

# 8

## The Case Studies

### The Case Studies in Prospect

One of the key aspects of planning and implementing the survey and site visits was the identification of relevant community projects and initiatives. This would serve two main purposes: (i) to inform and illustrate key issues arising from the research; and (ii) to provide a data bank from which three projects could be selected for further and more in-depth case study analysis. The activities identified through the environmental scan fell into four broad categories: (i) activities involving the direct participation of the community in planning and conducting projects and events; (ii) activities in which community members participate indirectly in events planned and conducted by others; (iii) activities planned and supported by community-based organisations and operated primarily by the community for the community; and (iv) activities conducted by external organisations bringing new services to the community. Table 30 synthesises these to provide a framework to guide the selection of projects for detailed case study analysis.

Table 30. Types of Projects and Initiatives Identified during the Survey and Site Visits.

Category of community activity	Examples	Community outcomes			Other outcomes
		Social	Cultural	Economic	
1. Direct community participation — activities planned, controlled and influenced by the community.	Arts-based enterprises and businesses. Local festivals. Cultural tourism initiatives. Art exhibitions. Theatre productions. Cultural planning and development.	Builds community networks and improves personal ties. Improves community cohesiveness. Develops community leadership skills. Builds social capital. Encourages community collaboration. Builds community identity and pride.	New cultural products. Increases cultural capital. Improved community image (internal and external). Enhances community skills in artistic decision making and creative problem solving.	Improves human capital — new skills and abilities. Creates new revenue streams/wages for local people. Increases revenue from tourism. Develops supporting industries and enterprises.	Increases opportunities for self-expression and personal creativity. Engages marginalised people including migrants, youth, etc. Increases sense of individual worth and self-esteem. Develops new business skills.
2. Community as audience — external events or programs brought to the community either by external agencies or the community itself.	Touring exhibitions and performance troupes. Festivals (where community is participating in a regional or state-wide initiative).	Creates opportunities for social interaction. Increases opportunities for shared enjoyment. Improves exposure to the arts. Relieves stress. Provides new experiences and expands personal horizons.	Provides access to new cultural experiences.	Attracts visitors and expendable income from neighbouring towns and regions.	Increases the propensity of people to become involved in the arts. Increases access to the arts by people who have limited access.

Category of community activity	Examples	Community outcomes			Other outcomes
		Social	Cultural	Economic	
3. Community support organisations — community-based organisations operated primarily by the community for the community.	Arts service and promotion organisations. Retail outlets for local artistic products. Local art schools or collectives.	Develops community leadership skills. Stimulates community networks. Encourages collaboration.	Increases opportunity for involvement in the arts. Increases appreciation for local heritage and history. Improves community image (internal and external).	Increases revenue from sale of local artistic product.	Increases opportunities for self-expression and enjoyment. Improves individuals' sense of belonging to a community.
4. External art organisations — external organisations providing services to the community.	Art schools (programs and weekend workshops etc.). Regional and state-wide coordinating bodies/funding agencies. Service providers. Peak bodies for the arts.	Increases access to opportunities and exposure to the arts. Develops expertise and resources not available to the community.	Provides access to new cultural insights.	Provides access to funds that may be used to generate new income streams for the community.	

Source: Author's research.

Of the four categories of activity identified in Table 30, it is argued that only two will illuminate issues being addressed in this book. Given that category one (direct community participation) projects and initiatives demonstrate a breadth of community outcomes across social, cultural and economic domains, it certainly warrants further investigation. However, category two (community as audience) provides little new information about the arts in community development and it is unlikely that projects from this category would yield useful insights. Both categories three (community support organisations) and four (external art organisations) focus on supporting the arts in community development. However, the analysis in Table 30 shows that the range of outcomes from category four is much more limited than that for category three. Hence the case studies are drawn from categories one (direct community participation) and three (community support organisations).

## Framework and Reporting Structure for Case Studies

The three projects identified for detailed case study analysis are:

1. Cultural planning in a pre-innovation context — an examination of a program to stimulate arts-based community development through the development of a community cultural plan and strategy
2. Networking cultural support — an examination of the role of a state-wide support organisation with the objective of supporting arts-based community development in regional, rural and remote/rural communities
3. A cottage enterprise comes of age — an examination of the growth of a local arts-based enterprise in a remote/rural community.

All three case studies represent separate and unique approaches to arts-based community development that share the common objectives of supporting community capacity building and growth. The case study framework and reporting structure builds on these common objectives and identifies nine areas of interest to guide the case study investigations. These nine areas are identified in Table 31, which also provides questions to guide the case study investigations across the nine areas of interest.

Table 31. Case Study Framework and Reporting Structure.

Area of interest	Focus questions
Stimulus for the project/initiative	How did the project begin? Why did the project begin? Who supported the project? Who funded the project? What community needs was the project addressing? How was the community involved in the project?
Ideological platforms of the project/initiative	On what, if any, guiding principles was the project based? How did contemporary ideological positions impact on the design of the project?
Major milestones and achievements	What are the major achievements of the project? What milestones did the project set? To what extent were these achieved?
Partnerships and networks	Who supported the project? What networks were established? What existing networks were used to support the project? What, if any, partnerships were formed? Formal or informal? How did project partnerships work? What synergies were created? What were the benefits of partnerships and networks?
Innovation and creativity	How did the project contribute to the application of creativity and innovation in communities?
Leadership	Who/what provided leadership? How was leadership exercised?
Management and evaluation	How was the project/initiative managed? How effective was the management of the project? How was the project/initiative evaluated? What were the results?
Project/initiative outcomes	What were the major outcomes of the project? Short-term outcomes? Long-term outcomes? How did the community benefit from the project?
Conclusions and implications	What are the implications of the project for the future? What can be learned from the project?

Source: Author's research.

The nine areas identified in Table 31 also provide a reporting framework for the case studies. Each of the case study reports presented in this chapter addresses the nine identified areas of interest, albeit in a structure appropriate to the individual case. The reporting structure for quotes from case study informants differs from the approach used in Chapter 7 in that names are not used to identify informants, who requested anonymity.

## Case Study One: Cultural Planning in a Pre-Innovation Context

### Cultural Planning: A Stimulus for Change

Blackall is a small remote/rural community located in western Queensland, approximately 960 kilometres from the state capital. It has a population of approximately 1,200 but, like many other rural/remote towns, its population has been in steady decline for the last two decades. Also like many other rural/remote communities, Blackall is confronted by unprecedented challenges as its traditional economies contract, its young people move to the cities, and cheaper imports challenge local production. These factors inevitably impact on the future viability and survival of the town itself. To address problems arising from these changes, the Blackall Shire Council sought to stimulate the creative energies of the town through the development and implementation of a cultural plan.

The genesis of the plan was the Blackall Tourism and Economic Vitalisation Strategy, which identified the arts and arts-based products as one of the platforms on which the economic potential of the region could be achieved. The strategy recognised that the shire had a wealth of arts workers, arts facilities, and arts-based products, events and festivals but also recognised that these resources were seldom harnessed in a coordinated or strategic way that could lead to measurable outcomes for the community as a whole (Blackall Shire Council, 2003, p. 4). Following the development of the vitalisation strategy, the council initiated a process to develop a new cultural plan to provide a strategic approach to building and coordinating arts and cultural activities in Blackall. The vision for the cultural plan was that it would stimulate a 'dynamic diverse direction to invigorate Blackall — its people, place and purpose' (Blackall Shire Council, 2005, p. 5). From its inception, the key focus of the plan was to achieve this vision. The plan outlined strategies to improve networking opportunities between government, arts organisations, cultural associations, local businesses and individuals. It was proposed that such networking would increase cross-fertilisation between the arts and non-arts

sectors of the community. The key direction and stimulus for the cultural planning process was summarised by a Blackall Shire Council Economic Development Officer:

Right from the beginning we were focused on what we already have, which we thought was a lot in the way of arts and crafts. But we also had a lot of other activities and things that could be enhanced through the arts. We saw the cultural plan as making the connections between things. We also thought that by making the connections, say between the arts and tourism, we could connect with the economic outcomes for the community and stimulate arts-based products (Interview 1 with Informant 1, Site Visit 1, 2004).

A Cultural Planning Working Group formed to guide the development of the plan reflected this key aim and included council officers, artists and arts workers, business owners and operators, and tourism promoters.

The cultural planning process commenced with a comprehensive mapping exercise to identify and document existing cultural facilities, associations, events and other key contributors to the cultural life of Blackall. The decision to map existing contributors to Blackall cultural life was based on the strongly held belief by the council and members of the working group that the community had unique cultural facilities and resources that would provide a strong base for further development:

We are very proud of Blackall — we have more arts-based events and other things than just about any other community in the west. We've been doing it for years. We really wanted to build on our achievements but also make connections between the groups that haven't always worked well together. More than that, we also wanted to make new connections particularly with groups that didn't really see how the arts might help the community grow (Interview 1 with Informant 2, Site Visit 1, 2004).

The key results of the initial mapping exercise are summarised in Figure 4, which scopes local facilities, networks, associations, festivals and events in order to illustrate the breadth and depth of local arts-based initiatives in the local community.

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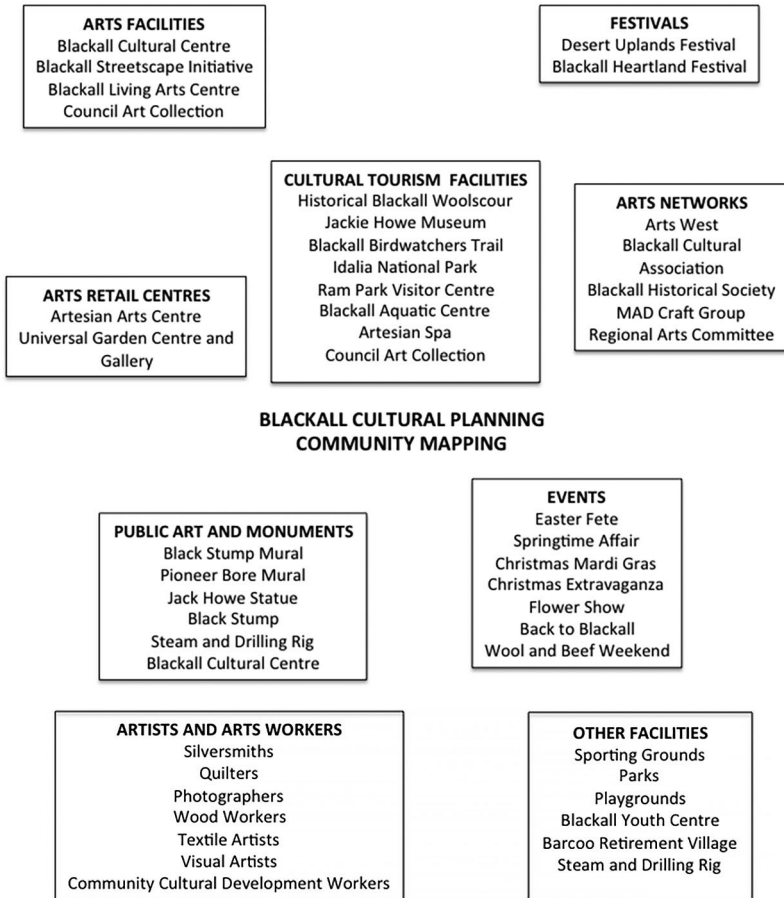


Figure 4. Overview of Blackall Cultural Mapping.

Source: Interviews with Blackall Shire Council Economic Development Officer.

Figure 4 represents the outcomes of an extensive mapping exercise demonstrating the scope and nature of community involvement in Blackall.

## Community Development Ideologies: Tensions and Resolution

The Blackall Cultural Plan identified community cultural development (CCD) as a key guiding ideology (Blackall Shire Council, 2005b). The working group also identified CCD as a concept to ensure that the cultural planning process would enhance the lives of Blackall residents,



build community spirit and pride, and foster a strong sense of local identity and belonging. However, some strain could be identified between CCD as an ideology and the key directions identified for the cultural plan. These are well reflected in the comments of one of the working group members:

I guess we all agreed with the overall concept of CCD but we also thought that Blackall was a long way down the track with community spirit. We felt that we had a great sense of community involvement and we wanted to build on this not go back to the beginning. Culture and the arts were already part and parcel of our town — we wanted to strengthen this and we also wanted to move the arts from the periphery to the centre of planning (Interview 1 with Informant 3, Site Visit 2, 2005).

Perhaps the most critical tensions arose from the fact that the Blackall Shire Council, on behalf of the working group, contracted consultants to work with the working group and the community to develop and implement the plan. The consultants were CCD specialists and stressed the social objectives of CCD, especially social inclusion and equity. As a consequence, a major concern arose that some of the core principles of CCD given prominence by the consultants conflicted with a key identified aim of the cultural plan, which was to ‘move towards the development of arts-based industries for economic outcomes’ (Blackall Shire Council, 2005b, p. 6). The working group members sought to address this tension by balancing the social outcomes of CCD with the economic aims of the plan by adopting a very pragmatic definition of CCD:

Community Cultural Development (CCD) occurs when communities come together and engage in cultural activities that enhance people’s lives, socially and economically. Cultural development is about the community working together towards common interests (Blackall Shire Council, 2005b, p. 6).

## Synergies, Partnerships and Connections

The Blackall Community Cultural Plan recognises the movement of the community from a traditional rural economy to one that would ‘rely on diversity, tourism and cultural resources’ (Blackall Shire Council, 2005b, p. 8). It identifies that arts and culture will become pivotal in creating sustainable development through value adding to existing

industries such as retail, tourism, sport and recreation. The plan states that there is a need to 'explore new creative partnerships that link the arts with business and tourism' (Blackall Shire Council, 2005b, p. 8). In this context, the core platform of the plan was to stimulate opportunities for these partnerships to establish and flourish.

One practical objective of the cultural plan aimed at stimulating partnerships was 'to encourage local sporting groups to use arts and arts workers in their operational activities' (Blackall Shire Council, 2005b, p. 30). A local activity to support the achievement of this objective included promoting local artists through the display and installation of local artworks at sporting venues and clubhouses. In the years following the release of the cultural plan, two sporting organisations displayed local artworks, albeit only at the behest of those members of the Cultural Planning Working Group who were concurrently members of the sporting organisations. This is not indicative of a growing partnership between artists and sporting clubs as a result of the initiative. Far from developing working relationships, the artists whose works have been displayed in sporting clubs had no ongoing allegiance with the clubs:

I know two of my works are there but I'm not a member and have never been inside the club. I've certainly never worked with them nor have any type of partnership with them. I'm just hoping that someone might notice and go to Artesian Arts to buy something of mine. From my perspective, it's just a marketing ploy, not a partnership (Interview 1 with Informant 6, Site Visit 3, 2006).

A related initiative was to encourage sporting groups to engage local artists to design and produce trophies. As a result of a series of metalworking and silversmithing workshops held in Blackall over the previous decade, several community artists work in metal, so the initiative was grounded in real possibilities. However, the time and costs associated with using local artists proved to be significant barriers for the clubs who could source trophies much more cheaply from external commercial providers.

A further objective of the cultural plan was to 'create a cultural network to share knowledge, innovation and expertise' (Blackall Shire Council, 2005b, p. 30). This cultural network would be designed to reflect the key strategic direction of the plan, which was to encourage and broker strategic alliances and partnerships. At the time of the

last data collection visit to Blackall, the cultural network had been meeting for just over two years with active representation from the shire council, local businesses, arts retail organisations, community organisations, sporting clubs and community artists. While such representation is broad, all members of the network have been long-term supporters of the arts in Blackall with a belief that the arts offer great potential in growing the community. At that stage, however, the network had not been successful in extending its influence across businesses and organisations disengaged from the role of the arts in community growth:

Despite our good intentions and efforts, we are still a closed shop. We support each other but we can't crack the broader business community. Most of them just don't see any value in the arts, well at least local arts. That's probably a bit unfair, they support our major events, especially our festivals, but they can't see a role for the arts in supporting their business in more strategic ways through partnerships or collaborations on particular things — maybe we just can't force it (Interview 3 with Informant 1, Site Visit 3, 2006).

This insightful comment suggests that successful partnerships probably need to evolve from a legitimate and clearly defined community or business needs that cannot be mandated or manufactured through goodwill alone. Just less than two years into the implementation of the plan, members of the working group have begun to realise that it needs revision to reflect their new understanding that they could not force the development of community and business partnerships:

We realised that we couldn't make partnerships work unless there was some purpose to them. We could promote the potential benefits but, unless there was a clear reason, nobody was interested (Interview 3 with Informant 3, Site Visit 3, 2006).

It may be that the role of community cultural plans is limited to promoting the potential of partnerships and seeking opportunities to stimulate partnerships once a business opportunity has been identified. Aspects of the plan that aimed at ensuring open communication and information exchange go some way to creating an environment in which opportunities, if they arise, may be acted on if the plan is successful in pre-establishing, clarifying and promoting potential areas of mutual interest.

Another aspect of the cultural plan was the identification, mapping and promotion of current community capabilities on which local business could draw should the need arise. These internal promotional activities were aimed at breaking down barriers, real and perceived, between sectors of the community in order to link artists and arts workers with business and enterprises. The message of the contribution of the arts to community was well understood by local artists and arts workers and the shire council, but after two years of implementation appeared still not to be well understood by the community. The following comment by a local businessman points to an element of antipathy to the role of the arts in community building:

Mate ... it's all well and good but it's a hobby ... something that the Mrs does in her spare time. It's never going to bring in any money for me or for the town ... maybe some spare change but that's it (Interview 1 with Informant 6, Site Visit 3, 2006).

While the Blackall Community Cultural Plan identified the key importance of partnerships within the community, the success of collaborative partnerships is likely to be some time away. Its long-term success would seem to be very dependent on the ability of the working group to work with the community in order to develop a better understanding and appreciation of the potential of the arts to improve the economic and social life of Blackall. In turn, this depends on the identification of tangible and real outcomes and models that clearly demonstrate such potential to community members.

## Creativity and Innovation

Creativity is inherent in the Blackall Community Cultural Plan in that it is replete with new ideas and clever strategies. The objectives of the plan are far reaching and seek new approaches to community development based on new connections and the potential of new business opportunities. Its emphasis on the integration of the arts across all sectors of the community is challenging and far reaching in its vision and commitment. However, it is clearly in a pre-innovation phase. Innovation involves much more than simply generating new ideas; it is also about doing something with them. In Blackall, the ideas have not yet been able to be implemented so that innovative outcomes for the community currently remain a desire rather than a reality.

Indeed, the limited successes associated with the implementation of the cultural plan to date have been characterised by a lack of innovation, especially given the plan's dependence on existing programs and infrastructure as well as people already committed to the arts and community cultural development. In short, the Blackall community has been too narrow and cautious in its implementation of the plan, dealing exclusively in the known, rather than pushing the boundaries to broker and encourage diversity towards innovation.

There is also a possibility that the cultural plan has inhibited innovation in the community through too narrow a targeting of specific people and activities. It may not be enough simply to encourage the adoption of new approaches and new partnerships unless such a strategy connects broadly with all sectors of the community. Despite its laudable intentions, it may support too narrow and predictable an approach to the arts based mainly on the experiences and knowledge of the working group, the members of which have already identified as people committed to the arts. Moreover, they may be people wedded, either consciously or subconsciously, to the status quo:

Perhaps we are just the same old group who has controlled things for many, many years. We certainly haven't gone out of our way to bring in new people with new ideas. We tend to focus on things that we know are valued by the community — we don't challenge the community. We only do the safe things (Interview 3 with Informant 3, Site Visit 3, 2006).

## Major Milestones and Achievements

A major milestone in the planning stage of the development of the cultural plan was achieved when the council initiated and hosted a comprehensive training program focusing on cultural planning and community consultation. The training program was designed and delivered by an external consultant specialising in community cultural development. The training incorporated a five-day, face-to-face program followed by a six-month action learning phase in which participants conducted community consultations and undertook preliminary analyses of the outcomes of the consultations under the mentorship of the expert contractor. Participants in the training program reported that this program increased their skills and knowledge of CCD, cultural planning, and community consultations (training evaluation

forms accessed during Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2004).<sup>1</sup> Perhaps more importantly, the action learning phase of the program allowed the participants to conduct a comprehensive consultation process involving surveys, interviews, focus groups and community meetings under the stewardship of experts. This activity provided the data on which the cultural plan was developed and also facilitated its initial analysis.

Another major milestone was the public release of the cultural plan. Community input into the plan had been based on the processes and outcomes of the community consultation and cultural planning training program and input from community members is quantified in Table 32.

Table 32. Community Consultation Responses: Cultural Planning.

Consultation	Distribution	Responses	
		No.	%
Community Survey	70	38	54
Community Meetings	1,000	161	16
Totals	1,070*	199	18

\* Total population of Blackall at time of the consultation process was 1,659.

Source: Author's research.

The cultural plan was publicly released in 2005 with a community event to celebrate the artistic achievements of Blackall. The event was small and exclusive, attended by only 26 people (including 10 from the Cultural Planning Working Group and seven council employees); the event was invitation only and only 30 people were invited. It was an event characterised by a lack of fanfare, which represented a lost opportunity to engage the wider community in the implicit and explicit challenges ahead.

A third major milestone was the first annual evaluation of the cultural plan. While many aspects of evaluation are addressed later in this chapter, it is important to acknowledge that the first annual evaluation was a watershed event in the development of the cultural plan.

<sup>1</sup> Eighty per cent of workshop participants indicated that their knowledge of CCD had 'improved' or 'significantly improved'. Ninety per cent of workshop participants indicated that their skills in planning and consultation had 'improved' or 'significantly improved'.

It exposed a major fault, namely the absence of performance indicators on which to judge the success or otherwise of the implementation of the plan. The identification of this fault forced the working group to reconsider its approaches to the implementation of the plan:

We came to the first evaluation meeting with a fair sense of optimism and achievement. We all had stories about what had happened in the last year — our festival was a great success; our inaugural Back to Blackall weekend had attracted huge numbers of visitors; Artesian Arts was achieving well ... It was all good until we looked again at the plan and realised that these great events were only a small part of what we had sought to achieve. We had no idea how we were going in the other areas or how we would tell when we were successful (Interview 3 with Informant 1, Site Visit 3, 2006).

As a consequence, the working group decided to develop performance measures for all the strategies identified in the cultural plan. However, the group seriously underestimated the difficulty of the task and, a year after the first evaluation, a full set of performance indicators had not yet been finalised. However, the experience was overall a positive one in that the working group developed a greater understanding of the complexity of the task and the necessity of developing approaches and measures to allow the whole community to assess and understand progress and achievements. In effect, the process led the working group to a continuous improvement model and approach to the implementation of the cultural plan.

## Leadership

Leadership associated with the development and implementation of the Blackall Community Cultural Plan resides within the working group. Collectively, the group has been and continues to be the driving force for the implementation and continuous improvement of the cultural plan, with both positive and negative implications. On the positive side, the group has worked effectively and efficiently to identify and address community needs through the development of the first cultural plan for Blackall, thereby putting the arts and culture firmly on the local government policy agenda. Through extensive training the group has developed key skills in community consultation and cultural planning and has become a key source of expertise in the community. Representation on the working group is broad and encompasses many sections of the community,

including council officials and employees, business operators and owners, tourism promoters, arts retail organisations, community organisations, artists, and youth. On the negative side, working group representation is almost exclusively based on people who are cognisant of the potential of the arts and are thus active promoters of the arts. It is a group with insular, closed networks, a group 'preaching to the converted' (Interview 2 with Informant 4, Site Visit 2, 2005). Opportunities to transfer skills and experiences from the working group to new people from the community have been limited by the group's inability to extend its reach across all community sectors. In addition, the group lacks a single spokesperson and advocate. While leadership is a complex phenomenon, key components of leadership include authority and the power and influence to forge or refashion allegiances and networks. What is lacking in Blackall is recognisable leadership with the authority and community influence to form new alliances with people and organisations who, as yet, have little or no appreciation of the potential role of the arts in the social and economic future of Blackall. There is a voice but no face to the leadership.

## Management and Continuous Improvement

Management of the cultural plan is the responsibility of the Cultural Plan Working Group reporting to the shire council through the economic development officer who works closely and collaboratively with the community support and development officer of the council. Annual evaluation of the plan's implementation is a key part of the management responsibilities. As acknowledged already, evaluation has been made more difficult because the plan did not specify performance criteria or measurable outcomes against which progress can be benchmarked. The process for annual evaluation is, at best, ad hoc and based on activities known to working group members reflecting again the closed and insular nature of the group:

I know it's not the best approach but we are well known in the community and have our fingers in many pies so we are in a good position to know how we're going (Interview 2 with Informant 3, Site Visit 2, 2005).



At worst, the evaluation process is based on the perceptions of the planners and is not subject to more objective, comprehensive and probing evaluation processes. The economic development officer articulated this problem:

[W]e are a group of like-minded people with an agenda; we are evaluating programs that we have a vested interest in or programs that we know are running successfully. We are not evaluating the broad objectives. We know that Artesian Arts is running profitably so we see that as an achievement but we don't know how connections with the broader business community are developing (Interview 3 with Informant 1, Site Visit 2, 2005).

An objective evaluation program with measurable and visible outcomes would assist the community to understand objectives, recognise results and celebrate outcomes. Members of the planning group appear to have subsequently focused their discussions on the development of potential success indicators and performance measures. Potential indicators developed by the planning group are presented in Table 33.

Table 33. Potential Indicators to Guide Evaluation of the Cultural Plan.

Category	Possible indicators
Infrastructure	Number and type of uses of dedicated arts facilities. The activities arising from local arts organisations. The number of other community facilities used for arts activities. The amount of council expenditure on the arts.
Participation	The number of attendees at performances, events, exhibitions and workshops, etc. The number of commissions and public artworks from council. Membership of voluntary and community arts groups.
Creative activity	Number of commissions to community artists. Number of new employment opportunities for artists.

Source: Author's research.

It should first be noted that the indicators presented in Table 33 fail to address the core objectives of the cultural plan — for example, the stated key objective is to stimulate economic and social opportunities through the arts. The indicators also fail to provide realistic measurements of outcomes specified in the plan; more precision around the indicators still needs to be developed. Yet, while the performance indicators outlined in Table 33 remain immature and

require further development, at least they represent a positive step by the working group to address problems and challenges arising from the implementation of the cultural plan. This early work on indicators provides a good foundation for future annual evaluations of the plan.

A further problem with this most recent approach to evaluation is that its impact reaches only the Cultural Planning Working Group and council, neither of which involves or engages the wider community. It was suggested by a member of the working group that the skills in community consultation acquired in the initial training program could be applied to evaluation and continuous improvement:

We learnt a lot about consulting with the community to identify their concerns. If we used these skills to evaluate the plan we could re-engage the community and get meaningful feedback. It would be simple — this is what you said you want and this is what has been done. How are we going? We could lead the process; we have the tools and experiences — surveys, interviews and focus groups (Interview 3 with Informant 3, Site Visit 3, 2006).

A continuous evaluation program based on action research and involving the whole spectrum of the community would serve many purposes for Blackall. Firstly, it would re-establish and reinforce community expectations of the cultural planning process. Secondly, it would re-engage the community in processes and allow them to celebrate success and learn from one another's experiences. Thirdly, it would promote outcomes and provide a significant marketing advantage for the council. It remains to be seen if changes to the evaluation will result in a more inclusive implementation of the plan.

## Outcomes

The most significant outcome of this case study is the design and development of the cultural plan, with its significant impacts, including the placement of the arts firmly on the local government policy agenda as well as the identification and documentation of local arts-based infrastructure, arts facilities and arts organisations. The resulting community recognition of its existing achievements through the arts (including successful festivals, active arts-based organisations, arts venues and facilities) has also been a significant outcome for the community, allowing the community to focus on and celebrate past

efforts previously largely unheralded by the council and community. Recognising achievements also provided a sound platform on which to build new directions for the cultural plan.

The challenge for the cultural planners of Blackall was to respect the achievements of the past, identify and build on the existing local creative capital, and stimulate innovative approaches for the future through the development of new networks and connections. As the case study data collection was able only to focus on the development and very early implementation of the plan, it is possible to comment only on evolving outcomes. The plan has contributed to a positive community image of Blackall by its inhabitants and neighbouring towns and regions:

Just by mapping and documenting everything that is happening in Blackall, people have said ... yeah that's been good, we're really doing a fair bit (Interview 3 with Informant 2, Site Visit 3, 2006).

The cultural mapping undertaken to inform the plan has showcased the breadth and depth of the role of the arts in the Blackall community and strengthened the commitment to the arts by the council and the community. The plan also demonstrated the high levels of community engagement and support for the arts in the Blackall community, as evidenced by the high level of involvement of the community in festivals and major arts events, including significant sponsorship of these events by local businesses. Festivals and major events are an important part of Blackall social and business calendars and attract significant numbers of participants and visitors.

Strategies documented in the plan have contributed to a further deepening of community engagement by encouraging local groups to increase involvement in festivals and events with particular emphasis on activities to capitalise on under-utilised community resources identified through community consultation processes. Other simple strategies to encourage community engagement through the plan include (i) the publication of events and activities on the council website, (ii) the inclusion of community events and activities on all formal council presentations to the community and external organisations, (iii) promotion of events through school programs and newsletters, and (iv) the creation and publication of arts-based professional development and training programs and workshops.

Blackall has for many years demonstrated a strong respect for its history and heritage illustrated through a very active historic society and successful preservation programs, including the restoration of the Blackall Woolscour. The cultural plan recognised these successes and sought to build on past achievements, for example, by working with the historic society to develop a series of self-guided walks for visitors. Such strategies have since proven to be very successful as Blackall boasts many historical features within easy walking distance of one another, including public memorials, murals and public art. There are also plans underway to introduce a Blackall Heritage Week incorporating re-enactments and other public events.

Another key outcome of the cultural plan focuses on local lifestyle. A positive outcome of the plan to date has been the enhancement of the Blackall streetscape and surrounding parks through the creation of dog-walking areas and cycling tracks. An artists' walk has also been developed to allow interested visitors to visit key monuments, public art installations, art retail centres and galleries.

The area of the cultural plan that has proven to be the most challenging is the focus on business and industry. In three years little has been achieved in this focus area, even though it is a primary objective of the plan. A key strategy was to value-add to industry and business through arts products, production and interpretation:

Even though everyone understands that festivals bring tourists and additional revenue to town, business people don't see any further value. They see that the art shop sells stuff but they can't think beyond that. They're just not interested in how the arts might generate new businesses and new business opportunities (Interview 3 with Informant 1, Site Visit 3, 2006).

A key success was the inclusion in the 2006/07 council budget of a creative industry development fund, but initiatives supported through the fund have been less than successful. One initiative included the stimulation of partnerships between business and community artists to encourage them to produce a collaborative corporate gift line for council. While individual artists worked to develop a gift line, they failed to involve local businesses in the venture and the initiative consequently failed to achieve its main aim of stimulating new community partnerships.

Local businesses still see the arts as something that has little to do with their success and have not developed an appreciation of potential benefits that might arise from more active involvement with artists and arts workers (Interview 3 with Informant 1, Site Visit 3, 2006).

While the cultural plan provides some important outcomes for the community of Blackall, they remain at a pre-innovation level. They rely on conventional practices and traditional ways of viewing the arts in community development. In short, the design and implementation of the Blackall Community Cultural Plan represents simply more of the same.

## Conclusions and Implications

The development of the arts as a central component of community development and growth is a complex and challenging endeavour. At its core is recognition that the arts may add significant value to existing community products and services as well as a belief that local arts and culture is a form of capital that can yield significant returns. The Blackall Community Cultural Plan recognises this as one potential of the arts without significantly addressing it in the form of realistic strategies and support initiatives. This is a key aspect incorporated into the plan's vision, mission and key result areas, including a commitment to support artists and businesses in 'building alliances and partnerships with industries and contribute to the local economy' (Blackall Shire Council, 2005b, p. 16). However, despite the promise of this objective, it is neither fully articulated nor supported by realistic strategies or initiatives. The plan fails to capitalise on the theme of business/arts alliances and instead resorts to projects and initiatives that simply maintain the status quo, and places major emphasis on building current initiatives and programs rather than developing strategic new approaches and initiatives. In this way, the opportunity for the cultural plan to provide a catalyst for the development of new enterprises, partnerships or collaborations between artists and businesses has been missed.

In the early implementation of the cultural plan, the arts continue to have a relatively low status within the broader community, especially when compared to sport as Table 34 indicates by drawing on the outcomes of a cultural audit conducted by the Blackall Shire Council.<sup>2</sup>

Table 34. Number of Arts Organisations vis-à-vis Sporting Organisations.

Arts and craft organisations (No. = 3)	Sporting organisations (No. = 19)	
Blackall Cultural Association. Artesian Arts. MAD Craft Group.	All Breeders Performance Horse Club. Barcoo Amateur Race Club. Barcoo Country Cricket Club. Barcoo River Associations. Blackall Camel Races Committee. Blackall Amateur Swimming Association. Blackall Bowling Club. Blackall Cricket Association. Blackall Golf Club.	Blackall Gun Club. Blackall Junior Rugby League. Blackall Netball Association. Blackall Pistol Club. Blackall Polocrosse Club. Blackall Pony Club. Blackall Rugby League. Blackall Tennis Club. Cone Break Pony Club. Roo Shooters.

Source: Author's research.

The Blackall Community Cultural Plan provides strategic direction for the community and a framework for everyday action. Coordinated action requires commitment and funds — the real test is still being applied in the Blackall community.

## Case Study Two: Networking Cultural Support

This case study differs from the localised Blackall case study in that it focuses on an organisation providing support to communities across the state of Queensland.

<sup>2</sup> The unpublished cultural audit material was accessed during Interview 2 with Informant 1, Site Visit 2, 2005.

## The Stimulus for a Support Network

In 1981 a small group of artists and community arts workers interested in supporting community arts across Queensland met in Brisbane and formed an organisation then known as the Community Arts Network of Queensland. Their motivation stemmed from concern that communities, especially smaller rural/remote communities, needed support in developing community initiatives and guidance in accessing funds to support their programs.

During its early years, the network's only form of income was from membership fees, and it was managed and supported on a totally voluntary basis. Its initial services, which focused on the provision of information about projects and funding opportunities, were well received by arts workers and the membership base of the network grew quickly across Queensland so that, by 1984, the network was in a position to employ staff to support its operations. At that time, the Community Arts Board of the Australia Council began to provide funds to support the production of a state-wide community arts newsletter. In 1985 the network attracted small grants from both the Australia Council for the Arts and the Queensland Government (QCAN, 1985).

The network quickly expanded its services to include the provision of advice and information to community groups and arts workers not only about projects and funding but also about professional development and networking opportunities, best practice examples and guidelines, problem solving and community networking. At this time, the network also became an active lobby group for community arts by targeting national, state and local governments (Interview with past president of QCAN, 2005).

From 1985 to 1996, the network's rapid growth coincided with a growing recognition by all stakeholders of the importance of the role of local government in promoting the arts in communities:

It was in the late '80s that everyone started to focus on working with local government. They didn't have money but they became interested in the arts and how they work to help rural communities especially (Interview with past president of QCAN, 2005).

However, the first major stimulus for change occurred in 1987 when the Community Arts Board of the Australia Council was replaced by the Community Cultural Development Unit. This represented much more than a simple name change; it heralded new directions and a new focus for the network.

The focus of the network moved from its primary objective of making art accessible to communities to a new concept that suggested the arts could be used to address key issues impacting on communities, including social issues and community economic development. A second major stimulus occurred in 1992 when the Australia Council entered into a partnership with the Australian Local Government Association to promote the importance of the arts and cultural development within integrated local area planning strategies (Interview with past coordinator of the network, 2005). The effect on artists, community arts workers and the network itself was significant, as cultural development became serious business for local governments. It was during this stage of development that the network adopted a new name, Queensland Community Arts Network (QCAN).

## Partnerships and Networks

QCAN's 2007–2010 Strategic Plan identified the increase of networking opportunities in rural/remote areas as a high priority (QCAN, 1985b). It also specified the need to develop more and stronger partnerships with other agencies providing complementary services to rural/remote communities. This direction in the strategic plan represented a consolidation and reinforcement of community networking, building on strengths that have always been a core component of QCAN's operations. QCAN's effectiveness in supporting community partnerships and networks is well illustrated through an examination of a project that was designed and managed by the organisation with the stated purpose of facilitating community networks and partnerships. The project was called CultureLink.

CultureLink was established to take advantage of evolving technologies and build on their potential to link geographically diverse groups of people with common goals around community growth and development (Notes from interview with CultureLink project officer, 2006). The project used web-conferencing technologies to create a multi-community forum, thus facilitating opportunities to bring together



community arts workers, local government development officers, community volunteers and others in a virtual environment in which they could share information and undertake collaborative planning:

This is the first time we have been able to build networks across communities that are geographically diverse. We can bring people together to share projects and experiences from Burketown to Birdsville (Notes from interview with CultureLink project officer, 2006).

The web-conferencing environment facilitates effective collaboration as it is flexible and responsive to users' needs (meetings can be arranged easily and quickly to address emerging issues) and provides clear, open, high-quality voice communication, videoconferencing, and data-sharing facilities. The project plan developed by QCAN staff captures the scope of the project. In the plan, the QCAN Project Officer describes the project as an approach that 'provides new opportunities for collaboration and networking by regional, rural and remote communities and promotes the ability of these communities to exercise control over their social, cultural and economic futures' (Notes from interview with CultureLink project officer, 2006). The other interesting application of the CultureLink project was the facility to link communities with key people from across the nation. During its first year of operation, five special sessions were held linking community members to experts in community development, specialists in cultural mapping, researchers in community regeneration, and people from state and national funding bodies to advise on application processes.

While maintaining funding for the CultureLink project presents a major challenge, the value of the program has been recognised by participating communities, and the maintenance and expansion of the program, including the financial management of the program, has now become the joint responsibility of participating regional, rural and remote/rural communities. CultureLink has proven its sustainability and by accepting ownership and control over the network, communities can support their individual and collective endeavours in community development:

We set our own agendas and get on with it. We decide what the priorities are and plan our own meetings. Each of us take turns in organising meetings and it all works out really well (Notes from interview with local government community development officer, 2006).

It will be interesting to observe its evolution as communities exercise further control over the network. It is likely that practical, community-based issues may become more central to discussions and planning.

Despite the growth of CultureLink, QCAN has failed to develop networks and partnerships beyond the arts sector. At a time when the corporate sector is increasingly acknowledging its social responsibilities and recognising that environmental and social outcomes are as important as financial outcomes, QCAN has failed to capitalise on opportunities to forge links with community-based corporations and private organisations.

## Milestones and Achievements

Despite its ideological rigidity, QCAN has several significant achievements that are recognised by communities and other stakeholders. As stated in a recent strategic plan, QCAN operated a state-wide community-based service that supported and promoted community cultural development practice (QCAN, 1985b). In this context, it had two distinct but related roles in the identification and use of community assets.

Firstly, it increased community access to information, ideas, advice and expertise, thus contributing to the scope and nature of community assets. Secondly, it supported communities in the identification of their own assets and, through training and professional development, assisted communities to plan for effective application of their assets.

In this context, QCAN's major achievements relate to the provision of training and professional development aimed at improving existing community assets. For example, rural/remote communities need financial assets that are accessed mainly through the monetary resources available to them, usually through government, to implement solutions to community problems. QCAN has provided a range of well-regarded financial management training programs aimed at helping artists to access and report on funds to support arts-based activities in communities:

The courses are great — they are practical and useful and provide tools to help me report on the use of funds — to reconcile expenditure. It's now more important than ever. We all have to be accountable (Interview with community arts worker, 2006).

The training programs also target individual artists seeking to commercialise their art practices:

The programs really helped me learn how to price my art. I now am much more confident when dealing with shops and dealers (Interview with community artists, 2006).

In addition, QCAN's information program includes newsletters, bulletins and web updates, which provide timely information to communities on grants and funding opportunities. It also provides a training program on writing funding applications.

Communities also need physical resources, assets such as community meeting halls, theatres, galleries, parks, and museums. QCAN's role in helping communities improve physical assets is limited but, through its information program, it helps communities' awareness of opportunities offered through government. Through its advisory service, it also provides ideas and options for communities struggling to improve their physical assets. In one instance it helped a community source a community meeting hall by facilitating negotiations with local government (Interview with Chief Executive Officer of QCAN (2003–2007), 2005).

Communities also need to build on their existing human resources — the skills, knowledge and abilities of people who live and work in the community. QCAN's achievements have been twofold: helping communities through its suite of training programs and professional development events aimed at building community skills, knowledge and expertise; and, when appropriate, assisting communities to source external expertise to work with community members to develop new skills and knowledge. External experts usually work as project managers and community mentors on short-term projects:

QCAN has helped us to identify people who will come to the community to work with us. We were interested in working on public art but we have no skills or talents so we got someone to come and work with us (Interview with local government official, remote/rural community, 2006).

Finally, communities also need to identify and build social resources — the networks within communities that shape the quality of life in community. This has been a most challenging role for QCAN, and its achievements in this regard are difficult to measure. Central to its approach to building social resources is its training program.

Each training program brings together members of the community into a social grouping that represents a fledgling network. Where training programs encompass action learning through long-term projects, these networks can be sustained for up to six months or more. While QCAN has not conducted long-term evaluations of the sustainability of these networks, anecdotal evidence indicates that they sometimes evolve into permanent groupings, thus providing a long-term asset for the community (Interview with Chief Executive Officer of QCAN (2003–2007), 2005).

## Management and Continuous Improvement

QCAN has adopted an annual management cycle that produces a business plan to guide the operations of the organisation during the subsequent 12-month period. Every third year, planning activities are extended to provide for the development of the next three-year strategic plan. The development of the business plan, together with the overarching strategic plan, includes a one-day workshop for the management committee (board), the director and all staff. An external facilitator who applies a variety of planning tools usually facilitates the planning day (Notes from interview with Chief Executive Officer of QCAN (2003–2007), 2006). Other important inputs to planning include the views of external stakeholders accessed through structured face-to-face and telephone interviews, an annual internet-based survey of members, analysis of the organisation's financial position, a review of past business plans, an environmental scan of the state and Commonwealth policy environment, and familiarisation with contemporary debates and theory in contemporary art and the creative industries (Notes from interview with administration officer of QCAN, 2006).

Financial management is also critically important to QCAN, as there is an expectation that any organisation funded primarily through public funds will display a high degree of professionalism and accountability. QCAN has demonstrated high-quality approaches to financial management; however, funding uncertainty remains a persistent issue for QCAN, and static or declining government funding in recent years has contributed to ongoing and mounting organisational anxiety. While QCAN has multiple sources of funds, including membership fees, specific project grants and training fees, it is still reliant on core funding from Commonwealth and state governments. While many

community organisations have moved in recent years to diversify their funding sources and reduce their reliance on government, QCAN has not actively sought to expand its funding base either by seeking commercial opportunities or by adding value to its existing product and service base. Nor has it sought sponsorship from private organisations or benefactors despite the fact that none of its programs are financially sustainable without government subsidy (Notes from interview with Chief Executive Officer of QCAN (2003–2007), 2006).

While QCAN's management processes and procedures have been formalised and structured, they have failed to recognise and adequately build upon new opportunities. The organisation's knowledge of its operating environment and the appropriateness of its products and services in a changing context would appear to have been seriously flawed:

They [QCAN] have really missed the boat — they now spend their time checking their books and providing the same old services. Other organisations are moving with the times and providing new approaches and helping communities look at new ways of doing things but QCAN just does the same old things. I think their days are numbered (Interview with past employee of QCAN, 2006).

In such an environment, the appropriateness of performance indicators is seriously compromised. QCAN developed performance indicators relevant to its plans and objectives, but those plans and objectives have proved to be no longer relevant to the needs of its primary clients — regional, rural and remote/rural communities.

## Creativity and Innovation

There have been many significant community outcomes from the support services provided by QCAN to Queensland communities, and QCAN has often adopted innovative ways of delivering support services and training to communities. However, the key issue is whether QCAN has supported communities to embed creativity and innovation in community development practices and processes. To what extent has QCAN prompted and helped community artists to reconsider their roles and to adopt new approaches relevant to the changing conditions in communities?

QCAN has provided some great training programs and has helped us develop community skills. But it's been about maintaining current practices; it's not been about new roles and new approaches (Notes from interview with local government community development officer, 2006).

QCAN's failure to consider the potential of the arts across all areas of community development (social, cultural and economic) has seriously limited its ability to support communities to develop appropriate holistic and integrated approaches to growth and development.

## Community Development Ideologies: Narrowness and Rigidity

The shift in QCAN's policy position from supporting access to community arts to focusing more actively on supporting local government attempts to address community issues was a major watershed for the network. Its interpretation and subsequent approach to the new concept of community cultural development provided the framework for its operations for subsequent decades. QCAN's approach to CCD had at its core a strong move to address equity and it wove this philosophy into its charter for support. As a consequence, its programs began to focus on (i) Indigenous arts and cultural development, (ii) people from non-English speaking backgrounds and their arts and culture, (iii) women in the arts, and (iv) art and disability (Interview with Chief Executive Officer of QCAN (2003–2007), 2005). This interpretation impacted on all QCAN operations and effectively resulted in the adoption of an affirmative action strategy for the arts to redress the disadvantage experienced by people living outside metropolitan areas. Admirable as this strategy might have been, effectively it narrowed and marginalised QCAN's scope of activity at a time when there was a real opportunity to broaden the impact of the arts across all dimensions of local government responsibilities — including social, cultural, economic and environmental (Interview with community artist, 2006). Indeed, it provided the philosophical framework within which QCAN operated from 1992 to 2008 (Interview with Chief Executive Officer of QCAN (2003–2007), 2005).

Over those two decades, QCAN held rigidly to the concepts of CCD and especially its commitment to equity and social inclusion principles:

We believe that art and culture are core needs of all people but that there is also a need to address the barriers which restrict people's access to it. Our programs and services aim to overcome these barriers so that all members of the community can participate in cultural life (Interview with training and development officer of QCAN (2003–2007), 2005).

The activities and projects pursued by QCAN focused almost exclusively on social and cultural outcomes and CCD's role in the promotion and acceptance of diversity and inclusiveness. This focus became increasingly restrictive and limited QCAN's ability to adapt to changing requirements of governments, organisations and communities facing new challenges and grappling with new directions. QCAN, and its commitment to CCD, was becoming increasingly marginalised as it became more removed from the escalating complexity of community life:

QCAN couldn't really see the forest for the trees — it was busy playing politics while Rome burned. We needed a flexible and agile organisation that could move with the times and add value to community life. QCAN was just running to their old agenda — they preached about community consultation but they didn't listen to us at all (Interview with a government official of a remote/rural community, 2006).

Moreover, the language and philosophy of CCD that was adopted by QCAN was neither understood nor appreciated by community stakeholders:

We really wanted help to engage with the community but all we got from QCAN was ideological gobble-gook (Interview with community arts worker, 2005).

As a result, QCAN was all too often operating at the periphery of community life on narrowly defined projects and services:

I was a member for 12 years but it became more and more irrelevant. The library service was good but the other stuff that was supposed to help us help communities was just useless (Interview with community artist, 2005).

One case study informant suggested a way forward for QCAN:

They need to get their hands dirty — they need to engage with communities and support the integration of the arts in all aspects of community development. They need to engage not just with local governments but also with community organisations and private sector agencies. They need to promote the potential of the arts across all community services — economic as well as social and cultural (Interview with community arts consultant, 2006).

This challenge outlines a potential new way of operating for QCAN. However, during the data collection phase of the case study, there was no indication that the management of QCAN was open to discussions about new ways of operating or new directions.

## Leadership

There are three aspects of leadership relevant to QCAN. Firstly, QCAN is an organisation providing advocacy for communities to government and government agencies, specifically by supporting the role of the arts in community growth and development. In this context, QCAN has been expected to provide leadership in cultural policy development as well as interpreting and explaining the impact of new policy developments on communities and their programs. Secondly, as a state-wide service organisation, QCAN's objective is to stimulate and mentor community leadership through its programs and services. While these first two leadership roles are externally focused, the third and final role focuses internally on organisational leadership and deals with organisational restructuring and redirection, organisational effectiveness and efficiency, development of new services, staffing, and organisational facilities.

Leadership of contemporary arts organisations is challenging as leaders have to remain on top of an evolving policy context as well as being able to represent the needs of their constituents. Advocacy for communities and community arts workers has been central to QCAN's philosophy and operation for two decades. Consequently, QCAN has been active in its involvement in national collaborative efforts to increase the visibility of the sector and secure funds to support the work of the sector. The leadership of QCAN has led national delegations to key decision makers to lobby for the sector's needs and attempt to secure funding to support it. Over recent years especially, it



has actively participated in national discussions/forums on the future of the sector — especially during a recent review of the sector by the Australian Council for the Arts, which was seeking to develop new ways of working with communities through the arts.

However, leadership and advocacy require a deep appreciation of the changing policy context and operating environment and QCAN's demonstrated philosophical rigidity towards analysis of the changing nature of the environment has rendered its leadership in the sector ineffectual. At a time when the sector is struggling to come to terms with emerging concepts such as 'creative communities' and 'knowledge-based economies', QCAN has maintained an equity-based approach to community development at the expense of broader, more encompassing concepts emphasising creativity and innovation as drivers of community economic growth and social cohesion:

It's [QCAN] really kept its head in the sand — things have moved on but QCAN is still living in the '70s. It just doesn't get it (Interview with community arts consultant, 2006).

Furthermore, its continued emphasis on community cultural development as a primary tool for social change has resulted in limiting the impact of its programs at the community level. Its role in stimulating and mentoring of community leadership has thus been marginalised due to QCAN's decreasing understanding of the complexities of issues facing communities.

At the organisational level, QCAN has certainly demonstrated effective and efficient leadership in the management and accountability of its programs. However, in times of decreasing budgets, QCAN's strong management focus on accountability and efficiencies rather than new strategies on the pathway to greater financial independence has proved disastrous for the organisation over the long term.

## Outcomes

Throughout its history, QCAN has maintained a sizeable membership comprising community organisations, arts organisations, local government, local government agencies, and individual artists and arts workers. The membership also includes non-artists, cultural planners, teachers, and community development workers. QCAN conducts annual surveys of its members to collect data on the outcomes of those

products and services. Membership surveys have consistently rated the information services as the single most highly valued service provided by QCAN. These services provide information to members including updates on grant availability and funding opportunities, upcoming professional development and training events, and summaries of significant reports (with web links to full copies of the reports):

The bulletins and web services are great. I've just won a grant that I would not have known about without QCAN (Comments provided by members in the annual survey of QCAN services, 2006).

It's important to keep up to date with changes in policies and the web site provides a great summary of developments (Comments provided by members in the annual survey of QCAN services, 2006).

After the information service, the next most highly rated support service provided by QCAN to communities was training and professional development. The accredited training and professional development services that were most valued by survey respondents were those programs focusing on community consultation, cultural planning and the maintenance and protection of culture. The most popular non-accredited training was focused on the development of practical skills for arts workers ('Grant Writing for the Arts', 'Understanding the Public Art Commissioning Process', 'Commercialisation of Your Independent Practice') and skills for community workers and other stakeholders ('Being a Creative Community', 'Community Arts at Work', 'Introduction to Community Cultural Development') (Data from annual survey of QCAN services, 2006). Outcomes of training services include the development of new community knowledge and skills.

In a recent membership survey conducted by QCAN, respondents were asked to nominate possible new training courses that would be of use to them. Respondents suggested a range of practical and generic courses targeting skills that could be applied at the community level including project management, strategic planning, networking, business skills, communication skills, financial management, developing a business plan, and marketing and promotion (Comments provided by members in the annual survey of QCAN services, 2006). This indicated an ongoing demand for training courses by communities

and an appreciation by communities of the training services provided by QCAN. QCAN incorporated this feedback into its planning for future training programs.

## Conclusions and Implications

QCAN is highly visible within the arts and cultural sectors of Queensland, providing a link between artists, communities and local and state governments that has been sustained by quality products and services, and supported by effective and efficient governance and management structures. Over its years of operation, QCAN has responded to many challenges and threats, and has responded to most by developing new products and services and improving its business operations to increase its efficiency. It is managed through effective quality systems, has a highly competent and engaged management committee and competent and committed staff. However, despite its business effectiveness, QCAN has failed to take advantage of changing policy positions arising primarily from the new centrality of creativity and innovation in economic growth. Consequently, it has also failed to recognise and take advantage of opportunities arising from these new directions.

In environments where there is a heightened awareness of creativity as a driver of the economy, there is also a growing demand for lateral thinking and innovation. Consequently, there is increasing pressure on arts and cultural organisations to develop new ways of engaging with communities and the economy. When QCAN failed to respond to the challenges presented by national policy movements away from community arts and CCD towards a broader, more encompassing concept of creative communities, it demonstrated a failure to understand adequately and react appropriately to contemporary changes related to the creative economy and creative communities.

## Case Study Three: Cottage Enterprise Comes of Age

Case study three presents a small arts-based enterprise flourishing in a small remote/rural community.

## The Stimulus

Tambo Teddies is a small, cottage-based enterprise creating boutique teddy bears made from products sourced from the local environment around Tambo, a remote/rural township in western Queensland. The town consists of a main street with a small number of public buildings (including council offices, library and a learning centre), two hotels, two service stations, a disused picture theatre, and a general store selling drapery, vegetables and groceries. From the main street stem several roads scattered with the modest houses of Tambo residents. On any day, the main street provides temporary parking for a few road trains carrying cattle and wool to market, shelter for several of the town's residents, and sanctuary for more than a few of the town's dogs. The current population of Tambo is approximately 350, although it has been steadily declining over the last two decades (the population in 1991 was 690).

The stimulus for the new enterprise occurred unexpectedly in 1992 when three local women were invited to attend a state government-sponsored workshop to examine options for the future of remote/rural towns in western Queensland. The workshop was one of several conducted across Queensland by the Queensland Department of Primary Industries to stimulate job creation in small rural communities. Approximately 20 local Tambo people attended the workshop, most being council employees, local graziers and businessmen. Two of the three women present at the workshop reported that discussions focused on community access to government subsidised infrastructure development projects, including dams and roads, assistance for existing primary industries (wool and cattle), and the development of new primary industries based around timber getting and sawmilling (Interview 1 with Informants 1 and 2, 2004). The tone and direction of the workshop was summarised particularly cogently by one of the women in attendance:

We were the only women there and we mostly ignored by the men at the meeting ... and, when we split for small group discussions, we found ourselves sitting by ourselves on the veranda of the hall while the 'big business' was being discussed inside by the men (Interview 1 with Informant 1, 2004).

In this environment, the three women focused their discussion on what they considered to be the key questions raised by the workshop. What can be done to stimulate jobs in the town? What new enterprises might be possible? How can existing skills and resources be better used? (Interview 1 with Informants 1 and 2, 2004).<sup>3</sup> Their discussion was summarised by one of the participating women:

I remember that we all made ourselves a cup of tea and sat on the veranda and chatted about what we thought the town really needed. We wanted something that would involve the people in town who had some time on their hands and we wanted to make sure it was something that reflected the region. Our first idea was for a gift shop that would sell local products but we remembered that we didn't really have any local products [laughter] ... so we wondered if we could develop some. We thought about our local produce and we got stuck, not surprisingly, on wool. It was a time when wool prices were very low and the region was in the middle of a drought and we felt sure that we could come up with some way of using wool to create a saleable product and at the same time promote wool and the industry as a whole. I can remember that we talked a bit about the qualities of wool and what we might use it for that was a bit new and interesting — then the brainstorm — teddy bears (Interview 1 with Informant 1, 2004).

The three local women established Tambo Teddies in 1993 to manufacture teddy bears from pure merino wool and other local products.

However, when the small groups reported back to the workshop, the other workshop delegates did not receive the idea enthusiastically: 'There was a polite response but the men were not really taken with the idea' (Interview 1 with Informant 2, 2004). A few days after the workshop, the idea became a major point for discussion among many of the townspeople who decided almost unanimously that the idea would not work. One of the women described this as 'good-natured ridicule', but another explained that, like many small remote/rural towns, there was very real community scepticism in Tambo reflecting a community concern, perhaps fear, of change — concern that impacts negatively on the generation of new ideas and the creation of new

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<sup>3</sup> Questions listed from interview notes were based on memory of workshop participants. While some original workshop documentation was able to be sourced, specific questions to be addressed by workshop delegates were not available in the sourced documentation.

ventures. Despite this less than enthusiastic community response, the three women decided that they could and would do it and thus commenced a journey that they now characterise as one of sheer hard work and frustration:

Looking back, we were quite naïve. We thought that we could just make some woollen teddies — no problems. We had no design expertise other than sewing and knitting. We had no appreciation of the difficulties of sourcing materials — yes we learned quickly that there were other things needed for teddies besides wool, such as eyes! We didn't understand that we needed special equipment for cutting and sewing woollen hides. We didn't understand just how hard it was going to be (Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005).

After many months of designing and planning and a few false starts, the first Tambo Teddies were ready for sale in February 1993 (Interview 1 with Informant 2, 2004). They were presented to the public at the Charleville Sheep Show and over 20 Tambo Teddies were sold (Tambo Teddies, 1994). Since that time the enterprise has steadily grown and now employs three full-time and approximately 40 part-time staff (representing over 11 per cent of the total population of Tambo and making it the largest employer in town) (Interview 3 with Informant 1, 2006). The teddies have also become a major tourist stop in western Queensland, attracting the attention of tourism operators who now make scheduled stops in Tambo, a destination that had previously been ignored in their itineraries (Interview 1 with Tambo Shire economic development officer, 2006). The enterprise has also stimulated the establishment of other businesses seeking to take advantage of the increased tourist flow. In particular, a coffee shop has now opened in the building adjacent to Tambo Teddies (Interview 1 with coffee shop owner, 2006). Tambo Teddies are also now sold throughout the world through an online purchasing facility embedded into the enterprise's website: [www.tamboteddies.com.au](http://www.tamboteddies.com.au) (Tambo Teddies business records viewed during Interview 3 with Informant 1, 2006).

## Community Development Ideologies: Ignorance and Bliss

The three initiators of Tambo Teddies had very clear business objectives for their enterprise, which were summarised in the initial business plan for the enterprise in 1994: 'to develop a small business that

builds the profile of the local community, uses resources from the local community, and provides a new revenue stream for the community' (Tambo Teddies, 1994). Given that these objectives explicitly connect the development of the business with stimulating community growth and development, it is worthy of note that the three developers of the concept had no exposure to any of the community development ideologies (see Chapter 3) that have provided development platforms for the other cases studies and community vignettes examined by this research:

We had never heard of those things. If you go to community meetings today everything is about community development theories. It's almost like we are now expected to follow a recipe and then everything will be all right. I've never really understood the value of the theories. We saw ourselves as three ordinary people with ordinary backgrounds who wanted to develop a new business based on sound business principles and practices — that's all (Interview 1 with Informant 1, 2004).

Blissful ignorance of community development theories and ideologies seems to have given the women freedom to focus all their energies on sensible business development and the quality of their product. This strong business focus was not always understood or appreciated by people working in community arts, as is demonstrated by the following comment from a community arts worker in another community who was asked about the potential of creative enterprises such as Tambo Teddies:

They're running a business and yes it's been successful but they have no real understanding of the role of arts in the community. We are trying to involve this community in arts to develop a better and richer community feeling — we're not just trying to make a profit (Interview with arts worker from a neighbouring community, 2006).

Over almost 20 years of business operations, Tambo Teddies has attained and maintained a national and international reputation for quality while retaining a distinct local identity. It is best described as a cottage enterprise or a boutique rural business specialising in an original product. It is a business with roots firmly in the arts and crafts market and consequently with links to the concept of community art, despite the fact that these links have never been of concern or interest to the business operators: 'Right from the start we were concerned with business not art. We saw ourselves as businesswomen not artists' (Interview 2 with Informant 2, 2005). There was also a sense among

the three women that the arts and crafts community of Tambo was insular and marginalised and, while not necessarily anti-business, that involvement with them would not enhance business development:

We didn't want to get involved with the arts and crafts people in town as we saw this as a real threat to the business. There was a lot of backbiting in that crowd and they were really just focused on accessing arts funding to run workshops and other activities. Of course, that stuff's important but we were just not interested in accessing government money. We wanted a business that worked (Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005).

Despite the strong emphasis on business development and the determined approach to keep Tambo Teddies separated from the arts and crafts sector, the business enterprise has many characteristics in common with community art. The teddies are hand crafted, individually numbered and named after sheep and cattle properties in the Tambo region, linking the product to the community. Customers can further individualise their teddies by choosing to dress them as true-blue Aussies in moleskin pants, check shirt, plaited belt, 'bear-as-a-bone' coat, hat and swag. Each year the enterprise also releases a limited edition teddy designed around a special theme. A recent edition focused on the history of Tambo and honouring the early settlers. The teddies are high-quality, high-priced articles retailing from approximately \$100 for a basic model to \$300 for a limited edition bear.

Tambo Teddies is now a mature, stable small business/cottage enterprise with a reputation for high-quality products. In recent years there has been active consideration by the owner/operator of potential expansion opportunities including franchising of the concept, but these have been rejected for two main reasons. Firstly, the owner and key staff have a strong commitment to supporting and promoting Tambo and, even though increased revenue may have economic benefits for the region, there is a strongly held belief that expansion would dilute the special connection of the bears to the region and reduce the impact of the product in the market. Secondly, the owner wishes to maintain the lifestyle she has achieved through her hard work and is focused on consolidating the product's appeal while enjoying life and work in the local community.



## Major Milestones and Achievements

The first major milestone for the enterprise occurred just three months after the establishment of the business in 1995 when the partners purchased their first industrial fur overlocker to sew the teddies. The machine was second-hand and cost \$1,500, and each partner contributed just over \$500 to purchase the machine and a few sheepskins, cotton and accessories to manufacture the teddies (Tambo Teddies business records accessed during Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005).

When we started we had no idea that we would need specialised machines — we thought that we would just use our home machines. This small outlay convinced us that we were really starting a business — it was our own money! It was scary but really exciting (Interview 1 with Informant 1, 2004).

In the next four years additional equipment and resources were purchased as meagre profits were made — seven industrial fur overlockers were purchased to meet growing demand. The demand also created new local employment opportunities as the enterprise began employing local woman as part-time sewers (Tambo Teddies business records accessed during Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005).

The second major milestone also occurred in 1995 when the three partners set up a Company Limited by Guarantee (Tambo Teddies Pty Ltd) and each of the three partners became directors.

We were really in business. Looking back it's amazing — none of us had any real experience with business but we were committed and willing to work hard so that was really what got us over the line (Interview 2 with Informant 2, 2005).

The new company was cash poor but determined to manage financial risks by keeping investment levels low. The business was expanded only when it was financially viable (Interview 2 with Informant 2, 2005). Another aspect of the business that the women saw as a significant achievement is the fact that they received very little in government grants to establish the business. In 1994, \$600 was granted by the Queensland Small Business Corporation towards the cost of developing Tambo Teddies' first business plan (Tambo Teddies business records accessed during Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005):

We always thought that we needed to stand on our own feet and not rely on government support. All of us thought that accessing public money was a recipe for disaster and would make us less able to sustain and operate a viable business. We have only ever, in all our years, received a small grant of \$600 (Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005).

An unexpected milestone for the company occurred in its eighth year of operation when a national current affairs show televised a story on the company and its products.<sup>4</sup> The story was broadcast nationally and generated major national interest in the product:

We were not prepared for the demand the story generated. We were run off our feet. The telephone just rang off the hook with orders. We had to increase our part-time staff by 10 (including a person just to answer the phone) and we still couldn't meet the demand. It was great as it came at a time when the market was slowing a bit and our confidence was low — it really picked us up and was a boon to the business (Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005).

As well as generating a new market for the teddies, this milestone also encouraged the directors to think about expanding and resulted in the establishment of the Tambo Teddies website to cater for growing demand both nationally and internationally. The website allows potential customers to learn about the history of the teddies and Tambo, view the various products, and place orders for the teddies. It is estimated that the website now generates about 25 per cent of all orders (Tambo Teddies business records accessed during Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005). Also at about this time, the company directors were invited by the Toowoomba Regional Development Board<sup>5</sup> to accompany an official contingent on a trade trip to Japan, a trip that generated significant international demand for the teddies (Interview 3 with Informant 1, 2006).

Not all milestones have been positive for the key stakeholders in the company. A major milestone occurred five years after the establishment of the company when one of the directors wanted to end her association with Tambo Teddies. For the first time the company had to be valued so that the two remaining directors could buy the departing director's share of the company. The valuation process was hotly debated between the directors and it became evident that a satisfactory solution could

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4 A videotape of the televised story was accessed during Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005.

5 Toowoomba is the main regional centre for Tambo and south-western Queensland.

not be achieved without external intervention (Interview 2 with Informant 2, 2005). An independent business assessor was brought in to value the company and an agreement was eventually reached and an agreed payment made to the departing director.

Four years after this event, one of the two remaining directors also made a decision to leave Tambo, a decision that generated bitter discussion about the future of the company. The departing director wanted to establish a branch of the teddies in her new town, essentially proposing a franchise of Tambo Teddies. The remaining director felt very strongly that such an action would jeopardise the uniqueness of the product and have a negative impact on the Tambo community (Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005). After much debate, a solution was reached that maintained a single company operation based in Tambo. The solution was based on a single payment from the remaining director to the departing director based on the existing value of the company and a percentage of estimated potential growth.

## Synergies and Partnerships

One of the very first problems faced by the three women at the time of the establishment of the company was sourcing a suitable venue from which to launch the proposed new business. They approached the Tambo Shire Council who offered the fledgling business the use of the local Post Office Museum. They were given two rooms at the back of the museum with the proviso that the women would also accept responsibility for operating the museum. The benefits for the council were that the museum would significantly increase its operating hours and would be staffed by full-time operators (Interview with council official during Site Visit 2, 2005); until this time, volunteers and council employees had staffed the museum on a part-time basis. In return, the council would provide the two vacant rooms rent-free and would pay for electricity and other utilities. This arrangement began a productive partnership between council and the fledgling enterprise, which was to last several years. The nature of the partnership is wryly described by a current council official:

We would like to claim that we had foresight and vision to support what has become a very successful business and a real community asset but it was more a case of having two spare rooms that were not being

used and the proposed arrangement suited us as we could keep the museum open all the time. We really didn't think the teddies would be so successful (Interview with council official during Site Visit 2, 2005).

Regardless of the motivation for the partnership, the results have been significant. While not necessarily recognised by the partners at the time, the partnership demonstrates the role of the shire council as an incubator for new business (Notes from interview with economic development officer, 2006). Although the approach did not include business development assistance, it did allow Tambo Teddies to commence business in an environment where costs could be kept low thus allowing the limited funds to be directed to product research and development (Notes from Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005).

The partnership with the local council has changed and evolved over the years. After four years of occupying council premises, Tambo Teddies moved out of the museum into a vacant shop in the main street. The directors felt that the business needed a more visible profile to attract passing tourists and visitors (Notes from Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005). The move proved to be very successful and, as noted, Tambo Teddies has become a significant stop on the tourist trail through western Queensland. The growing potential of an increasing tourist market had now been recognised and appreciated by the council who designed and erected pedestrian crossing signs in the main street reading 'Teddies Cross Here' (Interview with council official during Site Visit 2, 2005). This action firmly entrenched Tambo as the home of the teddies and cemented the ongoing relationship between the local business and government. It also illustrates clearly the impact of creative work in enhancing the attractiveness of a region to visitors and tourists thus contributing to the economic viability of the region (Interview 3 with Informant 1, 2006).

All other local partnerships with the community have been firmly on a business footing, the business never having relied on volunteer services for any of its operations:

Except for our free rent for the first few years, we have paid for everything. Our relationships with other community businesses or organisations have always been on a purely business basis. We contract the services we need, whether it is renovations or hide cutting (Interview 3 with Informant 1, 2006).

## Innovation and Creativity

Tambo Teddies is a business that has grown and evolved as a result of determination and hard work, but this should not overshadow the fact that inspiration, creativity and innovation have been the hallmarks of the business's growth and development. Its success is, in part, due to the fact that it has built on local knowledge, skills and resources applied in ways that have created innovative opportunities for the community. While creativity and innovation are downplayed by the business owners who continually state that they as just ordinary business owner/operators (Interviews 1, 2 and 3 with Informants 1 and 2, 2004, 2005 and 2006), an analysis of the development of the business demonstrates the continual application of creative decision making, problem solving and innovative thinking. Table 35 provides examples of how the business has used these skills across a range of aesthetic and business issues.

Table 35. Creativity and Innovation in Business Development – Tambo Teddies.

Processes and skills	Application	Evidence
Aesthetic problem solving	<p>The business had to develop new patterns for the design of the teddy bears.</p> <p>New designs had to take account of challenges using woollen hides.</p> <p>Appreciation of the interconnection between materials and resources and the final product.</p> <p>Resources had to be sourced to meet design principles.</p> <p>Appreciation of the opportunities arising from community distinctiveness.</p>	<p>Interview 1, Informant 1 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 1, Informant 2 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 1, Informant 1 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 1, Informant 2 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 1, Informant 1 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 1, Informant 2 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 2, Informant 1 (2005)</p> <p>Interview 2, Informant 1 (2005)</p> <p>Interview 1, Informant 1 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 1, Informant 2 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 2, Informant 1 (2005)</p> <p>Interview 3, Informant 1 (2006)</p>
Technical problem solving	<p>Specialist equipment had to be sourced and purchased.</p> <p>Staff had to be located and trained within the community.</p>	<p>Interview 1, Informant 1 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 1, Informant 2 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 1, Informant 2 (2004)</p> <p>Interview 2, Informant 1 (2005)</p>

Processes and skills	Application	Evidence
Synthesis of business and artistic ideas into creative outcomes and products	Development and negotiation of partnerships with local government while maintaining creative and business integrity. Integration of community history and culture with artistic ideas to develop a new local product. Integration of business with community needs through training and employment.	Interview with local councillor (2005) Interview with economic development officer (2005) Interview 2, Informant 1 (2005) Interview 2, Informant 2 (2005) Interview 1, Informant 1 (2004) Interview 1, Informant 2 (2004) Interview 1, Informant 2 (2004) Interview 2, Informant 1 (2005)

Source: Author's interviews.

## Leadership

The success of Tambo Teddies has been dependent on the continuous leadership of one energetic person who has consistently demonstrated vision, originality and commitment. The current director of the enterprise has provided continuous leadership for almost 20 years. While she does not view herself as a leader, she has nevertheless demonstrated persistence, stamina and tenacity and has faced significant challenges to the business:

I've been with the business for its whole life. It's not always been easy but it's been a great life for me — I've loved it. I've moved from being a teacher aide at the school to running my own business. It's been hard but I've survived. I survived fights and backbiting but I achieved some great things for the town and its people. I don't see myself as a community leader or any the type of leader — just a hardworking business woman (Notes on Interview 3 with Informant 1, 2006).

Notably, there have been times of business disruption due to differences in the vision and direction of the business partners. There have also been other challenges arising from the design and development of the product, including difficulties in relation to sourcing materials, resources and skills:

We made a lot of mistakes at the beginning especially — the selection of the wrong hides made sewing almost impossible. Sewing on the industrial machines was very different from what we were used to and we had to spend a fair bit of time training our recruits. At one point, it seemed that we would never get ahead (Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005).

Leadership was a topic that interviewees involved in this case study were comfortable discussing but the current director of Tambo Teddies was self-deprecating when asked to comment on leadership issues:

I'm just a businesswoman and like everyone else, I'm just trying to make a living. I know that there have been benefits to the community along the way but other people should also take the credit. I just run a business (Notes on Interview 3 with Informant 1, 2006).

However, the self-deprecation evident in all key players should not be mistaken for a lack of confidence. The people responsible for the success of Tambo Teddies are confident, dynamic and forthright women who have been determined to succeed. They are generally recognised by the community as successful business people and community leaders, whether they like it or not:

They have put Tambo on the map. We are recognised as the home of the teddy. What has been remarkable is that they have done it by themselves. Other communities in our region have tourist attractions but they have all been funded and developed by the government. This is the only one for thousands of miles that has been established as a successful business from nothing. It's a credit to them (Interview with Tambo Shire council official, 2005).

Local business owners have also recognised the leadership qualities of the current director:

I've been here all my life and I have to admit that I thought it was a stupid idea that would never lead anywhere. I've had to eat my words and it's because of [her] determination and drive. She ignored all the talk behind her back and got on with the job. My takings are up 20 per cent on what they were three years ago and it's all because of those teddies (Interview with local business owner during Site Visit 2, 2005).

Community leadership and recognition are not always positive, and Tambo Teddies' leadership has suffered in some quarters, and still does, from regional and local jealousies and suspicions:

There's no doubt that she has been incredibly successful but it's for her own pocket. She's making thousands of dollars a week and I'd like to know how much goes back into the community (Interview with local community member during Site Visit 2, 2005).

The key players in the development of Tambo Teddies have demonstrated that community leadership can stem from any area; a fundamental requirement is a desire and a willingness to follow through with creative ideas and focus on solid outcomes.

## Management and Evaluation

The management of Tambo Teddies has been based on sound business principles since its inception. Growth over almost 20 years of operation has been generally slow and steady. The evaluation of the company has been an ongoing and continuous aspect of business management, and the company has informally but regularly set business objectives. That is, while the process has never been formally addressed through the development of a formal annual strategic or business plan, goal setting has been a strong feature of development:

While we did some business planning at the beginning of the business, we didn't really find the process worthwhile. We usually just set some aims for ourselves — things like selling the first 100 teddies and then just set about trying to do it. Sometimes it took us a bit longer than we thought but that was OK. Every time we had a bit of a profit we would buy something we needed to improve the business (Interview 2 with Informant 1, 2005).

This uncomplicated approach to evaluation and improvement was possible because of the small nature of the enterprise and the simplicity of its operation. While it may not be a model that could or should be applied more broadly, it has been demonstrably successful in the case of Tambo Teddies.

## Outcomes

Tambo Teddies has yielded many significant outcomes for the community of Tambo through the establishment of a viable and sustainable business with flow-ons to the whole community. One significant achievement has been the development and community recognition of new community skills. Entrepreneurship, business skills and project management skills are now perceived by the community to be useful in building community capacity (Interview with economic development officer, 2005). A more tangible outcome is the existence of an original and marketable product strongly linked to community consciousness and one that has brought significant



economic and social returns to the community (Interview with shire councillor, 2005). It has generated tourism for the town resulting in increased visitor numbers to the area and increased revenue flow for existing businesses (Interviews with local business owners, 2005 and 2006). It has also resulted in the development of a secondary spin-off business, an adjacent coffee shop and snack bar to cater for the augmented tourist trade.

Other major outcomes have included the development of increased employment opportunities within the community that has occurred in two ways. Firstly, the enterprise itself has become a major employer for the community. Secondly, local people have been employed to support the spin-off businesses (coffee shop and snack bar). While all the direct employment benefits have been in part-time or casual employment, this has had a significant impact in a town with a population of fewer than 400 people.

The initiative has also generated a positive community image, both internally and externally. Within the community, residents feel that the enterprise has created an image for the community that makes it unique in western Queensland:

We weren't really known for anything before the teddies. Well, the best thing was the roadhouse that used to have a good name with the truckies for the food. Now it's pretty well known as the home of the teddies by most travellers, especially the grey nomads. Even if people don't know it exists, they have plenty of signs both in town and on the way in to alert them to the fact. It seems that teddies have some appeal to most people — it's something different that they haven't seen before. It's not just another historical museum or monument (Interview with local business owner, 2005).

Some of the residents of Tambo are proud of the fact that it has been an initiative that has been developed without outside assistance. This pride is well presented by the following comment from a Tambo resident:

You know there's a lot of tourist stuff in the west. Charleville has that star-watching thing, the cosmos thing; Blackall has the Woolscour; Barcardine has the Workers Museum; Longreach has the Stockman's Hall of Fame; and Winton has the Matilda Centre — they've all been funded by the government but we did it without their help, without anybody's help (Interview with local long-term resident, 2006).

## Conclusions and Implications

While there have been many factors influencing the success of Tambo Teddies, one stands above others and that is the leadership shown by the company director over a period of over 20 years. Her initiative, drive, enthusiasm and commitment to business development and community growth have provided the foundation for the success and longevity of the enterprise. Her combination of business acumen, inspiration and community resources has allowed the enterprise to develop and grow into a sustainable business generating significant social and economic outcomes for the community. The other significant finding from this case study has been the existence of a significant disconnect between the success of this cottage enterprise and the contemporary theories and ideologies guiding community growth and development. In the case of Tambo Teddies, the ideologies were unknown to the developers of the enterprise, who knew their community and set their own objectives for community development, following their instincts in the development of approaches to stimulate economic development, generate community pride and involvement, and encourage community partnerships. The case study raises provocative questions about the role of community development theories in providing foundations for approaches to community growth including: To what extent are contemporary community development theories relevant to the development of creative enterprises? To what extent do they provide an adequate balance between economic, social and cultural outcomes? How do they encourage local leadership and innovation? Might they perhaps be too narrow and too focused to encourage genuine community creativity and innovation?

## Perspectives from the Case Studies: Commonalities and Differences

Table 36 provides a snapshot of the key findings of the three case studies. The major findings are presented for each area of interest identified in the case study framework and reporting structure.

Table 36. Summary of Key Findings of Case Studies.

	Cultural planning in a pre-innovation context	Networking cultural support	Creative enterprise comes of age
<b>Project name</b>	<b>Blackall Shire Council and community</b>	<b>Queensland Community Arts Network (QCAN)</b>	<b>Tambo Teddies</b>
<b>Stimulus</b>	Local government desire to extend the scope of cultural activity in the community by developing and implementing a community cultural plan.	Identified need by a group of artists for a state-wide support network for community arts.	Provided by external agency through Futures Search Workshop (state government).
<b>Ideology</b>	Strongly connected with the ideology of community cultural development (CCD) but driven by practicality rather than ideology.	Strongly guided by community cultural development (CCD) as an ideology. CCD provides a strong framework for all QCAN activities.	Not ideologically based — focus on the development of a sustainable business.
<b>Partnerships and networks</b>	Partnerships limited to local environment — linkages achieved mainly with local agencies and organisations. External organisations and private consultants used to support the project.	No formal partnerships other than those with funding organisations. Networks exist with communities throughout Queensland.	Partnership with local government. Community networks neither involved nor supportive.
<b>Creativity and innovation</b>	Little evidence of creative and innovative approaches to the planning process. (The implementation of the cultural plan may encourage more innovative approaches and stimulate community creativity.)	Some evidence of creativity in project design but little support for the adoption of creative and innovative approaches at the community level.	High levels of creativity and innovation critical to the success of the enterprise.
<b>Major milestones and achievements</b>	Development of a cultural plan. Implementation strategies and projects to support the cultural plan.	Successful information services to Queensland communities. Creation and maintenance of community networks. Registration as an accredited training organisation and the provision of training services to Queensland communities.	A creative product. Sustainable local businesses. Increased tourism. Spin-off businesses. Development of secondary and specialised products.

	Cultural planning in a pre-innovation context	Networking cultural support	Creative enterprise comes of age
<b>Project name</b>	<b>Blackall Shire Council and community</b>	<b>Queensland Community Arts Network (QCAN)</b>	<b>Tambo Teddies</b>
<b>Leadership</b>	No identifiable and singular leader. Leadership by committee.	No singular leader. While individual members of staff have demonstrated leadership in various projects, the organisation suffered from a lack of vision and direction in its overall approach to supporting communities.	Success has been dependent on the continuous leadership of one energetic person demonstrating vision, originality, and commitment.
<b>Management and continuous improvement</b>	Sound management practices. Poorly designed and implemented review processes/poorly designed performance measures.	Sound management practices. Poor evaluation and review practices (little evidence of continuous improvement approaches).	Sound management practices. Continuous improvement embedded as business improvement.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Recognition of the creative capital existing in community. Improved coordination of cultural and arts-based approaches including special events and festivals.	The development of comprehensive information services to support community artists and arts workers. Sustainable communities of practice across communities to build knowledge and share expertise across communities. Formal and informal training programs for artists and community arts workers.	A creative enterprise manufacturing an original and marketable product strongly linked to community consciousness. Increased employment opportunities within the community. Increased tourism. Positive community image (internal and external).
<b>Conclusions and Implications</b>	A cultural plan will at best only provide a framework for further work. To move communities towards more creative and innovative approaches, models and benefits will need to be demonstrated to community members.	While QCAN mechanisms for networking and information sharing are important, they do not contribute to the stimulation of new ideas and new approaches.	The creation of arts-based enterprises in remote/rural communities is possible and leads to significant social and economic benefits to the community.

Source: Author's research.

While an analysis of the findings in Table 36 summarises and highlights the significant outcomes of community programs, projects and initiatives, it also exposes key issues and challenges influencing the potential of the arts in community development. Paramount among these is the need for the arts and artists to stimulate and support more creative and innovate approaches to community development. Table 36 also suggests that arts-based ideologies, while providing a philosophical platform for many projects, may also be inhibiting the development of practical, integrated and collaborative approaches to community growth. Other issues and challenges shown in Table 36 include the importance of successful community networks and partnerships in stimulating collaboration and cooperation across community and the centrality of passionate, dedicated, strong and community-based leadership in successful community development and growth.

These findings provide a framework on which guidelines and models to guide future arts-based community development may be developed. Principles on which such guidelines and models might be developed include:

1. Community members should focus more broadly on creativity and innovation rather than the traditional primary focus on arts and culture — a focus on creativity and innovation will allow community issues and opportunities to be considered in an inclusive, integrated manner that has the potential to encompass all community interests and skills
2. Community development programs and initiatives should build on existing community skills, resources and ideas
3. Arts-based community development should engage all relevant community stakeholders using networks and partnerships where appropriate
4. Community networks and partnerships should, where possible, cross social, cultural and economic domains to exploit potential new linkages between previously disparate community groups
5. New ideas and new approaches should be generated from within communities and not imposed by external agencies and organisations
6. Successful guidelines and models derived from these principles may need to incorporate the development of new strategies and tools that encourage creative thinking and steer communities into new ways of planning and doing.

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