

Discussion paper



**Arts,
Creativity and
Mental Wellbeing:**
Research, practice
and lived experience

Prepared by the Australia Council for the Arts, in collaboration with
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Acknowledgements

The Australia Council for the Arts proudly acknowledges all First Nations peoples and their rich culture of the country we now call Australia. We pay respect to Elders past and present. We acknowledge First Nations peoples as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands and waters on which we live.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of First Nations peoples and communities to Australian life, and how this continuation of 75,000 years of unbroken storytelling enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards ensuring an equal voice and the equality of outcomes in all aspects of our society.

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LGBTI+ Elders Dance Club
by All The Queens Men.
Credit: Bryony Jackson.

What do we know?

There is a growing body of evidence on the positive impacts of arts engagement on health and wellbeing.

Arts interventions address the social determinants of health.¹

Engagement with creative activities gives participants a sense of control over their life, builds and deepens relationships, generates skills and self confidence, facilitates social inclusion and overcomes stigma by empowering participants to explore a range of experiences and identities.² Connection to culture through cultural practice provides people with a sense of identity, meaning and purpose.³ These opportunities can ameliorate experiences of depression, anxiety and stress, while regulating emotion and promoting feelings of wellness.

Creative participation facilitates human flourishing across the life span.

It enhances our ability to prevent, manage, or recover from disease,⁴ encourages brain development in children⁵ and minimises brain decline in older people.⁶ Creative and performing arts activities are uniquely powerful as they can simultaneously engage motor, cognitive, social, and emotional functions, thereby providing psychosocial as well as neural scaffolding.⁷

Culture is a foundation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing. Culture is a protective factor – it decreases the likelihood of negative health outcomes – and can positively influence other social aspects of our health. Engaging in culture reinforces cultural connectedness, maintenance, resurgence, nation building and pride in cultural identity.⁸

- 1 Fancourt D and Finn S 2019, *What is the Evidence on the Role of the Arts in Improving Health and Well-being? A scoping review*, World Health Organisation. Parkinson C 2018, 'Weapons of Mass Happiness: Social justice and health equity in the context of the arts', *Music, Health and Wellbeing*. Chandler M 2018, 'Cultural Wounds Demand Cultural Medicines', *Determinants of Indigenous People's Health in Canada: Beyond the social*.
- 2 Davidson JW and Krause AE 2018, 'Social and Applied Psychological Explorations of Music, Health and Well-being', *Music, Health and Wellbeing*. Boydell KM et al 2021, 'Graffiti Walls: Arts-based mental health knowledge translation with young people in secondary schools', *Creative Approaches to Health Education: New ways of thinking, making, doing, teaching and learning*.
- 3 Dudgeon P, Bray A, Smallwood G, Walker R and Dalton T 2020, *Wellbeing and Healing through Connection and Culture*. Salmon M, Doery K, Dance P, Chapman J, Gilbert R, Williams R and Lovett R 2019, *Links Between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture and Wellbeing: What the evidence says, Mayi Kuwayu*.
- 4 Burns DS 2001, 'The Effect of the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music on the Mood and Quality of Life of Cancer Patients', *Journal of Music Therapy* 38. Elimimian EB et al 2020, 'A Pilot Study of Improved Psychological Distress with Art Therapy in Patients with Cancer Undergoing Chemotherapy', *BMC Cancer* 20.
- 5 Norton A et al 2009, *Musical Training Shapes Structural Brain Development*.
- 6 Baird A, Garrido S and Tamplin J 2020, *Music and Dementia: From cognition to therapy*. Lee J, Davidson JW and Krause AE 2016, 'Older People's Motivations for Participating in Community Singing in Australia', *International Journal of Community Music* 9:2. Cohen GD et al 2006, 'The Impact of Professionally Conducted Cultural Programs on the Physical Health, Mental Health, and Social Functioning of Older Adults', *Gerontologist* 46:6.
- 7 Hansen E et al 2015, 'Cultural Activity Participation and Associations with Self-Perceived Health, Life-Satisfaction and Mental Health: The Young HUNT Study', Norway, *BMC Public Health* 544. Davidson JW and Emberly A 2012, 'Singing, Dancing and Embodied Communication: Research perspectives', *Music, Health and Wellbeing*.
- 8 Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Health 2017, *My Life My Lead - Opportunities for Strengthening Approaches to the Social Determinants and Cultural Determinants of Indigenous Health: Report on the national consultations*. Salmon M, Doery K, Dance P, Chapman J, Gilbert R, Williams R and Lovett R 2019, *Links Between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture and Wellbeing: What the evidence says, Mayi Kuwayu*.

Why this matters and how this knowledge can be used

The Productivity Commission Inquiry report (2020) recommended mental health reform to support a people-centred mental health system that can meet changing community need, particularly in a time of crisis.⁹

The report identified a disproportionate emphasis on clinical services, and lack of attention to the underlying determinants of mental health – including the important role played by family, kinship groups and carers, and providers of social support.

Arts and creative engagement can address access issues in relation to the mental health system. It is estimated that some 65% of those with mental health concerns do not seek help and over 50% of those who die by suicide have not made contact with a mental healthcare provider.¹⁰ Arts and creativity can extend reach beyond traditional health services and address social determinants of health by facilitating engagement with and connections for people with diverse lived experiences.

The arts are playing a key role in advancing a culturally embedded, ‘whole of community’ approach to mental health. Operating in non-clinical domains, artists are developing programs that engage marginalised, disadvantaged, regional and remote communities and communities with low rates of ‘help seeking’. Arts-based community-led and/or person-centred initiatives serve to combat the stigma and discrimination around mental health, and to address the specific and diverse needs of people and communities.

The arts support the articulation and expression of lived experience, which is integral to trauma therapies. Patient and consumer experience has historically been downplayed in mental health research and policy. However, the arts have long been a vehicle for articulating lived experiences of mental health, trauma, stigma and marginalisation.

Addressing the social determinants of health is key to achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In December 2021, the Federal Government released the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan, highlighting the importance of social and cultural foundations for a healthy life, and the need to take a life course approach. There is a significant opportunity to build on this policy landscape, moving swiftly onto this document’s Implementation Plan, and so to contribute positively towards ‘Closing the Gap’ between the health of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.



⁹ Productivity Commission 2020, *Mental Health*.

¹⁰ Black Dog Institute 2022, *Under the Radar*, blackdoginstitute.org.au/research-projects/under-the-radar/; NSW Mental Health Commission 2014, *Living Well: A strategic plan for mental health in NSW*, NSW Mental Health Commission.

Balgo women, KALACC Festival Lombadina September 2017.

The Australian context

There are various international examples of how arts and wellbeing can be better integrated at the level of policy and practice, as outlined in the section below (The Need for Action). However, **Australia is positioned to be an emerging world leader in arts and health.** While international models provide an important reference, any new investment or policy frameworks should leverage Australia's existing assets, making best use of our experienced arts and cultural practitioners, world-class research, and emergent training base.

The Australian arts and cultural landscape

- **First Nations people are knowledge leaders in social and cultural determinants of health in Australia.** First Nations artists and cultural practitioners have a deep understanding of the intimate relationship between cultural practice and individual and community wellbeing.
- **Australian artists have extensive experience working with communities on creative projects with positive wellbeing outcomes.** These may be labelled variously 'community arts', 'socially-engaged practice', or 'community arts and cultural development'. These artists produce high impacts by integrating aesthetic and social goals. Some are more singularly focussed on participant wellbeing or recovery, running programs for individuals or organisations (there are various small operators around the country whose services are recognised by the NDIS).
- **There is a wealth of knowledge held by artists working in disability arts.** Artists who have lived experience of mental health challenges, intellectual disabilities and/or complex mental health conditions have an embodied understanding of what creative approaches can bring to wellbeing.
- **Many arts organisations work specifically in regional and disadvantaged urban communities,** where individuals might otherwise feel isolated or vulnerable (e.g., at-risk youth, the elderly). Their work has documented impacts in building community, overcoming loneliness and enhancing a sense of purpose.
- **Australia hosts one of the world's largest arts and mental health festivals – The Big Anxiety.** Founded in 2017, The Big Anxiety aims to foster the production and evaluation of art projects produced through collaborations with people of lived experience and interdisciplinary teams.



Edge of the Present, Australian world first VR environment for suicide prevention, Alex Davies and team, The Big Anxiety festival 2019. Credit: Jessica Maurer.

The Australian research landscape

In Australia, the development of practice-led or 'art-based' research within the university sector over the past two decades has established a strong foundation for arts-science collaborations – and more importantly, for specialised interdisciplinary practice in arts and mental health. See Appendix A for details.

Australia has pockets of excellence in relation to a number of specialisations such as music and psychology, trauma and psychosocial design, and the importance of cultural practice for Indigenous health. Some specialised labs and centres currently enable academics, artists and students from both arts and psychology/health backgrounds to collaborate. This work has importantly started to bridge the gap between arts and mental health, building fundamental knowledge and capacity. See Appendix A for details.

The relationship between research and practice is critical. Understanding the precise 'mechanisms' or 'active ingredients' within arts processes, and how psychosocial benefits are engendered and programmatically designed, is vital to development in the field. Australian researchers are positioned to be, and become, leaders in the study of how and why art works.¹¹

The Australian training landscape

There is growing interest within universities and peak arts and mental health organisations to develop specialist training for individuals wishing to mobilise the arts for wellbeing benefits. This is to meet a frequently expressed need from artists, care workers and members of the community.

Within the universities, study options currently include short-term micro-certificates, sub-components of a small set of degree programs, and a limited number of masters degree programs in creative arts therapies, which are run in association with professional validating bodies. See Appendix B for details.

¹¹ Aspen Institute and Johns Hopkins University 2021, *NeuroArts Blueprint: Advancing the science of arts, health and wellbeing.*



MADE Ensemble – *The Frock 2 Japan* 2018.
Choreography: Graeme Murphy.
Credit: Sandi Sissell.

The need for action

There is an urgent need to expand and develop new approaches to address mental health in Australia, including the capacity of arts and creative programs in this area and to better link existing cultural resources with those who would benefit from this support. This need has been exacerbated by the impacts of COVID-19. It will endure as we encounter increasing extreme weather events and consequent social and economic disruptions.

Now is the time to upscale existing arts and mental health models, and to build on our strong research base, rather than ‘reinventing the wheel’. Australia is rich with expertise and experience in arts and mental health. However, this expertise could be far better connected and coordinated.

The links between the arts and health must be strengthened. The arts have much to offer a mental health system in crisis, possessing a wealth of skills and knowledge that have proven health benefits beyond clinical contexts. **There is also a need to develop mechanisms to enable arts and culture to work complementarily with various portfolios – from First Nations to defence to aged care – to support individuals’ and communities’ wellbeing.**

Finally, we need a ‘whole of community’ approach to mental health – developed through a socio-cultural as well as medical lens. This requires new paradigms for thinking and research. Such approaches will integrate research knowledge with experiential knowledge, cultural knowledge and practical knowledge derived from lived experience. Embracing all these will vastly improve our understanding of mental health and wellbeing, and the most cost effective and high impact interventions we could use to support it.

Overseas models

Some examples of how upscaling and coordination could occur are given below. Each of these are drawn from the international sphere and are precedents from which Australia could learn. Ultimately, however, Australia will need to develop models that are suitable to its specific social, cultural and institutional landscape.

Arts on prescription

Arts on Prescription interventions (where participants engage with arts and artmaking) offer a framework to look beyond clinical interventions to non-medical community activities and assets in supporting the prevention and treatment of mental illness.¹² Such arts programs are one component of a broader remit of social prescribing initiatives, rolled out broadly in Canada and the UK.¹³

Evidence demonstrates positive outcomes in adults as a result of these interventions, including enhancing recovery from mental ill health; facilitating social inclusion for those with mild to moderate depression and anxiety; reducing anxiety and depression symptoms; increasing self-confidence; producing feelings of empowerment and wellbeing; enhancing quality of life; and contributing to positive mood.¹⁴

On 20 October 2021, The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), Consumer Health Forum of Australia (CHF) and Mental Health Australia published a [media release](#) urging the government to implement a national social prescribing scheme to tackle Australia's mental health and wellbeing crisis in the 2021 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO).



Aerialist from Corrugated Iron Youth Arts production *Bamboo Moon*.
Credit: Tahlia Jasmine Photography.

A national policy framework or strategy

The United Kingdom's Tackling Loneliness strategy

In 2018, the UK published its [Tackling Loneliness strategy](#) – a national policy framework that requires loneliness and its causes to be considered across a variety of portfolios. The strategy contains 60 policy commitments across nine government departments. Its three overarching objectives are: to reduce stigma; drive a lasting shift so that relationships are considered in policymaking and delivery by organisations across society; and to build an evidence base on loneliness, its causes and treatments.

In early 2020, the government then used the strategy to launch a major effort to tackle loneliness during the coronavirus outbreak and periods of social distancing. Led by the Culture Secretary, Olive Dowden, and working across portfolios and sectors, the plan aimed to ensure that staying at home did not lead to loneliness.

New Zealand's Wellbeing Framework

In 2011 New Zealand's Treasury released the first version of Living Standards Framework (LSF) – a policy framework that provides the structure for an inclusive economy. This framework has since evolved, and now includes He Ara Waiora which is built on te ao Māori knowledge and perspectives of wellbeing.

The LSF guides thinking about policy impacts across the different dimensions of wellbeing, as well as the long-term and issues and implications of policy. It also supports treasury analysts by providing a framework to understand the drivers of wellbeing, and to consider the broader impacts of policy in a systematic and evidenced way.

The framework aims to be compatible with te ao Māori and Pacific perspectives, and positions culture in a key, determining role. Culture shapes the country's conceptions of wealth and value, its institutions and governance, and so provides the very foundation for individual and collective wellbeing.

¹² Fancourt D et al 2021, Social, Cultural and Community Engagement and Mental Health: Cross-disciplinary, co-produced research agenda, *BJPsych Open* 7:1.

¹³ Boydell KM 2020, 'The ART of Social Prescribing: Beyond clinical options', *Beyond the Psychology Industry*.

¹⁴ Fancourt D and Finn S 2019, *What is the Evidence on the Role of the Arts in Improving Health and Well-being? A scoping review*, World Health Organisation. Chatterjee HJ et al 2018, 'Non-Clinical Community Interventions: A systematised review of social prescribing schemes', *Arts & Health* 10:2.

Appendix A: Research expertise in Australia

INSTITUTION	CENTRE/UNIT AND KEY PERSONNEL	KEY RESEARCH FOCUS	FUNDERS AND PARTNERS
Black Dog Institute	Arts-based knowledge translation and implementation		
	<p>Prof Katherine Boydell (Professor of Mental Health) and staff (Dr Priya Vaughan, Chloe Watfern, Stephanie Habak, Dr Alexandra Nicolopoulos, Diane Macdonald, A/Prof Ann Dadich, Ainslie Cahill), Dr. Barbara Doran</p>	<p>Potential for suicide prevention through creative arts engagement</p> <p>Intersectionality – individuals impacted by disability, refugee status and mental illness</p> <p>Culture Dose for kids and young children (10-12 years) impacted by anxiety</p>	<p>Funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) – National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) • Australia Research Council (ARC) Discovery Projects • National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) • NSW Government • Various project partners, eg: SPHERE, Carers NSW and philanthropic bodies, e.g. Jibb Foundation <p>Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Gallery of New South Wales • Telethon Kids • STARTTS • Settlement Services International • The Disability Trust • Suicide Prevention Australia

Young creative from Corrugated Iron Youth Arts workshop program. Image courtesy: Corrugated Iron Youth Arts.



INSTITUTION	CENTRE/UNIT AND KEY PERSONNEL	KEY RESEARCH FOCUS	FUNDERS AND PARTNERS
University of Melbourne	Creativity and Wellbeing Hallmark Research Initiative		
	<p>Prof Jane Davidson (Chair) and many individuals and teams of researchers from across the university</p>	<p>Exploration of the link between creativity and wellbeing across the lifespan</p>	<p>Funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARC (Discovery, Linkage) • Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) • Facebook Research Grant • Engage Victoria North Richmond Precinct Community Projects Fund <p>Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melbourne Fringe Festival • Parkville Youth Justice Precinct • Australian Theatre for Young People • Starlight Children's Foundation • Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House • Orygen Centre for Youth Mental Health • The Big Anxiety Festival • Multicultural Arts Victoria • Arts House, City of Melbourne • The Arts Wellbeing Collective, Arts Centre Melbourne • AMAZE (peak body for autistic people and their families in Victoria) • Musicians Without Borders • Maroondah Positive Education Network • Maroondah City Council • Yarra Ranges Council • And many others
	Creative Arts and Music Therapy Research Unit		
	<p>Prof Felicity Baker and Prof Katrina McFerran (co-Chairs) and their respective teams of researchers</p>	<p>The wellbeing effect of creative arts therapies (drama, dance, movement, art and music)</p>	<p>Funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARC (Discovery, Linkage, Future and Dementia Fellowships) • NHMRC (Boosting Dementia grants) • MRFF (funding music therapy research) <p>Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSIRO • Multicultural Aged Care Service • BUPA • Caladenia Dementia Day Centre • Parkinson's Victoria



INSTITUTION	CENTRE/UNIT AND KEY PERSONNEL	KEY RESEARCH FOCUS	FUNDERS AND PARTNERS
University of Melbourne	Research Unit for Indigenous Arts and Culture		
	Wilin Centre Director Tiriki Onus and A/Prof Sally Treloyn (Co-directors)	Indigenous arts practices and arts philosophies, exploring physical, emotional and spiritual impact	<p>Funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARC (Discovery Indigenous) • ARC (Future Fellowship) • ARC (Linkage) <p>Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mowanjum Art and Cultural Centre, WA
University of Melbourne	Social Equity Institute		
	Prof Jo Barraket (Director), and many researchers from across the university	Various research projects (including those relating to creative engagement for mental wellbeing) that actively engage with community-based organisations, government, business, philanthropic organisations and academic staff to address social equity issues	<p>Funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARC (Discovery, Linkage) <p>Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth support and Advocacy Service • Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council • Telethon Kids Institute • Centre for Multicultural Youth • Orygen Centre for Youth Mental Health • City of Melbourne • Department of Human and Health Services, Victoria State Government • Department of Health • Anglicare Australia • Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights • And many others

INSTITUTION	CENTRE/UNIT AND KEY PERSONNEL	KEY RESEARCH FOCUS	FUNDERS AND PARTNERS
University of New South Wales	ARC Laureate Felt Experience & Empathy Lab (fEEL Lab)		
	ARC Laureate Fellow, Scientia Prof Jill Bennett (Director), working with Volker Kuchelmeister (immersive media arts), Dr Gail Kenning (participatory design), Dr Lydia Gitau (refugee trauma), Dr Sophie Burgess (trauma; clin psych), Bec Moran (trauma; abuse), Steph Vajda (community film/media making)	Lived experience-led immersive media collaborations; creative media for support of trauma; ageing and dementia; psychosocial practice and psychosocial evaluation	<p>Funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARC Laureate Fellowship (5yrs) + co-contribution from UNSW <p>Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health and Aged Care sector
University of New South Wales	Big Anxiety Research Centre (BARC)		
	<p>Prof Jill Bennett (Director), A/Prof Caroline Lenette (Deputy Director), Prof Michael Balfour, Prof Katherine Boydell</p> <p>Membership approximately 25 research staff/artists including Dr Alex Davies and Adjunct Prof Bill Thompson</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma-informed creative programs • Complex trauma and transgenerational trauma • Creative media tools • Emotion regulation • Psychosocial design/evaluation • Participatory practice with refugee and CALD communities • VR in suicide prevention • Dementia 	<p>Funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARC (Discovery, Linkage, Fellowships) • NHMRC (3-5-year awards) • Other government funding • Philanthropy <p>Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro South Health (QLD) • Hamwe, Rwanda • UCLan, UK • RMIT • Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council • Multiple partners across health and arts sectors through The Big Anxiety festival
University of Melbourne	NHMRC ALIVE		
	National Research Translation Centre to Implement Mental Health Care at Scale (engagement node of national Centre), including one NHMRC fellow	Lived experience engagement design/co-design	<p>Funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHMRC <p>Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Melbourne

INSTITUTION	CENTRE/UNIT AND KEY PERSONNEL	KEY RESEARCH FOCUS	FUNDERS AND PARTNERS
University of New South Wales	Ageing Futures Institute		
	Prof Mari Velonaki and Prof Jill Bennett (Co-leads) 2 x postdoctoral research students in creative robotics and lived experience	Creative robotics and lived experience of ageing and dementia	Funders: • UNSW • ARC • NHMRC Partners: • Hammondcare and others in aged care sector • Lifeline
	Arts and Health Network, School of Media Arts		
	Prof Michael Balfour, Dr Bryoni Trezise, Dr Jodi Brooks, Prof Emery Schubert, Dr Meg Mumford, Dr Adam Hulbert, A/Prof Mary Zournazi	• Music and emotion • VR in hospitals • Applied theatre • Dementia	Funders: • ARC Partners: • Various hospitals • Randwick health precinct
University of New South Wales	3DVAL 3d Visualisation Aesthetics Lab		
	A/Prof John McGee, Dr Andrew Lilja, Nick Gunn, Campbell Strong	Biomedical communications; nanomedicine; stroke	Funders: • ARC Partners: • St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney • The Garvan Institute • Monash University • University of Queensland
	Aboriginal education and wellbeing		
	A/Prof Fabri Blacklock	The role played by art in the wellbeing of Aboriginal people	Funders: • ARC • And other grants

INSTITUTION	CENTRE/UNIT AND KEY PERSONNEL	KEY RESEARCH FOCUS	FUNDERS AND PARTNERS
University of Sydney	Creativity in Research, Engaging the Arts (CREATE) Centre		
	Prof Michael Anderson (Co-director) Prof Emeritus Robyn Ewing (Co-director) Thomas di Angelis (playwright)	The role of the arts in education, health and wellbeing	• Philanthropy • Arts partners including NIDA, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Theatre Company, Milkcrate Theatre, and many others
	Sydney Arts and Health Collective		
	A/Prof Claire Hooker Health Humanities President, Arts Health Network NSW/ACT Dr Paul Dwyer (Theatre and Performance Studies), Prof Louise Nash (Brain and Mind Institute), A/Prof Karen Scott (Medical Education and Evaluation), Dr Fereshteh Pourkazemi and Prof Susan Coulson (Physiotherapy)	Understanding the impact and value of creative arts in improving health outcomes Performance arts approaches to improving clinician communication and wellbeing Arts in chronic pain, facial nerve impairment and other clinical challenges	• Philanthropy • Art Gallery of NSW • Worldwide Universities Network (WUN) – Health Humanities initiative • Western Sydney Local Health District
University of Western Australia	Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention		
	Prof Pat Dudgeon (Director), Prof Roz Walker (Principle Research Fellow)	Indigenous mental health, social and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention	• Commonwealth Government's National Suicide Prevention Leadership and Support Program • Suicide Prevention Australia • University of Melbourne – Centre for Mental Health • Black Dog Institute • Everymind

Uti Kulintjaku (NPY Women's Council) and FEEL (UNSW), VR development workshop for The Big Anxiety festival, Alice Springs, 2019. Credit: Rhett Hammerton.



INSTITUTION	CENTRE/UNIT AND KEY PERSONNEL	KEY RESEARCH FOCUS	FUNDERS AND PARTNERS
Various (individual researchers/projects)	Griffith University		
	A/Prof Naomi Sunderland, Prof Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, Prof Philip Graham, Dr Darren Garvey, and Prof Clint Bracknell	The potential of music to contribute to First Nations' health and wellbeing	• ARC Discovery Indigenous
	Queensland University of Technology		
	A/Prof Donna Hancox and Prof Sandra Gattenhof	Social impact of the arts in regional Australia	• ARC Linkage with various regional Australia partners
	University of Canberra		
Ian Drayton (formerly Royal Australian Army)	The efficacy of creative arts in transitioning to new roles following trauma	• Department of Defence	
University of Western Australia			
Dr Christina Davies	Policy making in arts-health, health promotion and mental wellbeing	• Ian Potter Foundation	
Western Sydney University			
Dr Sandra Garrido (Deputy Program Leader of Music, Cognition and Action (MCA))	Translational research involving arts in health contexts, particularly people with dementia and depression	• NHMRC-ARC Dementia Research Development Fellow	



Photograph of Mark Thompson being interviewed by Producer, Jess O'Callaghan, about the Sherlock Musical Playground project for episode 3 of the Creative Responders podcast. Credit: Scotia Monkivitch.

Appendix B: Examples of specialist training in creative arts for wellbeing

TRAINING PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION
University and other tertiary institution courses Ordered by scale, that is: from micro-certificates to Masters' degrees	<u>Art Therapy - Health and Wellbeing</u> (Chishom TAFE) 3 x 3-hour in person sessions <u>Sharing of Indigenous Knowledges</u> (Willin Centre, University of Melbourne Micro Certificate) 6 weeks, part time, online <u>Art Therapy for Positive Wellness</u> (TAFE NSW) 6 weeks part time, online
	Explains how art therapy can enhance professional practice within the fields of health and community care Deepens students' cultural understanding of Indigenous creative practices and connection to place, and how to responsibly and respectfully engage with Indigenous knowledges Introduces participants to the value and effectiveness of art therapy, supported by a theoretical approach

TRAINING PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION
University and other tertiary institution courses Ordered by scale, that is: from micro-certificates to Masters' degrees	<u>Creativity and Health Certificate</u> (University of Melbourne Grad Specialist Certificate) 6 months, part time, online <u>Arts, Health and Creativity</u> (University of Tasmania) 8 x 10-hour modules, online <u>Creative Arts and Health</u> (University of Tasmania undergrad Certificate) 6-18 months, in person
	Equips students to contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of children and young people across a range of diverse health settings through creative performance and practice engagement Offers students introductory research, community-based case studies and hands-on activities for them to explore the frameworks and potentially experience the benefits of arts-based health practices themselves Develops students' understanding of the effects of the arts on the brain and body in social and cultural contexts and introduces them to ethical and effective implementation of arts programmes in both community and healthcare settings
	<u>Bachelor of Creative Arts and Community Wellbeing (Visual Art)</u> (University of Southern Queensland, 3 years full time)
	Expands creativity, leadership and facilitation skills, and understanding of the needs of community care and development. Builds technical, analytical and research skills within all visual art areas. Combines human services and visual arts courses and includes project placement in a community organisation
	<u>Master of Creative Music Therapy</u> (Western Sydney University, 2 years full time, mixed delivery)
	Offers students intensive musical, therapeutic, and academic studies with an emphasis on clinical musicianship and supervised clinical work
	<u>Master of Creative Arts Therapy</u> <u>Master of Music Therapy</u> (University of Melbourne, 2 years full time, mixed delivery)
	Provides students with studies in theory, methods, research and professional practice across health, educational and community contexts
	<u>Master of Art Therapy</u> (La Trobe University, 2 years full time, mixed delivery)
	Provides training in the practice of art therapy, which combines art and counselling within a clinical, therapeutic or community context

Congress by All the Queens Men.
Credit: Bryony Jackson.

	TRAINING PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION
Other specialist training programs	<u>Creative Arts and Wellbeing</u> (Building Better Brains) 10 weeks online	Offers a ‘business in a box’ for creative arts course providers. Outlines why play helps build better brains and stronger communities. Lessons include advice on how to plan for different group dynamics, populations, behaviours and more
	<u>Creative Recovery Training</u> (Creative Recovery Network in partnership with Red Cross)	Offers training for artists and arts workers who wish to work in communities that have been affected by disasters
	<u>Equity Planning in Culture</u> (Multicultural Arts Victoria) 5 in person workshops	Provides a critical approach to addressing legacies of institutional and structural discrimination in the arts. Aims to increase representation of marginalised creative artist in the creative industries by educating representatives of art facilitator organisations, thereby potentially increasing artists’ wellbeing
Programs for wellbeing practitioners	<u>ClassBento</u>	Supports local artists and promotes mental wellbeing as an online broker of short courses in Australia focused on wellbeing through creative engagement
Programs for individual wellbeing	<u>Express Yourself: Creativity and wellbeing short course for teenagers with Jaana Sahling</u> (Melbourne Art Class, 6 x 1.5 hour weekly classes)	Enables teenagers to explore art activities that encourage spontaneity, playfulness and imagination in a safe and inclusive environment. All activities have a focus on the creative process and freedom of expression instead of an end-product
	<u>ReMind</u> (Makeshift, online or in person, 8 weeks part time)	A trauma-informed education program that explores creative and social practices as tools for regulating, supporting and reducing experiences of anxiety, depression, burnout and impacts of trauma



Photograph of Fiona Sinclair, manager of the Understory Art and Nature Trail from episode 4 of the Creative Responders podcast. Credit: Scotia Monkivitch.



australiacouncil.gov.au