereby enhancing accessibility and ensuring broader participation in IAAG deliberations.
6. Community project presentations: There will be opportunities for community members to present their projects during IAAG meetings. This initiative will not only provide a platform for showcasing local projects but also stimulate dialogue and potential collaboration within IAAG.
7. Continuation of the annual networking event: IAAG's end of year event has proven to be a significant cultural highlight and, as such, should be continued. This event serves as a celebration of the arts within the community and provides an opportunity for the group to engage with a wider audience.



City of
Ipswich

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