DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
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Integrating Art Production and Economic Development in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory

NATIONAL SURVEY OF REMOTE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTISTS

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Integrating Art Production and Economic Development in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory
National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists

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PREFACE

This Report presents the results of a study that forms one component of a major National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists. The National Survey is being undertaken in the Department of Economics at Macquarie University progressively across six regions in remote Australia. The regions are:

Region 1: Kimberley, WA
Region 2: East and West Arnhem Land, NT
Region 3: North-West NT and Tiwi Islands
Region 4: Central Desert, NT and APY Lands, SA
Region 5: Pilbara and Ngaanyatjarra Lands, WA
Region 6: Far North Queensland

Implementation of the National Survey in Region 1 was completed in 2016, with the rollout continuing in Regions 2–6 during 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020[1]. The present Report relates to the implementation of the National Survey in Region 2, Arnhem Land. An initial scoping trip to the region was undertaken in July 2018 and the main fieldwork was carried out in November 2018, as discussed in more detail in the Report.

We would like to express our gratitude to a number of individuals and organisations who assisted us in various ways in the conduct of this work. Firstly, we acknowledge the financial support provided by the Commonwealth Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, the Australia Council for the Arts, and Arts NT. Several people in these departments and agencies were especially helpful, including Debra Myers (PM&C), Rebecca Mostyn and Lisa Walsh (Australia Council for the Arts), Angela Hill and Renita Glencross (Arts NT), and Hugo Leschen (formerly Arts NT). We also express our gratitude to Sally Basser, Stephen Arnott, Jane Barney, Lyn Allan, Ingrid Barnes, Jacqueline Gropp, Sonia Hailes and Karen Bell in the Commonwealth Department of Communications and the Arts for their advice and encouragement at all stages of this project.

The collaboration of a number of Aboriginal artists, cultural consultants, translators and interpreters was an essential ingredient in designing and implementing the survey, including Derek Carter (Maningrida), and Bobby Bununggurr and Tolbert Dharramanba (Ramingining). In addition a number of informal conversations were held with senior artists in many of the locations visited during the survey fieldwork.

We would also like to thank the managers and staff of art centres and other organisations in the region who cooperated with us and assisted in implementing the survey, including: Lotte Waters (Elcho Art Centre); Rowan Busuttil and Josie Wright (Galiwin'ku); Trevor Van Weeren (Gapuwiyak); Felicity Wright and Kate McGreal (Injalak Arts, Gunbalanya); Michelle Culpitt, Kate O'Hara and Chloe Gibbon (Maningrida Arts and Culture); Ingrid Johanson and Jessica Phillips (Bábbarra Women's Centre, Maningrida); Dave Curmi and Joyce Bohme (Djelk Rangers, Maningrida); Luke Scholes (Maningrida College); Carolyn Coleman and Stanley Rankin (Literature Production Centre, Maningrida); Chris Durkin and Rosita Holmes (Milingimbi Art and Culture); Hilary Crawford (Bula'Bula Arts, Ramingining); Katie Degnian, (Arafura Swamp Rangers (ASRAC), Ramingining); Louise and

[1] Reports to date are published as Macquarie University Economics Research Papers: *Integrating Art Production and Economic Development in the Kimberley* (No. 2/2016); *Integrating Art Production and Economic Development in the Central Desert (NT) and the APY Lands (SA)* (No. 1/2019); and *Integrating Art Production and Economic Development in North West NT and the Tiwi Islands* (No. 2/2019).

Len Wiebenga (Lirrwi Tourism, Yirrkala); Will Stubbs, Dave Wickens, Joseph Brady and Sally Mooney (Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala); Jake Stockley, Rarriwuy Marika and Yalmay Yunupingu (Yirrkala Literature Production Centre); and Dave Preece and Gill Towler (Yirralka Rangers, Yirrkala).

We would like to thank the board directors, members and Chief Executive Officer of ANKA, for their assistance and encouragement through different stages of this survey. In particular we thank the CEO Christina Davidson and the Chairman of the Board, Djambawa Marawili.

The Regional Coordinator for the survey in the East and West Arnhem Land region was Dr Denise Salvestro. Members of the research team who participated in the scoping trip in the region were David Throsby, Katya Petetskaya, Denise Salvestro and Neil Lanceley. The survey interviews were conducted by Denise Salvestro, Neil Lanceley and Katya Petetskaya, supported by the translators and interpreters mentioned above.

Several people provided perceptive comments on a draft of this report. With the usual *caveat*, we acknowledge in particular the detailed feedback provided by Rebecca Mostyn, Denise Salvestro and Caitlin Vaughan. We also acknowledge the financial and administrative support and cooperation provided by Macquarie University. In particular, we are very grateful for the administrative assistance and support at all stages of the project provided by Laura Billington in the Department of Economics at Macquarie University, and for the editorial assistance of Linda Drake in the same Department.

Finally, we express our sincere gratitude to all the Arnhem Land artists who gave up their time to be interviewed for this survey and its piloting in 2018.

In expressing our thanks to all the above, we make it clear that responsibility for the content of this Report and for the views expressed are entirely our own.

David Throsby

Katya Petetskaya

August 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report presents the results of a study that forms one component of a major National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists. The National Survey is being undertaken in the Department of Economics at Macquarie University progressively across six regions in remote Australia. The present Report relates to the implementation of the National Survey in Region 2: The Arnhem Land region (including both East and West Arnhem Land).

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the National Survey of which this study forms a part is to produce a nationally representative database on how individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in remote Australia establish, maintain and develop their professional arts practice. The survey aims to investigate and analyse the extent to which art and cultural production can provide a viable pathway towards economic empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples[2] living in remote towns, settlements, homelands and outstations.

The study covers the following major cultural-economic activities which are classified into two categories:

> *Creative artistic activities*: Visual arts; Performing arts; Composing or choreographing; Writing or storytelling; Making a film, TV or radio program, or multimedia work.
>
> *Cultural maintenance and applied cultural activities* (referred as "other cultural activities"): Teaching others in arts and cultural activities; Caring for country; Being on a cultural board, committee or council; Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting; Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services; Fishing, hunting, collecting or preparing bush food; Participating in ceremonies; Providing cultural tourism services; Arts administration; Arts management; Cultural archiving and/or record keeping.

The target population for the implementation of the survey in the Arnhem Land region comprises adult Indigenous artists residing in remote and very remote areas in the region. To be eligible for participation in the survey, respondents had to meet all four of the following criteria: self-identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both; be 15 years old or above; be residing in remote and very remote areas of the Arnhem Land region in accordance with the defined study boundaries; and have had previous experience in at least one of the five creative artistic activities considered in this study. The estimates show that there are about 3,000 Indigenous adult practising artists in the study region.

The research team undertook a scoping trip to the study region in July 2018. The main fieldwork involving interviews with artists in Arnhem Land took place in November 2018. In the implementation of the survey, 122 interviews were achieved for this region.

Socio-demographic characteristics of artists in the Arnhem Land region

The average age of an Indigenous artist in the region is 46 years. The use of traditional language by artists is very high in the region, with 91 percent using their traditional language most these days, with only eight percent saying they mostly used English, and the remainder using Aboriginal English.

In terms of domestic arrangements, the largest group among artists in the region comprises individuals living with a partner and with dependent children (34 percent of artists). Just under one-third of artists in the survey region live with a disability or long-term illness. More than half of these artists said that this disability or illness had no effect on their practice as

[2] The words "Indigenous", "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" and "First Nations" are used interchangeably in this report.

an artist and for the remaining artists in this group, living with a disability or long-term illness does impact their practice negatively

On average, artists in the region spend 10.5 months a year in a community or settlement, about one month on country and the remaining part of the year in regional towns, capital cities or overseas.

Artists' cultural activities

Within creative art practices, the most prominent art form in the Arnhem Land region is visual arts, with more than 80 percent of survey respondents currently working in this field. Among other cultural activities, the most prevalent are the traditional cultural practices of caring for country, fishing/hunting/collecting/preparing bush food, and participating in ceremonies, as well as the continuing process of passing on cultural knowledge and artistic skills to others.

On average, an artist in the Arnhem Land region has engaged in about eight cultural economic activities at some time in their life. At the present time, she or he is engaged in about two artistic activities and about five other cultural activities. This average artist receives some form of income for her/his work in at least one of the artistic activities and about two other cultural activities.

While almost everyone with experience in visual arts continues to be engaged in this artform (94 percent), only seven in ten of those with experience in composing or choreographing and in writing/storytelling are able to practise in these fields. The great majority of artists with experience in the cultural practices of caring for country, participating in ceremonies, fishing/hunting/collecting bush food and arts and cultural teaching of others are currently engaged in these activities, yet about a third of artists with previous experience in cultural archiving or arts management currently do not engage in these activities. In aggregate these data point to the availability of significant levels of cultural and human capital in the Arnhem Land region that might be capable of further deployment in art and cultural production.

Cultural knowledge and artistic skills

The survey findings show that the Arnhem Land artists acquire cultural knowledge from family members (98 percent) and from being on country (87 percent). The single most important pathway to learn culture is through a family member (for 92 percent of artists). In regard to the acquisition of artistic skills, learning from a family member is both the most common (for 95 percent of artists) and most important (for 82 percent) source. Other significant avenues include self-learning, learning on the job and mentorship.

Time allocation

Among the creative arts, the majority of visual artists work at their art-making for two to three full days (average 7.6 hours per day) per week or more; indeed more than one-third work at visual arts more or less full time. In contrast, the largest proportion of performing artists (82 percent) work on average only one to two full days per month or less. The data show the importance of caring for country – 86 percent of all artists in the region engage at some time in caring for their country and more than half of these (56 percent) on average spend one full day per week and more in this activity.

An average Arnhem Land artist's working week consists of 60 hours divided between the sixteen arts and cultural activities considered in this study, as well as non-cultural work. The data show that on average, artists in the region spend more time on cultural activities that support and maintain their culture (54 percent of their working week) than on artistic activities (33 percent) or non-cultural work (13 percent).

When asked whether they would like to spend more, less, or about the same amount of time at their art practice, half of respondents said they are happy with the status quo, while two in five would like to spend more time on their artistic work. The main reasons why those artists

who would like to allocate more time to their art do not do so relate to family responsibilities, or a need to spend time at work not connected to their art practice.

Financial circumstances

Paid and unpaid activities

The great majority of visual artists who practised their art in the last 12 months received some financial return from it. However, only half of musicians, actors and other performers were paid for some of their creative work, and even fewer writers and film-makers. Overall about a quarter of artists in the Arnhem Land region who are currently engaged in artistic work are not being paid for this work at all. Among other cultural activities, a significantly higher proportion of these is left unpaid, with about two-thirds of artists engaging in these activities across the board doing so on a voluntary basis. The survey findings also show that about one third of artists in the region who are engaged in non-cultural work are not paid for this work. This is partially because the great majority of these unpaid artists (almost nine in ten) are Community Development Program (CDP) participants. The voluntary nature of significant amounts of non-cultural work in remote areas of the region points to the overall lack of opportunities for generating incomes outside the arts sector.

Sources of payment

Artists receive work-related income from the private sector, the government, the third sector (includes Indigenous-owned and not-for-profit organisations) and the informal family/community sector. The great majority of payments for visual artists (88 percent of payments) and film-makers/multimedia artists (57 percent) are derived from the third sector. The private sector provides the majority of payments to composers/choreographers. Half of all payments to performing artists and authors also come from this sector. The largest proportion of payments for all other cultural activities come from the third sector; this is particularly significant for arts administration, cultural tourism, cultural archiving and cultural governance. These results can be compared with non-cultural work, where the majority of payments come from the government sector.

Methods of payment

Works of visual artists are usually paid per piece. Most sell their work through an art centre, which may pay an agreed price for the work on receipt, or more commonly will pay the artists when the work is sold. Three quarters of performing artists receive payments per service for their work, and about half of filmmakers/multimedia artists and two in five of authors receive full-time or part-time salaries. Full-time and part-time salaries are also the most common methods of payment for arts management, arts administration, translating and interpreting services, cultural archiving and teaching in arts and culture.

Other sources of income and sharing income with others

Other paid or unpaid work outside the arts and cultural sector is undertaken by one third of the artists in our sample; around two thirds of artists who engage in non-cultural work are paid for this work. About one-third of those undertaking paid non-cultural activities are doing so on a full-time basis and about one quarter on a part-time basis. The majority of the paid non-cultural jobs are within the third sector, which highlights the importance of this sector for generating employment in the region, including jobs outside the arts and cultural sector.

Two-thirds of all artists in the region receive some form of financial support through a government benefit program. This group of recipients includes pensioners and people with disability, those receiving a parenting payment, those on a Work-for-the-Dole program with CDP activities and some on unemployment benefits.

Importance of income from cultural activities

Despite the amounts of time that artists in the region put into their artistic practice, most of them regard the income from their artistic work as extra income or “incidental income” only.

Only about two in five of both visual artists and writers/storytellers see their creative income as major income.

Mean and median incomes

Our data on artists' incomes in the last 12 months indicate a mean income from creative activities of $8,700 (median $3,000). Mean incomes from other cultural activities and from other non-cultural activities were $9,700 and $4,800 respectively, giving a mean total income from work of $23,200 (median $17,600). Average income from other sources, as described above, was $8,700 (median $7,500). We find the average artist's total income from all sources in the last 12 months was $31,900 (median $26,000).

These data show that artistic activities make up 27 percent of an average artist's total income, and almost 40 percent of their work income. The largest component of artists' average work income comes from participation in other cultural activities, which comprises more than 40 percent of an average artist's work income and about a third of her/his total income.

Our estimate of the median annual income of artists in the region of around $26,000 per annum is significantly higher than the median personal income for Indigenous adults (15+) in remote and very remote areas of the Northern Territory (about $11,700 per annum) as derived from 2016 ABS Census data. This median income of Indigenous artists in the region is also higher than the median personal income of Indigenous adults in the labour force in remote and very remote areas of NT (about $23,400 per annum).

Professional practice

In considering issues of art practice, we distinguish between those artists who are primarily *visual artists* engaged in activities including painting, print-making, weaving, carving, and sculpting, and those who are *performing artists* engaged in music, dance, theatre, or film production.

Artists' years of experience

About two-thirds of the artists in the region (68 percent) have had more than 20 years' experience practising their art form. This attests to the significant accumulation of human capital in the Arnhem Land as a major resource to generate economic benefit for communities in the region.

Locations and facilities for making work

Around 70 percent of all artists in the region utilise their own or a family member's home and for about 40 percent, private homes are the places where they spend the most of their time making work. More than two-thirds of visual artists in the region have been able to practise in an arts centre, and for about half of them arts centres are where they spend most of their working time. Almost one-third of all artists in the region also make use of other community spaces and facilities, such as community halls and recreation spaces - this is more common among performing artists than visual artists.

Professional achievements

Almost two-thirds of artists in the Arnhem Land region have had their work shown or presented in capital cities, and almost one-third have been seen overseas. Around one-in-five of artists in the region have won an award or prize of some sort. The same proportion of artists has received a grant or similar funding for their artistic production. Of those whose work has been showcased overseas or in capital cities, almost all regarded this experience as very positive, as did those winning a prize or receiving a grant.

Use of equipment and technology

Just on half of visual artists do not use any technological device, while two thirds of performing artists use one or more devices. Note that overall Indigenous artists use technology more than the Indigenous population in general. Also, NATSISS data show that

Indigenous artists in remote and very remote areas across Australia access the Internet more often than the general Indigenous population in these areas.

Copyright issues

The majority (80 percent) of artists said that as far as they were aware, their work or a reproduction of their work had not been used without their permission or payment, with a further 15 percent being unsure. The remaining 5 percent stated that they experienced copyright infringement.

Gender issues

The female/male gender ratio in the survey region is roughly 54/46. There appear to be somewhat more females than males in our survey sample who suffer from disability, long-term illness or other form of impairment (36 compared to 23 percent).

A larger proportion of women artists in the region complete high school than men do and somewhat more men than women complete a post-school diploma or certificate. Although both men and women mostly gain their cultural experience and skills from family members, women are more likely than men to do so by observing and participating with a family member, whereas the reverse is true for those who simply observe.

There are only minor differences between the genders in the levels of the different sources of income. Although it appears that the gender gap that affects incomes of mainstream artists in Australia is not evident in the incomes of Indigenous artists in the Arnhem Land region, it should be remembered that the absolute levels of creative incomes of non-Indigenous artists are significantly greater than those of their Indigenous counterparts.

Art and culture in sustainable communities

We found artists agree unanimously with the proposition that art and cultural production has the potential to promote long-term sustainability of remote communities in the Arnhem Land region. In addition, there was very strong agreement that "Artists/writers like myself can train young people in the community to become artists/writers". Respondents also strongly endorsed the importance of bilingual education in school.

The results show that there was strong support for the importance of art centres, with almost unanimous agreement that "Having an art centre creates (could create) jobs and incomes in my community". There appears to be general satisfaction with the community facilities in remote communities. Almost all respondents in our survey expressed a positive attitude to having tourists visit to experience Aboriginal culture first hand. Respondents also thought that tourists can bring incomes and employment to communities.

Conclusions: Policy issues and recommendations

There is considerable variation across Arnhem Land in the economic, social and cultural circumstances in different communities and in their potential for future development. It is unlikely that a single policy measure will address all issues at once; rather, a mix of complementary measures is needed to deal with particular aspects. We do not suggest that art and cultural production on its own can transform any remote community. We argue that under the right conditions it can be an effective means for employment creation and income generation, and can help improve the long-term prospects for economic sustainability and social viability, while also respecting the fundamental importance of Indigenous culture. All policy recommendations that flow from this study are pointed in this direction.

(1) Infrastructure needs

Art centres

Artists are unequivocal in their recognition of the vital role that art centres play in the functioning of the Indigenous arts economy in the region. Nevertheless, while the art centre model has been working, it will need to rely on a continuation of support in future. In

particular, art centres provide many additional social services and other public benefits to their artists and the wider community for which they rarely receive any funding support. Often artists rely on the art centre staff (sometimes consisting of just an art centre manager) to assist them with financial and other matters. While providing such support puts additional pressures on the art centre staff, it is crucial in enabling artists to continue their practice. It is important that funding arrangements for art centres recognise this reality for their ongoing sustainability.

One of the features of organisations working to support art and cultural producers in remote Indigenous communities is the mixing of skills, experiences and knowledge of local Indigenous staff with those of non-Indigenous professionals coming from outside the communities.

Resources for performing artists

Generally performing artists do not have access to widely available facilities to assist in the development of their creative work. Many also face problems finding opportunities to present their work because of a shortage of suitable venues or events. Sharing of resources between local organisations in provision of facilities could foster an expansion of musical work by creative individuals.

Support organisations

Several cultural organisations exist in the Arnhem Land region that support the work of artists. One of the most important is ANKA, the peak organisation for the region. It provides advocacy, training, marketing and resourcing services, and its regional conferences are important for providing support and coordination for Indigenous artists and Indigenous art workers in the region. There are several other organisations supporting the arts in the region, including Artback NT, Music NT, NT Writers Centre, Aboriginal Broadcasting Australia, and Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association. The important role of these organisations in facilitating the development of arts and cultural practice in the region needs full acknowledgement in the formulation of policy strategies at all levels of public and private sector engagement affecting arts and cultural producers.

(2) Expanding economic opportunities

Earning income from culture-related activities

In addition to the creative arts there are several other culture-related activities including translation and interpretation services, cultural archiving, cross-cultural consulting, cultural governance services and providing cultural tourism services to visitors. Many artists in the region undertake these activities on a regular basis without being able to earn additional income from them. It is important to acknowledge and remunerate appropriately the various cultural contributions that Indigenous artists and cultural producers have been providing. Effective awareness campaigns and the right support could significantly improve prospects for economic opportunities derived from these sorts of activities.

Market and supply-chain issues

To a large extent market development takes place in response to commercial incentives, but there is a role for judicious policy interventions that provide market intelligence, export promotion programs, regulatory measures to prevent the sale of fake Indigenous art products, and promotion of best practice in certification of authenticity by all sellers of products purporting to come from Indigenous artists.

Learning from successes of hybrid organisations

Working in cross-cultural environments requires bridging different values, rationales, agendas and objectives. Enterprises and organisations that have understood and accommodated this, such as ranger programs and art centres, have been able to function and thrive in these conditions. Their structures allow them to operate within the hybrid realm of

the market, embracing government, community/families and the not-for-profit sectors. There is an opportunity to acknowledge such working models and learn from their experiences.

(3) Education, training and skill development

School

School education is recognised by artists as having some part to play in imparting cultural knowledge and skills that complement the essential role of family and community members. Some programs provide cooperation between an art centre and the local school, whereby children visit the centre on a regular basis, or where senior artists visit the school to teach arts and cultural skills to children. There is an opportunity to strengthen these educational pathways by acknowledging their long-term nature and providing appropriate funding support.

Inter- and intra-generational cultural transmission

At present the costs of arts training by family and community members are to a large extent borne by the community and in-kind payments. Very few funding streams acknowledge artists involved as teachers and reimburse their work accordingly. Other educational initiatives including training provided by arts centres, ranger organisations, culture and language centres and other organisations rarely have an appropriate budget or funding to support these activities, and workers are often unpaid. Our Report points to the need not only to acknowledge the long-term educational benefit that these organisations can provide, but also to ensure that they are properly supported.

Skill transfers from outside

Art professionals who come from outside to work in organisations that support art and cultural producers benefit from training and advice received from senior artists and local Indigenous staff. When these people leave, many years of valuable experience is lost. If there were a database of these culturally experienced professionals, they could be located and engaged as consultants later in the region in the arts and cultural sector or perhaps in other industries.

Access to country

Virtually all artists spend some part of their time caring for country, and many rely on accessing their country as a source of knowledge and creative inspiration, place of practice or for gathering materials for their art production. The data provide compelling evidence in support of the need for securing artists' access to country if art and culture are to become a stronger source of economic empowerment for remote Aboriginal communities in the Arnhem Land region.

Further education

Various opportunities exist for further education of artists in the region, such as short courses and workshops provided through an art centre, other organisation or agency. These activities may include hosting a visiting artist or educator to train local practitioners in specific techniques such as printmaking, fabric design, and so on, and specialised courses for film- and multi-media makers. There is a need for continued funding for such initiatives, including support for workshops and short courses taught by Indigenous senior artists and cultural producers from the region.

Business skills

There is a strong need for business training in remote communities so Indigenous artists, cultural producers and other community members better understand the business side of art and cultural production. Many art centres already educate their artists on business aspects of the arts. More could be done if dedicated funding and support materials could be provided for organisations to take on this function.

(4) Cultural tourism

A program of particular importance in encouraging tourist engagement with Indigenous art and culture is the series of Territory Arts Trails, developed by the Territory Government. It includes the Indigenous Tourism Champions program to identify Aboriginal-owned tourism businesses offering authentic cultural experiences delivered by Indigenous people. There is also scope for smaller start-ups and local initiatives in the Indigenous cultural tourism space. In some locations, opportunities exist for the establishment of small family-based tourism enterprises involving Aboriginal individuals and focussing on providing small-group art/culture/nature experiences for discriminating visitors. Sometimes these activities can occur in association with the work of Indigenous rangers and other local organisations.

Prospective enterprises in this field require basic business skills, indicating the need for skill development programs such as workshops, short-course training sessions, and/or small business incubators tailored to the needs of family-based tourism initiatives. If successful, these enterprises could become a prime example of a participatory economy in the region, engaging Indigenous individuals and communities.

There is a range of possibilities for individual or small-group tours to homelands in the region, by self-drive or on an all-inclusive tour. Tourists can also visit Arnhem Land by sea – cruise ships call at some locations along the coast from time to time. These vessels are mostly relatively small, catering to discriminating cultural tourists. With necessary community support for commercial initiatives in the cultural tourism space, there is scope for growth in this sector as a source of low-volume/high-yield cultural tourists keen to experience Yolŋgu culture at first hand.

Overall, we conclude that there is considerable potential for further development of the Indigenous tourism industry in the Arnhem Land region. In particular, there is scope for consolidation and expansion of the Art Trails program. Identification of key infrastructure constraints is a priority, including transport, accommodation, and other tourist services including marketing. It can be suggested that the region needs a strategic plan for tourism that should be integrated with the Territory's overall tourism strategy, originally framed in terms of 2020 and currently being moved forward to planning for developments up to 2030.

National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists

Integrating Art Production and Economic Development in Arnhem Land

1 BACKGROUND

Arts and cultural production has significant potential to contribute to the economic sustainability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander[3] communities in remote areas of Australia. Indigenous Australians possess fundamental cultural knowledge and skills, and participate in a wide range of arts and cultural activities. These are the activities that allow Indigenous cultures to be maintained, developed and expressed, ensuring their continuation. They also encourage a strong sense of community identity. Yet, little formal research has been undertaken investigating how the cultural assets in Indigenous communities can be mobilised as a source of income generation and employment creation. The only official survey that collects data on aspects of cultural production in Indigenous communities in remote Australia is the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) carried out periodically by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). However, the data collected by NATSISS only target some selected cultural activities, and the statistics generated are not suitable for determining the full scale of artistic and cultural production in these areas.

In the mainstream arts in Australia it has been recognised that the only way to collect reliable, robust, systematic and objective data about the conditions of individual artistic production is via a nationwide survey. Such a survey was undertaken for the first time in 1983 as a component of the Australia Council's Individual Artist Inquiry, and has been repeated periodically ever since, with the most recent survey having been carried out in 2017[4]. The information about arts practice yielded by the surveys has been of inestimable value to government departments and agencies at Federal, State, Territory and local levels, peak bodies in all areas of the arts, cultural institutions, other arts-related organisations and the general public. While these surveys have included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists working at a professional level in the mainstream – mostly in metropolitan and other urban and regional locations – it has never been possible to extend the coverage to include remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. A completely different questionnaire and survey methodology is required to address the realities of artistic production of these artists.

The nationwide survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, of which the present study is a part, was initiated by the present authors in 2015 to remedy this situation. The Survey responds to a need for a deeper and more informed understanding of the circumstances of Indigenous cultural production as a source of income and employment in remote communities. It is motivated by two basic propositions: (1) Use of cultural assets has

[3] The words "Indigenous", "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" and "First Nations" are used interchangeably in this report to refer to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia.

[4] See David Throsby and Katya Petetskaya, *Making Art Work: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia* (Sydney: Australia Council for the Arts, 2017), referred to henceforward as *Making Art Work 2017*.

the potential to make a significantly more substantial contribution to the economic sustainability of Indigenous communities in remote Australia than it does at present, and it can do so in a way that links economic and business development with the maintenance of Indigenous culture; and (2) If the stakeholders are to understand the potential of cultural assets as a component of economic sustainability, and if policy-makers are to understand how to design policy strategies to support this, basic data are needed about cultural work and practice on the ground.

The purpose of the study in Arnhem Land is to investigate and analyse the extent to which art and cultural production can provide a viable pathway towards economic empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in remote towns, settlements, homelands and outstations across the region. These are areas where cultural production has the potential to be one of the most important means for providing a viable, sustainable and culturally-relevant livelihood for members of the community. Cultural production is taken to include artistic activities such as the visual and performing arts, writing/ storytelling, composing, artistic production in film and audio-visual media, as well as a range of other cultural activities such as caring for country, participating in ceremonies, cultural governance, cultural archiving, and so on. Notwithstanding the wide range of cultural activities covered, the primary focus of this study is on the creative arts, and on the prospects for art and cultural production to promote employment for creative workers and incomes for communities.

Implementation of the survey in the Arnhem Land region is particularly important because of the following considerations:

- Firstly, economic sustainability for Indigenous Australians living in remote communities is an extremely important issue in the Northern Territory, and there is a strong need for a clearer understanding of the ways in which production of arts and cultural goods and services might be able to contribute to the long-term resilience of these communities.
- Secondly, there are a number of established art centres and other cultural organisations in the region, which constitute an important component of the infrastructure supporting regional art and cultural production; the maintenance and further development of this infrastructure is essential to the viability of art and cultural activities for Indigenous people in remote and very remote areas.
- Thirdly, the policy directions of the Commonwealth and NT Governments have an extensive engagement with the issues that this project addresses, such that the results have the potential to make a significant contribution to policy formation at all levels of public administration as well as in commercial and non-government sectors.

2 ART AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES

As described in Section 1 of this Report, the aim of this study is to investigate and analyse the extent to which art and cultural production can provide a means towards economic empowerment for remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The context, within which the study is placed, is one that recognises the fundamental significance of culture to the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The intangible cultural capital possessed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in these remote communities is the fundamental resource upon which they can draw – both generally in their day-to-day lives, and specifically in their creative and culture-related activities. It is through the use of their cultural and natural resources that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have their strongest opportunity to attain long-term economic and cultural sustainability.

Analytical framework

For the purposes of systematic analysis, we require a model encapsulating the essential character of the Indigenous art and cultural economy in remote regions. Such a model will look somewhat different from standard economic models of industrial organisation, labour supply, profit-oriented production, entrepreneurial behaviour, and so on. An overarching framework for our model can be drawn from the concept of sustainability as understood by First Nations communities all around the world[5]. For these peoples, the basic premises governing economic, social and cultural life relate to the interconnected roles of land, cultural law and language[6]. The social norms and mode of governance for Indigenous communities in Australia exemplify these principles, which have underpinned the maintenance and transmission of their culture for thousands of years.

Our focus in this study is on the individual artist or cultural producer who lives and works within this Indigenous art and cultural economy. The model of the economy that we propose extends the conventional three-sector model (comprising a government sector, a commercial sector, and a non-profit "third" sector) by overlaying a fourth sector, a community/family sector, that has interactions with all three. Organisations operating within this economy can be seen as examples of "hybrid" organisations, which combine elements from at least two of the state, market, non-profit and community sectors[7]. The boundaries between the sectors are blurred and overlaps between the sectors can shift with time and changes of circumstances, and will be specific to each particular hybrid organisation. The concept of hybridity in organisations emerged in the mid-1990s and has gradually gained in importance in what is now known as a "hybrid movement" (Battilana et al. 2012).

There are multiple definitions of hybridity. In the context of remote Indigenous communities, hybrids occur as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned corporations, social enterprises, community-run initiatives and commercial businesses as well as private companies with established protocols for corporate social responsibility and corporate philanthropy. They embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural practitioners working as individuals. For our purposes, we can take an art centre in a remote Indigenous community as an example of a hybrid organisation. Art centres are Aboriginal

[5] See the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations 2007).
[6] For a discussion of these issues, see Throsby and Petetskaya (2016).
[7] Use of the terms "hybrid" here is different from its application in Jon Altman's concept of the "hybrid economy" comprising state, market and customary sectors (see Altman, 2007).

and Torres Strait Islander owned, managed and governed enterprises that are state-supported, yet they also function as businesses that need to generate operating profits. In many communities, art centres are often forced to take on additional duties as social welfare distributors in the absence of such organisations in the community in which they operate. Such additional services include but are not limited to: account management for their artists; negotiating with Government services on behalf of the artists (and at times their family members); providing training and education to community members; documenting and archiving of material of cultural and social significance to the community; and so on. At times, an art centre might be the only organisation in a community that has functional equipment and facilities, such as an internet or phone connection, printer, or transportation resources. A remote art centre often also serves as an effective conduit for other organisations and agencies, enabling them better to serve the Indigenous community; in this respect these other organisations take advantage of the art centre's role as a broker between artists, other community members and outside stakeholders.

Ranger groups provide another example of hybrid organisations in remote Indigenous communities. These groups usually receive support from various Government programs for providing environmental services to the Australian community, yet some of their activities are market-based – plant harvesting enterprises, for example, or making bush medicine/cosmetics for retail or wholesale sale via local markets, stores and online. These organisations may also participate in the market via trading in Australian Carbon Credit Units.[8] Notwithstanding these commercial operations, ranger programs are an extension of existing practices of caring for country that have been undertaken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on a continuous basis over many thousands of years in many parts of Australia.

Given the context of hybrid organisations as outlined above, the analytical framework that we propose involves the individual cultural producer placed at the centre of the system, engaging in cultural production and cultural transmission as an individual operating within all four sectors. The individual cultural producer is portrayed as a member of a community with cultural, social and other responsibilities, and functioning in an environment that is affected by values, agendas and rationalities (often competing with each other) that derive from all four sectors and from the mainstream policy discourse.

It is important to note that the hybridity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations operating remotely allows for overlapping and sharing of services between organisations. This happens in a variety of ways, including: when tourist operations cooperate and rely on services provided by art centres or rangers; when art centres rely on the stream of tourists being brought in by those tourist operators; when artists cooperate with rangers for collecting materials on country; when organisations or groups in a community rely on the services of a local multimedia centre for documentation of events and promotional material; when dancers and musicians benefit from using vacant spaces provided by a local school for rehearsals; or when artists are able to earn some income from participating in culture programs run by a school. Because there are strong interconnections between the sectors, boosting one or more of the sectors in remote Indigenous communities has the potential to contribute to the growth of the local economy overall.

Employment and unemployment

An essential concern of this study is with the prospects for employment creation through art and cultural production in remote Indigenous communities in the Arnhem Land region. As is

[8] Received for reducing carbon emissions via burning at the start of the dry season, which allows avoiding much bigger fires later on.

well known, employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals living in remote areas of Australia, especially the younger generation, tend to be sparse, a fact that increases the pressure on young people to leave the community in search of employment in larger centres. Jobs in remote areas have particular challenges such as constraints on accessibility, resources, services, infrastructure and communication, as well as limited access to professional development, training and education. In addition, in many remote areas in Australia, seasonality and having to work in a physical environment of climatic extremes add to the list of challenges. Moreover, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals experience difficulties when trying to balance their cultural and work obligations. The impact of this issue on the workplace is well known, such as when ceremonies interrupt work for several days or weeks. There is a strong need for culturally appropriate jobs in remote areas or at least jobs flexible enough to accommodate cultural requirements and obligations.

Efforts have been made by successive governments to deal with the lack of jobs and job training in remote areas. The Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program was introduced to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the 1970s as a community development, employment creation and income support scheme. The CDEP was terminated in 2009. At the moment, the Community Development Program (CDP) is the main program of job-related assistance for unemployed people in remote areas[9]. In 2018 there were about 32 thousand CDP participants, of whom more than 80 percent were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals[10]. The CDP provides social security for the job seeker, with obligations to meet certain requirements, such as undertaking 25 hours per week in work-for-the-dole, or up to their assessed capacity. Penalties can be applied for non-attendance.

The CDP and equivalent programs have been applied to tackling employment problems in remote Indigenous communities, an approach involving training provision for potential jobs. An alternative is to recognise that significant skills and even employment options already exist in the region. These resources can be utilised in creating incomes and further employment possibilities for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals in remote areas. Such an approach would seek to expand already existing opportunities proven to be working. For this approach to work, there is an urgent need to understand the scope of existing skills and experiences that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in remote regions have. The National Survey of Remote Indigenous Artists was created with this purpose in mind.

Working remotely

There is a belief that the majority of jobs available remotely tend to concentrate in larger communities and hub settlements. To the extent that this has occurred, there is evidence that the movement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into larger communities has created social, cultural and economic problems (see, for example, Morphy 2008), yet has not contributed to improving the situation of remote Indigenous unemployment. The most recent NATSISS data show that 44 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from remote and very remote areas Australia-wide lived outside such hub settlements and in small homelands/outstations in 2014-15. Another 40 percent visit homelands/outstations

[9] The Remote Jobs and Communities Program (RJCP) was also in existence between 1 July 2013 and 1 July 2015.

[10] Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Community Development Programme: Where the CDP operates*, 25 June 2018, https://www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/indigenous-affairs/community-development-programme-regions (accessed 19 June 2019).

from time to time – places where they fish, hunt, collect bush medicines, collect materials for their art works and make art, and participate in ceremonies. Only four percent have never visited a homeland, or are not allowed to, or do not know if they are allowed to visit (NATSISS 2014-15). For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples there are many economic, health, social and cultural benefits that living in smaller homelands/outstations can provide (Altman and Taylor 1989, McDermott et.al. 1998 Rowley et al. 2008). When living on their country, "people feel that they have a degree of autonomy, of control over their own destiny" (Morphy 2008, p.388).

It is noteworthy that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals who are engaged in artistic activities have high levels of engagement in homelands/outstations it is more common for Indigenous artists than non-artists to live in such places. Nevertheless, living remotely does not mean a lack of engagement with the outside world. Many artists who work from these locations also travel or send their work Australia-wide and internationally.

Cultural tourism brings people from all over the world to places where Indigenous culture can be experienced in the most direct and authentic way. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals from these remote locations also participate in research, such as research into biodiversity undertaken in collaboration with different institutions in Australia and overseas – there are a number of examples of harvesting and cultivation of bush foods and medicine as commercial ventures[11]. Our analytical framework recognises all the various realities of living and working remotely for Indigenous cultural producers.

Mapping remote Indigenous cultural production

The broad conceptual framework within which this study is situated as outlined above involves also a delineation of the nature and extent of Indigenous cultural production in remote and very remote locations. In the present survey, mapping of cultural-economic activities that contribute to art and cultural production in the Arnhem Land region was undertaken by the research team in July 2017, based on the results of a similar mapping exercise of cultural-economic activities carried out by the present authors in the Kimberley region in 2015 and the East Arnhem Land region in 2012-2014.

The continuous mapping exercise allowed identification of the major cultural-economic activities being practised in remote areas, broadly classified into the following categories (1) creative artistic activities and (2) cultural maintenance and applied cultural activities, referred to simply as "other cultural activities". The activities identified (and corresponding occupations for the creative activities) are defined as follows:

Creative artistic activities:

- Visual arts (painting, photography, printmaking, making sculptures, textiles, carvings, weaving, ceramics, glass, jewellery)
- Performing arts (acting, dancing, playing musical instruments, singing)
- Composing or choreographing
- Writing or storytelling
- Making a film, TV or radio program, or multimedia work

Cultural maintenance and applied cultural activities:

- Teaching others in arts and cultural activities

[11] See, for example, Altman et al. (1997); English and Baker (2003); Merne Altyerre-ipenhe (Food from the Creation time) Reference Group et al. (2011); Walsh et al. (2014).

- Caring for country
- Being on a cultural board, committee or council
- Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting
- Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services
- Fishing, hunting, collecting or preparing bush food
- Participating in ceremonies
- Providing cultural tourism services
- Arts administration
- Arts management
- Cultural archiving, record keeping.

All cultural-economic activities listed above can be interpreted with reference to standard industrial definitions as determined under the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006 (Revision 2.0), as shown in Appendix 1.

In regard to definitional issues in interpreting the above list of activities, the following points should be noted:

- "Performing arts" is distinguished from "Participating in ceremonies". During survey interviews, respondents were asked if dance or music pieces that they were engaged in were performed to outsiders as part of showcasing local culture. In the case of a positive response the activity was defined as "performing arts".
- "Fishing, hunting, collecting bush food" and "Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services" involve participation in activities that require detailed knowledge of the local environment – its seasons, ecology, flora and fauna" (Morphy 2008).
- "Caring for country" involves controlled burning, weed and feral species control, protecting marine life, the clearing of beaches, conservation and research of marine and terrestrial wildlife – in other words, land and sea management using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ecological knowledge. It does not refer necessarily to any formal work activity, but is something that may be practised simply by living on country and carrying out normal day-to-day activities there.

3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

3.1 THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF REMOTE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTISTS

The objectives of the National Survey of which this study forms a part is to produce a nationally representative database on how individual Indigenous artists in remote Australia establish, maintain and develop their professional arts practice. This database aims to provide reliable data on how cultural knowledge and creative skills are accumulated and transmitted within and between generations in different remote regions and how individual Indigenous artists utilise their knowledge and skills to serve both cultural and economic purposes, while pursuing their artistic aspirations. The database is intended to cover all major remote regions of Indigenous art production in Australia and will be able to be updated over time to add further information and account for changing conditions.

The results of this work so far are already providing a solid evidence base helping to inform policy-making by a range of stakeholders including individual artists, community organisations, art and cultural businesses, art centres, peak bodies and government agencies. The policy areas for which the survey data are proving to be relevant include the following:

- avenues for expanding economic opportunities through mobilisation of the existing cultural capital in remote Indigenous communities;
- education, training and skills development;
- infrastructure needs;
- the role of art centres and other non-government (third sector) organisations;
- cultural tourism;
- the future sustainability of Indigenous communities in remote and very remote locations.

It is expected that the policy usefulness of the results of the National Survey will build up from local to regional to State/Territory and to national levels over time as the database is further developed.

3.2 THE SURVEY IN THE ARNHEM LAND REGION

In the implementation of the National Survey in the Arnhem Land region, the overall objectives remain as spelt out above. Since a basic premise of the survey is that art production must be seen in the context of the full extent of artists' cultural engagement, our survey in the Arnhem Land region investigates a range of aspects of art and cultural production including:

- the number and extent of cultural-economic activities that artists undertake or have undertaken;
- the pathways for acquiring the knowledge and skills (the cultural capital) to become an artist in remote areas;
- respondents' current economic engagement with arts and cultural production;
- the spread of paid and unpaid work of different types, the allocation of time to different activities, and the nature and amounts of income earned;
- aspects of professional creative art practice in the region; and
- the role of cultural production in sustainable community development.

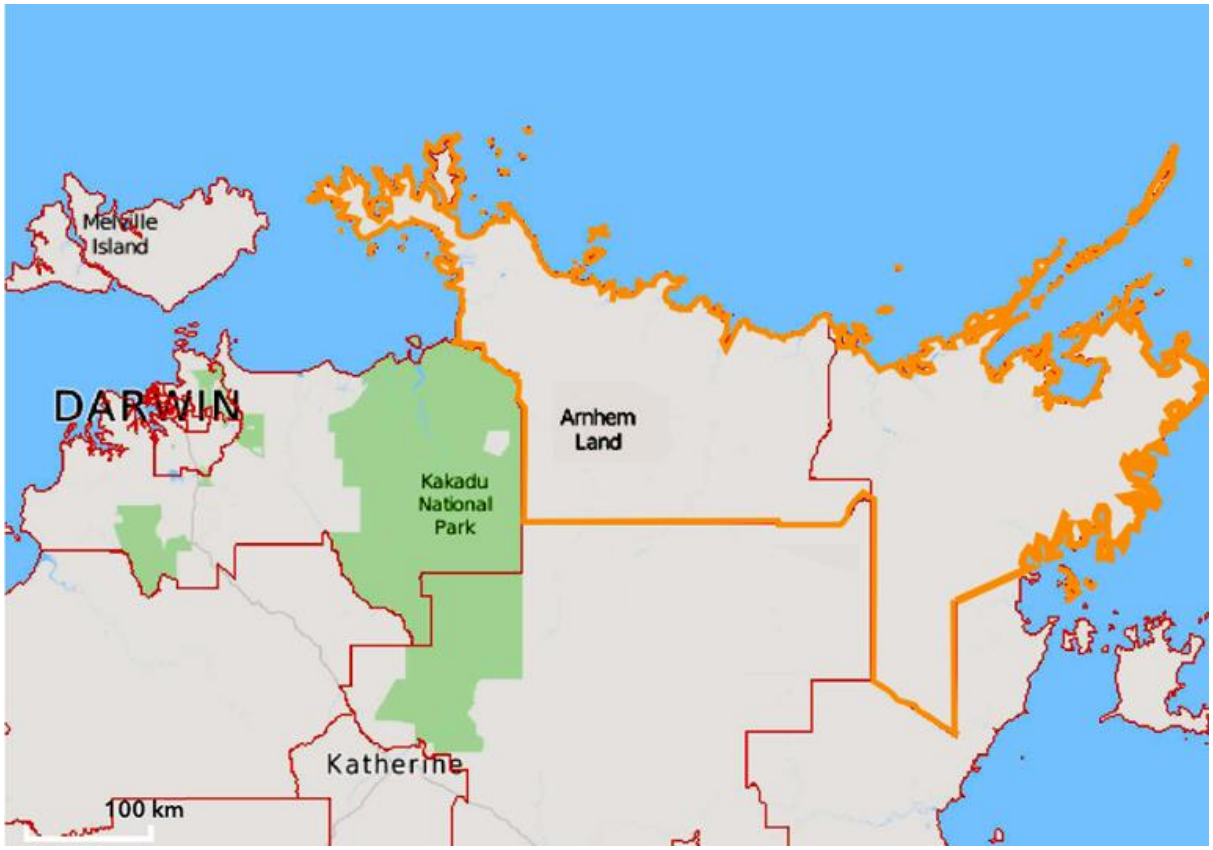
4 METHODOLOGY

This section provides a description of methodology used for this study and how this regional survey was carried out. First, we define the region. We then discuss how we estimated the target population and the required sample size, followed by a description of the survey procedure, and the calculation of weights to be applied to the data to assist in standardising results in line with known population characteristics.

4.1 REGIONAL BOUNDARIES

For the purpose of this survey, the boundaries of the Arnhem Land study region are taken to coincide with the following Statistical Areas Level 2 (SA2) boundaries as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS): Nhulunbuy, East Arnhem and West Arnhem. All of the locations within this area are classified as "very remote" with one exception of Gunbalanya (Oenpelli), which is classified as "remote", in accordance with the 2016 ASGS Remoteness Structure. The location of the survey region is shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Arnhem Land regional boundaries



4.2 TARGET POPULATION

The target population for this study comprises adult Indigenous artists residing in the Arnhem region in remote and very remote areas. The region is home to diverse Aboriginal languages and cultures that include the Gumatj, Manggalili, Rirratjingu, Marrakulu, Djambarrpuyngu, Wangurri, Galpu, Djarrwark, Dhalwangu, Dhudi, Djapu, Marrangu,

Ngaymil, Golumala, Warramiri, Daatiwuy, Gupapuyngu, Madarrpa, Ganalbingu, Mawng, Kunbarlang, Kunwinjku, Iwaidja, Djambarrpuyngu, Ndjébbana, Nakara, Gurrgone, Burarra, Kune (Mayali), Rembarrnga, Wagilag, Djinang and Kundjeyhmi peoples.

To be eligible for participation in the survey, respondents had to meet all four of the following criteria. Respondents were required to:

(1) self-identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both;

(2) be 15 years old or above;

(3) be residing in remote and very remote areas of the Arnhem Land region (in accordance with the defined study boundaries); and

(4) have had previous experience in at least one of the five creative artistic activities considered in this study (see further in Section 6).

Screening questions were introduced in the survey to ensure the above criteria were met.

4.3 ARTIST POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE ESTIMATION

The numbers of Indigenous artists residing in remote areas of Australia and practising across different art forms are largely unknown. For the purpose of this study, we had to rely on the only source available on which we could make our own estimates – the ABS series of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Surveys (NATSISS). The 2014–15 NATSISS provides data about percentages of Indigenous adults (15+) in remote and very remote areas who had participated in at least one of the following three artistic activities in 2014–15:

- making Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander arts or crafts;
- performing any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander music, dance, theatre, and/or;
- writing or telling Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander stories.

The definition of an artist used in our own survey covers a wider range of creative artistic activities than those listed above, as it also includes composers, choreographers, filmmakers and multimedia artists. Thus the NATSISS estimates of the artist population are likely to underestimate the numbers of artists of relevance to this survey. In the absence of other sources however, the NATSISS data were used.

Furthermore, our definition of artists relates to those with experience in particular art forms and not only those who have practised their art forms in the previous year, which is the focus of the NATSIS surveys. To make a comparison between our data and the NATSISS results, we use the data from our survey on artists who had participated in at least one of the five creative artistic activities in “the last 12 months”.

Analysis of the 2014-15 NATSISS data shows that 40.2 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults (15+) in very remote areas of the Northern Territory; and 25.0 percent in remote areas had participated in at least one of the three creative artistic activities in 2014-15. We therefore assume that these percentages can be applied to the adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the Arnhem Land region as indicated by the 2016 Australian Census in order to estimate a lower bound on the number of artists located in the region, as shown in Table 4.1.

The calculations in Table 4.1 produce an estimate of about 3,000 Indigenous adult practising artists in the study region. Although these figures are likely to understate the true number

for the reasons stated earlier, we use them for the purposes of estimating approximate sample sizes. They allow us to calculate the minimum requirement for a sample size for this region as being set at n=94, for a 10 percent margin of error at a 95 percent level of confidence. In the end, a sample size of 122 was achieved for our survey in the Arnhem Land region.

Table 4.1 Population distribution and size

ABS 2016 Statistical Areas	Communities included	Remoteness	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander adults (15+)		
			Population*	Participated in selected artistic activities in 2014–15**	
			N	%	N
Nhulunbuy Level 2	Nhulunbuy	Very remote	225	40.2	90
East Arnhem Level 2	Ramingining, Yirrkala, Milingimbi, Gunyangara, Gapuwiyak, Galiwin'ku, Garrthalala, Dhalinybuy, Yilpara (Baniyala), Bukudal, Bawaka	Very remote	4,818	40.2	1,937
West Arnhem Level 2***	Maningrida, Warruwi, Minjilang	Very remote	2,341	40.2	941
Gunbalanya Indigenous Location (ILOC)	Gunbalanya (Oenpelli)	Remote	751	25.0	188
Total Arnhem Land			**8,135**	**-**	**2,968**

* Source: ABS 2016 Census.

** Source: NATSISS 2014–15.

*** Not including the Gunbalanya ILOC area, which is classified as "remote".

4.4 SURVEY PROCEDURE AND WEIGHTING

In the absence of a complete list of adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists residing in the study region, we could not construct a sample frame for this study.[12] Instead we relied on a limited sampling procedure involving locating artists via a variety of regional organisations in commercial, government, not-for-profit and community sectors dealing with art and cultural activities. These organisations included art centres, commercial and artists-run galleries, community centres, youth centres, men's sheds, women's centres, Indigenous rangers, publishing houses, schools, aged care centres, TV and radio stations, broadcasting corporations, culture and learning centres, language centres, archives and

[12] For a more detailed discussion of sampling issues in surveying remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, see David Throsby and Ekaterina Petetskaya (2015) *Remote Indigenous Cultural Practitioners in East Arnhem Land: Survey Methodology and Principal Results*. Macquarie Economics Research Paper 1/2011, September 2015, pp. 8–9.

libraries, arts and cultural festivals, media production centres, peak bodies and relevant government departments. In order to ensure that all individuals from the target population had a chance to be selected and represented in the survey, we adopted the following strategies when finding survey respondents:

- Potential respondents were located via connections to one of the regional organisations as indicated above, or via family members working with these organisations, or were approached in public spaces in the various survey locations.
- The interviewers explained the nature and objectives of the survey to potential respondents, who were then asked whether they would be willing to participate in the survey.
- Potential respondents were then asked screening questions to allow for elimination of ineligible respondents.

When the interviews were completed and the full final dataset was available for analysis, it was possible to compare relevant characteristics of the sample of artists with those of the target population to determine weights, as described further in Section 4.5 below.

The survey interviews were conducted in the following locations in the study region: Nhulunbuy, Ramingining, Yirrkala, Milingimbi, Gunyangara, Gapuwiyak, Galiwin'ku, Maningrida, Warruwi and Gunbalanya (Oenpelli). The researchers received necessary research permissions to enter these communities and conduct the interviews, with full cooperation and engagement from the communities, local organisations and relevant peak bodies.

The research team undertook a scoping trip to the study region in July 2018, when the draft questionnaire was tested with local Indigenous consultants to make sure it addressed local particularities of artistic and cultural production in the region. On the basis of the feedback received, the draft survey instrument was revised and subsequently prepared in its final form. The main fieldwork involving interviews with artists in Arnhem Land took place in November 2018. The survey was administered by computer-assisted face-to-face interviews in English or, when required, with the assistance of a translator/interpreter.

4.5 CALCULATION OF WEIGHTS

Our survey yielded a sample size of 122 artists. In order to determine how representative our survey sample is of the entire population of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artists in the survey region, we compared the socio-demographic characteristics of the obtained sample with the corresponding characteristics of the target population derived from NATSISS data; this population comprises Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander adults in very remote and remote areas of the Northern Territory who had participated in the creative artistic activities discussed in Section 4.3 above.

NATSISS data for most regions allow stratification by gender. The 2014–15 NATSISS data for very remote areas in NT also allow valid stratification by age. However, in the case of the two other NT regions included in the National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists — the Central Desert/APY Lands and North-West NT/Tiwi Islands regions – stratification by age was not possible due to very high relative standard errors (greater than 50 percent) for the age statistics in these areas. Thus, to make our findings for Arnhem Land consistent and comparable with the other two regions in NT we only compare our sample with the NATSISS data for gender.

Table 4.2 shows the calculation of weights according to the above procedures. The results indicate that some corrections were needed to adjust for gender differences between the sample and the target population. The calculated weights shown in the last row of the table were applied to the raw data to obtain estimates adjusted to reflect the gender characteristics of the target population. As a result of these procedures, we can take our results to be broadly representative of the population of adult Indigenous artists in the Arnhem Land region, subject to normal caveats concerning statistical inference. It is the weighted data that are shown in all subsequent tables in this Report.

Table 4.2 Comparison of our sample with NATSISS data by gender showing calculation of weights**

	Female	Male
Our sample, %	57	43
NATSISS 2014-15, %	55	45
Weights applied in the survey	**0.96**	**1.05**

* For method, see text.

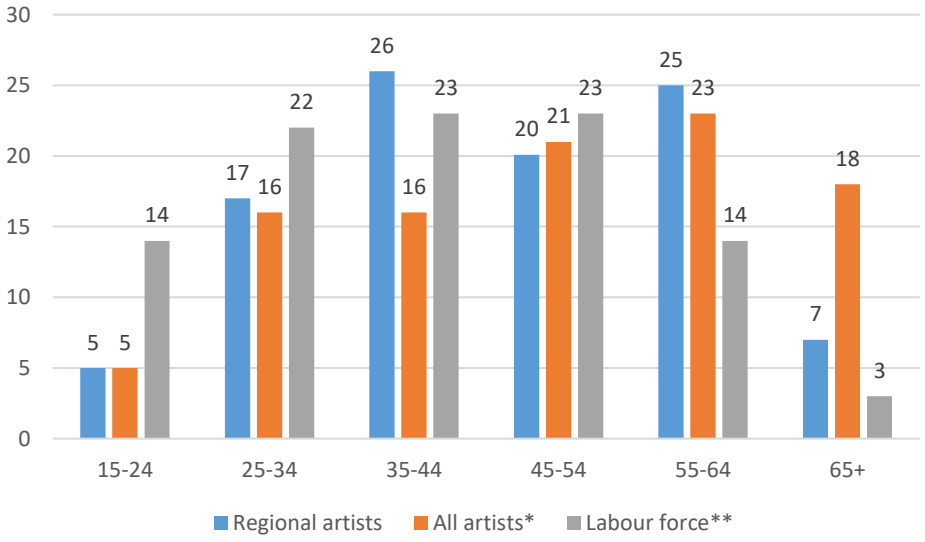
5 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ARTISTS IN THE NORTH WEST NT AND TIWI ISLANDS REGION

In this section we discuss the main socio-demographic characteristics of our sample: gender, age, language, domestic arrangements and disability. Note that education, a major socio-demographic characteristic, is discussed in detail in Section 7 of this Report.

The distribution by gender of artists in the region is 54 percent female and 46 percent male. The age distribution of artists in the region is shown in Figure 5.1 in comparison with all Australia practising professional artists and the Australian labour force as a whole. While the age distribution of the Australian labour force reflects the life cycle pattern of the average worker, practising professional artists are different in that they tend to continue working beyond the usual retirement age.

However, the age distribution of Indigenous artists in the Arnhem Land region appears to follow more closely the life cycle pattern of an average worker in the Australian labour force rather than other practising professional artists[13]. Nevertheless, the Indigenous artists in the region tend to start later at their artistic careers, and continue working into older ages than the labour force on average. The average age of an Indigenous artist in the region is 46 years (45 years being the median age).

Figure 5.1 Age distribution of Arnhem Land artists, all Australian artists and Australian labour force (percent)



**Making Art Work* 2017

***ABS Census 2016

[13] These and other statistics in this report should be interpreted in light of the differences in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians; see Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018).

While many respondents speak more than one Indigenous language as well as English, in the survey respondents were asked to identify the single language group as the one to which they belong. Table 5.1 shows the main language groups of survey respondents.

Table 5.1 Language group (percent of respondents)

Language group (n=121)	%
Djambarrpuyngu	18
Kunwinjku	18
Burarra	8
Gupapuyngu	6
Ganalbingu	5
Gumatj	5
Djapu	4
Rirratjingu	4
Wagilag	4
Daatiwuy	3
Dhalwangu	2
Ndjébbana	2
Djinang	2
Marrangu	2
Wangurri	2
Other	15
Total	**100**

The great majority of artists in the region (91 percent) use their traditional language most these days, with about eight percent saying they mostly used English, and the remainder using Aboriginal English[14]. We can compare these figures with the 2014-15 NATSISS data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists[15] in remote/very remote areas of Australia. The NATSISS data show that artists in remote/very remote areas of Australia use their Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language more than non-artists (48 percent compared to 38 percent respectively). Language is an important carrier of culture, and these data illustrate the particularly important role that artists play in the maintenance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. This role is especially strong in Arnhem Land, given that the percentage of Indigenous artists who use their traditional language is higher in this region than in other remote areas Australia-wide (91 percent compared to 48 percent).

In terms of domestic arrangements, our sample shows that in the region the largest group among artists comprises individuals living with a partner and with dependent children (34 percent of artists). The sample is split roughly evenly between those artists living with and

[14] Note that the United Nations General Assembly has declared 2019 the International Year of Indigenous Languages (IY2019) to raise awareness of the crucial role languages play in First Nations peoples' daily lives.

[15] Those who participated in the creative artistic activities as defined by NATSISS in the last 12 months prior to the survey interviews.

without children (48 percent and 52 percent respectively), and about 60/40 between those living with a partner or single.

Just under one-third of artists in the survey region (30 percent) live with a disability or long-term illness. More than half of these artists (54 percent) said that this disability or illness had no effect on their practice as an artist. A further 35 percent said this health condition had a negative effect on their artistic practice only "sometimes" with 11 percent stating that their disability affected their practice most of the time.

Other socio-demographic data show that in the Arnhem Land region, the most common place of residence is in the artist's community – the average length of time spent in community by all artists is 10.5 months in a typical year. On average artists in the region spend about one month living on country or their homelands, with about 0.5 months divided between regional towns, capital cities and/or overseas. More than half of artists in the region (53 percent) travelled outside their usual place of residence to pursue art and cultural activities in the last 12 months.

6 ARTISTS' CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

In this section we discuss the data concerning creative artistic practice and other cultural work in the lives of artists in the Arnhem Land region, the range of existing cultural and artistic experience in the region and the significance of cultural-economic activities in generating income for artists in the region. We have noted earlier that art production by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cannot be studied in isolation but must be considered in the context of the full extent of artists' cultural engagement. Therefore, in this study and as described in Section 2, we identify a wide range of art and culture-related activities that we classify broadly into two groups: creative artistic activities and other cultural activities.

We look first at the artistic and cultural experience that exists in the region at the present time. Table 6.1 shows the proportions of artists in the region who have ever during their lifetime engaged in the various activities, the proportions who have been involved in the activities during the last 12 months, and the proportions of those artists who have been paid for these activities in the last year. The same data are displayed in a diagrammatic form in descending order of those being paid for current activities in Figure 6.1.

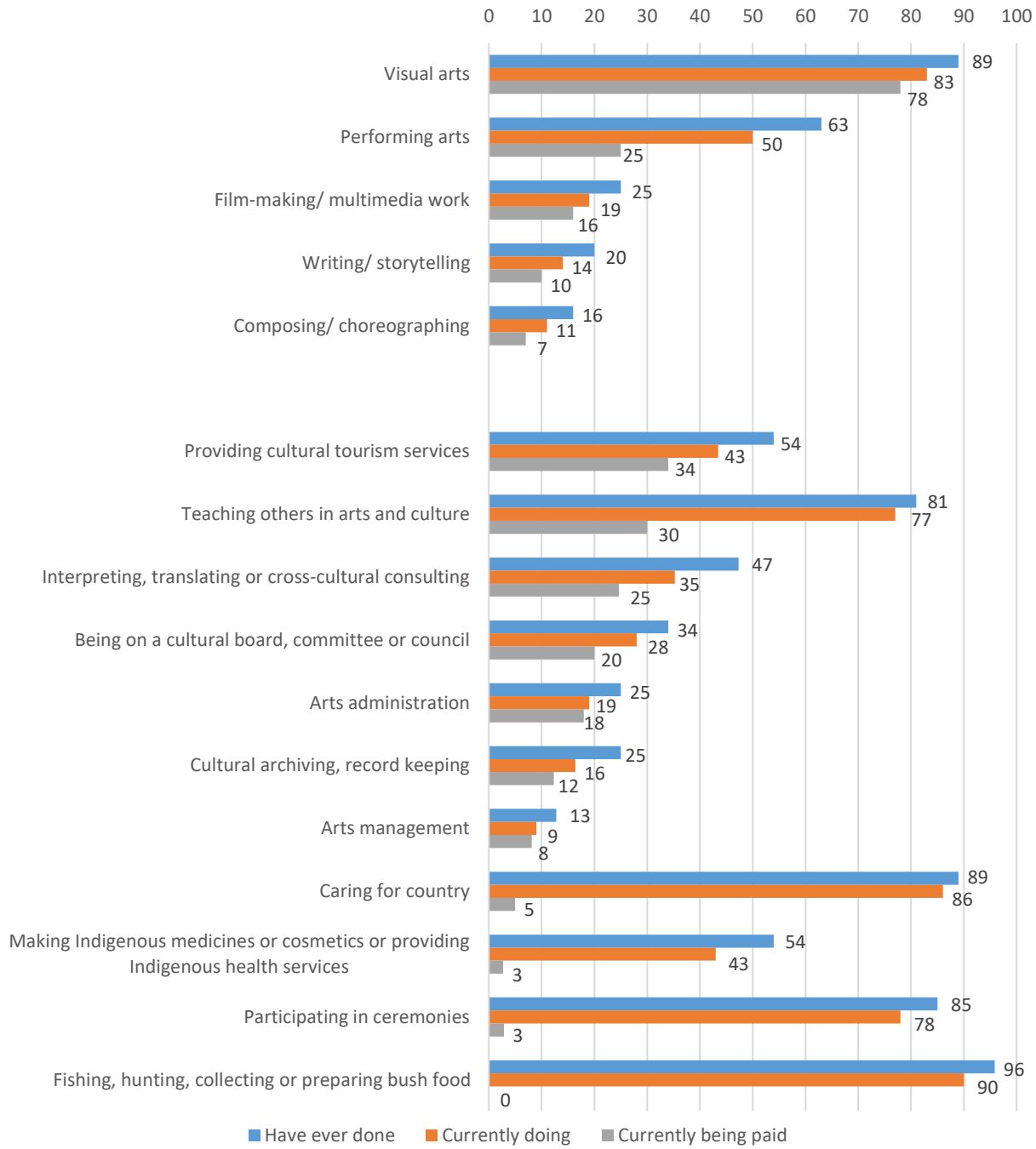
Table 6.1 Cultural-economic activities undertaken by artists (percent of all respondents)

Activities**	Have ever done	Currently doing*	Currently being paid*
		(n=122)	
		%	
Creative artistic			
Visual arts	89	83	78
Performing arts	63	50	25
Composing/ choreographing	16	11	7
Writing/ storytelling	20	14	10
Film-making/ multimedia work	25	19	16
Other cultural			
Participating in ceremonies	85	78	3
Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting	47	35	25
Cultural archiving, record keeping	25	16	12
Being on a cultural board, committee or council	34	28	20
Teaching others in arts and culture	81	77	30
Caring for country	89	86	5
Fishing, hunting, collecting or preparing bush food	96	90	-
Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services	54	43	3
Arts management	13	9	8
Arts administration	25	19	18
Providing cultural tourism services	54	43	34
Other	2	-	-

- indicates nil response in this sample
* In the last 12 months
** Multiple response allowed

As the table and the figure demonstrate, within creative art practices the most prominent artform in the region is visual arts, with more than 80 percent of all artists in the region currently working in this field. The next most common artform in the survey region is the performing arts (primarily music and dance), with exactly half of artists currently engaged in one or other of these performing activities. But whereas the majority of visual artists currently working in visual arts are being paid, only half the performing artists engaged in their art at present are being paid for it. In the category of other cultural activities, the ones that are being practised the most are: caring for country; fishing, hunting, collecting, preparing bush food; participating in ceremonies; and teaching others in arts and culture.

Figure 6.1 Cultural-economic activities undertaken by artists (percent of all respondents)



The Arnhem Land region is affected by seasonality, with big differences in accessibility and community activity possible between the wet (November to March approximately) and dry (April to October) seasons. This climatic pattern affects art production and other art-related activities to some extent. For example, only 74 percent of respondents who are currently engaged in providing cultural tourism services are able to do so throughout the year. There are some minor restrictions on other cultural practices due to seasonality, although most creative artistic work is carried on regardless of the season.

The very wide range of cultural practice in which artists have experience and in which they are currently participating is summarised in Table 6.2, which shows the average number of activities that artists in the region have ever done or are currently undertaking,[16] as well as the number of different activities that are generating some form of income. On average, an artist in the region has engaged in about eight different artistic and cultural economic activities over the course of their life. At the present time, she or he is engaged in about two artistic activities and about five other cultural activities. This average artist receives some form of income for her/his work in at least one of the several artistic activities and between one and two of the other cultural activities that she or he undertakes at present. The data in Table 6.2 confirm the versatility and diversity of artistic and cultural practice among Indigenous artists in Arnhem Land.

Table 6.2 Average number of cultural economic activities undertaken by artists(number of activities)

Activities**	Have ever done	Currently doing*	Currently being paid*
		(n=122)	
Creative artistic	2.1	1.8	1.4
Other cultural	6.0	5.4	1.6
All cultural activities	**8.2**	**7.1**	**2.9**

* In the last 12 months
** Excludes 'Other' cultural work activities

The survey data reveal some gaps – firstly, between the numbers of those who have experience in a particular activity and those who are actually engaged in it, and secondly, between the numbers of those who currently do an activity and those who receive some form of financial reimbursement for their work in that activity. We look into the first issue in this section; the income data are analysed in more detail in Section 9, where we consider artists' financial circumstances.

Table 6.3 shows the numbers of respondents currently engaged in each activity as a proportion of those who have experience in that activity; the same data are shown diagrammatically in Figure 6.2, where the proportions of currently practising artists are arranged in descending order. While almost everyone with experience in visual arts continues to be engaged in this artform (94 percent), only seven in ten of those with experience in composing or choreographing and in writing/ storytelling currently practise in these fields. In the case of other cultural activities, the great majority of artists with

[16] In this survey, these are activities that have been undertaken in the last 12 months prior to the survey interviews.

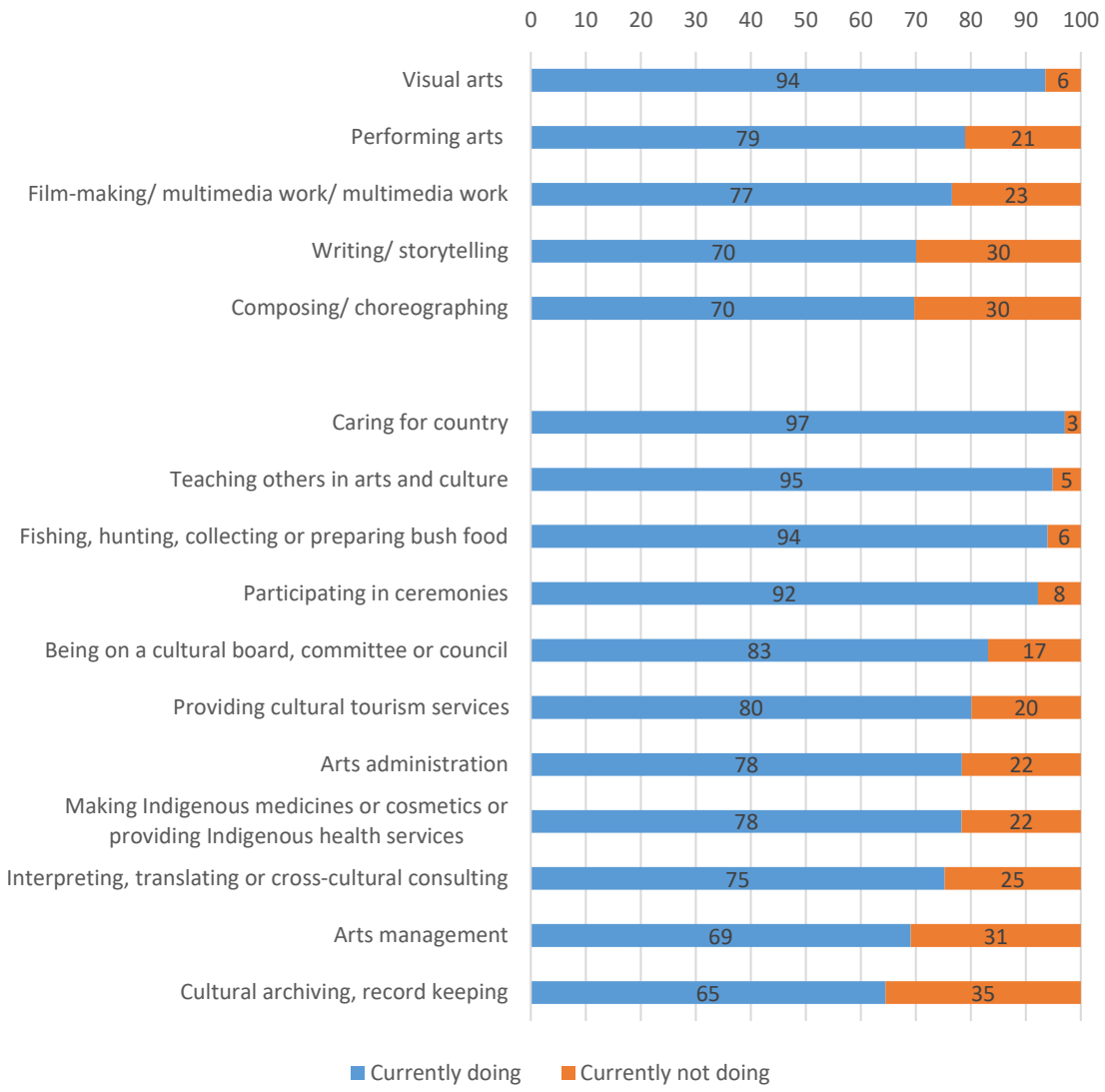
experience in the everyday cultural practices of caring for country and fishing/hunting/collecting bush food are currently engaged in these activities (97 and 94 percent respectively), and among the relatively small numbers of artists with experience in arts administration, a majority (78 percent) are currently working in this occupation.

Table 6.3 Proportions of artists with experience in activities currently engaged in those activities (percent of those with previous experience)

Activities*		Currently doing	Currently not doing
	N	%	
Creative artistic activities			
Visual arts	109	94	6
Performing arts	77	79	21
Composing/ choreographing	20	70	30
Writing/ storytelling	24	70	30
Film-making/ multimedia work/ multimedia work	30	77	23
Weighted average for creative artistic activities		**83**	**17**
Other cultural activities			
Participating in ceremonies	104	92	8
Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting	57	75	25
Cultural archiving, record keeping	31	65	35
Being on a cultural board, committee or council	41	83	17
Teaching others in arts and culture	99	95	5
Caring for country	108	97	3
Fishing, hunting, collecting or preparing bush food	117	94	6
Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services	65	78	22
Arts management	16	69	31
Arts administration	27	78	22
Providing cultural tourism services	66	80	20
Weighted average for other cultural activities		**87**	**13**

- indicates nil response in this sample.
* Multiple responses allowed.

Figure 6.2 Proportions of artists with experience in activities currently engaged in those activities (percent of those with previous experience)



However, there are several activities in which artists are not practising at present, despite having had experience in those activities. These include, for example, writing/story-telling and composing/choreographing among creative artistic activities, and providing cultural tourism services among other cultural activities, where almost one-third (30 percent) are currently not involved. Likewise, among other cultural activities, between one-quarter and one-third of artists with experience in interpreting/translating/consulting, archiving/record-keeping, and arts management are not engaged in these lines of work, indicating a pool of under-utilised human and cultural capital in the region.

The weighted averages shown in Table 6.3 indicate a gap of about 20 percent in aggregate between those with experience and those currently practising. Certainly, circumstances differ between individuals, and there could be many reasons for non-engagement at present – sometimes artists want to focus full-time on a particular artistic practice, while at other times they may be looking for opportunities to supplement their incomes with casual or part-time

work that does not relate directly to their culture or artistic practice . Nevertheless, in aggregate the data discussed here point to the availability of significant levels of cultural and human capital in the region that might be capable of further utilisation in art and cultural production.

7 ACQUISITION OF CULTURAL CAPITAL

There are a number of pathways that an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artist living in remote areas in the Arnhem Land region can follow to receive education and training necessary for professional artistic practice. Apart from formal education, learning and teaching occurs among the family and other community members at home, in art centres, on country, in ceremonies and so on. Within the education system, further opportunities for cultural transmission may arise – for example, senior artists and cultural practitioners could be formally or informally invited to a local school to teach culture and language classes to children, or the school could arrange for their students to go to an art centre for hands-on experience with the centre's artists.

In this survey, we distinguish between (1) formal education, which includes the usual processes of schooling and other general education that provides a wide range of knowledge and competencies; (2) cultural education that is knowledge and skills required for participating in cultural activities and gaining permissions to practice cultural work within a certain cultural law; and (3) specific training required for practicing in a particular artistic occupation. The boundaries between these three are not easily distinguishable. The skills acquired through a general education, for example, could be useful in an artist's professional work. Some arts-related education and training could be undertaken as part of the formal education, for example at school or university. Cultural knowledge and skills, such as language or body painting, could be acquired in different art forms and through diverse cultural activities. Skills acquired through professional artistic practice, for example sound-recording skills, could be utilised across a range of cultural activities, including cultural archiving, and in work that is not directly related to culture, such as report writing.

7.1 FORMAL EDUCATION

In the survey we asked respondents to indicate the highest level of formal education or training they have completed. This includes general education and training in non-arts as well as formal arts education that is not related to respondents' cultural knowledge. The results are summarised in Table 7.1. The table also shows the same data for the Indigenous labour force in remote and very remote areas of the NT, derived from the 2014-15 NATSISS data.

As Table 7.1 shows, the differences between Indigenous artists in the survey region and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander labour force in the remote Northern Territory are significant. Around three in ten artists in the survey region have had schooling only up to year 10 or equivalent, whereas more than four in ten (41 percent) of the Indigenous labour force in remote NT have only this level of educational qualification. Nevertheless, at the other end of the schooling spectrum, about two-fifths (21 percent) of artists in Arnhem Land have progressed to year 12 or equivalent, compared to less than one-tenth (8 percent) of the remote NT Indigenous labour force. A further comparison with similar educational statistics for all Australian artists drawn from *Making Art Work 2017* indicates that artists in mainstream Australia access much higher educational levels than their remote Indigenous counterparts. It is apparent that for the latter artists it is not formal education that provides the most essential training for participation in arts and cultural production, as we shall see further below.

Table 7.1 Highest levels of formal education (percent of respondents)

Level of education	Indigenous artists in the study region				Indigenous labour force in remote NT
	Visual artists (n=95)	Performing artists (n=12)	All other artists (n=15)	All artists (n=122)	
	%				%
No schooling	8	-	7	7	*
Completed Year 9 (or equivalent) and below	30	8	6	25	17
Completed Year 10 (or equivalent)	3	9	14	5	24
Completed Diploma or Certificate[17]	28	41	34	30	29
Completed Year 11 (or equivalent)	10	16	-	9	18
Completed Year 12 (or equivalent)	18	26	27	21	8
Completed Bachelor Degree	1	-	13	2	**
Completed Postgraduate Degree, Diploma or Certificate	1	-	-	*	***
Other	1	-	-	*	4
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

- indicates nil response in this sample
* indicates less than 1%
** Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.
*** Estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use.

7.2 CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

In the survey, respondents were asked in regard to cultural activities undertaken "How did you get the knowledge to do these activities?" They were then asked which of these was "the most important" to them in gaining cultural knowledge and skills. Table 7.2 summarises the findings. Learning culture from family members is both the most common (98 percent of respondents) and the most important pathway (92 percent) to acquire such knowledge. Another pathway that was identified as important by about nine in ten of respondents (87 percent) was learning from being on country, and for six percent this represented the most important pathway to gain cultural knowledge and skills. As has been the case in other regions covered in the national survey, many respondents had difficulty determining the most important pathway when choosing between learning from family and community, and learning from country. Many pointed out that these two may come together, because cultural education often occurs on country through guidance of a family or community member.

[17] In our survey, responses of artists who have diplomas and certificates at different levels are combined. In NATSISS, the following hierarchy is used: Diplomas are below Bachelor degrees and above Certificates III/ IV, Certificates III/ IV are below Diplomas and above Year 12, Certificates I/ II are below Year 10 and above Year 9, and "Certificates not further defined" are below "Year 9 and below".

Table 7.2 Important pathways for acquiring cultural knowledge (percent of all respondents)

Cultural knowledge pathways	Important pathways*	Most important pathway
	(n=122)	
	%	
Directly from family members	98	92
Directly from elders and/ or other community members	44	2
From being on country	87	2
From participating in ceremonies	64	**
From artworks, songs or stories	63	-
From festivals or other cultural events	31	-
From books, archives, libraries, including online libraries/archives	26	**
Some other way	5	2
Total		**100**

* Multiple response allowed
** indicates less than 1%
- indicates nil response in this sample.

It must be borne in mind that the cultural knowledge that is fundamental to the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continues throughout the individual's lifetime. We found that three-quarters of artists in the Arnhem Land region assert they are still learning from their culture and the majority of these (91 percent) say they are also teaching others. The latter finding reinforces the importance of inter- and intra-generational transmission as a means of maintaining Aboriginal culture.

Once culturally educated, a person can participate in a number of the cultural-economic activities considered in this study. Moreover, as in the case of formal education that provides basic, academic or industry skills applicable to a variety of jobs in the labour market, cultural education also provides knowledge that has a wide application in the culture-based economy.

7.3 ART INDUSTRY SKILLS

Artistic practice requires skills, i.e. a range of technical abilities to work with artistic materials such as paint, clay, fibre or bark, or to use equipment such as a video camera, screen-printing equipment, a sound system or editing software. There are multiple ways by which Indigenous artists in remote communities can acquire skills necessary for their artistic occupations. For the artists working within the Arnhem Land region these are summarised in Table 7.3. Again, the role of family members in transmitting knowledge and skills is seen to be highly significant, and is not surprising, given that most of the art produced in remote communities is traditional in form. More than nine in ten artists have learnt their industry skills from their family, and for more than 80 percent of them this has been the most important pathway. Some differences occur in the ways in which this learning occurs within families. In some cases, family members allow and encourage doing artistic work together through both participation and observation (67 percent of all respondents), whereas in other cases only observation will be allowed or possible (28 percent). Observing and participating has been the most important pathway for more than half of all respondents; only 26 percent nominated observing only as the most important source of their industry skills.

Table 7.3 Important pathways for gaining industry skills and experience (percent of all respondents)

Industry skills pathways	Important pathways*	Most important pathway (n=122)
	%	
Learning from a family member:	**95**	**82**
Learning from watching and doing with a family member	67	56
Learning from watching a family member	28	26
Learning from a friend or community member:	30	7
Learning from watching and doing with a friend or community member	22	6
Learning from watching a friend or community member	9	**
Self-learning/ Learning on the job	60	8
Feedback and advice from an art professional	35	2
Workshops/ short courses	21	2
School	12	-
Online sources	6	-
Vocational training	3	-
University program	2	-
Some other way	2	-
Total		**100**

* Multiple response allowed.
** indicates less than 1%.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

The other major means by which artists in the Arnhem Land region gain their industry skills is via self-learning – 60 percent of artists identify this as having been important for them, although only eight percent see it as having been the most important source.

The data in Table 7.3 indicate that participation in formal education processes such as school, workshops and vocational training has been important for significant numbers of artists in the region as an avenue towards acquiring their artistic skills. However, only very small numbers see these sources as the most important. The latter result should not be seen as indicating that formal education as a source of artistic skills is unimportant in a more general sense. On the contrary, formal ways of learning arts industry skills are recognised as important for some artists in remote areas of the region. For example, the skills for new artistic practices usually necessitate outside training or workshops – these might include skills needed for artforms such as printmaking, contemporary popular music, digital art, video, and working with metals and other materials used in sculpture and requiring processes such as casting and welding.

In fact, as we shall see in Section 12 that deals with opinions and attitudes of artists towards cultural production and sustainability, artists show support for formal forms of training to create a wider range of learning opportunities for Indigenous artists living remotely, for example via workshops that provide skill refreshment for established practitioners and an introduction to artistic practice for beginners. Nevertheless, observing and participating with

family and other community members remains by far the most significant way for transferring and acquiring knowledge and skills for Indigenous artists in the region and as such these forms of training need to be more fully recognised and supported.

Acquiring cultural knowledge and skills takes a significant investment in time, both for the person who undertakes such training and for the person(s) who perform the training. The costs involved in producing a culturally educated person in remote Indigenous communities in Australia are largely unknown. While some cultural education might occur within the formal educational system, for example via culture and language programs at school, most of the associated costs for young people's cultural education would be incurred by the family and community members. Later in this Report we discuss the time that is spent by artists in passing on their knowledge to others.

7.4 CONCLUSION

The data discussed in this section demonstrate the fundamental importance of family and community for the processes of acquiring not only cultural knowledge but also industry skills for participation in the arts and cultural industries. Nevertheless, all of the pathways considered above, whether through formal schooling or the processes of inter- and intra-generational cultural transmission, can be seen to provide competencies that enable Indigenous people in the Arnhem Land region to engage in productive activity in the remote cultural economy of the region, while maintaining the inalienable connection with their culture. At the same time, it is important to note that these pathways also provide competencies and skills that are relevant to a variety of jobs in the wider labour market.

8 TIME ALLOCATION

As discussed in Section 6, artists in the Arnhem Land region practise a wide range of arts and cultural activities as well as undertaking non-cultural employment in some cases. Art production cannot be understood in isolation from other activities, particularly those cultural activities that maintain, support and contribute to continuous development of artistic work. In undertaking a variety of types of work, Indigenous artists apply different time allocation strategies in an effort to balance their artistic aspirations, their cultural obligations, their personal needs and their financial commitments. In this section we look into these strategies with reference to patterns of time use, average number of hours spent on different activities, and constraints affecting artists' time allocation.

There is no clear line between "work" and "life" for most Indigenous arts and cultural producers. Many cultural activities are understood as "work" by Indigenous people (Austin-Broos 2006), and the terminology is occasionally carried across – for example, ceremonial activities are often called "business", as in "sorry business" etc. Yet, some activities that would be seen as work in the mainstream Australian economy – for example, tourism services or certain administrative work – may not be seen as such by some Indigenous cultural producers. Notwithstanding these definitional issues, in this survey we asked respondents questions about the amount of time they spend specifically on the sixteen cultural-economic activities covered by the survey. Prompt questions were asked to enquire if, for example, "every working day" meant between four and five days a week, or if "a full day" meant working in the morning and afternoon with an average of 7.6 hours work in a typical day. For our calculations we also assume 48 weeks a year on average.

The average amounts of time that Indigenous artists in the region spend on various activities are shown in Table 8.1. The table also shows an average score for the time spent at each activity, calculated according to the scale indicated at the foot of the table. For example, writing/storytelling occupies about two days per month on average for an artist who is currently engaged in that activity.

We can observe some general patterns that emerge from these data. Among the creative arts, the majority of visual artists (69 percent) work at their art-making for two to three days per week or more, indeed more than one-third (36 percent) work at visual arts more or less full time. In contrast, the largest proportion of performing artists (82 percent) work an average of only one to two full days per month or less. These data indicate the differences in artform practice — producing art works for sale is a reasonably regular activity for most artists, whereas performing as a musician or dancer depends on the availability of opportunities for their work to be performed, and such opportunities may only appear from time to time.

Table 8.1 Time spent on activities in the last 12 months (percent of those currently engaged in the activity)

Activities	N	4-5 full days/ week	2-3 full days/ week	1 full day/ week	1-2 full days/ month	Few full days/ year	Total	Weighted average score**
				%				
Creative artistic activities								
Visual arts	102	36	33	22	2	7	**100**	**3.9**
Performing arts	61	3	7	8	20	62	**100**	**1.7**
Composing/ choreographing	13	8	31	24	22	15	**100**	**3.0**
Writing/ storytelling	17	-	18	12	35	35	**100**	**2.1**
Film-making/ multimedia work	23	4	-	17	22	57	**100**	**1.7**
Other cultural activities								
Participating in ceremonies	95	-	-	1	20	79	**100**	**1.2**
Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting	43	5	14	30	25	26	**100**	**2.5**
Cultural archiving, record keeping	20	-	10	20	40	30	**100**	**2.1**
Being on a cultural board, committee or council	34	-	-	-	56	44	**100**	**1.6**
Teaching others in arts and culture	94	-	15	31	34	20	**100**	**2.4**
Caring for country	98	2	37	17	25	19	**100**	**2.8**
Fishing, hunting, collecting or preparing bush food	110	*	20	63	15	2	**100**	**3.0**
Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services	51	2	-	7	21	70	**100**	**1.4**
Arts management	11	28	36	18	19	9	**100**	**3.9**
Arts administration	21	20	43	23	5	9	**100**	**3.6**
Providing cultural tourism services	53	-	14	40	21	25	**100**	**2.4**
Other activities (not directly related to culture)								
Other activities (not directly related to culture)	39	64	23	8	2	3	**100**	**4.4**

- indicates nil response in this sample
* indicates less than 1%
** Scores: 1 - “Few full days/year”; 2- “1-2 full days/month”; 3 – “1 full day/week”; 4 - “2-3 full days/week”; 5 – “4-5 full days/week”. Excludes "Don't know/ Not sure" responses.

In the group of other cultural activities, the data in Table 8.1 reflect the relatively small amount of time over a full year that is absorbed by participation in ceremonies, with about eight in ten (79 percent) of artists indicating that ceremonial activities take up only a few full days in any given year. Similarly, being on a board or committee takes up very small amounts of an artist's time on average. The data also show the importance of caring for country – more than half of all artists (56 percent) spend at least one day per week on average in caring for their country[18].

For those artists who are more likely to be in paid employment, for example in arts management or administration, or in work outside the cultural sector, their time allocation patterns show a preponderance of full-time or near full-time work. For example, 63 percent of respondents working in arts administration and 87 percent of artists working at jobs outside the arts, do so for at least two to three full days per week.

An alternative way of representing our data on time allocations to various activities is to convert the time estimates on which Table 8.1 is based into the equivalent in hours per week. This requires us to make a series of plausible assumptions as to the average weekly hours implied by each category of frequency of involvement, and to apply these assumptions to the individual response records to calculate hours spent by each respondent in each activity. The resulting estimates of time spent per week for the major groupings of activities are shown in Table 8.2. It is apparent from these data that artists in the Arnhem Land region spend more time on cultural activities that support and maintain their culture than on artistic activities or non-cultural work. The fact that an artist's working week consists of 60 hours implies that on average artists spend over eight hours daily divided between the sixteen arts and cultural activities considered in this study, as well as non-cultural work.

Table 8.2 Mean and median number of hours that artists spent on activities in the last 12 months (hours)

Hours spent on… (n=122)	Mean	Median
	Hours	
Creative artistic activities	20	18
Other cultural activities	32	32
Total arts and cultural activities	**52**	**52**
Other activities (not directly related to culture)	8	0
Total working hours	**60**	**58**

There are several factors that affect how individual artists in the region allocate their time on different artistic, other cultural and non-cultural activities. These include seasonality of work; limited transportation options; lack of access to facilities or equipment on a regular basis; road closures during certain times of the year; variations in demand for artists' services; and occasionally the need to undertake multiple activities at the same time. Having to balance their time between multiple activities is a common factor that affects many artists throughout their career. Culturally-knowledgeable artists are usually subject to many competing demands to apply their cultural skills and knowledge, for example from their families or communities, or from organisations that rely on such skills in their employees.

[18] Note that for some Indigenous people, simply living on country may be thought of as caring for country – see the original definition in section 2 above.

These demands continue to grow as the knowledge and skills of the artist increase. This is why many senior artists often find themselves in a situation where at the peak of their artistic career they have to put aside their art work and take on more cultural responsibilities, such as cultural governance and leadership, education, and providing cross-cultural advice, as well as having to spend increased time on ceremonies.

Overall, our data point to multiple and interconnected ways in which artists in the region allocate their time on creative artistic work and on other cultural activities. There is clearly a mix between work that generates an income and activities that are undertaken for cultural, artistic or social reasons. Artists balance these types of work in line with their financial, social and cultural needs. The various demands on artists' time may act as a constraint on their capacity to make art and/or to undertake more income-yielding employment.

Section 10.3 of this Report looks into artists' preferences over the ways in which they spend their time as well as some specific constraints on their time allocation patterns.

9 FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

One of the most important objectives of the National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists is to assess the extent to which art and cultural production can provide a means towards employment creation and income generation for Indigenous people in remote communities. To consider this objective in empirical terms, a range of information is needed on the financial circumstances of arts and cultural producers – how many of their various cultural activities are paid, what are their main sources of income, and how is their total income from all sources comprised. This section presents the survey results on these issues for the Arnhem Land region.

9.1 PAID AND UNPAID ACTIVITIES

In the previous section, we discussed the amounts of time spent at various activities by artists in the region on average. Some of this time is paid and some is undertaken unpaid or on a voluntary basis. Table 9.1 shows the proportions of artists who were paid and not paid when they engaged in artistic or cultural activities or non-cultural work in the last 12 months. These data are also shown in a diagrammatic form in Figure 9.1, where the creative and other cultural activities respectively are arranged in descending order of the proportions of artists who are paid. It should be noted that being paid for a certain activity does not mean that all of that individual's work in that activity was financially rewarded, it simply means that an artist was paid for at least some of their work.

The pattern of paid/unpaid work for different activities varies greatly. Among creative artistic activities, the great majority (92 percent) of visual artists who practised their art in the last 12 months were financially reimbursed for their work in one form or another. Just over four in five (82 percent) filmmakers and multimedia artists are paid. However, only 49 percent of musicians, actors and other performers receive some financial return from their work. About two-thirds of all writers, storytellers and composers are paid. Overall about a quarter of artists in the Arnhem Land region who are currently engaged in artistic work are not being paid for this work, as shown in Table 9.1.

There could be a number of reasons why artists undertake their creative artistic work unpaid, including: passing on their knowledge to others; learning their culture or artistic skills; cultural obligation reasons; developing a new body of work; or the artists' own enjoyment or enjoyment shared with others. During interviews respondents also cited other reasons for undertaking artistic activities such as "keeping my culture strong", "sharing my culture with others" or "keeping me and others positive". On the other hand, some of the work that remains unpaid could be interpreted as producing output for which the artist is unable to access a market, as is likely to be the case for the great majority of composers. Moreover, at times artists are expected to provide their services free on a pro-bono basis – for example, when asked to perform at a ceremony for an opening of a new local business or organisation.

Turning to other cultural activities, we can observe that a significantly higher proportion of these activities is left unpaid. However, those activities that are generally undertaken on an employment basis, such as arts administration and arts management, are paid. Between 70 and 80 percent of artists who engage in providing tourism services, interpreting/translating, or cultural archiving are paid for their work. The data show that just over 70 percent of artists who serve on some local, regional or state board or committee receive some financial compensation for their time; in some cases, however, fees are not paid but travel could be reimbursed. Making Indigenous medicine or cosmetics and/or providing Indigenous health

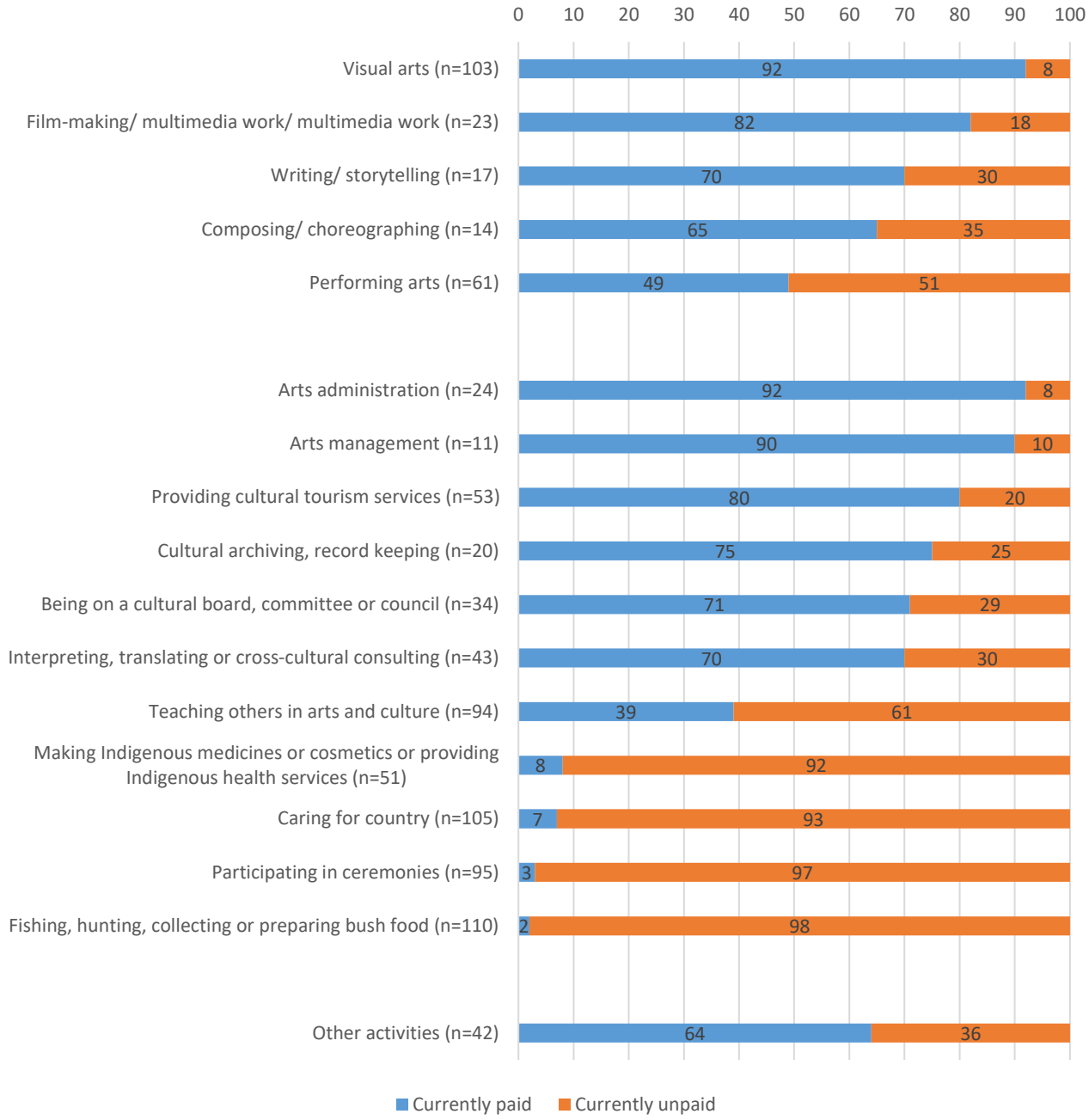
services are primarily done for own and family use. Participating in ceremonies is primarily an unpaid activity. While more than four in five artists are currently engaged in caring for country activities, only seven percent of them are paid, usually when these activities are undertaken as part of a formal ranger program or when they involve provision of environmental management advice to different agencies, in which case payment is likely to be made as consulting fees. In summary, we find that across all of the other cultural activities that artists in the region undertake, about two-thirds do so on a voluntary basis.

Table 9.1 Proportion of artists paid and not paid for cultural activities (percent of those who engaged in each activity in the last 12 months)

Activities	Currently paid*	Currently unpaid	Total
		%	
Creative artistic activities			
Visual arts (n=103)	92	8	**100**
Performing arts (n=61)	49	51	**100**
Composing/ choreographing (n=14)	65	35	**100**
Writing/ storytelling (n=17)	70	30	**100**
Film-making/ multimedia work/ multimedia work (n=23)	82	18	**100**
Weighted average for artistic activities	**75**	**25**	**100**
Other cultural activities			
Participating in ceremonies (n=95)	3	97	**100**
Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting (n=43)	70	30	**100**
Cultural archiving, record keeping (n=20)	75	25	**100**
Being on a cultural board, committee or council (n=34)	71	29	**100**
Teaching others in arts and culture (n=94)	39	61	**100**
Caring for country (n=105)	7	93	**100**
Fishing, hunting, collecting or preparing bush food (n=110)	2	98	**100**
Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services (n=51)	8	92	**100**
Arts management (n=11)	90	10	**100**
Arts administration (n=24)	92	8	**100**
Providing cultural tourism services (n=53)	80	20	**100**
Weighted average for other cultural activities	**31**	**69**	**100**
Other activities (not directly related to culture)			
Other activities (n=42)	64	36	**100**

***** Note that being paid for a certain activity does not mean that **all** of that individual's work in that activity was financially rewarded, it simply means that an artist was paid for at least some of their work.

Figure 9.1 Proportion of artists paid and not paid for cultural activities (percent of those who engaged in each activity in the last 12 months)



We can compare the paid/unpaid pattern for arts and cultural work to the paid/unpaid pattern for work that does not directly relate to culture. Table 9.1 and Figure 9.1 show that one-third of artists in the region (36 percent) are not paid for their non-cultural work. This is in part because many of the artists engaged in unpaid non-cultural work are Community Development Program (CDP) participants. The CDP does not provide a real wage that would be equivalent to the minimum wage in Australia or above; it is a form of job-related assistance for unemployed people in remote areas.[19] This is why in this survey we treat CDP payments as "government benefits" and not as income that is derived from work, whether the payments are made for arts/cultural work or non-cultural work. Nevertheless, the voluntary nature of significant amounts of non-cultural work in remote areas of the region points to the overall lack of opportunities for generating incomes outside the arts sector.

9.2 SOURCES OF PAYMENT

Artists receive work-related income from organisations and individuals operating in different sectors: the private sector, the third sector, the government and the informal family/community sector. Table 9.2 shows which of these sectors made payments to artists for various types of work in the last 12 months. The importance of the third sector in providing employment and income opportunities to these artists in the region is evident in the fact that the great majority of payments for visual artists (88 percent of payments to artists receiving income from this source) and film-makers/ multimedia artists (57 percent) are derived from this sector. The private sector also plays an important role in generating income in arts production in the region; this sector provides the majority of payments to composers/choreographers and half of all payments to performing artists and authors. In the case of other cultural activities, by far the largest proportion of payments comes from the third sector, a source that is particularly significant for arts administration, cultural tourism, cultural archiving and cultural governance. These results can be compared with payments for non-cultural work, the only activity considered in this study where the majority of payments come from the government sector (52 percent of payments to artists receiving income from this source).

[19] In order to access full unemployment benefits in remote areas, CDP participants are obligated to commit to 25 hours per week in Work for the Dole or up to their assessed work capacity, scheduled as five days per week. For some discussion of the CDP, see Jordan *et al.* (2016), Fowkes (2019). Further discussion will be accessible via the Diversity Council of Australia's Indigenous People and Work Research and Practice Hub at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Table 9.2 Sources of payment for artists undertaking various activities in the last 12 months (percent of those paid in each activity)*

	Commercial company, private sales, individual entrepreneur	Indigenous corporation or not-for-profit organisation	Government or public organisation	Family/ community
	%			
Creative artistic activities				
Visual arts (n=95)	18	88	1	2
Performing arts (n=30)	50	47	4	7
Composing/ choreographing (n=9)	77	23	-	-
Writing/ storytelling (n=12)	50	25	33	16
Film-making/ multimedia work/ multimedia work (n=19)	37	57	21	11
Other cultural activities				
Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting (n=30)	10	63	37	6
Cultural archiving, record keeping (n=15)	-	80	20	-
Being on a cultural board, committee or council (n=24)	-	79	22	-
Teaching others in arts and culture (n=36)	8	58	36	11
Arts management (n=10)	29	71	-	-
Arts administration (n=19)	5	95	-	-
Providing cultural tourism services (n=42)	21	82	7	-
Other activities (not directly related to culture)				
Other activities (n=25)	4	44	52	-

* Multiple response allowed. Note that some activities where the sample size was insufficient have not been included in this table.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

9.3 IMPORTANCE OF INCOMES FROM CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

In the survey, respondents were asked about the significance of the payments from various activities, i.e. whether according to their knowledge the revenue from these activities constituted a major income source or were smaller amounts of money that could be regarded as extra or incidental income. The results of the estimates as perceived by respondents are shown in Table 9.3.

It is noteworthy that despite the amounts of time that artists in the region put into their artistic practice, the majority of them regard the income from their artistic work as extra income or "incidental income" only. Only about four in ten of both visual artists and writers/storytellers receive their *major* income from their creative work.

Among other cultural activities, arts management and arts administration provide a major source of income for those employed in these occupations. Payments for some other cultural activities are sporadic, such as for translating, interpreting, cross-cultural consulting or cultural archiving, with some artists being able to generate major income from these activities, but many others earning only incidental incomes. For some artists, casual employment in other cultural activities on top of their artistic work is in fact advantageous, as it can fit in with their cultural and family obligations. When work in other cultural activities does not provide significant financial returns, we can assume that they are mostly undertaken for reasons related to the maintenance and continuation of culture.

Table 9.3 Perceived importance of income from cultural activities (percent of those paid for each activity in the last 12 months)

Activities	Major income	Extra income	Incidental income	Total	Weighted average score**
		%			
Creative artistic activities					
Visual arts (n=94)	41	32	27	**100**	**2.1**
Performing arts (n=30)	13	20	67	**100**	**1.5**
Composing/ choreographing (n=9)	22	34	44	**100**	**1.8**
Writing/ storytelling (n=12)	41	9	50	**100**	**1.9**
Film-making/ multimedia work/ multimedia work (n=19)	31	22	47	**100**	**1.8**
Other cultural activities					
Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting (n=30)	50	10	40	**100**	**2.1**
Cultural archiving, record keeping (n=15)	47	7	46	**100**	**2.0**
Being on a cultural board, committee or council (n=24)	8	9	83	**100**	**1.3**
Teaching others in arts and culture (n=36)	35	17	48	**100**	**1.9**
Arts management (n=10)	90	10	-	**100**	**2.9**
Arts administration (n=19)	89	-	11	**100**	**2.8**
Providing cultural tourism services (n=40)	34	8	58	**100**	**1.8**

* Note that some activities where the sample size was insufficient have not been included in this table.
** Scores: 1 - "Incidental income"; 2- "Extra income"; 3 – "Major income". Excludes "Don't know/ Not sure" responses.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

9.4 METHODS OF PAYMENT

Artists in the region receive income for their work by different means of payment. Table 9.4 shows the most common payment methods for different arts and other cultural activities and other activities not directly related to culture. Works of visual artists are primarily paid per piece (90 percent of all visual artists), although some receive part-time salaries or wages for working as arts workers, usually as part of an arrangement with their art centre. While some visual artists receive payment directly from individual buyers of their work, or from dealers and galleries, the majority sell their work via a community or not-for-profit organisation, primarily an art centre. Different art centres in the region have different systems of payment, as approved by their respective boards and artists. The majority of art centres will pay the artists when the work is sold; however, some may pay the artist an agreed price for the work on receipt. Some art centres operate an income management arrangement for their artists, whereby the artist is paid a relatively small weekly allowance in cash or as a voucher for spending at the local store; the amounts of these payments are debited to the artist's account held by the centre. Implementation of this system is subject to the approval of the board and the artists. Although this procedure involves additional work for art centre staff, artists benefit by having a regular and reliable income stream for meeting their daily expenses, with their balance hopefully kept in credit through continuing sales of their work.

Around three-quarters of performing artists in the region – musicians, singers, dancers and actors – are paid fees per service. Filmmakers and multimedia artists usually work for full-time or part-time wages (63 percent), with the rest receiving fees per service, payments per piece or wages for casual work.

Regularity of income varies between different activities. Artists who combine their artistic practice with other cultural employment such as interpretation/ translation/consulting (57 percent) or cultural archiving (60 percent) are likely to enjoy a regular stream of income as a result of being employed full-time. The same is true for artists who engage in arts management (67 percent). Arts administration work also provides some regularity in artists' income, in the form of full-time wages (54 percent) or part-time wages (41 percent). However, for many artists, the method of payment does not lead to a regular inflow of money. For example, about nine in ten artists who are paid for their cultural governance services receive these payments in fees (such as sitting fees for board members), which depend on the frequency of meetings. Also two in five artists working in cultural tourism or teaching in arts and culture are paid per service – these activities provide flexible work arrangements but they depend on the nature and availability of the work involved.

Table 9.4 Methods of payment (percent of those currently paid for each activity)*

Activities	Salaries/ wages full-time	Salaries/ wages part-time	Casual wages	Payments per piece	Fees per service	Hourly rate	Royalties/ licence fee	In-kind payments	Commissions	Other	Total
Artistic activities											
Visual arts (n=94)	7	2	-	90	-	-	-	-	-	1	**100**
Performing arts (n=30)	13	-	7	-	76	-	-	-	4	-	**100**
Composing/ choreographing (n=9)	-	-	-	66	22	-	12	-	-	-	**100**
Writing/ storytelling (n=12)	33	8	**	42	**	8	9	-	-	-	**100**
Film-making/ multimedia work/ multimedia work (n=19)	31	22	10	11	16	5	-	-	5	-	**100**
Other cultural activities											
Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting (n=30)	57	20	7	-	13	-	-	-	-	3	100
Cultural archiving, record keeping (n=15)	60	27	6	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	100
Being on a cultural board, committee or council (n=24)	-	13	-	-	87	-	-	-	-	-	100
Teaching others in arts and culture (n=36)	52	20	3	-	20	5	-	-	-	-	100
Arts management (n=10)	67	12	-	-	21	-	-	-	-	-	**100**
Arts administration (n=19)	54	41	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**100**
Providing cultural tourism services (n=40)	32	13	-	-	40	10	-	-	-	5	**100**
Other activities (not directly related to culture)											
Other activities (n=25)	65	16	11	4		4	-	-	-	-	**100**

* Note that some activities where the sample size was insufficient have not been included in this table.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

9.5 OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME

Apart from the creative and other cultural activities discussed above, we identify two other sources of revenue that may contribute to an artist's total income: other paid or unpaid work outside the arts and cultural sector, and other sources such as financial assistance received from family members, government benefits or financial loans.

Our data show that in addition to their arts and cultural activities, 34 percent of artists in the region undertake other work that is not directly related to their culture. As was seen in Table 9.1, about two-thirds of artists who engage in this work are paid for it, leaving almost 40 percent who do this work unpaid. About one-third of those undertaking paid non-cultural activities are doing so on a full-time basis and one-quarter on a part-time basis (see Table 9.4), paid in the form of full- or part-time salaries or wages. The majority of these non-cultural jobs are within the third sector, which highlights the importance of this sector for generating employment in the region, including jobs outside the arts and cultural sector.

Our survey also provides data on the second source of income noted above, i.e. financial support received from government benefits of various kinds, money received from a partner or other family members, or payment from community trust funds and so on. In the Arnhem Land region, only 16 percent of artists do *not* receive any form of support from one or more of these non-work sources, as shown in Table 9.5. Sources of artists' non-work income include financial support from their partners (27 percent), financial support from other family members (40 percent)[20] and mining royalties/community trusts (eight percent). However, the main source of non-work income is government benefits. Exactly two-thirds of all artists in the region rely on some form of government support. Of those receiving government support payments, the largest groups are those receiving unemployment benefits such as Newstart or Youth Allowance (21 percent) and those on work for the dole with CDP activities (19 percent), as Table 9.6 shows. Just over one in ten artists receiving government benefits obtain support from a disability pension and about the same number of artists receive family tax benefits, while less than one in ten are in receipt of a parenting payment or an age pension. We note that the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme has not attracted any artists amongst our survey sample. There may be several reasons why this is so, including the possibility that the existence of the scheme is not well known, or because the scheme requires a level of entrepreneurial and business skills found among only a few individual artists in the region.

[20] Support from partners and family members does not include transfers in kind.

Table 9.5 Artists receiving support from other income sources in the last 12 months (percent of respondents)

Other income sources (n=122)	%
Artists not relying on other income sources	**16**
Artists relying on other income sources*:	**84**
Government benefits, such as unemployment or other benefits	67
Money received from family (other than partner)	40
Partner income	27
Park/ mining royalties (community trust)	8
A loan from a financial institution	**
Other loans, such as Indigenous Business Network	-
Other	3
Total	**100**

* Multiple response allowed.
** indicates less than 1%.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

Table 9.6 Artists receiving government benefits in the last 12 months (percent of respondents)

Government benefits (n=122)	%
Artists not receiving government benefits	**33**
Artists receiving government benefits*:	**67**
Unemployment benefits, such as Newstart or Youth Allowance	21
Work for the Dole with CDP activities	19
Disability Support Pension	12
Family tax benefit	11
Parenting Payment	8
Age pension	8
Carer payments	3
Work for the Dole without CDP activities	**
New Enterprise Incentive Scheme	-
Other	-
Total	**100**

* Multiple response allowed.
** indicates less than 1%.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

Income flows do not occur solely in one direction. Artists receiving money from whatever source are very likely to be involved in supporting others; indeed 85 percent of artists in our survey indicated that they were supporting other people in one way or another, confirming the importance of the sharing economy in Aboriginal communities. Table 9.7 shows that the main recipients of monetary transfers from artists are family members – dependent children or grandchildren (45 percent), other immediate family (39 percent), or a partner (30 percent). Less than ten percent of artists also support members of their extended family.

Table 9.7 Artists supporting others in the last 12 months (percent of respondents)

(n=122)	%
Did not support anybody	**15**
Supported other*	**85**
Dependent children/ grandchildren	45
Artist's partner	30
Other close family (immediate family, other than artist's partner)	39
Extended family members (outside of immediate family)	9
Total	**100**

* Multiple response allowed.

9.6 THE MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME

As discussed earlier in this section of the Report, artists could have multiple sources of income from cultural or non-cultural activities or from non-work income. In the survey, we asked respondents to identify which one of all these income sources had been, according to their knowledge, their *main* source of income in the last 12 months. Table 9.8 shows the results, which indicate that creative artistic activities combined with other cultural activities were the main income source for a third of artists, with about a quarter stating that they gain their principal income from other work. But it is noteworthy that two in five artists (43 percent) nominated "other sources", or non-work income, as their principal revenue stream. Almost all respondents in this group received some form of financial support from the government. It seems likely that these other sources of income were identified so often because they are perceived as being more consistent, despite generating only about 27 percent of the average artist's income.

Table 9.8 The main income source in the last 12 months as perceived by respondents (percent of respondents)

Income sources	N	%
Income from creative artistic activities	32	26
Income from other cultural activities	8	7
Income from other activities (not directly related to culture)	29	24
Income from other sources	53	43
Total	**122**	**100**

9.7 MEAN AND MEDIAN INCOMES

The use of population surveys as a means of collecting data about the monetary amounts of people's incomes and expenditures faces particular difficulties. Such information is private and respondents are often sensitive about divulging details of their financial affairs. These considerations are just as relevant to Aboriginal artists as they are to anyone else. However, as in other regions where the National Survey has already been carried out, we received no refusals from respondents in the Arnhem Land region to provide information about their incomes, and all did so to the extent that they could. Despite such cooperation from interviewees, however, there remain serious constraints on deriving accurate income data in a survey such as this. Some of the respondents have low numeracy levels[21] and most do not keep accurate accounting records or do not lodge their tax returns every year. Many of the respondents also could not recall exactly how much they have received as income and when it might have been received, particularly as most receive income from a variety of sources. Moreover, monies paid to Aboriginal artists could also be immediately shared with family members and others, so it is not clear how much of any payment actually accrues to the individual. In some cases, income is received on behalf of the family, for example in royalty payments through the Land Council.

In our survey, we were able to deal with these problems for the component of income derived from artistic work through the following avenues. For those visual artists whose creative income was managed more or less solely through an organisation, such as an art centre or gallery, we were able to collect accurate statistics directly from these organisations with written permissions of the artists to allow us to access their income data. In regard to other artistic forms, a number of artists were paid as employees (e.g. film-makers and writers), so again their salaries could be determined.

For income from other cultural and non-cultural activities, recollection was often difficult, particularly as there were generally multiple sources of income in varying amounts during any given period. In cases where the respondent received a reasonably consistent income through salary or wages (e.g. as rangers, arts and media workers, teachers) more precision was possible. Sitting fees, fees for performing and fees for consulting services were particularly hard to determine.

Other sources of income (non-work) were also difficult to pin down; not all respondents were able to provide figures and these data need to be treated with caution. In most cases where Government benefits were received, the amounts could be estimated approximately from the standard payment rates for the different benefit types subject to respondent's circumstances, such as whether or not they had dependent children, the respondent's age, their disability status and so on. These amounts are approximations only, because our survey does not give data on details that would be needed for determining more accurate estimates, such as arrangements with partners, number and the age of dependent children, and so on. We also did not have clear information on the continuity of these Government payments in individual cases, such as whether respondents received these payments throughout the entire 12 months or during some months that year only, or whether there had been any subtractions due to CDP penalties[22]. In the absence of this information, we had to make an assumption

[21] For data on competency levels derived from a survey of a small sample of Indigenous arts workers carried out for Desart in 2014, see Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (2014); see also Wright (2000).

[22] Since January 2016, in any one quarter about 60 per cent of CDP participants recorded at least one suspension, and about a third of participants were penalised. Since the middle of 2016, close to one in ten penalised participants lost twenty percent or more of their quarterly payments. (Department of

that all respondents who received Government benefits received them for the entire 12 months and that no penalties were applied. This means that some overestimations are possible in these data. In the case of other sources such as income from a partner or money received from family, these receipts were likely to be irregular, such that respondents had difficulty nominating the total amount they would have received last year. In all cases it was not possible to obtain precise dollar figures; rather, we asked respondents to choose the range within which their income fell. In compiling tables from these data, we assume the point estimate to be the mid-point of the range.

Taking into account the above-mentioned issues, Table 9.9 presents the mean and median incomes of artists in the Arnhem Land region for the last 12 months. The table shows the means/medians calculated across all artists in the sample, including zero incomes wherever relevant, but not including cases where income information was incomplete or uncertain.

Table 9.9 Mean and median incomes for artists in the last 12 months ($'000 p.a.)

Income sources (n=99)	Mean	Median
	$'000 p.a.	
Income from creative artistic activities	8.7	3.0
Income from other cultural activities	9.7	0.5
Income from other activities (not directly related to culture)	4.8	-
Total income from work	**23.2**	**17.6**
Income from other sources	8.7	7.5
Total income	**31.9**	**26.0**

As we can see from the table, artistic activities make up 27 percent of an average artist's total income, and almost 40 percent of their work income. However, the largest component of artists' average work income in the Arnhem Land region is income that comes from participation in other cultural activities. It comprises more than 40 percent of an average artist's work income and about a third of her/his total income. These percentages of an artist's average income can be compared with the work hours that he/she spends on these activities – 33 percent of time on artistic activities and 53 percent on other cultural activities. Work outside the arts and cultural sector makes up one fifth of an artist's work income and 15 percent of total income. Overall, the income that an average artist in the region receives from work is roughly three times the income that is derived from other sources. It needs to be noted again here that we treat income that comes from CDP work activities as unpaid work and any remuneration received for these activities as government benefits in accordance with the purpose of the CDP scheme.

We can compare the creative artistic income and total income of Aboriginal artists in the Arnhem Land region with the corresponding data for all Australian artists. The report *Making Art Work* shows that practising professional artists in Australia earned $18,800 on average in 2014–15 from their artistic work, with total incomes from all sources of $48,400. These incomes are considerably higher than the corresponding earnings of Indigenous artists in the survey region. However, it appears that artists in the region may nevertheless

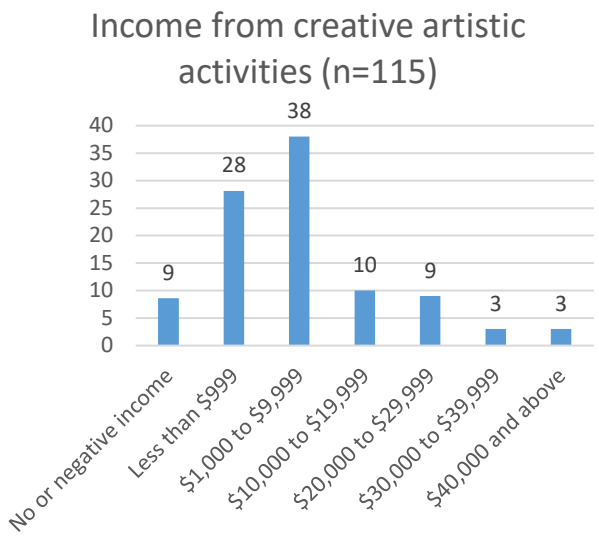
the Prime Minister and Cabinet. *An evaluation of the first two years of the Community Development Programme*. 5 February 2019.)

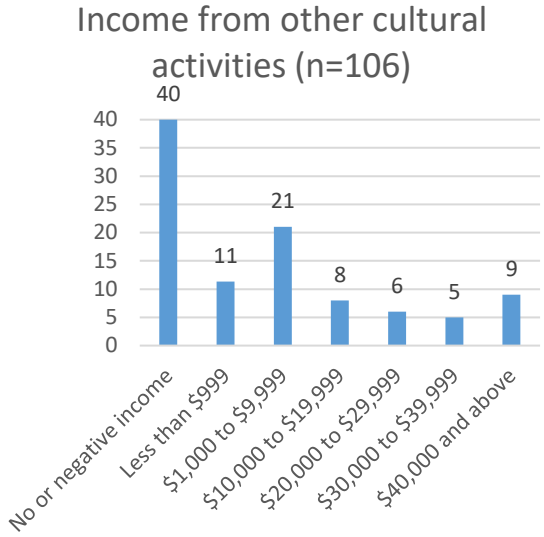
be better off on average than other Indigenous people in the region. Two comparisons are possible: given that our data show that the majority of Indigenous practising artists in the region are not in the labour force, we can compare incomes of artists in the region (1) against incomes of Indigenous adults (15 years old and older) in general, and (2) against incomes of Indigenous adults who are in the labour force. Our estimate of the median annual income of artists in the region of around $26,000 per annum is significantly higher than the median personal income for Indigenous (15+) people in remote and very remote areas of the Northern Territory (about $11,700 per annum) derived from 2016 ABS Census data. This median income of Indigenous artists in the region is also higher than the median personal income of Indigenous people in remote and very areas of NT in the labour force (about $23,400 per annum) [23]

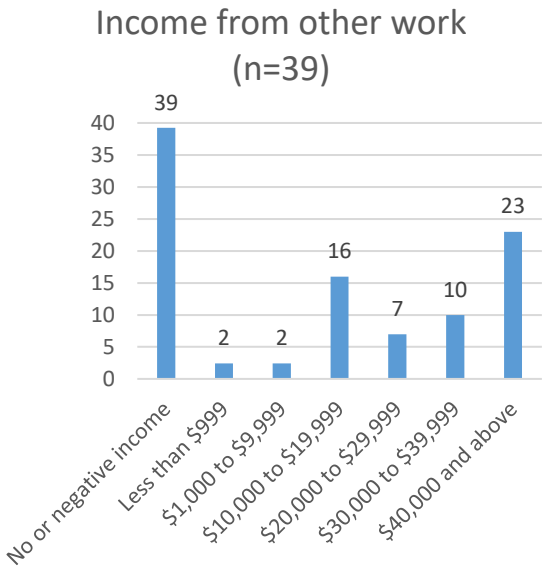
Finally, we show in Figure 9.2 the income distributions within the main income categories. These diagrams illustrate the observations concerning the various income sources that we have discussed in this section. In the case of income from artistic activities, the largest group of artists comprises those earning between $1,000 and $10,000 from their creative work (38 percent of artists). A similar proportion earned less than $1,000 from this source in the year. At the other end of the distribution of creative incomes, six percent of artists in the region earned more than $30,000 from their artistic work. In regard to income from other cultural activities, other (non-cultural) work, and other sources, the largest single group in each case is of those receiving zero income from that source.

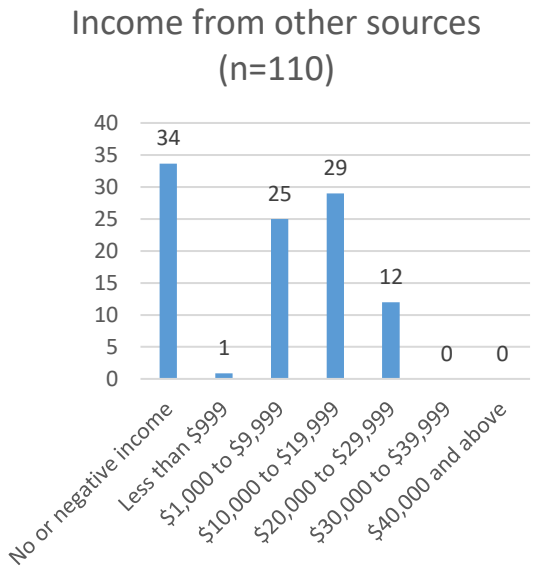
[23] Derived from estimates of weekly personal incomes for Indigenous persons (15 +) in general and in the labour force in Remote and Very Remote NT from the 2016 Census.

Figure 9.2 Income distribution from different sources (percent of respondents who receive income from these sources









10 PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

This section addresses professional practice issues of artists residing in the remote and very remote areas of the region. In presenting the results, we distinguish between those artists who are primarily visual artists (activities including painting, print-making, weaving, carving, sculpting and so on) and those who are performing artists (engaged in music, dance, theatre, or film production). We recognise that Indigenous artists, as all other artists, often work across artform boundaries, and we have documented these work patterns for our survey sample in section 6 of this Report. Nevertheless, it is possible for artists to identify a mode of practice that takes up most of their time these days, and this is the basis of the distinction that we use here[24]. The survey data provide insights into a range of issues relating to professional artistic practice, including: the years of experience in art production; spaces that are available to artists in the remote areas of the region; artists' preferences for spending more or less time in their artistic practice; and artists' use of technology. We also look into a number of professional experiences that are common among artists in the Arnhem Land region and their impact on artists' professional lives.

10.1 ARTISTS' YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

The great majority of artists in the region have been practising in the arts for more than 20 years (68 percent), as shown in Table 10.1. This reflects both the age distribution of the artist population in the region, and the early age from which artists learn and practice their art. It also attests to the significant accumulation of human capital in the Arnhem Land region that comprises a major resource contributing to the generation of economic benefit for communities in the region. Note that many artists begin their involvement with serious creative work in their teens or even earlier. Thus the group with more than 20 years of experience will include a number who are by no means elderly.

Table 10.1 Years of experience by art form (percent of respondents)

Years of experience	Visual artists (n=95)	Performing artists (n=12)	All artists (n=122)
		%	
1-2 years	7	-	9
3-5 years	8	9	8
6-10 years	6	0	8
11-20 years	7	24	7
20+ years	72	67	68
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

- indicates nil response in this sample.

10.2 FACILITIES FOR MAKING WORK

To continue their practice, artists in the region make use of different facilities available in remote areas. In the survey we asked respondents to tell us about the places in which they

[24] Note that the same issue arises in the survey of all Australian artists as reported in *Making Art Work* (2017). In that survey the specification used is of an artist's principal artistic occupation (PAO), defined as that art form in which the artist "mostly works these days in terms of time" (p. 19) Although many artists do engage in multi-artform practice, all have been able to identify one as their PAO.

have been making their work. Respondents were then asked to identify one place where they spend the most of their time on their artistic work. The results are summarised in Table 10.2. An artist's home, or the home of a family member, is a common location for their work. About 70 percent of all artists in the region utilise their own or family member's home as a place for artistic practice and for about 40 percent, private homes are the places where they spend the most of their time making work. Homes as places of practice are used less often by performing artists than by visual artists – only one-third of them have practised their art at home, and only one-quarter work mostly at home these days.

For most visual artists, an art centre is likely to be an important work location. More than two-thirds of visual artists in the region (69 percent) have been able to practise in an arts centre, and for about half of them arts centres are where they spend most of their working time. Almost one-third of all artists in the region also make use of other community spaces and facilities, such as community halls and recreation spaces – this is more common among performing artists than visual artists. In fact, 84 percent of performing artists have used a community space for their practice at some time, and for one-third of them (34 percent) this is the most used working space.

Table 10.2 also highlights the importance of working on country, not only for the purposes of collecting materials but also for making work, with half of all artists in the region making their work and practising there at some time. During interviews, some respondents explained that working on country is where their art "would come alive" and "achieve meaning". One-quarter of the performing artists in our sample work mostly on country these days; this number will include those performers who live and work on outstations located on their country, and the work involved might include performances at ceremonies and other events, such as performances specifically for tourists. Note however that the sample number here is too small to enable generalisation of this statistic.

Table 10.2 Places used for artistic practice by artists (percent of respondents)

Place of artistic practice	Location used for producing art*			Location where most time for art production is spent		
	Visual artists (n=95)	Performing artists (n=12)	All artists (n=122)	Visual artists (n=95)	Performing artists (n=12)	All artists (n=122)
	%			%		
Home or family member's home	79	34	71	43	25	41
Art centre	69	17	58	49	-	42
On country	49	60	50	1	25	5
Community space or facility	19	84	27	6	34	8
Educational institution (such as school, TAFE, etc.)	4	33	12	-	8	2
Dedicated studio space, such as artist studio, recording studio or editing suite	3	41	11	1	8	2
Other	0	8	1	-	-	-
Total				**100**	**100**	**100**

* Multiple response allowed.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

About four in ten of performing artists in the region at some time have had an opportunity to utilise a dedicated studio space, such as a recording studio or editing suite. Only three percent of visual artists in the region have practised in a dedicated artist studio outside of the art centre format. One-third of performing artists also have made use of educational facilities, such as schools, when making their art – in some communities, bands can come together in out-of-school hours to practise using space and equipment provided by the local school.

10.3 PREFERENCES FOR SPENDING MORE/LESS TIME IN ARTISTIC PRACTICE

In the survey, we asked respondents if they would like to be spending "more, about the same or less time on their art practice". Only one in ten respondents said that they would like to spend less time. About half of all artists are happy with the amount of time they currently spend on making their artistic work. About two in five artists stated that they would like to spend more time. It appears that in the region a larger proportion of performing artists than visual artists would like to spend more time on their practice. Those respondents who indicated that they would like to spend more time on their practice were then asked about reasons that prevented them from allocating more time towards it. As Table 10.3 shows, among many reasons mentioned there are two that stand out: obligations imposed by having to do other non-arts work, and having to balance artistic work with community or cultural responsibilities. Not only are these two obstacles the most commonly cited among reasons why more art work could not be taken on, they are also the *most important* obstacles for the largest proportions of respondents.

It is troubling that health issues are the main reason preventing as many as 15 percent of artists who would like to work more at their art from being able to do so. We also note that almost one in five artists cite lack of equipment or facilities as being one of the obstacles to undertaking more artistic work – these artists are likely to be mainly performers who do not have access to recording facilities, studios, etc. Where a clear need for such facilities can be demonstrated in the region, these sorts of resource constraints could be mitigated through increased support measures and other forms of targeted assistance.

Table 10.3 Reasons for not being able to spend more time at art work (percent of those respondents who would prefer to spend more time on their artistic activities)

Reasons	Reasons *		The main reason	
	n=49	%	n=47	%
Too much non-arts work that I have responsibilities for	11	22	8	17
Balancing my work with community or cultural responsibilities	11	22	7	15
Health issues	7	14	7	15
Other	8	16	5	11
Family issues	10	20	4	8
Lack of equipment	9	18	3	7
Lack of facilities	9	18	3	7
No time because have to fulfil requirements in order to receive government benefits	4	8	3	7
Lack of materials	6	12	2	4
Lack of skills/ experience	2	4	2	4
Difficulties with promoting my work/ getting my work to market	3	6	2	4
Lack of access to country	2	4	1	2
Little income from this work/need to earn more income elsewhere	2	4	-	-
New thing, just starting it out	-	-	-	-
Total			**47**	**100**

* Multiple response allowed.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

10.4 PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

The National Survey of Remote Indigenous Artists, of which the survey in Arnhem Land is one component, covers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural producers practising art at a level that qualifies them as professionals according to the accepted standards of professionalism in the arts[25]. In the survey we asked respondents about several aspects of their working lives that are relevant in some way to their experience or practice as a professional artist. Issues covered include: the management of their practice; the extent to which their work was seen interstate or overseas; external sources of support for their artistic development; mentorship; and their experience of copyright. Table 10.4 provides some data on the numbers of artists affected by each of these issues, and the extent to which their experience has been positive or negative. These results are discussed below.

[25] For a discussion of the definition of professional practice in the arts, see *Making Art Work 2017* pp. 18-19.

Table 10.4 Professional experiences and their impact on artistic career (percent of respondents)

Professional experiences	% of all artists* (n=122)	Very positive	Fairly positive	No effect	Fairly negative	Very negative	Total
Being managed by an art centre	72	87	13	-	-	-	**100**
Being managed by a community organisation or artist-run initiative (other than art centres)	16	94	6	-	-	-	**100**
Being managed by a private company	11	76	24	-	-	-	**100**
Showing your work overseas	30	92	8	-	-	-	**100**
Showing your work in capital cities	60	99	-	1	-	-	**100**
Receiving a grant or funding to continue artistic work	17	100	-	-	-	-	**100**
Winning an award or prize	16	90	10	-	-	-	**100**
Working with an established artist/ author from my community (assisting or collaborating)	24	87	13	-	-	-	**100**
Working with an established artist/ author from outside of my community (assisting or collaborating)	14	89	11	-	-	-	**100**
None of these	6						

* Multiple response allowed
- indicates nil response in this sample

Management of art practice

Artists have different arrangements when it comes to the management of their practice and consequently the ways in which their work is promoted and sold. Some artists are managed by an art centre, local gallery or other local organisation, agent, manager or gallery dealer, while some work independently. Table 10.4 shows that about seven in ten artists in the Arnhem Land region have had an experience of working with an art centre, and 16 percent have had some engagement with an artist-run initiative or other community organisation. The great majority of artists have found these arrangements to be very positive, and no respondents voiced any negative opinions in this regard. Being managed by a private company, such as a commercial gallery, record company or publisher, is much less common in the region, with only 11 percent of all artists having had such an experience; although three-quarters of these artists found these arrangements to be very positive, the remainder said that the experience had been only “fairly positive”. Again, however, no negative views were mentioned.

Interstate and overseas exposure

Despite being produced in the most remote parts of Australia, the artistic outputs of Indigenous artists in these regions are appreciated throughout Australia as well as overseas. Table 10.4 shows the proportion of artists who have had professional engagements as artists or have had their work shown in the Australian capital cities and abroad. Just on 60 percent of all artists in the region have had their work showcased outside of their remote settlements in one or more of the Australian capital cities, and 30 percent have shown their work overseas[26]. Overwhelmingly these opportunities have had an almost unanimously positive impact on the artist's practice. It should be remembered that there are also other ways in which artists' work moves beyond the region – many music bands, for example, tour between towns and communities in and outside the region, and work of visual artists sold to visitors at a local art centre may be taken anywhere in Australia and in the world.

External sources of support: grants and prizes

A common means for supporting artists is by way of a competitive grant program which may be provided from public or private sources. Our survey data show that 22 percent of artists in the Arnhem Land region have applied for a grant in the last 12 months – or more precisely, some body such as an art centre has applied for a grant on the artist's behalf or on behalf of a group of which the artist was a member. The proportion of applicants could in fact have been much higher than 22 percent, since more than one-third of our sample (35 percent) did not know or were not sure whether a grant might have been applied for. Of those who knew they had been involved in a grant application in some way, 85 percent stated that their application was successful. In the longer term, Table 10.4 shows that 17 percent of all artists in the region have at some time received some form of grant or funding to continue their artistic work. There is unanimous agreement amongst these artists that such support had a very positive impact on their artistic career.

Winning an award or prize in an artistic field is another avenue that can advance an artist's career and contribute to the artist being recognised and becoming more established in their practice. Table 10.4 shows that 16 percent of artists in the region have won an art award or prize at some stage of their career. Of these artists, 90 percent expressed a very positive view of the impact of this success on their artistic career, and the remainder said the impact had been "fairly positive".

Mentorship

For some artists, their professional practice may be advanced by the possibility of working at some point in their career with a more experienced artist in their artform; such collaborations may in some cases come from a mentor based within the artist's own community, in other cases the mentor may come from outside. The data in Table 10.4 show that one-quarter (24 percent) of artists in our sample have assisted or collaborated with an established artist from within their community at some time, and 14 percent have been engaged in such arrangements with an artist from outside. Again, the effects of such mentorship arrangements have been judged to be very positive by almost nine in ten of these artists, with the remaining ten percent saying that the experience was fairly positive. Collaborations and mentorship arrangements with established artists, especially with practitioners from the wider professional field of art practice, are a way of supporting artists in communities that could have more extensive application in the future.

[26] It appears that Aboriginal artists in the region are having less exposure to the international art market than all artists Australia wide – 27 percent vs 42 percent (the latter data from *Making Art Work,* 2017).

Copyright

Copyright is especially important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, given the attention being paid at present to the widespread occurrence of unauthorised use of Indigenous creative work. In the survey, we asked respondents "As far as you are aware, has copyright of your creative work ever been infringed (i.e. an image of your work used without permission or payment) or has your work been pirated (i.e. used without your, or your art centre, or dealer's permission)?" The responses showed that a large proportion of artists in the region (85 percent) were aware of copyright relating to their artistic work, and most of these artists did not think that their copyright had been infringed. Only 15 percent stated they did not know or were not sure if their copyright had been infringed, though it should be remembered that there are many circumstances where creative work is used without the knowledge or authorisation of the owner of the copyright in the work. Of those artists who knew about copyright of their work, a small proportion (6 percent) stated that their work had been copied or used in some inappropriate way. We then asked those who knew of such infringement whether they had taken action to stop the practice or to seek compensation; some had done so, but the sample is too small to be able to draw any conclusions.

Copyright is important as a means of providing remuneration to creators and for allowing orderly access to creative work by consumers. There have been several awareness campaigns in recent years that have sought to educate Indigenous artists in remote parts of Australia on copyright issues. Given the vulnerability of the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to unauthorised exploitation or appropriation, it is essential that such education measures be maintained and extended.

10.5 USE OF TECHNOLOGY

More than half of Aboriginal artists in the region (58 percent) personally use some form of equipment or digital technology in their artistic work, as shown in Table 10.5. Among those artists who use these technologies, mobile and smart phones are used the most in the production of art works, with 51 percent of all artists using their phones for these purposes. About one in five artists who use technology also use social media platforms. Desktop computers, laptop computers, iPads and so on are also relatively popular (23 percent). It is noteworthy that performing artists are more technologically engaged than visual artists, a result that is hardly surprising considering the various devices and pieces of equipment specific to music-making, film-making, and audio-visual production generally. Individual promotion of an artist's work via the internet is not common in the region; just under ten percent of performing artists and no visual artists have a personal website that they manage themselves, although one in ten of all artists indicate that they supply their artistic content to a third-party website, such as YouTube, Spotify and so on, to be promoted by them.

Despite a relatively low use of technology by Indigenous artists in the remote regional areas, it is important to note that overall Indigenous artists use technology more than the Indigenous population in general. Analysis of the 2014-15 NATSISS data shows that Australia-wide, Indigenous artists in very remote and remote areas access the Internet more often than the general Indigenous population in these areas – 73 percent compared to 64 percent for very remote areas, and 56 percent compared to 50 percent for remote areas.

Table 10.5 Artists' use of technologies in the process of creating art (percent of respondents)

Equipment and technology	Visual artists (n=95)	Performing artists (n=12)	All artists (n=122)
		%	
Use some of these*:	**50**	**66**	**58**
Mobile or smart phones	46	66	51
Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or others	19	24	20
Desktop computer, laptop computer, iPad, etc.	13	41	23
Still photography camera	11	8	14
Video or film equipment	6	25	13
Sound recording or playing equipment	-	8	8
Third-party websites, such as YouTube, Vimeo or others	4	26	10
Personal website	-	8	1
Other	-	9	1
Do not use any of these	**50**	**34**	**42**
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

* Multiple response allowed.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

10.6 MOTIVATIONS

Why do people become artists? In the survey we asked respondents to think about why they pursued their creative practice in circumstances where other career paths were available to them. The range of motivations mentioned is shown in Table 10.6, together with the proportions of artists who recognised each one. The most frequently nominated reason why artists in the Arnhem Land region became engaged in artistic and cultural activities was simply the love of making art and the enjoyment they obtained from doing it, a reason identified by four out of five artists. Importantly the role of art as an embodiment and expression of Aboriginal culture were the next two most often cited reasons – sharing culture with others, and keeping culture strong, were referred to by 71 and 68 percent of artists respectively. An economic motivation – the earning of an income – was mentioned by two-thirds of respondents. More than half the artists (58 percent) mentioned cultural teaching as a motivation, a response linked with motives concerning the maintenance and celebration of culture through art, and reflective of the significant role of intergenerational cultural transmission in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

Table 10.6 Reasons for participating in art and cultural activities (percent of artists)

	N	%
Own enjoyment/ love doing it	97	80
Sharing culture with others	87	71
Keep culture strong	83	68
Get money as income	79	65
Cultural teaching	71	58
Can live/ work on country	26	21
Cultural learning	25	20
Community/ cultural obligations	24	20
Keep others away from trouble	14	11
Keep me away from trouble	10	8
Flexible work arrangements	5	4
Subsistence, i.e. food or medicine	4	3
Other	1	*
Don't know/ Not sure	-	-

* indicates less than 1%.
- indicates nil response in this sample.
** Multiple response allowed.

11 GENDER ISSUES

The position of women in Australian society in general and in the workforce in particular has been coming under increasing scrutiny. The issues being raised are just as important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women as for any other group. It is appropriate, therefore, that this study should take a closer look at the similarities and differences in the circumstances of female and male artists in the survey region. We do so in this section, comparing where possible the data for the Arnhem Land artists with statistics for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults residing in remote and very remote areas Australia-wide, and for all Australian artists as shown in *Making Art Work* 2017.

11.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

The female/male gender ratio amongst Indigenous artists in the survey region is roughly 54/46 as indicated by NATSISS data and our own survey sample (see Table 4.2 above). Demographic characteristics of the female and male artist population in the region are shown in Table 11.1. There are few differences between the genders in these statistics, except that there is a much smaller proportion of male single parents with children than there is of females (8 percent vs 19 percent). This differential reflects the common occurrence among families where parents have separated – casual observation suggests that it is more often the mother rather than the father who subsequently has care of the children after separation.

Table 11.1 Demographic characteristics of artists, by gender (percent of all respondents)

	Female (n=66)	Male (n=56)
Age (years)		
Mean age	46	46
Median age	50	40
Family circumstances (%)		
Single no children	27	30
Single with children	19	8
Partner no children	22	24
Partner with children	32	38
Total	**100**	**100**

Table 11.2 shows the proportions of male and female artists in our survey sample who suffer from disability, long-term illness or other form of impairment. There appears to be a somewhat greater incidence of disability among women artists than among men (36 percent compared to 23 percent).

Table 11.2 Disability, long-term illness or other impairment, by gender (percent of respondents)

Disability/ long-term illness/ other impairment	Female (n=66)	Male (n=56)
	%	
Yes	36	23
No	64	77
Total	**100**	**100**

11.2 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

How do female and male Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in remote areas compare in terms of their levels of formal education, and are there any differences between men and women when learning about their culture or acquiring their industry training skills to work in the arts?

The highest levels of formal education received, the pathways for acquiring cultural knowledge, and the pathways for gaining industry skills are shown by gender in Tables 11.3, 11.4, and 11.5 respectively. It is apparent that a larger proportion of women artists complete high school than men (39 percent compared to 17 percent), and although somewhat more men than women complete a post-school diploma or certificate (37 percent compared to 27 percent), relatively small numbers of females from the region go on to university, whereas no males in our survey sample had graduate or postgraduate qualifications. These results reflect an Australia-wide pattern, since female artists in general tend to spend more years in formal training and education than their male colleagues.[27] Some minor differences do appear in the data for the most important pathway for acquiring cultural skills, as shown in Table 11.5. Although both men and women mostly gain their cultural experience and skills from family members, women are more likely than men to do so by observing and participating with a family member, whereas the reverse is true for those who simply observe. However, most of the differences are only minor.

[27] *Making Art Work* 2017, p. 125.

Table 11.3 Highest level of formal education, by gender (percent of respondents) ^

	Never attended	Year 10 (or equivalent) and below	Year 11 and Year 12 (or equivalent)	Completed Diploma or Certificate	Completed Bachelor Degree	Completed Postgraduate Degree, Diploma or Certificate or Doctorate Degree	Total
				%			
Indigenous artists residing in remote and very remote areas in Arnhem Land							
Female	3	25	39	27	5	1	**100**
Male	11	35	17	37	-	-	**100**
Indigenous adults residing in remote and very remote areas Australia-wide**							
Female	2	49	26	21	1	1	**100**
Male	2	52	23	22	-	1	**100**
All artists Australia-wide***							
Female	*	1	5	11	37	46	**100**
Male	*	3	11	16	32	38	**100**

^ Excluded “Don’t know/ Not sure” responses.
* indicates less than 1%.
** NATSISS 2014-15.
*** Artists’ Survey 2017.
- indicates nil response in this sample.

Table 11.4 Most important pathway for acquiring cultural knowledge, by gender (percent of respondents)

Cultural knowledge pathways	Female (n=66)	Male (n=56)
	%	
Directly from family members	91	92
Directly from elders and/ or other community members	3	2
From being on country	3	2
From participating in ceremonies	2	-
From artworks, songs or stories	-	-
From festivals or other cultural events	-	-
From books, archives, libraries, including online libraries/archives	-	2
Some other way	1	2
Total	**100**	**100**

- indicates nil response in this sample.

Table 11.5 Important and 'most important' pathways for gaining industry skills and experience, by gender (percent of respondents)

Industry skills pathways	Female (n=66)	Male (n=56)
	%	
Learning from a family member:	**81**	**83**
Observing and participating with a family member	61	51
Observing from a family member	20	32
Learning from a friend or community member:	**7**	**6**
Observing and participating with a friend or community member	7	4
Observing from a friend or community member	-	2
Self-learning/ Learning on the job	6	9
School	-	-
Mentorship with an art professional	4	-
University program	-	-
Workshops/ short courses	2	2
Vocational training	-	-
Online sources	-	-
Some other way	-	-
Total	**100**	**100**

- indicates nil response in this sample.

** Multiple responses allowed.

11.3 TIME ALLOCATION AND FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Time spent on cultural-economic activities by female and male artists in the Arnhem Land region is shown in Table 11.6. Data on the number of hours in the average week that artists allocate to various activities are shown in Table 11.7. Table 11.8 shows the proportions of artists who nominated each source of income as their single main revenue source, and in Table 11.9 we show the mean and median incomes from different types of work for male and female artists in the region. In all these tables there are only minor differences between the genders and none of the differences shown is statistically significant. Although it appears that the gender gap that affects incomes of mainstream artists in Australia is not evident in the incomes of Indigenous artists in the Arnhem Land region, it should be remembered that the absolute levels of creative incomes of non-Indigenous artists are significantly greater than those of their Indigenous counterparts.

Table 11.6 Time spent on cultural-economic activities, by gender (weighted average score)

Activities	Female	Male
	Weighted average score*	
Creative artistic activities		
Visual arts	4.0	3.8
Performing arts	1.6	1.8
Writing/ storytelling	2.1	2.2
Composing/ choreographing	2.6	3.0
Film-making/ multimedia work	2.0	1.5
Other cultural activities		
Teaching others in arts and culture	2.4	2.3
Caring for country	2.3	2.8
Being on a cultural board, committee or council	1.5	1.6
Interpreting, translating and/or cross-cultural consulting	2.4	2.6
Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services	1.6	1.1
Fishing, hunting, collecting or preparing bush food	3.0	3.0
Participating in ceremonies	1.3	1.1
Providing cultural tourism services	2.5	2.3
Arts administration	3.2	3.8
Arts management	3.4	4.0
Cultural archiving, record keeping	1.9	2.3
Other activities (not directly related to culture)		
Other activities	1.6	1.5

** 1 indicates “few full days/year”; 2 indicates “1-2 full days/month”; 3 indicates “1 full day/week”; 4 indicates “2-3 full days/week”; 5 indicates “4-5 full days/week”. Excludes “Don't know/ Not sure” responses.

Table 11.7 Mean and median number of hours that artists spent on activities in the last 12 months, by gender (hours)

Hours spent on…	Female (n=66)		Male (n=56)	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
	hours			
Creative artistic activities	21	18	19	18
Other cultural activities	30	30	34	32
Total arts and cultural activities	**51**	**52**	**53**	**49**
Other activities (not directly related to culture)	7	-	9	-
Total working hours	**58**	**54**	**62**	**62**

- indicates nil response in this sample.

Table 11.8 The main source of income in the last 12 months, by gender (percent of respondents)

Main income comes from	Female (n=66)	Male (n=56)
	%	
Creative artistic activities	28	25
Other cultural activities	4	9
Other work	22	26
Other sources	46	40
No income	-	-
Don't know/ Not sure	-	-
Total	**100**	**100**

- indicates nil response in this sample.

Table 11.9 Mean and median incomes for artists in the last 12 months, by gender ($'000 p.a.)

Income sources	Female (n=55)		Male (n=44)	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
	$'000 p.a.		$'000 p.a.	
Income from creative artistic activities	8.6	3.0	8.7	3.0
Income from other cultural activities	10.5	3.0	8.9	0.5
Income from other activities (not directly related to culture)	4.4	0.0	5.4	0.0
Total income from work	**23.4**	**15.5**	**23.0**	**18.0**
Income from other sources	8.7	7.5	8.7	7.5
Total income	**32.1**	**28.0**	**31.7**	**25.5**

12 ART AND CULTURE IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

One of the important purposes of this study has been to consider the extent to which art and cultural production has the potential to promote the long-term sustainability of remote communities in the Arnhem Land region. As a component of the survey, we presented respondents with a series of statements, both positive and negative, relating to this question and sought the extent of their agreement or disagreement with each statement. The following aspects were considered:

- views on the role of art and cultural production as a source of income and employment in respondents' communities;
- needs for skill development;
- infrastructure issues; and
- tourism as a source of economic benefit.

Details of the statements and of the responses for each one are shown in Table 12.1. The summary scores shown are calculated according to the scale shown beneath the table. The order of the statements was randomised in presenting them to respondents in the interviews.

Turning first to artists' views on the role of art and culture in generating incomes and employment, we note that a significant majority of artists agreed with the proposition that artistic activities can indeed be a source of economic benefit (89 percent of respondents *strongly* agreeing with this proposition). There was a similar level of agreement that culture-related activities could also be beneficial. These attitudes extended to the long-term prospects for the role of art in community development, as can be seen in the table.

Secondly, there was very strong agreement that "Artists/writers like myself can train young people in the community to become artists/writers", attesting to the importance of intergenerational and intra-generational cultural transmission in skill development that we have noted earlier in this Report. Respondents also endorsed the importance of bilingual education in school (88 percent of respondents *strongly* agreeing with this proposition); not only is this essential for the maintenance of Indigenous languages, the dual nature of such educational programs is seen to help young people in the community to get jobs and earn incomes later on. In a post-school context, the value of arts-practice workshops in providing people in the community with the skills to do more artistic activities was supported by 97 percent of respondents. More formal course programs such as those available in TAFE and university were also seen in a positive light – about 96 percent of respondents were in favour.

Thirdly, there was strong support for the importance of art centres, with 98 percent of respondents agreeing that "Having an art centre creates (could create) jobs and incomes in my community". For those respondents from communities with an existing art centre, this importance was an observable reality, whereas those artists from communities without such a facility could only say that an art centre would create potential economic opportunity in their community. The latter artists could in many cases see the benefits provided by an art centre in a neighbouring community, prompting a hope that they could have one too. In this regard, there would appear to be scope for further infrastructure development in some remote communities, with about 20 percent of respondents agreeing with the proposition that facilities such as community centres, venues, etc. in their community at present were not enough to support more artistic activity. However, two-thirds of respondents appear to

be completely satisfied with the level of support for artistic activity provided by facilities in their community.

Finally, tourism is a significant issue in the region. We will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of tourism as a source of economic benefit to remote communities in the next section of this Report. Here we simply consider the view of artists on this matter. Virtually all the respondents in our survey expressed a positive attitude to having tourists visit to experience Aboriginal culture at first hand, and most thought that tourists can bring incomes and employment to communities. Although artists in some other regions in the National Survey express a certain level of ambivalence towards tourism, particularly because high-volume mass tourism may be culturally insensitive or even damaging, this is not the case in Arnhem Land, where tourist visitation does not reach the scale experienced elsewhere. We will discuss these issues further in the next section.

Table 12.1 Opinions regarding impact of arts and cultural activities on the economic sustainability of remote Indigenous communities (percent of all respondents and weighted average score)

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know/ No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Weighted average score**
Artists/ writers like myself can train young people in the community to become artists/ writers (n=121)	97	3	-	-	-	**100**	**2.0**
Artistic activities like painting, music, dance, writing, can provide jobs and incomes for young people in my community (n=121)	89	8	-	3	*	**100**	**1.8**
Cultural maintenance activities can provide jobs and incomes for young people in my community (n=121)	90	10	-	-	-	**100**	**1.9**
The facilities in my community, such as community centres, venues, are not enough to support more artistic activity (n=120)	16	5	4	9	66	**100**	**-1.0**
Having an art centre creates (could create) jobs and incomes in my community (n=120)	91	7	*	-	2	**100**	**1.9**
Arts-practice workshops can provide people in my community with necessary skills to do more artistic activities (n=121)	90	7	3	-	-	**100**	**1.9**
It is good (would be good) for tourists to visit our community to see our culture at first hand (n=121)	96	3	-	*	-	**100**	**1.9**
Tourists can bring jobs and incomes to my community (n=120)	93	5	2	-	-	**100**	**1.9**
Over the long term, sales of art and other cultural activities could bring in enough money to make our community sustainable (n=120)	88	12	*	-	-	**100**	**1.9**
Bilingual education in the school can help young people in my community with jobs and incomes later on (n=120)	88	12	-	-	2	**100**	**1.8**
Sending young people to study in TAFE or university can help them to become artists/ writers (n=121)	88	8	2	2	-	**100**	**1.8**

- indicates nil response in this sample.

* indicates less than 1%.

** 2 – "Strongly agree", 1 – "Agree", 0 – "Don't know/ No opinion", -1 – "Disagree", -2 – "Strongly disagree".

13 CONCLUSIONS: POLICY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this Report we have shown how the visual artists, performing artists, composers, writers, film-makers and multimedia artists in the Arnhem Land region represent a rich resource of cultural capital. The knowledge and skills of these artists already contribute significant levels of cultural goods and services to the regional economy. But the data show considerable untapped potential – experienced artists who are willing to work at cultural production but who for various reasons may not be able to participate fully in the art economy at the present time.

In this final section of the Report we identify a number of policy issues that arise in considering the present state and future potential of art and cultural production in the Arnhem Land region. The issues are grouped into the following categories: infrastructure needs; expanding economic opportunities; training and skill development; and cultural tourism. In considering policy development, it must be understood that there is unlikely to be a single one-size-fits-all strategy applicable to all regional remote communities. Instead, different needs can be identified in different locations depending on a range of factors. In these circumstances there is clearly a requirement for coordination between the decisions and actions of stakeholders at various levels in the policy process.

13.1 INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

The art economy in the Arnhem Land region depends on a wide variety of infrastructure that supports and facilitates its operation. Some of this infrastructure is general, and serves everyone in the region, such as transport and communication services. Other categories of infrastructure are specific to the arts and cultural sector, providing the necessary support to enable artists and cultural producers to pursue their work. The latter include: art centres; recording studios and other facilities for performing artists, film-makers, multimedia and other artists; and cultural organisations of various sorts.

Art centres

Art centres play a vital role in the functioning of the Indigenous arts economy in the region. They are active in the visual arts market, forming partnerships and making connections with agents, galleries and art institutions in the capital cities in Australia and overseas. Artists are unequivocal in their recognition of this role in affecting their own individual and community circumstances. Our data show that artists in communities which currently do not have an art centre recognise the benefits that might accrue if such a centre were to be established in their community. Nevertheless, while the art centre model has been working very well overall, some art centres have been plagued by management problems. In particular, art centres find themselves having to provide many additional social services and other public benefits to their artists and the wider community which are outside of their core business operations, and for which they rarely receive any funding support, but which are essential for the communities to function and for artists to continue their work.

These problems are particularly acute in art centres with just one non-Indigenous manager, as for example in Ramingining and Gapuwiyak; these centres highlight the pressures placed on managers who are called upon to do more than simply manage the centre. Artists rely on the managers to assist them with financial and other matters, at times even household-related issues, putting time pressure as well as psychological pressure on managers and distracting them from their primary management function. It is important that funding arrangements for art centres recognise this reality for their ongoing capacity building and sustainability.

Art centres provide a first point of sale for the work of their artists and a channel linking artists to the wider art market through their participation in art fairs such as the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair, their relationships with dealers, galleries and museums in Australia and abroad, and their marketing presence on the Internet. Despite the provision of these services by their art centre, some artists are tempted to by-pass the centre and to sell their work direct to buyers when the opportunity arises – for example negotiating a lower price for a particular work than the purchaser would pay to buy the work through the proper channels. Such behaviours deprive the art centre of much-needed revenue and may contribute towards undermining its financial stability.

An important function of an arts centre manager is to oversee the skills training of arts workers. This function needs support, especially in centres with only a single manager. Provision of an additional trainer can make a great deal of difference. An example is provided by Milingimbi Art and Culture. When there was a solo manager of the art centre, he had no time for staff training, even though there were locals who were keen to work there. With no spare time for training, the manager had to do all the tasks himself, including semi-skilled work that could have been done by a local with some training, such as sorting, labelling and hanging stock, and packaging artwork. Currently in Milingimbi there is an additional support person who is training locals in computer skills so that they can deal with tasks associated with stocktaking, cataloguing, sales, and so on.

Art centre staff may have additional work to do if any of their artists or community members are involved with CDP activities. Earlier in this report, we discussed the role of the CDP in providing employment for Indigenous people in the region. During survey interviews, artists often expressed a dislike for CDP, which they thought was not providing “real jobs”. We encountered instances where artists or arts workers loved their work and wanted to work longer hours, but could not do so because of the restrictions placed upon them by the CDP scheme. Problems also arise when a worker is called away for family business and is penalised as a result. This can lead to financial stress for the family involved through the imposition of fines and places an additional workload on art centre staff who are called upon to assist with re-enrolling the individual in the program and to help organise payment of fines. During the survey, we also encountered occasional examples of some workers who would just be present in order to fulfil their time requirements of the CDP but would not contribute or perform any meaningful or productive work.

A well-established art centre can contribute greatly to the wider community, if it has the capacity and resources to do so. An example is the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka centre in Yirrkala. This is a case where the local population have a sense of ownership of the art centre. Children are welcome there after school to make use of the facilities – playing yidaki, using computers, watching historical and cultural videos. This also exposes them to potential employment opportunities within the art centre, both in creative art production and also as arts workers engaged in packaging, archiving, art restoration, cataloguing, office work, cleaning, working with visitors and so on.

As one of their principal functions in supporting their artists, all art centres in the Arnhem Land region operate a shop and/or a gallery on site and some offer accommodation to visitors (as for example in Yirrkala). Such activities extend the functions of an art centre beyond simply providing the facilities and resources for artists to practice and move their operations into other business activities. In this respect they function as not-for-profit enterprises, where any surplus generated by their sales or service provision are devoted to furthering their objectives and supporting their continuing operations. These aspects of an art centre’s functions place a demand on management for commercial expertise; if resources permit, additional staff can be employed to provide accounting or legal help and advice, or in

some cases some of these services may be provided pro-bono by local firms. In general, however, it has to be recognised that efficient management of the commercial operations of an art centre is critical to the centre's sustainability. If an art centre takes on too much too quickly, the viability of the entire operation can be jeopardised. For example, the Injalak art centre at Gunbalanya in Western Arnhem Land recently undertook a major project of opening a gallery, Provenance Art, in Darwin. The initiative encountered problems because it overstretched the art centre's managerial and financial resources, undermining its viability and threatening its future. The Injalak experience provides a cautionary tale for any centre contemplating a similar expansionary project – sound financial planning is needed, together with a significant level of managerial commitment and capacity, and an adequate provision to cover risk.

Resources for performing artists and film/media artists

Generally musicians, dancers, film-makers, and multi-media artists do not have access to widely available facilities to assist in the development of their creative work, and must often rely on their own resources – we found that for many musicians, for example, their main place of work was at home. Overcrowding is one of the biggest challenges that Indigenous communities face and having to rely on one's home as the only place available for artistic practice could present obvious difficulties to many artists in the region. A number of performing artists in the region also face problems with finding opportunities to present their work due to a lack of appropriate venues or events. Most individual performers do not have ready access to financial support and must rely on their own resources. For example, there are a number of musicians, dancers and film makers living and working in Ramingining who do not have dedicated facilities for their art practice; the Bula'Bula art centre in the community doesn't have such facilities but simply supports these artists' work whenever they can.

Nevertheless, the Arnhem Land region is home to one of the most advanced and well-equipped multi-media centres in all of remote Australia – the Mulka centre in the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre in Yirrkala. Creative artists at the Mulka Centre are working at the cutting edge of technology in areas including virtual reality, 360-degree filming, 3-D printing, and so on. Considerable amounts of funding are generated via commissions and sale of content to institutions and organisations around Australia and internationally. The Centre does not use CDP – it just employs local people as art workers, media workers etc. on a part-time or full-time basis. The Mulka Centre provides a vivid illustration of how the talent of Indigenous artists can be mobilised and developed if there is vision and sufficient resources are made available for it to be realised.

Support organisations

Several cultural organisations exist in the Arnhem Land region that support the work of artists. One of the most important is ANKA, the peak organisation for the region. It represents up to 5,000 Artists from 43 art and craft centres located in the Tiwi Islands and the Darwin/Katherine, Kimberley, and Arnhem Land regions. It provides advocacy, training, marketing and resourcing services, and its regional conferences are an important means for providing support and coordination for art centres in the region. There are several other organisations supporting the arts in the region, including Artback NT, Music NT, NT Writers Centre, Aboriginal Broadcasting Australia, and Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association.

The financial and governance structures of all of the organisations referred to above differ from one to the other, but their important role in facilitating the development of arts and cultural practice in the region needs full acknowledgement in the formulation of policy

strategies at all levels of public and private sector engagement affecting arts and cultural producers.

13.2 EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

A fundamental policy issue in addressing issues of disadvantage among remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities concerns how to open up opportunities for employment creation and income generation in the communities in a way that respects the needs and desires of the Indigenous people, with particular regard to employment that is both culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate. Here we consider several means to expand economic opportunities for artists in the survey region.

Earning income from culture-related activities

In addition to the creative arts, which yields about 38 percent on average of an artist's total income from work, there are a number of other culture-related activities which can also generate an income. For example, in NT in the field of translation and interpreting, significant progress has been made in the last 15 years in developing a wider recognition among organisations and individuals working with Aboriginal communities to remunerate the work of translators and interpreters. The NT Government has expanded its Aboriginal Interpreter Service and its training and accreditation of Aboriginal interpreters locally. All these have contributed to generation of additional incomes to those community members who are able to provide such services, and reduced the pressure on those who had to do this work unpaid on top of their other duties. At regional, national and international levels some other cultural activities have also been generating economic opportunities for some Aboriginal cultural producers who engage in them, for example via cultural archiving and museology services to museums and galleries, or cultural and language education for students outside the region.

One of the most productive areas for extending the work engagements for artists in the region is through ranger activities, providing a more structured environment for their caring-for-country activities. In some communities, such as in Milingimbi, artists and rangers work together. Many full-time or part-time rangers are also artists. For example, some of the Yirralka rangers in East Arnhem Land have produced art works or cultural products of some kind and continue to do so. Their working arrangements as rangers can be flexible enough to accommodate those wanting to pursue their artistic work. It is observed that the cross-overs and connections between art work and ranger work yield synergies that are productive in both fields, in particular through access to country that a job as a ranger can provide. Ranger organisations are often better supported financially than art centres, and indeed may have access to sources of revenue that their counterparts in the arts do not have. For example, the Djelk Rangers at Maningrida earn significant revenue from the sale of carbon credits generated from emissions savings achieved via controlled burning operations.

Ranger jobs are a strong source of employment for young people, who may be taken on as interns at a young age and may work through to becoming experienced rangers in due course. Working at caring for country can provide a strong sense of connection with land and culture for young Indigenous people, both male and female. It can help to overcome the sense of alienation and lack of opportunity affecting the younger generation in some communities. An example of a positive initiative in this area is provided by the Yirralka Rangers' program of building teams in homelands in which young people can participate.

There are many artists who do not earn additional income through working at the sorts of other non-creative cultural activities considered in this study, despite having the skills and experience to do so. We have argued that there are opportunities for more artists and

cultural producers to become engaged in these areas. On a local level these activities are often provided by artists on an unpaid basis, for example in the form of: translation and interpretation when dealing with service providers for family or other community members; cross-cultural consulting or language translation in a job that does not include such services in its job description; providing unpaid cultural tourism services for visitors to their communities; organising and performing a welcoming ceremony; and so on. Cultural governance is another area that requires significant time and effort from local cultural producers, with some senior artists spending a great deal of time as directors and members of different boards and committees. A significant amount of this work is also performed on a voluntary basis; many organisations are not able to pay any sitting fees to their board directors and members, at times due to legislation[28], and some can only afford token amounts.

Better awareness among organisations working with Aboriginal people in the region and among the general public is required to acknowledge and remunerate appropriately the various cultural contributions that Aboriginal artists and cultural producers have been providing. With the right support there could be significantly more economic opportunities derived from these sorts of activities, contributing in turn to developing a stronger arts and cultural sector in the region.

Small business development

Most visual artists in the Arnhem Land region work within the art centre framework. Artists working as independent individuals (for example, many musicians, film-makers, multimedia artists, or artists working with digital technologies) may take up opportunities to establish small creative enterprises, perhaps on a collaborative or cooperative basis, and perhaps engage in experimental art or developing new modes of distribution. In policy terms, such initiatives can link into a broader innovation agenda associated with the development of cultural and creative industries. Smart policy measures that recognise talent in this field can provide seed funding or small business incubators to encourage creative enterprise development.

An illustration of a successful creative enterprise in the Arnhem Land region is provided by Bábbarra Designs, which operates in the Women's Centre in Maningrida. About 15 artists work at making lino-cut designs and printing fabrics that are made into cushion covers, dresses, shirts and so on. Product is sold via the on-site shop and online, with considerable interest in the work in mainland capitals and overseas. With additional funding, the enterprise could expand its operations further, perhaps attracting younger artists to become involved, for example by providing opportunities for high-school students to make their own fashion designs. Grant funding could help the organisation to achieve these expansionary objectives, but applying for such financial support is difficult without prior experience in the application process.

Another example from the same community is the possibility of producing books for school children, written in both the local language and in English. The Language Culture Centre in the Maningrida Community Education Centre has made some progress in this area, but there is much more that could be achieved with appropriate support. Another illustration is provided by the potential for commercialisation of the production of the bush medicines and other traditional products that are a feature of cultural practice in a number of communities in the region. For example, the Yirralka Rangers based in Yirrkala produce and market a

[28] Not-for-profit organisations may not be allowed to pay their board directors and can only reimburse their directors' travel costs.

range of such products that have significant consumer appeal and that could in due course be more widely distributed.

These examples illustrate the range of creative enterprises that could be developed in the region, often originating in the enthusiasm and commitment of individuals. Once they are identified, they may be eligible for small-business-development programs relevant to the creative sector.

Market and supply-chain issues

An important avenue towards expanding economic opportunities for individual artists and cultural producers in the region lies in developing the distribution and marketing components of the value chain. These are parts of the supply chain for artistic goods and services that need to be well established if work produced is to find an appropriate market. The demand for the output of artists may be local; examples include a dance performance for visitors to an art centre or a community; sale of artworks, bush cosmetics or other cultural goods through local outlets; or musical performances in local venues. Alternatively, markets may be found beyond the region, through sales of work interstate or internationally. To a large extent market development takes place in response to commercial incentives, but there is a place for more government support through expert advice, information and services – for example through provision of market intelligence, export promotion programs, support for fairs and festivals, and so on. In a commercial context, the latter are a particular avenue for attention, since events such as the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair or the Garma festival are important channels for sales of creative output from the region.

One area where market intervention is appropriate is in the matter of ethically-sourced Indigenous art. Art centres and many galleries act responsibly in providing certificates of authenticity for works they sell, but further progress is needed in regulatory measures to prevent the sale of fake Indigenous art products of every sort, and to promote best practice in the certification of authenticity by all sellers of products purporting to come from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists[29]. Improvement in such measures will not only enhance the capability of these artists to assert their economic and moral rights, they would also give buyers added confidence in the functioning of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art market, with consequent positive effects on demand.

Learning from successes of hybrid organisations

Remote Indigenous communities provide cross-cultural environments. Working in these environments requires bridging diverse and often competing values, rationales, agendas and objectives that come from different sectors – family, community, market, government and the third sector. Enterprises and organisations that have understood and been able to accommodate this, such as ranger programs and art centres, have been able to function and thrive in these conditions. Their structures allow them to operate in the hybrid realm of the market within government funding requirements, while embracing community/family needs and diversity of the not-for-profit sector. There is an opportunity to acknowledge such working models and learn from their experiences.

Hybrid enterprises and organisations operating in the region are interconnected, such that activation of any of them may lead to increased activities in others. For example, a successful tourism enterprise could stimulate local production of visual and performing arts, as well as perhaps film and multimedia works. These activities could in turn have flow-on effects into cultural archiving, jobs in arts management and administration, sale of local art materials, or

[29] See House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs (2018).

other impacts. A further example might be a language and learning centre, which could be supported with additional government funding for a language-reviving project or for cultural archiving services; this could then lead to the centre taking on some publishing house functions and perhaps create opportunities for local Aboriginal writers, storytellers and illustrators. Yet another proposal could be for a centre in the Arnhem Land region to bring together the environmental and cultural dimensions of Yolŋu knowledge and experience; such an initiative would be of particular interest to visitors to the region as well as being a valuable educational resource for school children.

13.3 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

One of the most important areas for policy formulation at all levels of public administration in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in remote communities is in education and training. Much of the policy attention in this area is devoted to formal education processes; nevertheless, although this Report has shown how these processes are significant, they are not necessarily the most important avenues of knowledge acquisition and skill development for artists in the region. The findings of this study show that the most important pathways for transfer of art and cultural skills and knowledge are found within the communities through family and other community members. Our results also show that for many arts and cultural jobs, Indigenous cultural producers are already job-ready and do not require a significant amount of training.

The survey results point towards a number of improvements that could be made in the delivery of education, training and skills development in the remote areas of the region, as discussed below.

School

The importance of schooling in preparing children for life is of course well understood. Our data show that school education is recognised by artists as having some part to play in imparting cultural knowledge and skills that can be complementary to the essential role of family and community members. In some parts of the region both formal and informal programs co-exist. Such programs could provide for cooperation between an art centre and the local school, for example, whereby children visit the centre on a regular basis to participate in hands-on creative activity under the guidance of senior artists, or where senior artists visit the school to teach artistic and cultural skills and language to children. Either way, these initiatives serve a dual function in educating children and in providing incomes and employment for practising artists. There is an opportunity to strengthen these educational pathways by acknowledging their long-term nature and providing appropriate funding support.

As is apparent in many schools in Arnhem Land, art, music and sport are very popular subjects which act as incentives for school attendance. Most communities have Sport and Recreation Officers, some of whom have a dedicated facility, while others only have access to a building with few resources. If these programs were better funded and resourced, they could provide an ideal opportunity for integrating the art and cultural learning of school students with their sporting activities.

An example of a program that arranges visits by prominent artists to schools in the region to conduct workshops for students is the Artists on Tour initiative of Artback NT. Programs are tailored to meet individual student group capabilities and needs across all year levels from Kindergarten to Year 12. Workshops are provided in several art forms including dance, visual art, craft and theatre. The program can be seen as a model for bringing artists into schools that could be more widely adopted, given appropriate resourcing.

Inter- and intra-generational cultural transmission

In this study we have gathered extensive data on the ways in which cultural knowledge and skills continue to be passed down from one generation to the next by processes of inter- and intra-generational cultural transmission that have been in place throughout history. The learning pathways for artists that have proved to be most successful in the Arnhem Land region, as elsewhere, have been: observing/participating with a family member; learning on the job/self-learning; and learning from friends and other community members. Family members are particularly important in this context and their role and that of the two other pathways need to be taken into account in the planning of training and educational programs in the region.

At present the costs of this sort of art and cultural teaching are to a large extent borne by the community and via in-kind payments. Very few funding streams acknowledge local senior cultural producers and artists as teachers and therefore fund their work accordingly. For example, the sorts of culture programs in schools referred to above are generally not continuous; usually they rely on short- to mid-term funding arrangements and at times on the good will of artists to work with students on a voluntary basis. Other educational initiatives that involve family and community members include some training provided by arts centres, ranger organisations, culture and language centres and other hybrid organisations that have recognised the importance of inter- and intra-generational cultural transmission, and have brought local artists and members of the community into their training processes. But these organisations rarely have an appropriate budget or funding to support these activities, so the workers are likely to go unpaid. The Report points to the need to acknowledge the long-term educational benefit that local cultural producers and artists can provide via these organisations, and to ensure that the organisations that host them are properly supported.

A key resource in processes of inter- and intra-generational cultural transmission in the region is the knowledge, skills and status of senior artists. There is a danger that the knowledge and skills of these artists may not have the opportunity to be transferred, because these artists are already extremely busy, spending more hours on their arts and cultural work than other less-experienced artists, with little time left over. During the survey interviews, some senior artists expressed a strong desire to transfer their knowledge, but recognised that there are limited avenues for them to do so on a regular basis outside their families.

Skill transfers from outside

Having to operate in an intercultural space explains why many organisations working to support art and cultural producers in remote Indigenous communities rely on non-Indigenous staff[30]. A decision to engage someone from outside who can contribute to an art centre in the hybrid space is always at the choice of the Indigenous Board Directors (the

[30] For example, in many art centres, the managers come from outside the community. To some extent, it is important that an art centre receive all the industry knowledge it can get from someone with significant experience in the industry. On the other hand, concerns could be raised with regard to building local capacity if the top jobs are filled externally. But it may also happen that local Indigenous staff, even those with a full range of required experience, may prefer *not* to take on managerial duties. This could be due to multi-cultural complexities, such as dealing with financial needs of the art centre, or having to represent and service all the art centre's artists while being bound by obligations to family members. In these cases, the experienced local staff members may prefer simply to provide guidance to the non-Indigenous manager.

employer) who may benefit from such an engagement. These organisations bring together different cultures and values, and it is clear that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous approaches are required to navigate through this process – indeed one feature of these organisations is the mixing of skills, experiences and knowledge of local Indigenous staff with those of non-Indigenous professionals coming from outside the communities. These incoming professionals in turn benefit from training and advice received from senior artists and local Indigenous staff. While non-Indigenous managers come and go, art centre Directors and Indigenous arts workers are generally the keepers of the corporate knowledge. When the non-Indigenous professionals leave, many years of valuable experience also goes. Such experience is a valuable resource that could be utilised and built upon. There are examples of former art centre managers returning for short periods to the region to manage an art centre on an interim basis while its existing manager is on leave, or while its financial or governance affairs are sorted out, or in the period before a new manager is appointed. There are opportunities to harvest the knowledge and experience of former arts centre staff; for example, if there were a database of these culturally experienced professionals, they could be located and engaged as consultants later on in the arts and cultural sector or perhaps in other industries in the region.

Access to country

The fundamental relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the land is well understood, and is reflected in our survey data – virtually all artists spend some part of their time caring for country, and many rely on accessing their country as a source of knowledge and creative inspiration, or for gathering materials for their art production and at times as a place for creating work. However, access to country may sometimes be difficult, especially for artists who live in a community and who do not have the resources to make regular visits to their homeland. The data provide compelling evidence in support of the need for securing artists' access to country, if art and culture are to become a stronger source of economic empowerment for remote Aboriginal communities in the Arnhem Land region.

Further education

Only relatively few artists in the study region continue beyond school to obtain tertiary level qualifications, for example by participating in programs offered by the Batchelor Institute and Charles Darwin University – both of these educational institutions have a strong presence in the Arnhem Land region. Another avenue for further education in the region is the ANKA Arts Worker Extension Program, an intensive nine-month professional development program for a small number of Indigenous arts workers from the ANKA membership. The program is designed to increase professional skills and industry networks for arts workers to further their careers in Northern Australian Indigenous Art Centres. There are also some less formal post-school educational pathways for expanding artists' knowledge and skills, such as short courses and workshops provided through an art centre or other organisation or agency. A field of creative production where workshops conducted by experienced practitioners could be of particular relevance is in film production; there is a strong interest in this field in the region, especially among younger Indigenous artists, but potential film-makers need skills and facilities if their interest is to be developed.

Business skills

There is a strong need for business training in remote communities that could help artists, cultural producers and other community members to understand the business side of art and cultural production. Many Indigenous artists as well as others in remote communities do not completely understand the art business – how their payments are calculated, taxes are deducted, where buyers for their outputs come from, and how the market operates. Part of

the function of peak organisations such as ANKA is to undertake this business training, and many art centres have taken on a responsibility for educating their artists, their artists' families, and the wider community in the business aspects of the arts. More could be done if dedicated funding and support materials could be provided for organisations to take on this function. Use of local examples and best practices elsewhere would be particularly beneficial. Such support could significantly reduce pressure on organisations' staff and could potentially help to achieve higher rates of staff retention. The resulting increase in business awareness and skills that might be expected to flow from these programs over time could encourage more Indigenous people in the region to start a business enterprise. It could also assist in improving the Indigenous representation among arts centre managers.

13.4 CULTURAL TOURISM

Sale of the goods and services produced by artists requires a market, and in remote locations accessible markets may exist only through channels leading to customers who may be located far away. However, tourism is a means to bring customers directly to the source of supply. Tourists who visit remote communities can engage with Indigenous culture at first hand and hopefully buy artworks or attend performances staged by local artists. There is a significant demand from both domestic and international tourists to experience Indigenous culture; for example, international arts tourists who visited regional areas of the Northern Territory in 2017 had particularly high levels of engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, with 79 percent of them attending a First Nations arts activity while visiting Australia (Australia Council for the Arts, 2018: 20)[31].

A program of particular importance in encouraging tourist engagement with Indigenous art and culture is the series of Territory Arts Trails, developed by the Territory Government as a component of its program for building the Territory's creative economy through the art and cultural sector. In West Arnhem Land, the trail includes a visit to Injalak Arts and Crafts at Gunbalanya, and the possibility of a stay at a safari lodge at Mt. Borradaile. In East Arnhem Land, destinations currently included in the Arts Trail comprise the arts centres at Maningrida and Yirrkala (Maningrida Arts and Crafts and Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Arts Centre respectively), and tours to Yolŋu homelands organised by Lirrwi Tourism (see further below).

Tourism in the Northern Territory also forms part of the Commonwealth Government's strategy for growing the tourism market nationally, as administered through Tourism Australia. For instance, the Discover Aboriginal Experiences program is a collection of specifically identified tours enabling visitors to experience Indigenous culture in the company of Aboriginal guides. Three examples in the Arnhem Land region are: Davidson's Arnhemland Safaris in West Arnhem Land; Intrepid Travel in East Arnhem Land; and Bremer Island Banubanu Beach Retreat, also in East Arnhem Land. All offer multi-day tours or visits. These enterprises are also listed by Tourism Australia as Indigenous Tourism Champions. This is a program that identifies Aboriginal-owned tourism businesses offering authentic cultural experiences delivered by Indigenous people. The criteria for nomination of a business as an Indigenous Tourism Champion include that it runs a full-time commercial enterprise for at least six months of the year, and is proactive in the domestic and international marketplace. It must have a website, a current business plan, and a strong understanding of customer service. These requirements indicate that only well-established and efficiently-operated businesses will qualify for inclusion in the program.

[31] Further data on tourism in the Central Desert can be found in the regional profiles published periodically by Tourism NT for Darwin and surrounds, and Katherine and surrounds; see Tourism NT (2018).

Nevertheless, there is further scope for smaller start-ups and local initiatives in the Indigenous cultural tourism space. In some locations, opportunities exist for the establishment of small family-based tourism enterprises involving Aboriginal individuals and focussing on providing small-group art/culture/nature experiences for discriminating visitors. There are many ways to increase the involvement of Aboriginal individuals, families and communities in these initiatives. For example, in some communities there are likely to be experienced cultural producers who are good storytellers and who feel comfortable talking to visitors, enabling them to act as tour guides, interpreters and translators for tourists individually or in groups. Sometimes these activities can occur in association with the work of Indigenous rangers.

Prospective enterprises in this field will require basic business skills, indicating the need for skill development programs such as workshops, short-course training sessions, and/or small business incubators tailored to the needs of family-based tourism initiatives. For these developments to become a reality, a well-planned and adequately funded training strategy focussing on small Indigenous family- and community-run businesses is needed. If successful, these enterprises could become a prime example of a participatory economy in the region, engaging Aboriginal individuals and communities, and helping to reduce levels of welfare dependency among the Indigenous population.

We turn now to a more detailed consideration of issues for cultural tourism in the Arnhem Land region. There is a range of possibilities for individual or small-group tours to homelands in the region, for example as visits that can be arranged out of communities in Maningrida, Ramingining, Lake Evella (Gapuwiyak) and elsewhere. In such cases visitors can come either overland or by scheduled or charter flight from Darwin or Gove (Nhulunbuy). Longer tours covering some of the very remote communities spread across the coastal fringe of Arnhem Land are possible by self-drive or on an all-inclusive tour offered by a company such as Outback Spirit. All of these various opportunities for tourism in Arnhem Land are seasonally dependent, with most roads in the region being difficult or impossible to access in the wet (roughly November to April).

One means by which tourists can visit Arnhem Land is by sea – cruise ships call at some locations along the coast from time to time. These vessels are mostly relatively small, catering to discriminating cultural tourists. Thus the influx of visitors when a cruise ship calls at a community is unlikely to cause the sorts of negative impacts from congestion and crowding that are characteristic of the rapidly growing cruise industry in other parts of the world[32]. Indeed, the lack of port facilities and other infrastructure is likely to place a limitation on any major expansion in cruise visitation to the region in the immediate future. Nevertheless, with appropriate community support there is ample scope for further development of this sector as a source of low-volume/high-yield cultural tourists keen to experience Yolŋu culture at first hand.

An Indigenous organisation that provides experiences of Yolŋu culture for tourists in East Arnhem Land is Lirrwi Tourism, an Aboriginal owned and Accredited Tourism Business that operates cultural day tours and multi-day tours in the region. Tours spend time with the Yolŋu people on their traditional homelands. Lirrwi Tourism was established in 2010 to develop, support and promote Yolŋu tourism in Arnhem Land. It aims to combine the range of work traditionally carried out by economic development organisations, tourism operators and travel agents. It is governed by an all-Yolŋu Board of Directors. Its organisational structure is based around its headquarters in Yirrkala, with operations radiating outwards to run tours of varying size and length to outstations in the region. Although a hub-and-spokes

[32] See, for example, Brida and Zapata-Aguirre (2009).

model for such an enterprise has merit in principle, Lirrwi has experienced fluctuating fortunes in the almost ten years of its existence. It is a high-risk venture needing sound financial governance combined with capable and committed management. The organisation has been faced with management problems, staff retention issues, and logistical difficulties imposed by the sheer magnitude of the tourism task in remote conditions. In these circumstances, its successes have been limited. Nevertheless, if its ongoing difficulties can be resolved, it could play a more substantial role in the tourism sector in the region in the future.

To conclude, given the distinctive features of the Arnhem Land region and the willingness of the local Indigenous population to share their culture with visitors, it is clear that there is much potential for further development of the Indigenous tourism industry in the region. In particular, there is considerable scope for consolidation and expansion of the Art Trails program. In this context, priority should be given to identification of key infrastructure constraints, especially in transport, accommodation, and the provision of other tourist services including marketing. It can be suggested that the region needs a strategic plan for tourism development that is specific to its particular needs, strengths and potential for growth. Such a strategy would need to be integrated with the Territory's overall tourism strategy, originally framed in terms of 2020 (Tourism NT, 2013) and currently being moved forward to planning for developments up to 2030 (NT Government, 2018).

13.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our aim in carrying out this study has been to document the nature of art and cultural production by individual Indigenous cultural producers in the Arnhem Land region, and to assess the extent to which these activities might provide a means to integrate economic and cultural development in the region's remote communities. This region has offered some particular insights into these processes, on account of the long history of engagement of the Yolŋu people with the external world, dating back to the first encounters with the Macassins in the eighteenth century, who traded tobacco (ngarili), alcohol (nanitji), metal tools and cloth fabrics in return for trepang (sea cucumbers). These connections made the Yolŋu more aware of trade and its potential, a characteristic which continues today in the awareness among many members of the community of the economic potential of their art and culture.

In this final section of this Report, we have drawn together some of the key policy issues that have emerged from the study. As we have noted, there is considerable variation across the region in existing economic, social and cultural circumstances and in different communities' potential for future development. It is unlikely that a single policy measure can be found that will deal with all the issues at once; rather a mix of complementary measures will be needed to address particular aspects.

It is important also to bear in mind that we are not suggesting that art and cultural production can on its own transform any remote community; rather, we argue that in the right conditions it can be an effective avenue towards employment creation and income generation, helping to improve the long-term prospects for economic sustainability and social viability, and doing so in a way that respects the fundamental importance of Indigenous culture. All the recommendations that flow from this study are pointed in this direction.

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APPENDIX 1.

Concordance between cultural-economic activities in the Arnhem Land Region and the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006

Cultural-economic activities	Division – Subdivision	Group – Class
CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES		
Painting, printmaking, sculpturing, textiles, carvings, weaving, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography	R Arts and Recreation Services - 90 Creative and Performing Arts Activities	900 Creative and Performing Arts Activities
Performing	R Arts and Recreation Services - 90 Creative and Performing Arts Activities	900 Creative and Performing Arts Activities
Composing or choreographing	R Arts and Recreation Services - 90 Creative and Performing Arts Activities	900 Creative and Performing Arts Activities
Writing or storytelling	R Arts and Recreation Services - 90 Creative and Performing Arts Activities	900 Creative and Performing Arts Activities
Making film, television, audio or multimedia work	J Information Media and Telecommunications – 55 Motion Picture and Sound Recording Activities	551 Motion Picture and Video Activities 552 Sound Recording and Music Publishing
ARTS- AND-CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES		
Participating in ceremonies	S Other Services - 95 Personal and Other Services	954 Religious Services 952 Funeral, Crematorium and Cemetery Services
Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting	M Professional, Scientific and Technical Services - 69 Professional, Scientific And Technical Services (Except Computer System Design And Related Services)	699 Other Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
Cultural archiving, record keeping	J Information Media and Telecommunications – 60 Library and Other Information Services	601 Libraries and Archives
	R Arts and Recreation Services - 89 Heritage Activities	891 Museum Operation

Cultural-economic activities	Division – Subdivision	Group – Class
Serving on a cultural board, committee or council	O Public Administration and Safety - 75 Public Administration[33]	696 Management and Related Consulting Services
		751 Central Government Administration
		752 State Government Administration
		753 Local Government Administration
		955 Civic, Professional and Other Interest Group Services
Teaching others in arts and cultural activities	P Education and Training 82 Adult, Community and Other Education	821 Adult, Community and Other Education; 822 Educational Support Services
Caring for country	R Arts and Recreation Services Subdivision - 89 Heritage Activities	892 Parks and Gardens Operations
Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food	A Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing - 04 Fishing, Hunting and Trapping	041 Fishing; 042 Hunting and Trapping
Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services	Q Health Care and Social Assistance - 85 Medical and Other Health Care Services	851 Medical Services
	C Manufacturing - 18 Basic Chemical and Chemical Product Manufacturing	184 Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Product Manufacturing
Arts management	M Professional, Scientific and Technical Services - 69 Professional, Scientific And Technical Services (Except Computer System Design And Related Services)	696 Management and Related Consulting Services
Arts administration	N Administrative and Support Services - 72 Administrative Services	729 Other Administrative Services
Providing cultural tourism services	N Administrative and Support Services - 72 Administrative Services	722 Travel Agency and Tour Arrangement Services

[33] Excluding the management of commercial and business activities or activities other than central, state or local government administration are included in the classes appropriate to these activities.

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