



BEGA VALLEY REGIONAL GALLERY

2016 – 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted 18/05/2016



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# Contents

<b>Vision</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Mission</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>History &amp; Expertise</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Values</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Purpose</b> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<b>Method</b> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<b>Strategic Direction &amp; Goals</b> .....	<b>10</b>
1. Exhibition development .....	12
2. Contribute to a Vibrant Society and Culture.....	13
3. Community Engagement.....	13
4. Cultural Tourism.....	13
5. Collections Management .....	13
6. Gallery Redevelopment.....	13
7. Pursue and build on professional partnerships at a local, state, national and international level .....	14
8. Continue to grow, manage and promote BVRG’s unique advantages and play to our strengths .....	14



# Forward

It is with pleasure that we present the inaugural Bega Valley Regional Gallery Strategic Plan 2106 - 2020.

The Bega Valley Shire is alive with cultural activity which enriches the lives of local residents, and attracts thousands of visitors to the area annually to share in our festivals, exhibitions, performances and creative spaces.

The Bega Valley Regional Gallery is one of the primary ways that cultural services are provided by the Bega Valley Shire Council (BVSC), contributing to the achievement of the council's cultural vision, mission and guiding principles, identified in the BVSC Community Strategic Plan 2030.

The Regional Gallery presents exhibition and education programs, within a vibrant and strong cultural facility, that explores, creates and challenges audiences to see things differently.

The Gallery provides access to the best contemporary art for regional and remote audiences that stimulate, inspire and connect community.

This Strategic Plan sets the vision for the Gallery over the next four years. We encourage the community to visit, or return, to the Gallery for a rewarding and enriching visual arts experience.

Cr Michael Britten  
Mayor

Leanne Barnes  
General Manager

**5 million people attend small-to-medium museum and gallery events in NSW annually.**

*Museums & Galleries of NSW, 2013 NSW Museum and Gallery Sector Census and Survey*

# Vision

The Bega Valley Regional Gallery (BVRG) brings communities together, to build and share their identity, history, creativity and culture, through consultation and engagement with the arts.

# Mission

The BVRG stimulates, develops and enhances the diverse visual culture of the region through viable, accessible, dynamic and relevant exhibition, education and collection programs.

**“Arts and culture enable lifelong learning, bring communities together, support the visitor economy and activate our civic spaces.”**

*Create in NSW, Cultural Policy Framework, Arts NSW 2015*

## Recognising Aboriginal custodians

The Bega Valley Shire Council and Bega Valley Regional Gallery acknowledges, by way of a Memorandum of Understanding (2014) with the Bega, Eden and Merrimans Local Aboriginal Lands Councils, that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants, and custodians of all land and water in the Shire.





## Executive Summary

Bega Valley Shire Council is committed to supporting our cultural communities, and the opportunities that cultural activity brings to the Shire. This commitment is expressed throughout Council's Community Strategic Plan, Bega Valley 2030 and is further defined through the formalisation of the Cultural Setting Report which is a key implementation stage in setting out what Council will do to achieve Bega Valley 2030.

The Bega Valley Regional Gallery is the primary way that cultural services are provided for the Bega Valley Shire Council (BVSC), contributing to the achievement of the council's cultural vision, mission and guiding principles, identified in the BVSC Community Strategic Plan 2030.

The BVRG understands the contribution the arts can make in the health, cultural, economic, and social wellbeing of regional communities. The BVRG strategic plan has been prepared in response to community consultation and in reference to Arts NSW funding guidelines and *Create in NSW* (2015) priorities. In doing so, this plan outlines our Values, Purpose Methods and Strategic Direction & Goals.

The directions and goals set out in this plan reflect a proposed growth in capacity within the BVRG which is supported by our parent organisation, the Bega Valley Shire

Council and supports the ambitions outlined in *Create in NSW*; to encourage and provide Excellence, Access and Strength within our local area.

The gallery is uniquely placed to build partnerships with national lending institutions, private collectors and artists to showcase visual culture that regional/rural audiences would usually have to travel to major metropolitan centres to view.



## History & Expertise

The BVRG is located within the cultural precinct in Bega, adjacent to the Bega Valley Commemorative Civic Centre, Council administration building and the Bega Library.

The Bega Valley Regional Gallery is the only Council supported gallery in the South East of NSW. The Gallery was established in 1988, after some strong advocacy from the Bega Valley Arts and Crafts society, due to the growing interest in art in the community and the recognised need for space to support this.

The Bega Valley Regional Gallery is one of approximately 40 regional galleries in NSW. While the gallery is not so much purpose built as a modern art gallery but as a

rudimentary exhibition space, the local community has embraced the gallery and the space attracts around 12,000 visitors annually.

Bega Valley Shire Council recognises the need for arts professionals to be involved in the management and day to day operations of our Regional Gallery. Our Curator manages the artistic exhibition program, highlighting the work of local and contemporary artists from around Australia and is responsible for the artistic program the design and implementation of public programs and outreach.

The BVRG hosts the biennial Shirley Hannan National Portrait Award, the highest valued prize of its nature in regional Australia, and the Shirl, an acquisitive youth portrait award.

The BVRG is a lean, yet aspiring player in the regional gallery field, we recognise that the best outcome for the community is to conceive and deliver a concise, dense and challenging program that focuses on our strengths and doesn't over-extend our capacity.

**“Investment in Cultural infrastructure and events contributes to local economies by providing a focal point to attract tourist dollars and help promote a city’s image as a cultural destination and by attracting highly skilled and educated workers to communities”.**

*The Arts Ripple Effect: Valuing the Arts in Communities, Arts Victoria and Australia Council for the Arts*





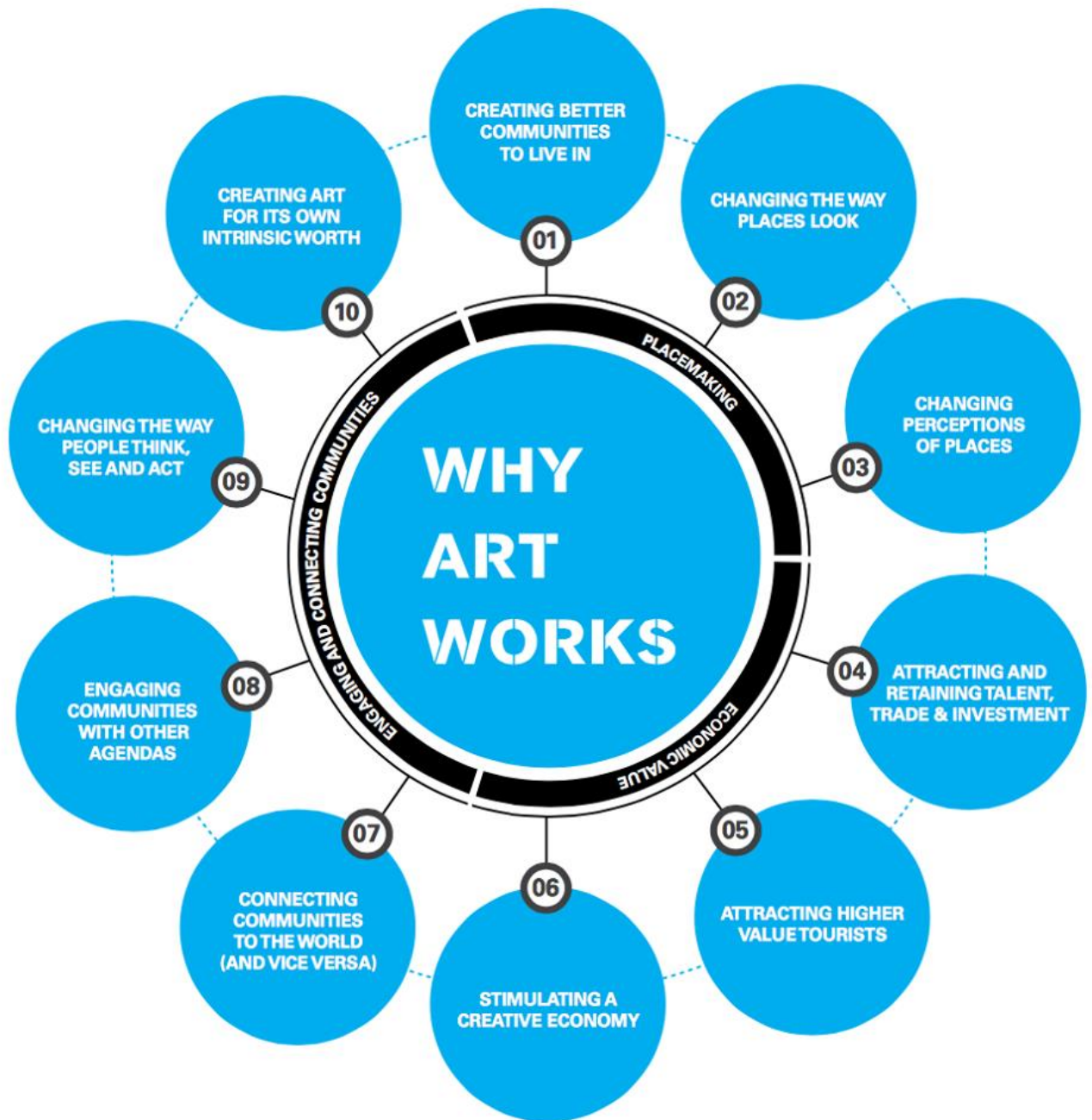


Figure 1. Why Art Works, North by Northwest, Arts Council UK

# Values

The BVRG acknowledges visual art and culture to be an essential part of the human experience in nurturing a healthy society. As a leading cultural institution the BVRG is an integral part of the fabric that draws intellectual, social and economic opportunities to the Bega Valley Shire.

**Equity** – creative programming in artistic, access and learning planning that celebrates and inspires all demographics within the community of the shire. Respect for Aboriginal people and their right to cultural ownership. Encouraging a diversity of opinion and knowledge.

**Access** – The BVRG embraces the philosophy of access for all and will endeavor to provide engaging, enjoyable and inspirational learning and recreational opportunities for local people and visitors that are sympathetic to their specific access needs.

**Participation** – accessible programs and events, encouraging participation at all levels of education, financial status and ability. To develop programs and projects relevant to contemporary cultures, community, government policy, as well as industry and sector needs.

**Rights** – equal rights established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in local visual culture.

**Integrity** – to be accountable, trustworthy and transparent.

**Some 56% of Australians believe that the arts significantly help them deal with stress, anxiety and depression.**

*Arts in Daily Life: Australian Participation in the Arts, Australia Council for the Arts, 2014*



# Strategic Direction

The Bega Valley Shire Council, through its Community Strategic Plan has identified a number of key strategic directions that outline the cultural aspirations of the community. The Regional Gallery can make a significant contribution in these areas.

## Direction L2 - Access to learning and creativity

We are an inspired community with expanded access to life-long learning and skill development, and have creativity and celebration integrated into our community life

Present an exhibition program within a vibrant and strong cultural facility that explores, creates and challenges audiences to see things differently. Provide access to the best contemporary art for regional and remote audiences that stimulate, inspire and connect community.

Promote excellence within local arts communities and individual practitioners.

## Direction L3 - Demonstrates respect and inclusion

We are harmonious community where everybody is welcomed, respected and diversity is celebrated

## Direction E2 - Growing our region

Our region is strong and diverse, which attracts and provides new opportunities for both business and community.

Support and encourage pathways to employment and education in the visual arts sector.

Act as the peak visual arts and cultural facility in the region by adhering to industry best practice.

## Direction E2 - Growing our region

Our region is strong and diverse, which attracts and provides new opportunities for both business and community.

# Goals

The BVRG will deliver a symbiotic Artistic and Access & Learning program in its existing facility based in Bega. Additionally, we will provide a schedule of projects and events throughout the Bega Valley Shire. External activities will focus on but not be limited to, the main town/population centres of Eden, Merimbula, Pambula and Bermagui.

The BRVG will, through these activities, grow a depth of engagement in the visual arts for local communities and develop awareness of the arts and culture to the significant number of visitors to our region.

The BVRG will remain a cultural hub and, through incremental increase in capacity, build its reputation as a safe, creative and culturally relevant space locally, statewide, nationally and internationally.

**At 79%, the 'South Coast sub-region' had the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest proportion of international visitors who engaged in a cultural and heritage activity.**

*Cultural and Heritage Tourism to NSW, Destinations NSW 2012*

Over the life of this Strategic Plan the Bega Valley Regional Gallery has the following goals.

## 1. Exhibition development

Research and develop a relevant, vibrant and challenging exhibition program that demonstrates imagination, distinctiveness and originality. Work with artists who contribute to innovative and new thinking in their art form and the wider culture.

Develop best practice exhibition displays that are easily accessible by visitors. Provide a digital platform for exhibitions so members of the community who are distance challenged can access and enjoy the artistic program remotely.

## 2. Contribute to a Vibrant Society and Culture

Work to make art a part of daily life. Adhere to The Australia Council for the Arts description of a healthy artistic organization as one who “promotes widespread, dynamic social and cultural conversations, helps to make Indigenous arts and culture strong and accessible, and who values and represents diversity.”

## 3. Community Engagement

Respect, collaborate and share decision making in a way that acknowledges diversity, difference of opinion, ideas and artistic preferences. Support participation and engagement by all. Explore connections with artistic leaders in the community.

## 4. Cultural Tourism

Program strong, engaging, relevant, unique and challenging exhibitions that encourage participation from visitors to the region. BVRG will work with the NSW Government to assist in delivering a Create in NSW key action; ‘to promote opportunities for cultural tourism through Destination Management Planning in consultation with the Regional Arts Network and Destinations NSW’.

## 5. Collections Management

Digitize and promote collection. Initiate a community program to capture the history and storytelling around the existing historical collection and to preserve for future generations and acknowledge the contribution previous generations made to the cultural heritage of the area. This provides a local action to mirror the NSW Governments support for the “development of digital platforms to extend the reach of the States Cultural Institutions” Create in NSW, ArtsNSW 2015. This becomes an outward facing resource, allowing access to local cultural heritage on a global level.

## 6. Gallery Redevelopment

Explore opportunities and work closely with BVSC to maintain, develop and grow existing cultural and visual arts services. Direct any expansion and adhere to best practice principals in consultation with community and peak industry bodies. Connect with the lives and times of contemporary society. A redeveloped exhibition space contributes to “an aesthetic enrichment, an emotional resonance, intellectual stimulation and social bridging and bonding through an arts experience.” Artistic Vibrancy, Australia Council for the Arts 2014.

## 7. Pursue and build on professional partnerships at a local, state, national and international level

Strong partnerships are already in place with lending institutions, including the Art Gallery of NSW, Australian National Maritime Museum, Newcastle Art Gallery, The Australian War Memorial, The National Gallery of Australia, Lismore Regional Gallery, Grafton Regional Gallery, Goulburn Regional Gallery and Mosman Regional Gallery.

BVRG works closely with Museums and Galleries of NSW, the National Association for Visual Artists, Regional and Public Galleries of NSW, The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Regional Arts NSW. Locally we work closely with the Regional Arts Organisation, South East Arts, fLiNG Physical Theatre and the FourWinds Festival as peak local arts bodies.

## 8. Continue to grow, manage and promote BVRG's unique advantages and play to our strengths

The development of the biannual exhibitions, The Shirley Hannan National Portrait Award and THE SHIRL – National Youth Portrait Prize brings national attention to the BVRG, provides financial returns, employment and professional development opportunities for exhibitors, and has flow-on benefits to local businesses through attracting visitation.

Artists in regional and remote places don't have access to services in the same way as metropolitan Australians.

This is a challenge, not a disadvantage. Regional people work more closely together, rely on each other: you have to nurture relationships when there is only one framer in town, you need to plan ahead when the barge only deliver goods once a week.

**Regional arts bring people together.**

*Regional Arts Australia, Stats & Stories, Executive Summary*

# The Gallery at work

## Exhibition Program

FLORA AUSTRALIS | Australian Artists & the Floral Still Life | March – June 2016

The first major exhibition held in partnership with the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Flora Australis is an exclusive exhibition to the BVRG. Accessing the AGNSW collection and working directly with contemporary artists, FLORA AUSTRALIS uses highly recognisable historic artists to promote visitation to the gallery.

With the majority of tourists visiting the area over the key peak tourism season of Easter 2016 and coinciding with the biannual FOUR WINDS FESTIVAL, the exhibition has been designed to draw visitors and locals to engage with the gallery and to provide a unique and exciting offering to boost visitor knowledge and numbers to the BVRG. An extensive marketing campaign across print, television, radio and online in addition to strong social media presence has resulted in an increase of visitors by 250% on 2015 numbers. To date, visitors origins have been an even mix of Shire residents and visitors from Victoria, Queensland, ACT, Sydney, surrounding Shires (Eurobodalla, Shoalhaven, Snowy Mountains) and international visitors from USA and Canada.

The screenshot shows the Grey Nomads website interface. At the top left is the logo for 'THE Grey Nomads .COM.AU'. To the right are navigation links for 'Advertising', 'Contact Us', and a search bar. Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and RSS are also present. Below the navigation is a horizontal menu with categories: Planning, Lifestyle, Your Rig, Where To Go, Events, Accessories, Shop, Classifieds, and Forums. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'Art Exhibition' and features a detailed page for the 'FLORA AUSTRALIS' exhibition. It includes the location (Bega Valley Regional Gallery, Bega), dates (March 11, 2016 - June 11, 2016), a description of the exhibition, a list of artists, opening hours, and a note that entry is free. A central image shows a still life painting of a basket of flowers. The right column is titled 'Where To Go' and lists several locations with corresponding images: Woolgoolga, Orange, Armidale, Coleambally, and Wagga Wagga.

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**Art Exhibition**

HOME > EVENTS > NEW SOUTH WALES

**Location:** Bega Valley Regional Gallery, Bega

**March 11, 2016 - June 11, 2016**

**FLORA AUSTRALIS : Australian Artists & the floral still life**

Featuring stunning historical pieces from the Art Gallery of New South Wales collection, along with works especially created for the exhibition by contemporary artists. FLORA AUSTRALIS is the BVRG blockbuster show of 2016.

Artists include,

Tom Roberts, Margaret Preston, Katie Petyarre, Arthur Streeton, Margaret Olley, Laura Jones, Nicholas Harding, Rupert Bunny, Roy de Maistre, Lucy Culliton, Elioth Gruner, Alesandro Ljubicic, Hans Heyson, Zuza Zochowski, Ken Done, A.E Aldis, Julian Meagher

Opening Hours Tuesday – Friday 10am-4pm  
Saturday 9am – Noon

ENRTY IS FREE

IMAGE – Margaret Preston, Still life National Flowers, oil on carvas, 60 x 50cm AGNSW collection

**Where To Go**

Woolgoolga

Orange

Armidale

Coleambally

Wagga Wagga

## Access & Learning

**COMMUNITY DRAWING CLASS** presented by BVRG, Adult Education and Mental Health Month.

To coincide with the touring exhibition *THE LAST SUPPER* by Ken & Julia Yonetani, BVRG facilitated a workshop held in the Sapphire Marketplace mall in Bega town centre.

The BVRG team recreated the installation and, with community partners Adult Education Bega, Woolworths and the Sapphire Marketplace delivered a free drawing workshop delivered by local artist and educator Veronica O’Leary. This activity had numerous outcomes. Exposing the general public to art making activities, promoting the touring exhibition and the gallery, engaging local organisations and business’ as well as promoting and supporting council’s involvement with Mental Health Month.

### *Art as a pathway to wellbeing for the community*

With over 75 people participating in the activity, from ages 12 to 75, many were encouraged to visit the gallery and many were trying drawing for the first time.





Rural, regional and remote locations are unique, complex and a significant part of Australian identity, defined in part by history and landscape. Many are now adversely affected by shifts in local economies and populations. Arts activities and projects can re-define such locations in new and positive ways, providing both residents and visitors with a strong sense of a community's unique identity.

*Regional Arts Australia, Stats & Stories, Executive Summary*

### **Further reading**

Regional Arts Impact Australia. That's a fact! Regional Arts Australia 2014

<http://regionalarts.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/RAA%E2%80%94Thats-a-fact1.pdf>

Sharpening the Arts in Regional Australia. Regional Arts Australia 2013

<http://regionalarts.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/SharpeningtheArts.pdf>

Create in NSW. Arts NSW 2015

[http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ARTS-NSW-Policy\\_13-MAY\\_web-1.pdf](http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ARTS-NSW-Policy_13-MAY_web-1.pdf)

Arts Nation 2015 Edition Australia Council for the Arts 2015

<http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/research/arts-nation-final-2-march-5518-56394fc08129b.pdf>

# Appendix 1

## Goals and Outcomes

Goal	Outcome
<b>Exhibition development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 exhibitions are scheduled each year</li> <li>• Digital exhibition platform developed</li> </ul>
<b>Contribute to a Vibrant Society and Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development opportunities for local artists are identified</li> <li>• Aboriginal Artists will feature in the exhibition program each year</li> </ul>
<b>Community Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 Public Programs delivered each year</li> <li>• Education resources developed</li> <li>• Volunteer base grown</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Tourism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of visitors from outside the Shire</li> <li>• Marketing plan developed</li> <li>• Partnership with SCT in place</li> </ul>
<b>Collections Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gallery Website Developed</li> <li>• Collection digitised and available on line.</li> <li>• Collection Policy developed</li> </ul>
<b>Gallery Redevelopment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding identified to complete works</li> <li>• Gallery refurbishment completed</li> <li>• Environmental factors addressed</li> </ul>
<b>Pursue and build on professional partnerships at a local, state, national and international level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalised relationships with lending institutions developed</li> </ul>
<b>Continue to grow, manage and promote BVRG's unique advantages and play to our strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One BVRG created exhibition toured</li> <li>• Multi-year funding achieved</li> </ul>