

Community Connections Working Group Terms of Reference

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1. Purpose and Scope

Establishment of the Community Connections Working Group (CCWG) aligns with the Greater Dandenong Council Plan 2025-29 and the objectives of Council's Community Engagement Policy and Framework and contributes to Council's strong commitment to engaging the community in a genuine and meaningful way by bringing together local knowledge, expertise and stakeholders to support Council's decision-making process.

The Arts Advisory Board was formed in 2018. The Terms of Reference of the Arts Advisory Board allows for the establishment of working groups to support its work and to achieve the outcome of Council's [Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy](#).

The scope of the Arts Advisory Board Community Connections Working Group is confined to the exploration, advocacy, advice and support of community connections opportunities for arts and cultural services in the City of Greater Dandenong to be recommended to the Arts Advisory Board.

This group will support staff in meeting these key strategy priority initiatives and projects (from [Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy 2022 – 2026](#)):

- 1.2 Connect local individuals and organisations in the arts, culture and heritage sectors with local, national and international networks, opportunities and best practice learnings.
- 1.3 Advocate and explore opportunities for local arts, culture and heritage activity across national and international platforms.
- 1.4 Continue to provide accessible and fit for purpose arts, culture and heritage spaces and infrastructure locally.
- 2.2 Support connection to funding pathways for local arts, culture and heritage practitioners and organisations...
- 3.4 Strengthen partnerships and synergistic opportunities across Council teams, community organisations, peak bodies, the private sector and other Councils.
- 4.4 Support local arts, culture and heritage organisations to increase participation and engagement
- 4.6 Increase the accessibility of our arts, culture and heritage programming, activities and infrastructure.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the CCWG are to:

- Proactively offer specialised advice, support, and advocacy to enhance collaboration among existing and new creative collectives and community, fostering a unified approach to empower the creative industry.

- Consider and advise Council's Arts Advisory Board on matters relating to Community Connections – including but not limited to initiation and delivery of Community Connections projects; programming/operations; and collaboration and advocacy within the creative industries, drawing on expert input from industry specialists.
- Provide strategic advice and advocacy in finding and developing new opportunities including partnerships, funding, and new innovative pathways and solutions.
- Provide a forum for best practice and innovation in the arts and culture sector.
- Support Community Connections initiatives across the City of Greater Dandenong including identifying opportunities for external partnerships that enhance and strengthen Council's ability to meet the Arts, Culture and Heritage strategy with a focus on 'Maintaining and providing access to high-quality arts, culture and heritage infrastructure'.

3. Term of Appointment

Individual members will hold office for a term of one (1) year. The role and purpose of the Community Connections Working Group are subject to annual review. The term can be extended following the review. The extension will be endorsed by Manager Creative and Engaged City.

Each member may only be appointed for three (3) consecutive terms as part of their tenor before retiring, unless otherwise resolved by the Arts Advisory Board.

An individual who has held membership for three (3) consecutive terms must take a twelve (12) month break before being eligible for re-appointment.

Terms of Reference are to be endorsed at an Arts Advisory Board meeting.

4. Role of the Working Group

The role of the CCWG is to engage with the community and report to the Arts Advisory Board by providing appropriate advice and recommendations on matters relevant to the Terms of Reference to assist in the facilitation of informed and effective decision making.

All recommendations made by the Working Group require consideration and endorsement through the Arts Advisory Board before being acted on.

5. Chairperson

The Chair will be the nominated representative member of the Arts Advisory Board.

The role of the Chairperson is to:

- Conduct all meetings in accordance with Council's Governance Rule
- Liaise with the Arts Advisory Board and administrative support office for Agenda and Minute preparation.
- Obtain consensus from all advisory committee members when developing recommendations to the Board.
- Foster a positive working relationship amongst all Working Group members.
- Ensure all members are given equal opportunity to participate in discussions.
- Keep members informed of developments and activities between meetings.
- Present recommendations and feedback to the Arts Advisory Board as required.

The term of the Chair will be a twelve (12) month period at which point in time the committee will elect and appoint another chairperson.

In the absence of the Chairperson from a meeting, the meeting will appoint an appropriate acting Chairperson.

6. Council Officer Representative

Council staff will provide administrative support and service expertise to the Working Group. Council staff are non-voting members.

7. Working Group Member Responsibilities

The CCWG will take account of the above scope, purpose and constraints.

Members are expected to:

- Attend meetings and participate in the conversation.
- Share specialist knowledge and expertise as appropriate.
- Discuss issues openly and respect confidentiality.
- Provide input and feedback where appropriate.

The activities of the Working Group will be reported at meetings of the Arts Advisory Board.

Conflicts of Interest

Any matter deemed by a member to represent a Conflict of Interest shall be reported to the Chairperson either prior to a meeting or before the specific item is discussed. Disclosure must include the nature of the relevant interest.

A member who has a direct or indirect conflict of interest (ie. Interest by close association, financial interest, conflicting duty, personal gain or loss) regarding an item to be considered or discussed by the Committee, must leave the meeting and remain absent until the conclusion of the discussion.

The conflict of interest, including the nature of the interest will be recorded in the meeting minutes including the time the member left the meeting and the time they re-joined the meeting.

If a community member nominates for Local State or Federal elections, they must stand down from their position from the time they declare they have nominated until the results of the election are announced. If a member is Elected, they will be required to resign from their current position on the Committee.

Media Protocols

All Working Group members must act in accordance with Council's Media Policy and refer all media enquiries to Council's Media and Communication Department for a response.

The mayor of the day remains the spokesperson for all Council activities. Working Group members are not to represent the Group or Council to the media or on social media, unless approved by the Manager Media and Communications.

Terms and Conditions

All members of the CCWG will be required to accept and sign the agreed Terms and Conditions as part of their membership.

Code of conduct

All members of the CCWG will be required to abide by Council's Code of Conduct - Staff (which includes volunteers).

Authority Constraints

The Working Group has no authority to:

- Spend money on behalf of Council.
- Commit Council to any arrangements.
- Consider any matter outside its area of reference.
- Direct Council Officer in the performance of their duties.

8. Membership and appointment of Community Representatives

Membership

In addition to the Chair, the CCWG membership is comprised of up to six (6) nominated individuals who may have:

- Interest in the development of creative industry and Community Connections.
- A demonstrated ability to embrace, respond and advise on Community Connections opportunities including traditional and contemporary practices and industry network development.
- Demonstrated experience in community arts and culture projects including but not limited to concept, design, development and curatorial.

These six (6) nominated positions are voluntary.

Appointment of Community Representatives

Community Representatives may be appointed by the Arts Advisory Board.

Community Representative Memberships are voluntary roles.

Community Members will be representative of the Council's diverse and multicultural community including local groups, agencies, businesses, schools and local residents.

Appointment of Community Organisation/Group Representatives

Where Council seeks membership from a specific community organisation or group, the organisation or group may nominate their preferred representative by providing written advice to Council.

Resignation, Removal and Vacancies

Members of the CCWG may resign from their position on the Working Group at any time by providing a written notice to the Chairperson of their intention to resign.

Council reserves the right to remove members from their Advisory Committee/Working Group positions when there is a demonstrated failure to meet the obligations outlined in the Terms of Reference.

Should a vacancy arise for a community representative, during the tenure of the Working Group, the vacancy can be addressed immediately or deferred until the annual review. If it is agreed that the vacancy will be addressed immediately, the working group can consider candidates from the last selection process; otherwise, it

will be filled through the formation of a Selection Panel as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

If a vacancy arises less than six (6) months prior to the end of the Working Group's term, the Working Group may resolve to leave the vacancy unfilled for the interim.

Vacancies of organisational or group representatives will be filled by direct nomination of the relevant organisation or group.

The term for any member appointed part way through the tenure of the CCWG shall expire in line with the other members of the Working Group.

If the Arts Advisory Board receives a request for membership in addition to the appointed members, such a request will only be considered if a vacancy exists, or the Board resolves otherwise.

Induction

New members will be required to undergo an induction process as soon as possible after their appointment to the Working Group to ensure they are familiar with relevant [Council documents](#), process and operating requirements, including but not limited to:

- Overview of Council
- Council Plan 2025-29
- [Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy 2022 – 2026](#)
- Community Plan 2040
- The Reporting Requirements
- Community Engagement Policy and Framework
- Transparency Policy
- Conflicts of Interest
- Privacy and Personal Data Policy
- Victoria Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities
- Media Policy
- Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy
- Diversity, Access and Equity Policy
- Code of Conduct – Staff
- Governance Rules

Co-opted Members and Non-Member Attendance

The Arts Advisory Board may invite suitably skilled persons (either professional or community based) to join the group in an advisory capacity for a specific purpose and period of time.

Relevant senior officers from across Council Departments may be invited to attend the Working Group meetings to provide advice and input as needed to assist the Working Group in their deliberations.

Co-opt members, invited community members and invited council officers do not have any voting rights.

9. Selection Criteria for Community Members

Community representatives of the CCWG must be able to demonstrate the following skills, competencies, interests and experience relevant to the purpose of the Working Group:

- An interest in local community development, including an understanding of its social, cultural, linguistic environment and economic influences.
- Be aware of the activities, interest and concerns of the local community.
- Broad community networks and linkages.
- An ability to cooperate with others and work as a team.
- Capacity to embrace diversity and equal opportunity.
- Willingness to provide advice and guidance to the Council regarding trends and opportunities in community engagement, community development or programs and services within the municipality.
- An understanding of the priorities as identified in the Council Plan 2025-29.
- Ability to prepare for and actively participate in scheduled meetings in a positive, fair and unbiased manner.
- Capacity to act in the best interest of the community at all times and look beyond personal concerns and individual interests.
- Capacity to commit to the Working Group for the required duration and attend no less than three (3) scheduled meetings.
- Willingness to celebrate the success and achievements of the Working Group.

10. Community Representation Selection Process

Community representatives will be called for by advertising in the local media and on the Council's website and other suitable forums.

Suitably qualified and experienced community representatives may be invited to nominate.

A nomination form must be completed by interested representatives and all nominations must be submitted by the published due date prior to being assessed against the Criteria for Community Members.

Officers may seek further information from nominees or their referees as part of the selection process.

A recommendation regarding preferred nominees for the Working Group will be prepared for the consideration and endorsement by the Arts Advisory Board.

Successful Nominees will be formally notified by a Council officer representative in writing as soon as practical after the Arts Advisory Board endorsement.

Membership of the Working Group is a voluntary position.

11. Community Member Selection Panel

The selection panel will comprise:

- Coordinator Experiences and Partnerships
- Arts and Cultural Development Lead
- Arts Advisory Board Representative

12. Voting Rights and Decision Making

It is preferable that recommendations from the Working Group to the Arts Advisory Board are made by consensus. However, there may be circumstances where a matter is decided by a vote.

Quorum

The quorum for the Working Group must be half plus one, which is the majority of the number of Committee Members with voting rights.

If a quorum is not present within 30 mins of the scheduled start of the meeting the meeting must reconvene at a suitable time.

A quorum must be maintained for voting purposes.

Voting

Each member is entitled to one (1) vote. The Chairperson may exercise a casting vote should this be necessary.

Votes shall be taken by a show of hands and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Guests who are not members of the committee are not entitled to vote.

13. Scheduled Meetings and Participation

The CCWG will meet quarterly. Additional meetings may be scheduled as agreed by the Working Group.

It is intended that each meeting shall not exceed two (2) hours in duration. If a meeting is to extend beyond this time a vote shall be taken by show of hands to decide if the meeting shall continue or be reconvened at another time.

Under special circumstances a meeting may be cancelled, re-scheduled or extended.

All meetings shall be held at one of the Council's cultural venues or in a virtual environment as required.

It is expected that each member of the Working Group will attend at least three (3) scheduled meetings each year.

14. Administration and Reporting of Minutes and Recommendations to Council

Administration Support and Distribution of Agendas and Minutes

The management of the Working Group will be overseen by the Chairperson who is nominated by the Arts Advisory Board.

Administration support will be provided by Council's Experiences and Partnerships Team to assist the Working Group to function efficiently and effectively, including but not limited to servicing all scheduled Working Group meetings and the timely preparation and distribution Agendas and Minutes.

All Committee Members can submit an agenda item in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

Agenda items or a meeting summary will be shared with the Arts Advisory Board.

The Chairperson in consultation with the Council Officer Representative will be responsible for coordinating the preparation and distribution of Agendas.

Minutes will be distributed in a timely manner to all members to ensure accuracy prior to sharing with the Arts Advisory Board.

Attendance and Record of Meetings

All attendance, apologies, conflicts of interests, recommendations and outcomes will be recorded in the Minutes of all meetings held where a quorum is present.

In the event that a member cannot attend, an apology must be received. Future participation of a member may be reviewed for non-attendance of two consecutive meetings without an apology.

Working Group members will be expected to demonstrate their commitment and due diligence by the preparation for, attendance at and active participation in the Working Group meetings.

15. Reporting and Requirements

Reports on the activities and outcomes of the Working Group will be reported to the Arts Advisory Board.

16. Confidentiality

Information discussed, received, used or created by the CCWG deemed confidential, must not be disclosed to any person who is not a member of the committee.

Any member who discloses information that they know or should reasonably know to be confidential will be found in breach of the Terms of Reference.

The CCWG must act in accordance with the Council's Transparency Policy and the Public Transparency Principles as outlined in the Local Government Act 2020.

17. Freedom of Information

All documents produced by or relating to the Advisory Committee that are not publicly available or deemed confidential are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

18. Breaches

The City of Greater Dandenong by resolution of Council may terminate a Working Group member's appointment for breaching the Terms of Reference set out in this document and/or Council's Code of Conduct – Staff/Councillor.

All members of the CCWG will be required to accept and sign the Terms and Conditions statement.

19. Evaluation and Review

A review of the Working Group will be undertaken every twelve (12) months to ensure the purpose, membership and operations of the committee remain effective and in line with Council objectives.

Appropriate changes to the purpose and outcomes of the Working Group and amendments to the Terms of Reference maybe made as part of the review process.

The CCWG Terms of Reference will be reviewed biannually or prior to the appointment of a new committee if needed. The review will be conducted by the Experiences and Partnerships Team and the Manager Creative and Engaged City.

Council has the right to conclude the Working Group by resolution of Council at any time if it is found that the Working Group is no longer beneficial to the needs of the Community.

20. Contact

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