

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

art at the heart

Regional Arts Australia National Conference
3-5 October 2008 – Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Part conference, part festival – all art!



Overview

The sixth biennial Regional Arts Australia national conference will be presented by Regional Arts Australia and the Northern Territory Government through Arts NT, in collaboration with the host town of Alice Springs.

After the success of the Pacific Edge in Mackay in 2006, **art at the heart** promises to be another great event embracing the theme – **part conference, part festival – all art**, to deliver the very best in regional arts performance and practice.

Alice Springs is known as Mparntwe to the Arrernte people, who have lived in the central Australian desert in and around Alice Springs for more than 50,000 years. **art at the heart** acknowledges the Arrernte people and the pivotal role they have in the life of this region. They have occupied and cared for this country over countless generations and continue to do so today.

art at the heart will explore the collective concerns and practices of those working with and for the arts in regional, rural and remote Australia. Ideas, strategies and skills will be shared and developed in discussions, debates, workshops and networking opportunities throughout the conference.

art at the heart will provide an opportunity for artistic and cultural exchange, cross cultural collaboration and best practice approaches to working in the arts. Artists, actors, academics, artworkers, curators, filmmakers, musicians, performers, producers, students, volunteers, writers, all levels of government and the wider community will gather in Alice Springs to discuss, celebrate and experience the arts and cultural achievements of regional Australia.

Location

Alice Springs Town Council is proud to be the local host of **art at the heart**. 'The Alice' is the geographical and spiritual 'Heart of Australia' and has a thriving arts community with a strong Aboriginal art movement, which is recognised in both Australia and internationally as one of the world's most exciting art movements.

Alice Springs is the communications and service hub for central Australia. With a population of around 24,000 people, Alice Springs is the second largest centre in the Northern Territory and is popularly known as 'the Alice' or simply 'Alice.' The town is 200 km south of the absolute centre of Australia, some 1200 km from the nearest ocean and 1500 km from the nearest major cities, Darwin and Adelaide.

Core Themes

We encourage creative concepts, ideas, workshops, interactive events and presentations that respond to the following core themes. Beneath each theme are potential strands that you may find relevant, you are invited to explore and adapt these for your own circumstances and experiences.

- **Place and identity**
 - *Storytelling as a medium for proclaiming connection to place and self.*
 - *The arts as a medium for finding and proclaiming identity, connection to land and celebrating heritage.*
 - *Cultural practices and sense of place.*
 - *How art that expresses connection to place influences policymakers, communities and individuals.*
- **Arts partnerships, collaborations and exchanges**
 - *Negotiating successful relationships across education, health, justice, heritage, tourism, environment, private enterprise, not for profit organisations and the wider community.*
 - *Constructive dialogues and relationships across cultures.*
 - *Cross cultural practices, protocols and working relationships.*
 - *How partnerships, collaborations and exchanges encourage innovation and change.*
 - *Creating regional communities as cultural centres – who is leading the change and how?*
- **Sustaining participation in the arts**
 - *Developing infrastructure that supports and sustains the arts in regional and remote communities.*
 - *Ensuring that resources and infrastructure grow creative capacity across communities.*
 - *Supporting experiences for young people in the arts that create new possibilities.*
 - *Communicating to others about the arts.*
 - *Helping policymakers make better decisions for regional towns.*
- **Creativity, innovation and change**
 - *Emerging art forms and arts practice, creating and inspiring new work and new ways of working.*
 - *The arts as a vehicle for addressing social inequality and disadvantage and creating community vitality.*
 - *How arts and culture affect neighbourhood conditions and community dynamics.*
 - *How participating in the arts can be fun and create change.*

Types of Presentation

We invite you to present your ideas, practice, event or research in creative ways that are socially inclusive, accessible, fun and even challenging in the method of delivery.

Presentations could include:

- debates or panel discussions
- skills and development workshops
- networking events
- performances
- exhibition/ installations (with artist talks/workshops)
- staged events (with question and answer time)
- interactive acts of expression that draw upon the conference participants
- collaborative events.



Proposals

Proposals should include: a two page brief outlining your idea, a budget and a one page curriculum vitae or biography of participants. You may submit photographs or DVDs to support your submission. Submissions will close on the 31st January 2008.

Proposals are being sought from artists and those who work in the arts, including volunteers, with ideas for presentations, exhibitions, displays or performances. While traditional presentation formats will certainly be considered, we are particularly interested in ideas that are receptive to audience participation or involve new ways of sharing ideas and information. Those considering submitting an expression of interest are invited to be as bold and imaginative as they like with their proposal.

For further information on the expression of interest or general enquiries please visit the [art at the heart website](http://www.artattheheart.com.au) or contact Kieren Sanderson, Conference Co-ordinator on:

Phone: (08) 8951 1151

Email: kieren.sanderson@nt.gov.au

Web: www.artattheheart.com.au

PO Box 3521, Alice Springs NT 0871

Proposals will be assessed by the Conference Management Committee of the 2008 Art at the Heart Regional Arts Australia National Conference.



The 2008 Regional Arts Australia National Conference is proudly supported by:



The Regional Arts Fund is an Australian Government initiative supporting the arts in regional, remote and very remote/isolated Australia.



The Northern Territory Government.



The Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

