Frameworks for cultural development projects

John Smithies and Kim Dunphy

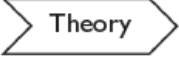## Introduction

Local governments in Australia produce more than 2,000 significant cultural development projects each year. The core business of local government arts and cultural development staff is management of these projects. While the creative output varies from location to location and community to community, the underlying project management principles and key relationships remain consistent.

Cultural development projects are activities that support the goal of a culturally rich and vibrant society. They include participants from local communities collaborating with arts workers and artists. Larger cultural development projects employ skilled artists as artistic directors or creative producers and similar roles.

For ten years CDN (Cultural Development Network) has produced and researched artist-led cultural development projects, in which participants from local communities collaborate with arts workers and artists, in local government contexts. The major focus of this work has been to understand the factors that assist in achieving desired outcomes. The experience with our own projects and our work with councils across Australia has provided the impetus for two frameworks that we recommend to local government managers, artists, community leaders, planners and funders to make the most of resources they apply to their projects.

Both these frameworks are presented in the context of working with local government but they can be used by any organisational support to cultural development.

The first framework is a set of planning principles that underpin cultural development projects. These are summarised in these six headings and applied to projects.

Values	Represented in organisational policies and Council Plans
Goals	Desired futures, across all policy domains that determine objectives
Evidence	Existing and new data, research and practice knowledge
Theory	Knowing (this)..., we will do (something)..., and we expect (that)...
Outcomes	Measurable impacts, not activities or outputs
Evaluation	Evaluation is consistent and impacts future decision-making

The second framework is a method of conceptualising the key partnerships for council-produced cultural development projects that are fundamental to their success. The key partners identified are the elected *Councillors*, the local *community leaders*, the *artists*, the *council arts managers* and the *council executive*.

Each of these frameworks are described and discussed under the headings below.

The workflow for cultural development projects

The project workflow is a series of steps over the life of the project that is based on the planning principles for cultural development projects established by CDN. In standard local government practice, the 'project plan' usually considers only the tasks of mounting the event or activity In this workflow, in contrast, the 'project plan' is one part of a larger process that shapes decision-making prior to action.

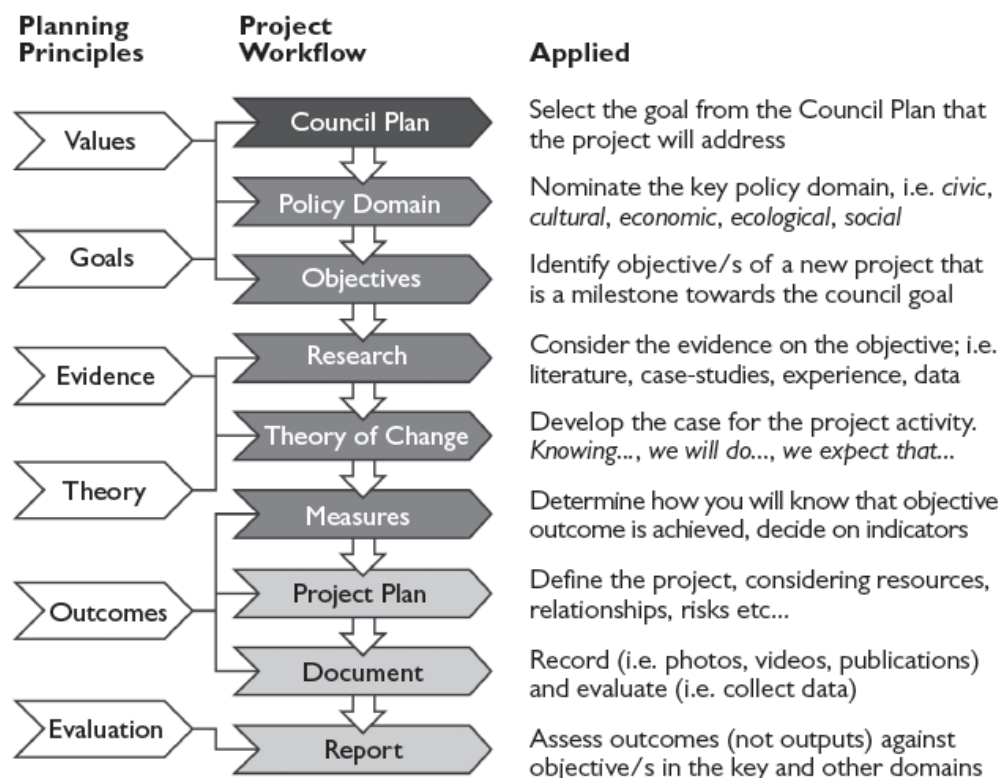| Planning Principles	Project Workflow	Applied
Values	Council Plan	Select the goal from the Council Plan that the project will address
	Policy Domain	Nominate the key policy domain, i.e. *civic, cultural, economic, ecological, social*
Goals	Objectives	Identify objective/s of a new project that is a milestone towards the council goal
Evidence	Research	Consider the evidence on the objective; i.e. literature, case-studies, experience, data
	Theory of Change	Develop the case for the project activity. *Knowing..., we will do..., we expect that...*
Theory	Measures	Determine how you will know that objective outcome is achieved, decide on indicators
Outcomes	Project Plan	Define the project, considering resources, relationships, risks etc...
	Document	Record (i.e. photos, videos, publications) and evaluate (i.e. collect data)
Evaluation	Report	Assess outcomes (not outputs) against objective/s in the key and other domains

Figure 1: The workflow for cultural development projects

The dark grey in the model above indicates components of the workflow that are provided by the council.

The medium grey parts are steps that are often informed only by the practice experience of the lead artist or project manager. They are rarely fully documented or explained. In this workflow we have named these processes that should underpin a project so that the premise or program logic can be used to produce a meaningful evaluation and demonstrate whether the project achieves the council's objectives.

The light grey parts are the steps that are common practice in documented cultural development projects in local government.

Building a cultural development project from values through to reporting

The following steps describe the workflow plan illustrated above. Each of these steps of the workflow are accompanied by a 'Sample council' example to help clarify the step.

Council Plan

Values: what do we care about?

Community values are reflected in the council plan.

Values for a municipality are determined through community consultation, supported by the input of elected representatives and council staff. They are also influenced by broader values reflected in legislative requirements and other policy frameworks adopted by the council.

At a local level, community leadership groups such as the board of the local gallery, an arts council, arts and culture committee are also places where the values of the local community are present. Allowing these advisory groups or committees to have input to the outcomes of the project will ensure that the project is connected to the values of the community and the council.

Goals: what are we trying to achieve to live out our values?

The council plan lays out the goals for the municipality

Goals are the desired futures that are published in the council plan and reflect the values of the community. Generally they are long-term and aspirational. Some examples of *goals* taken from different council plans are;

- Thriving in a clean green future
- A resilient economy and productive community assets
- Improving and sustainable local infrastructure
- A community that values the culture and heritage of the region
- Participating in and valuing community wellbeing
- A community engaged in local governance

Two of these goals are used in the sample council descriptions below.

Sample Council: The arts and culture department is acknowledged by the council as operating under the council goal of *a community that values the culture and heritage of the region.*

The Council, through the CEO, has also asked all managers to develop strategies to address the council goal of *a community engaged in local governance,* as there has been little movement in the measures of this goal over recent years.

Policy Domain

Council goals are the catalyst for council and they impact on different public policy domains. CDN acknowledges and uses the five policy domains defined by Community Indicators Victoria[1].

- Healthy Safe and Inclusive Communities (social domain)
- Dynamic Resilient Local Economies (economic domain)
- Sustainable Built and Natural Environments (ecological domain)
- Culturally Rich and Vibrant Communities (cultural domain)
- Democratic and Engaged Communities (civic domain)

Council goals can all be considered within these five policy domains. Cultural development projects are identified as operating in the cultural domain, 'a culturally rich and vibrant community'. Measures associated with that domain will be applied in the evaluation of the project.

However, often there will be a second goal addressed by the project since the value of cultural development projects is that they also have impacts in other areas of council policy. Identifying any additional policy domain is important if the project is to be evaluated outside the cultural domain. For example, if the project is also addressing an economic goal, then the evaluation would include measures of economic outcomes as well as cultural outcomes.

Objectives specify what we are trying to achieve with respect to a particular goal.

Sample Council: The cultural development project will address two of council's goals

- A community that values the culture and heritage of the region (cultural domain)
- A community engaged in local governance (civic domain)

Objectives

A specific result that a person or system aims to achieve within a timeframe and available resources.

Council plans and other council policy statements will identify objectives to assist the council to achieve its goals.

Objectives are not activities, but the reason an activity is undertaken. In the 1980s the SMART criteria became a mnemonic acronym for defining project objectives.

- Specific – target a specific area for improvement.

---

1 Community Indicators Victoria Data Framework (2013), www.communityindicators.net.au/data_framework

- Measurable – quantify or at least suggest an indicator of progress.
- Assignable – specify who will do it.
- Realistic – state what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources.
- Time-related – specify when the result(s) can be achieved.

The articulation of an objective helps inform decisions about which activities will be undertaken.

> **Sample Council:** The cultural development project will focus on the following two objectives, relating to the goals.
>
> Objective: Increased community participation in new creative activities in the Sample Spring Festival
>
> The goal: A community that values the culture and heritage of the region (cultural domain)
>
> Objective: Increased number of residents under 30 years old on Council arts and cultural facilities boards, and committees
>
> The goal: A community engaged in local governance (civic domain).

Research

Once the objective is identified then it is important to gather information about how to reach the objective.

The key questions to frame are;

- Where are we now? What does the council already know about the problem
- What is the available information about the problem?
- What proven solutions to the problem are documented and available

The council has determined the goals and therefore the first place to start is to find out what evidence or data was used by the council when determining the goals.

Evidence-base

Councils are expected to undertake evidence-based planning to increase the chance of success and to demonstrate the most efficient use of resources.

There are four types of evidence to draw upon at this stage:

- published research
- existing data
- new data
- practice knowledge

Useful subjects can come from a variety of those evidence sources:

- Audience participation in festivals and documented barriers to attendance
- Survey of cultural infrastructure across council
- Data on effect of participation in arts and cultural activity within the municipality
- Benchmarking data with other local government areas
- The value of arts and culture in diverse communities
- Social and economic impact measures and data
- Economic impacts of arts and cultural festivals
- Patterns of attendance at performance events
- Patterns of attendance at community arts activities
- An annual on-line survey of people in the local government area who have attended and/or participated in arts activities and events.

On-line publication of scholarly publications has brought a wide range of research and analysis to the computer screen and the experience, with evidence, of others will help determine the right activities to reach the objectives. Council departments can hold data that has been used to determine the goals of the Council.

Sample Council: The following evidence will help us determine the activity to address each of these objectives.

Objective: Increased community participation in new creative activities in the Sample Spring Festival

Where are we now? There are 54 incorporated arts groups within the Sample Council area and only 10 of them have a connection with the festival. In the 14 years of the festival it has remained the same although the number and diversity of residents in the area has increased. There has been no survey or consultation with those that do not attend and those that do not participate.

What do we know about the problem? The current participating groups consider the cost of participating to be higher than other festivals. The festival venue is not suitable for most of the groups i.e. wet weather provision, three-phase power, parking for heavy gear. Council officers interacting with the newer arts groups report that they do not feel welcome or equal to the established participants.

What do we know about the solution? Other festivals have multiple sites to service different needs. Different published reports and research findings provide successful case-studies on how diverse groups participate in festivals. Skilled artists have to be paid to perform or to create new work with the community.

Objective: Increased number of residents under 30 years old on Council arts and cultural facilities boards, and committees

Where are we now? 30% percent of the council area population is between 18 and 30 years old. Representation on council committees is 3%. The greatest proportion are residents over 55 and they are disproportionately 70% of the committee members. The Sample Council Spring Festival has two people under thirty on its 15-person committee.

What do we know about the problem? There have been little or no plans for changing the diversity profile of council committees. A recent council survey of young residents showed the council was seen as irrelevant and for 'older people'. Committees were regarded as 'boring' and full of 'oldies'.

What do we know about the solution? Recent academic publications tell us that the primary motivator for young people to volunteer is to gain work experience, industry experience for their CV and to gain experience in the particular committee of interest, i.e. art exhibitions, event organizing, meeting people with the same interest.

Theory of Change

Given what we know about the problem we can construct a theory on how to change it.

The theory of change is a formula for selecting the activity that will deliver the outcomes to satisfy the objective. Reaching our objectives brings us closer to the goal.

The theory of change is a three-step logical argument for making decisions about an activity.

Knowing …
> what has been effective previously
> what we know from research or previous experience
> how we use this information to assist with our planning and action
> what resources are available (current or future)

we will do …
> this activity or change what we do

and we expect that …
> what we are wanting to happen, will happen
> we will have a way to measure outcome's.

A simple mnemonic is

> *Knowing (this) …, we will do (an activity) …, and we expect (that) …*

A theory of change can help:

- sharpen the articulation of outcomes
- consider what's possible and not possible to achieve with an activity

- think about what inputs might be needed—yours and others—and when/where your input(s) might be most catalytic or strategic (valuing scarce resources)
- examine whether or not your intervention will have a meaningful or powerful enough effect
- staying focused when unexpected events or inputs emerge
- practice evaluative thinking.

Sample

Objective: Increased number of residents under 30 years old on council cultural facilities boards and committees.

Theory of Change

Knowing that the young people volunteer for organizations and activities based on their interest and opportunity to gain real work experience, in an area of interest, such as popular culture, music, events management, and the Spring Festival and the council committees receive funding from the council.

We will provide detailed information to Council committee members on what motivates young people to volunteer, and provide mentoring, work and industry exp[erience on committees and attach them to arts and creative festivals and cultural events that will attract them to arts and cultural events that will attract their peers to attend; and

We expect to increase the percentage of young people under the age of 30 on council cultural committees to a level equivalent to the age profile in the council area within 5 years and that those committees with increased younger members will participate and have more successful creative events in the Sample Spring festival and become more engaged in local governance.

Measures

The theory of change will tell you what it is you expect to achieve as it is supported by evidence. The measurement should be able to tell us that we have reached our objective and the outcome is addressing the Council goal.

This project workflow focuses on outcomes, not the inputs or outputs

- *inputs* are the resources used to produce outputs
- *outputs* are the things you produce or create
- *outcomes* are the consequences directly attributable, at least in part, to the program or project and are usually measured at, or shortly after, completion

Data collection strategies

Each objective will have different measures. Selecting the policy domains in the

first part of the workflow enables you to draw on some established measures for those domains. Whether using measures for *culturally rich and vibrant communities* or *democratic and engagedcommunities,* to know if there has been any change. It is essential that there is a base-line measure of the current status, before you can measure any change after the activity.

Where are we now? (Baseline)

Selecting what you use as a baseline will determine what it is you use at the end of or during the project to measure change. It could be the existing data that the council had to determine the original goal, or other published results of surveys.

Sample Council: Measuring the change as an outcome of the activity.

Objective: Increased community participation in new creative activities in the Sample Spring Festival

Measuring a baseline: Planning for the next festival will include a survey each of the arts groups within the council area, including those previous participating groups. The survey will gather quantitative information on which years their group participated, how many members, volunteers, employees spent how many hours preparing and what was the net cost to the organisation in cash. Did the organisation create a new event, exhibition, work to perform etc. just for the Festival. Qualitative information will aim to assess what have been the incentives and barriers to participating, the perceived value of their constituency in participating, satisfaction in presenting any new work compared to where they have presented established work. Was the new creative work critically acclaimed?

The survey will also ask for responses to the activities undertaken by the Council in diversifying the venues, the capital upgrade to the infrastructure and the change to fees and access.

Measuring the change: Following the Festival the same survey of organisations will assess if they did or did not participate and whether the council played a role or not in the decision to participate. Was the new creative work more satisfying to the participants? Did the participants place a higher value on the culture and heritage of the region than before?

Objective: Increased number of residents under 30 years old on Council arts and cultural facilities boards, and committees

Measuring the baseline: Compare existing records on the age and diversity of council committees with surveys published in academic articles on volunteering to see if the base-line of attitudes in our community matched the research survey results. Sample Council Youth Services formed a focus group of 15 to 25 year olds to meet and determine the five top barriers to volunteering on Council arts committees and these attitudes were added

to the baseline. Each council committee will report on how many of their activities in the previous year were youth focused and how many future activities would be aimed at or inclusive of youth – not just as audience but as creators, and participants.

Measuring the change: After a twelve month period, the surveys, focus groups and reporting would be repeated again after the second year. This would be repeated annually over the five-year period and the council team would maintain their communication and consultation with the committees and the youth services over this period, and seek further indicators on how youth satisfaction to arts participation has changed.

The project plan

Project planning is a skill already used by experienced cultural development managers and planners. Tools to manage the budget, timelines, communications, marketing and promotion and reporting are generally already part of council project management systems.

The key component of the project plan is the matching of resources to the activity. The resources available are drawn from five key groups both internally and externally to the council.

- Human
- Expertise
- Financial
- Relationships
- Infrastructure (hard and soft)

It is a rule of thumb that there will be less resources available than is desirable, therefore the decision in the project plan is to determine what is most *catalytic* and *strategic* or how to get the biggest 'bang for the buck'? Strategically if you had to choose one part of the project over the other, which would get you closest to your objective with the least use of resources.

An area often under-calculated is the human resources. This is not only in the expertise but in the 'profit & loss' of staff hours. Treating the bank of staff hours as you might the dollars in the budget you can make an allocation, in consultation with the staff or contractors on what you estimate can be done with the limit of hours 'in the bank'. Staff hours become volunteer hours very quickly when the account is 'overdrawn'. To extend the staff-hours resource, the partnerships with external organisations, volunteers, other council departments become critical assets in meeting the objective.

Sample Council: Project plan.

Objective: Increased community participation in new creative activities in the Sample Spring Festival

Resources: $25,000 is allocated in the first year to develop and test the surveys and establish the skills and infrastructure in council. Year 2 will have a capital budget of $250,000 to complete the identified capital improvements, (three-phase power, all weather shelters, lighting, and accessible venue upgrades). The council has amortized that investment over 8 years.

650 hours of staff time are allocated to managing and overseeing the tasks over the first year. A further 45 hours will be drawn from other council departments in exchange for access to the data and the inclusion of their contribution in the reporting.

The council General Manager and corporate services are partners in the assessment and allocation of council-wide resources and modelling the financial impact of a change in fee structure for communities to participate.

Sample Council: Project plan.

Objective: Increased number of residents under 30 years old on Council arts and cultural facilities boards, and committees

Resources: Over the first year, 220 hours of staff time are allocated to the task that has to be delivered. A further 15 hours will be drawn from other council departments, in particular the CEO's office to chair meetings of the committee chairs, attend key community group meetings.

$18,000 is allocated in the first year as additional funding to those committees that receive funding if they can meet the increase of young residents joining their committees. Council will review future funding to arts and culture organisations based on their capacity to represent the diversity of their council area on their committees.

For the second year and annually going forward, 80 hours are allocated to the manager's oversight of developing these committees.

Documentation for recording change and history

Documenting projects in all their aspects and stages is an important set of evidence, and it also provides accessible descriptions that report writing cannot cover. Images, video recordings, reviews by media are all assets to add value to the project for reporting to council and for future council officers.

The access to on-line storage, cataloguing, databases makes collecting documentation more accessible than ever before, however the motivation and discipline to document has not evolved as fast. Part of the resource allocation in the project plan should be to identify and have the project captured in the most usable and appropriate form.

Evaluation is present throughout the cultural development project workflow. Council has drawn on evaluation of previous work to guide its planning and it is also present when commencing new projects to address

goals. The evaluation of your project will assist in planning the next project.

Report

The report will provide a summary of the project through each of its workflow stages, objectives, theory of change, measures and evaluation results. The primary role of the report is to provide an evaluation of each stage of the project and the degree to which outcomes were achieved. How were the inputs and outputs responsible for the changes, the outcomes?

Evaluation

- provides a framework in which objectives are set in relation to specified targets
- allows progress towards the achievement of objectives to be monitored
- gives council (funders) assurance that investment is being put to effective use
- allows you to reflect upon and improve project delivery
- helps you modify strategies and policies throughout the lifetime of a project
- enables you to record all of the outcome and impacts of a project in a credible way
- provides feedback for everyone working on the project

Methodologies

- Quantitative- surveys
- Qualitative – interviews, focus groups
- Most Significant Change- use stories as a methodology
- Arts-based- using arts as a response
- Mixed methods
- Quantifying qualitative data

The case for a framework

The practice of developing and producing cultural development projects is growing as governments are recognising the evidence that creative participation at a community level has many positive impacts, not only in the creating of new art content, but across many of the council policy areas. The desired futures of councils and their communities are a set of interwoven goals such as liveability and a growing economy, civic engagement and valuing cultural diversity, public art and place-making and clean environments, meaningful

engagement, mental health and safety, etc.

Investment in cultural development is a significant activity of local government and in changing economic conditions, there will always be a responsibility to demonstrate the best outcomes for scarce public funds.

This cultural development project work flow is intended to give council officers and producers the skills, the tools and the confidence to propose bold and creative projects to council on the basis that they will support the council goals and that they are often the most cost-effective means of delivering on the pathway towards the council goals.

Frameworks for Cultural Development Projects

Dynamic relationships for local government cultural development projects

Local government-led cultural development projects contribute significantly to opportunities for people in Australia to participate in the arts. Councils are generally closely involved in these projects, with the majority of activity undertaken by council officers, working in collaboration with contracted artists. In contrast, state and national governments delegate responsibility for cultural development projects to their agencies or statutory authorities, and fund them at arms-length from the government.

Over a ten-year period, CDN has managed and observed ten multi-year cultural development projects led by councils. These have taken place in several states of Australia; and in small and large; metropolitan, regional and rural areas. In observing factors that contribute to the success of these projects, five key collaborating groups and the dynamic relationships between them have been noted as significant. Our experience from these major projects leads us to the view that all council cultural development projects should consider these groups and the relationships between them. Paying attention to these relationships in planning and execution of projects can contribute to improved outcomes.

These observations have been developed into a framework of five dynamic relationships presented in the sections to follow. While this framework is drawn from extensive practice experience, it has not yet undergone a formal application and evaluation.

Collaborating groups in local government cultural development projects

There are five groups of collaborators involved in successful local government cultural development projects. Three of these are within council and two are outside of council.

Council Arts
Management

Council
CEO/Executive

Cultural
Development
Project

Lead Artists

Councillors

Community
Leaders

Figure 2: Collaborating groups for local government cultural development projects

In alphabetical order they are;

Community Leader(s)

Community leaders are those people in the community who take time out of their work and personal lives to contribute to better outcomes for their community of interest or the region as a whole. Their governance role is to ensure the goals of the community, as articulated in the council plan, are addressed by the council in a responsible manner. They are found as volunteers in arts groups, school councils, sports associations, community associations and the like, and as leaders of business. Community leadership is critical for a cultural development project that has a long-term and sustainable vision.

Council Arts Manager(s)

Effective communication between the artist and the council is dependent on the skills and experience of the council officer managing the project and the

management expertise within council. The council arts manager does not have the authority of the Council, but has delegation through the CEO to deliver the project. This officer manages the needs of the artists with the governance obligations of the council.

Council CEO/Executive

The CEO and/or the executive of the Council are the key sponsors of cultural development projects within councils. Decisions about resources and the overall focus of the Council staff are directed by this group. A successful project needs to be beneficial to the CEO and/or the executive in supporting the strategic objectives set by Council and helping them achieve their 'performance indicators'. A CEO who takes an active role in a project will ensure that it is supported by council resources and delivers on councillors' expectations.

Councillors

The role of elected members of council is a unique blend of community leadership and corporate governance. The capacity of councillors to see the potential benefits of cultural development projects and how these can address council goals is critical to building the understanding of the project between the council and the community. Their involvement in chairing cross-council committees can support the CEO/Executive to embed the cultural development project within the council administration.

Lead Artist(s)

The artist or creative producer has unique skills that balance the artistic vision with communication to all groups and a capability to 'cast' the community in creative roles. Lead artists on cultural development projects have the capacity to spark the imagination and motivation of local artists and community members to participate. A skilled arts manager in the council can assist them to be provided with the necessary resources and a clear brief that is backed by the council.

These five groups are equally important in the success of cultural development projects. They should ideally work together in all stages of project development. The more of these groups that have active engagement in the project and interactive relationships with other groups, the stronger and more sustainable project outcomes will be.

Focus on the relationship not the role

Particular dynamic relationships between these groups have been observed. For each of the five groups, relationships with the groups on either side are

the most significant for the success of that role. The three relationships that do not connect directly are important to the project, but less important to that particular role.

The following image offers a representation of the dynamic relationships between the five groups and the sections that follow discuss how they work together.

Relationships: Community Leaders – <u>COUNCILLORS</u> – Council CEO

As elected representatives of the community, councillors tend to come from the pool of the 'community leaders' group to take on the governance role. They will work with other community leaders and represent the broader constituencies in development of the council goals articulated in the council plan. The cultural development project has to contribute towards the council goals and they invest in the CEO to carry-out what it takes to address those goals. If the cultural development project is addressing the goal then it should impact on the CEO's performance indicators to the council. At a minimum the councillors formalise the goals of the community and charge the CEO and their team to carry it out. The councillors do not have a direct relationship

with the arts manager and the artists, on the opposite side of the diagram.

Relationships: Councillors – <u>COUNCIL CEO</u> – Arts Management

The Council CEO is responsible to the elected council. The council management work with the councillors to formalise the goals of the community into the council plan. The CEO will delegate delivery of different objectives in the council plan to the various departments of the council administration. If the CEO has delivery of a goal as a key performance indicator then the CEO will be attentive to the delivery of programs that impact on that goal. At a minimum the CEO is delivering and reporting outcomes to the Council as well as ensuring the arts manager in the council has the skills and resources to carry out the cultural development project. The CEO does not have a direct relationship with the artists and the community leaders, on the opposite side of the diagram.

Relationships: Council CEO – <u>ARTS MANAGER</u> - Artists

The arts manager in the council is directed by the CEO to address the goals of the council. In doing so, the CEO will provide resources and appropriate cross-council support to deliver on the project. The arts manager knows what resources are required and what is available to enable the artists to do their work. They are project managers and report progress and outcomes to the CEO to maintain the support and resources. The arts manager needs a trusting and transparent relationship with the artists to enable the development and delivery of the project to run smoothly with council resources. At a minimum the arts manager will be ensuring the CEO and other sections of council are informed and remain supportive and that the artists have what they need to do the job. The arts manager does not have a direct relationship with the councillors and the community leadership, on the opposite side of the diagram.

Relationships: Arts Manager – <u>ARTISTS</u> – Community Leaders

The artists are the catalysts to the cultural development project. They might not be local to the council area or the community and their status as local residents is unimportant if they have strong relationship with the local community leadership (including local artists) and have the support and resources of the council arts manager. The artists will have a defined role on the project and this will assist in their delivery to the council manager and to building the project with the community members and community leadership. At a minimum the artists need to have good working relationship with the holder

of the resources, the manager, and the participating community leadership who will ensure the project is meeting the community expectations. The artists do not have a direct relationship with the CEO and the councillors, on the opposite side of the diagram.

Relationships: Artists – <u>COMMUNITY LEADERS</u> - Councillors

The group of community leaders is the stable and sustainable base of the cultural development project. While councillors move in and out of the governance roles and council executives and staff turn-over and artists move on, the community leaders essentially remain the same. The community leaders make their expectations known to the councillors through the processes of council consultation and council elections. It also provides feedback to the artists on community expectations. At a minimum they will keep their elected representatives informed through informal feedback and community interaction and provide the artists with support and guidance to the prevailing expectations of the different communities of interest and local conditions that will impact on the cultural development project. The community leadership does not have a direct relationship with the CEO and the Arts Manager, on the opposite side of the diagram.

All of these relationships are dynamically connected

This model of five key relationships is not prescriptive and the nature of individual personalities and the local context will come into the mix. However, we speculate that if each of these groups focus on the key relationships on either side and do not directly engage in relationships with members of other groups, then projects will be more successful. It is the responsibility of all members of the five groups to look for signals when relationships are likely to impact negatively on the project, before they occur.

When one of these relationships is weaker than the others, this imbalance will impact on the project. When two or more of these dynamic relationships is weaker than others, then the project is unlikely to achieve long-term sustainability.

Importantly, while one group cannot solve a relationship issue on the opposite side of the diagram, the theory that there is a flow of relationships means that they can indirectly influence those associated groups to remedy any faltering relationships. This framework helps us to understand how the groups are dynamically connected through the relationships.

CDN aims to refine the understanding of these dynamics through ongoing monitoring of projects. The objective is for future projects to build on strong relationships so that they can contribute to a greater level of success and sustainability for projects for communities, artists and the councils.

Working with local government is potentially one of the most beneficial structures for a cultural development project but the success will be subject to the skills of all the partners to understand and respect these relationships and their dynamic interaction.