10

The Arts as Creative Community Powerhouse

The four potential scenarios presented in this chapter provide examples of how the creative community development pyramid (CCDP) might be applied in practical applications to create new opportunities and build new community capital.

Taking Advantage of New Tourism Opportunities

A unique opportunity has presented itself to the remote/rural community of Barrington. The discovery of a major dinosaur fossil site 50 kilometres outside Barrington offers the community a major tourism opportunity. The Barrington local government and long-term residents have observed that other towns within the region have failed to capitalise on similar opportunities over the years, and are determined to ensure that the fossil discovery brings major long-term benefits to the town. The community realises that to encourage tourists to visit and experience the town, as well as the nearby fossil site, they must add value to the tourist experience by developing unique and desirable products and services.

The recently released CCDP offers the community a practical new planning tool. Using the CCDP, the Barrington local government initiates a planning process with a critical analysis of current community strengths and weaknesses using the purple base of the pyramid (see Figure 13).

Several community strengths are identified including (i) the vigour of local businesses and their willingness to work with government and community groups to address community problems and opportunities, (ii) the strength of community pride and confidence, (iii) a strong sense of community identity, (iv) a deep knowledge of community history (including local myths and legends), and (v) an active and talented arts community.

Using the blue middle area of the CCDP, the local government then examines the potential appropriateness and usefulness of available integrative planning processes. To recognise and build on the identified community strengths they firstly host an open, whole-of-community meeting to brainstorm ideas on how the community might benefit from the new tourism opportunity. In order to ensure representation from identified core strength areas, the Barrington local government specifically invites local business people, community elders, local historians and artists. The meeting identifies several ideas and two of these ideas are selected by the community for further investigation: (i) a simulated, interactive journey through time incorporating ancient myths and legends associated with the fossil remains and a more recent history of the community, and (ii) the creation of a series of unique local souvenirs commemorating the dinosaur fossils and celebrating the uniqueness of the Barrington region. By referencing the blue level of the CCDP (see Figure 13), government facilitates the creation of two small planning groups inclusive of at least one representative of each area of identified community strength, and sponsors and funds each group to conduct a feasibility study and, if appropriate, to develop a business plan for each of the identified ideas.

Both groups use community skills and resources to test the feasibility of the ideas and develop business plans drawing on the combined expertise of local government, local business people, community historians, community artists and others. As a consequence, the resultant plans are not only financially viable, creative and sustainable but also have high levels of community support and commitment.

The implementation of the plans achieves significant outcomes over the next five- to 10-year period. Within 12 months of the completion of the planning process, a simulated, interactive CD combining local myths and legends with information about the Barrington community has been produced and sold through several community outlets. Initial sales of the CD are sound indicating that the initial financial investment would be returned to government within 18 months. The CD also wins several prestigious national awards, resulting in community artists being recognised and offered commissions for further work.

Perhaps more importantly, the content and graphic representations on the CD stimulate interest from state governments and commercial agencies who recognise the potential of the idea and invest in the broader application of the work. These and other agencies fund the development of a $6 million experiential museum that builds on the original concepts, histories and artwork developed for the CD. The museum becomes a major tourist attraction and within 10 years is generating annual revenue of $4 million. It also becomes a major employer for the town and generates several spin-off businesses including cafes and gift shops.

The second idea also proved successful for the Barrington community, with designs for seven original souvenirs being developed by local artists. Four of the designs are selected for manufacture (based on the input and financial projections of local business people), two being manufactured locally after the identification of specific local skills and resources. Local manufacture generates additional employment opportunities for local youth. Early healthy sales of the souvenirs are further boosted by the opening of the experiential museum (arising from the implementation of the other community idea — the simulation journey through time).

Figure 13 illustrates how the Barrington community used the CCDP to guide them in linking identified key community strengths of environmental distinctiveness, knowledge of local history, small business acumen and an active arts community to develop new approaches based on sound, sustainable business practices that create a unique and innovative tourism program.
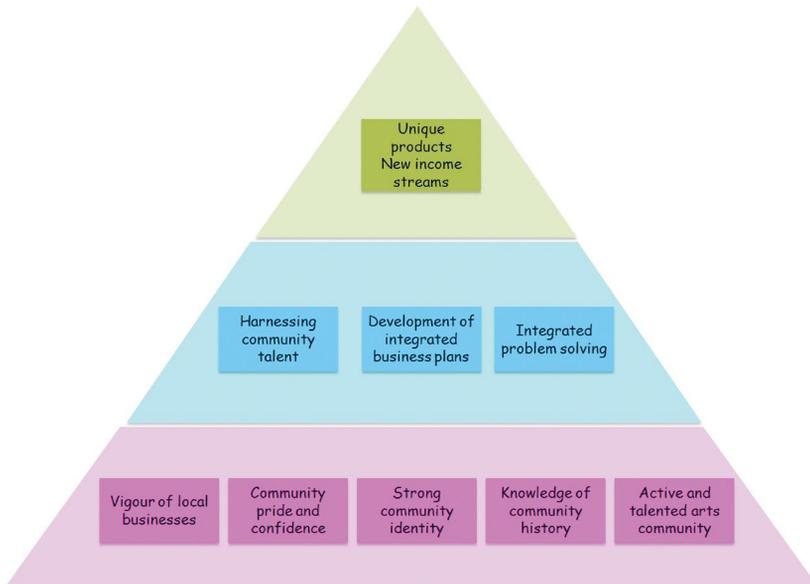
Figure 13. Barrington's CCDP Approach.
Source: Author's research.

Overcoming Youth Unemployment

Wangoola is a small remote/rural community with a major youth unemployment problem that has progressively worsened over the last five years. The Wangoola Arts Council, the chamber of commerce and the cricket club have been lobbying local government to support action to develop new programs and projects to address problems associated with youth unemployment for several years but without success. These three community groups have now become aware of the new community-planning tool, the creative community development pyramid. They have learnt of the successes achieved by neighbouring communities in applying the pyramid to develop solutions and new approaches to community challenges. Using the bottom purple level of the pyramid (see Figure 14) and working initially only within their own organisations, they develop a picture of the core community strengths on which to build new approaches to combat youth unemployment.

These include a strong business community with sound skills, an active arts community and an energetic sporting community. The organisations also used the bottom purple layer of the pyramid to identify and document several community weaknesses that were contributing to the unemployment problem. These included a lack of community pride, especially among young people, a lack of community identity and a resulting lack of shared community direction and social cohesiveness, and a sense that the community had little to offer young people in terms of liveability and lifestyle.

While the three organisations felt that their work at the purple level of the pyramid was worthwhile, as it provided a platform for the development of proposed future action, they still faced three key challenges. Firstly, they realised that the simple identification and documentation of community strengths and weaknesses would fail to convince local government of the need for action. Secondly, without local government support and assistance, work could not progress to the second blue layer of the pyramid, which would allow for the development of strategies and business plans. Thirdly, they needed to consolidate community support for new directions. The organisations decided to strengthen their initial identification of community strengths and weaknesses by conducting a community survey. It was felt that that survey would (i) strengthen their negotiating position with local government, (ii) provide a mechanism to gain community interest in the issues, and (iii) offer an opportunity to canvass future action with community stakeholders.

Members of the three organisations worked collaboratively to design and conduct a survey that included a questionnaire, interviews with selected stakeholders, and a targeted youth forum. By extending, consolidating and validating the results of initial identification of community strengths, the survey processes provided a strong case for community action that could now be presented to local government. Government agreed to support and fund a community-wide planning process to canvass ideas and develop strategies to address problems associated with youth unemployment. This resulted in the formation of a community planning group comprising key members of the original three organisations, two local government representatives, youth representatives and representatives of other community groups. The planning group focused on planning practices

drawn from the blue level of the CCDP (see Figure 14), especially (i) whole of community problems solving, (ii) ideas generation, and (iii) community networking.

Several solutions and ideas were generated and a small number of these identified for immediate application gained the financial support of local government. One idea with an immediate community outcome was the development of an environmental walkway. Located 15 kilometres outside the town of Wangoola is the western border of the Gumpybung National Park, a very remote site accessed only by a rarely used track. State government funds were sourced to develop a campsite and environmental walkway to provide an introduction to the rare flora and fauna of the site for locals and potential tourists. Local government agreed to upgrade the road to the park. At this stage, six young community members (under 25 years of age) were identified to plan and manage the project. They were provided with selected mentors drawn from both within and outside the community to cover areas of support such as project planning, project management, financial management, staff management, environmental management, arts and graphics, and community history. Despite this high level of advice and support, decision making rested with the six young people, as did responsibility for all project outcomes.

Short-term project outcomes included employment opportunities for community residents under 25 years of age, new skills for young people in the community, an increased sense of community pride and identity, a strong sense of confidence in community youth, and recognition of the distinctiveness of the community. Arising from and related to these social outcomes were a number of additional community activities including the annual Gumpybung Festival, the Wangoola-sponsored regional Gumpybung Cricket Festival, and the Gumpybung Arts Festival focusing on local flora, fauna and history. Longer-term outcomes included (i) increased tourist numbers, (ii) new economic opportunities meaning increased revenue flows in the community, and (iii) new local businesses catering for increased demand from tourists. An interesting and unexpected further long-term outcome arose from the initiative of two of the original young people selected to manage the environmental walkway. These two individuals, using their newly developed skills in business and management, enhanced confidence, fresh attitudes and attributes, and community networks, built a community enterprise based on adventure trekking. Within five years,

holiday makers attracted by wilderness areas previously inaccessible to the public were using the businesses services to plan and conduct their adventure holidays. The business's profit at the end of the sixth year reached $450,000 and won the state government's award for the most innovative new business. In the same year, the partner of one of the business owners started a bed and breakfast accommodation service to further capitalise on increasing visitor numbers. Figure 14 summarises the ways Wangoola used the CCDP to achieve their community outcomes.
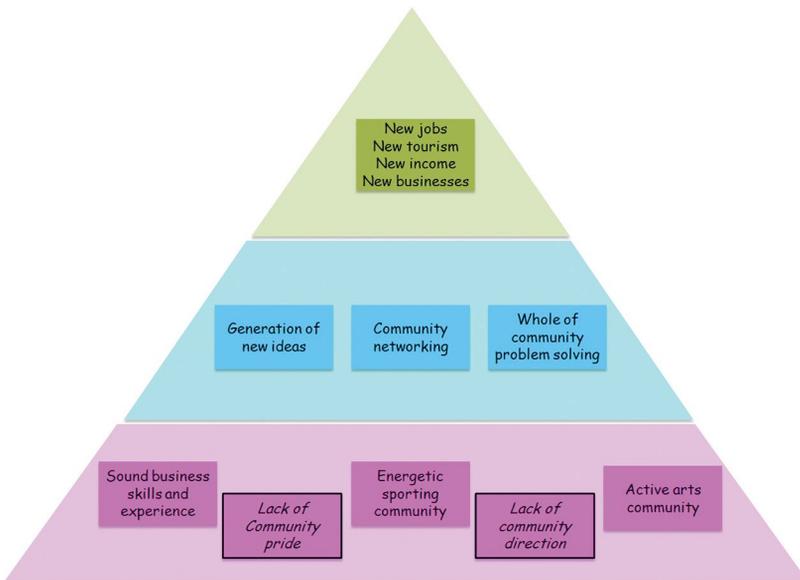

Figure 14. Wangoola's CCDP Approach.
Source: Author's research.

Coping with Population Increases

Jabbaroo is a small town located approximately 900 kilometres by road from the state capital. At the recent national census its population was recorded as 940, reflecting a slow decline in population growth over the past 20 years. During recent years, Jabbaroo has been the temporary home to an array of visiting geologists, archaeologists, surveyors and mining engineers from the major global mining company, Rio Grande.

The residents enjoyed hosting the scientists and engineers who mixed well with the townspeople and provided interesting insights into pre-mining investigations and operations.

Recently, however, Rio Grande has discovered vast reserves of iron ore in the land surrounding the community and, after four years of surveying and planning, mining operations located 50 kilometres north of Jabbaroo are now about to commence. The residents and local government of Jabbaroo have mixed feelings about large-scale mining activities. While they recognise the significant economic benefits that will flow from mining operations (including improved transport infrastructure, increased local revenue flows, new business opportunities, and new employment opportunities), they are nevertheless concerned about the potential problems arising from mining (including escalation of the costs of living associated with increased demands for local goods and services, the lack of available and affordable housing and accommodation, loss of land for traditional economic pursuits such as grazing and agriculture, potential dilution of community cohesiveness, and the loss of community identity).

Jabbaroo community concerns have become heightened by a Rio Grande declaration of two major new policy directions for its mining operations. Firstly, Rio Grande plan to abandon their fly in–fly out policy that allowed mining staff to fly into the mine to work a 14-day shift and then fly out for a commensurate period of leave. The existing policy is to be replaced by a program focusing on the recruitment of couples and families to work and live in the local Jabbaroo community. Secondly, the company will recruit skilled immigrants to overcome relevant national skill shortages. As a result, the Jabbaroo community faces major social, cultural and economic challenges arising from a potentially massive population explosion. Specific social and cultural challenges are also likely to arise for the predominantly conventional, Anglo-Saxon community in attempts to incorporate new social and cultural perspectives as it embraces a much more multicultural community.

These issues are understood and respected by the mining company and Rio Grande has a strong commitment to working cooperatively with the community. However, due to the wealth, power, prestige and experience of the company, several community leaders are concerned that Rio Grande will exert excessive influence and control over the community development agenda and limit community involvement

and decision making. Community leaders have been made aware of the new community planning tool, the creative community development pyramid and appraise its applicability to their situation.

Convinced of its potential, they present the tool to Rio Grande officials arguing that it provides a framework for discussion, negotiation and planning. Following agreement, the company and the community work collaboratively to identify core community strengths from the purple base level of the pyramid (see Figure 15). Community strengths identified include a robust community spirit and sense of identity, a solid connection with local history, heritage and the environment, and strong community networks, associations and institutions (including sporting clubs, service organisations and arts organisations).

Rio Grande and the community of Jabbaroo also use the purple section of the pyramid to identify and discuss potential threats to and opportunities for the community from the escalating mining operations. By balancing the strengths against the threats and opportunities, the company and the community are able to work through issues and plan developments based on the practices identified at the blue level of the CCDP (see Figure 15), especially in relation to (i) developing partnerships, (ii) collaborative problem solving, (iii) ideas generation, and (iv) community networking. With Rio Grande providing significant financial support, several projects commence immediately. These include:

1. Land for new housing selected to ensure housing is distributed across community boundaries and not established as mining enclaves

2. Architectural plans for new housing for mining families are reviewed to allow designs to be modified to reflect the traditional historical features of existing community housing

3. Building on identified community skills, strengths and interests, Rio Grande commits to (a) the development of a community equestrian centre focusing on programs and facilities for experienced riders but also incorporating beginner lessons for new members of the community, (b) building a state-of-the-art entertainment, sporting and recreation complex to attract touring exhibitions and shows, and encourage local productions and events, (c) building a lake to ensure a bountiful water supply and provide new water-based recreational facilities, and (d) the design

of a heritage trail to protect, promote and communicate the history of Jabbaroo

4. Funding to research the forgotten or unrecognised contribution of immigrants to the growth and development of the Jabbaroo community with the view to establishing a unique cultural centre/museum. This is seen as a positive way of recognising and promoting the potential contribution of mining-related, new immigrant settlers to the future of Jabbaroo

5. A community development fund is established to stimulate and revitalise existing networks and community organisations. The fund will be managed by a group of local residents drawn from areas of community strengths (identified through the CCDP).

Short-term outcomes of the Jabbaroo/Rio Grande partnership include increased community optimism about the opportunities arising from mining in the area, a sense of community empowerment and control over change, new employment opportunities for community residents, new skills for young people in the community, and a renewed sense of community involvement through the stimulus provided to community networks and organisations (see Figure 15).

Figure 15. Jabbaroo's CCDP Approach.
Source: Author's research.

It is anticipated that longer-term outcomes will include (i) a larger and more diverse population stimulating new community ventures, (ii) new economic opportunities and resultant increased revenue flows in the community, and (iii) new local businesses catering for increased demands.

Making the Most of New Infrastructure

Several months ago the small, remote/rural community of Waratah was advised that it would be one of the first Australian towns to have access to greatly improved communication services through the broadband infrastructure being deployed through the Federal Government's National Broadband Network (NBN).

This means that all the homes and businesses in Waratah community will have access to high-speed broadband. A small group of friends comprising the local computer repair man, a teacher, a telecommunications worker and a local artist meet over dinner and discuss what the new services might allow them to do, professionally and personally. Excitement grows during the dinner as they bounce ideas off one another including:

1. Greatly improved employment opportunities through telecommuting
2. New business opportunities (not just for technology workers but for everyone)
3. Access to new markets
4. Access to experts and specialist information
5. New educational opportunities through tele-learning
6. New media opportunities.

Towards the end of the evening, reality clouds their excitement as they realise that their potential dreams cannot be achieved without hard work, careful planning and community involvement. The friends decide to form a Waratah Broadband Advancement Working Group. Over the next few weeks, the group of four expanded to 20 passionate and committed people. However, apart from good intentions and ideas, they had little experience or skill in transforming ideas into reality.

The teacher in the group had recently come across a new community planning tool, the creative community development pyramid, and recommends that the group consider its usefulness in their endeavours.

Using the purple level of the tool the Waratah Broadband Advancement Working Group identify the strengths and weaknesses of the community awareness and readiness for broadband services (see Figure 16). Identified community strengths included a well-established and vibrant group of artists, a strong culture of volunteerism, community involvement and participation, and a history of innovation in technology (Waratah was one of the first communities to establish an internet cafe in the early 1990s). Above all, the group identified what they believed was a pioneering spirit that set the community apart from neighbouring communities — as evidenced by a small local core of innovation businesses (a retail outlet for local products, a remote adventure tourist agency and a spa using the waters of the Great Artesian Basin), a forward-thinking local council that has established library internet services, and involved government agencies (especially the schools, who were actively involved in a range of community initiatives). However, the group also used the bottom, purple level of the pyramid to identify a key community weakness — the unwillingness by older members of the community to adopt new technologies. Coupled with this was the recognition that the potential of broadband services would need to be successfully demonstrated to the community in order to understand and appreciate its potential. The discussion arising from working on the purple level of the pyramid consolidated the group's proposed directions and objectives. They were determined that the community of Waratah would not simply be a passive receiver of the broadband services and associated information; they would use the opportunity to become proactive providers of services.

Using the outcomes of their discussions, the group prepared a report for council outlining the opportunities for the community and reporting on the existing community strengths that could be harnessed to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the broadband rollout. They also sought a small grant to conduct a feasibility study (funding to address the blue level of the pyramid). The feasibility study sought community input into planning for opportunities arising from the broadband rollout. Several community meetings and workshops were held generating many ideas. These ideas were gradually winnowed

and consolidated to produce a manageable number of key strategies. Sub-groups of the Waratah Broadband Advancement Working Group were formed to develop business plans for each of the strategies. These sub-groups identified and used planning and development practices drawn from the blue level of the pyramid, which included (i) community-wide idea generation activities, (ii) whole-of-community problem solving, and (iii) community business networking and partnership development. Using these community-building processes, several projects and initiatives were designed and implemented:

1. A community infrastructure program to increase community access points to internet services

2. A local government initiative to provide new interactive services for the community including bill paying, community surveying, community meetings/forums through videoconferencing, and the establishment of a electronic community soapbox/speakers' corner

3. A Waratah Combined Businesses E-shop — a partnership of local businesses collectively selling local produce and products, including locally produced art and crafts

4. The Waratah New Media Experiment — a program to create and showcase new media arts by the local community.

These projects resulted in the development of new community skills, partnerships and opportunities for the community to work together to take advantage of new national infrastructure development (see Figure 16).

The four projects outlined above provided a preliminary foundation for the Waratah community to build a presence as a user and provider of broadband services. During the subsequent decade, Waratah consolidated itself as an innovative provider of broadband services.
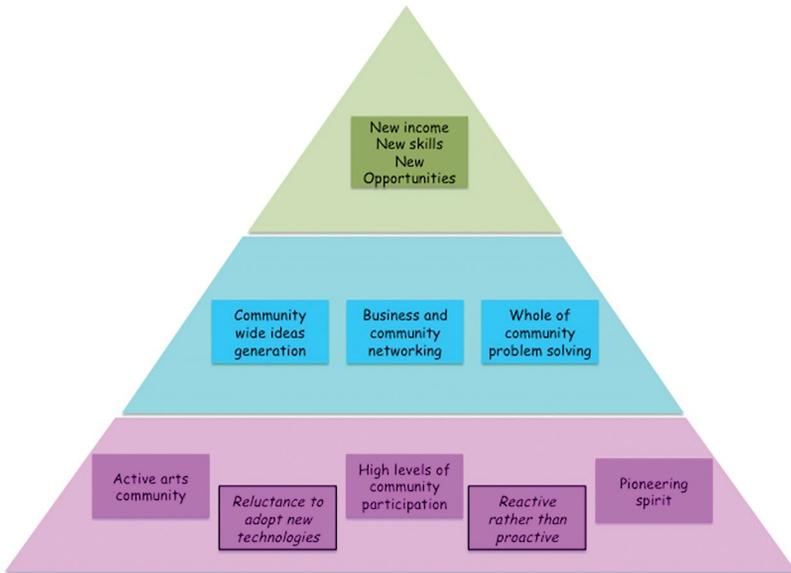
Figure 16. Waratah's CCDP Approach.
Source: Author's research.

Building on the Strengths of the Model

The community development model outlined in this chapter provides a mechanism to encourage community collaboration across diverse community interest groups and stakeholders. It provides a simple and flexible framework that can be adopted and used by individuals (business people, artists, government employees, etc.), community groups (sporting clubs, arts councils, chambers of commerce, etc.) and governments. It recognises that creative talent and skills reside in all individuals and community groups, and focuses on identifying and harnessing those talents and skills and using them to develop collaborative community solutions. In this way, the model overrides community-building approaches based solely on convention, tradition or the power and influence of specific community groups.

The model is designed to be a broad guide through which communities can make decisions and take action in a meaningful and structured way. The scenarios provided in the previous section demonstrate how the model might be used by different communities.

However, if communities are to make the most effective use of the model, it seems appropriate for further work to be undertaken to add depth to the model. Such work might include the identification and development of new tools, mentoring programs and other aids to help communities undertake specific tasks to support the implementation of the pyramid. Such tools, guides and aides might include checklists to aid the identification of community talents and skills, tools to assist in community surveying, guides in how to conduct community focus groups or public meetings and business incubation guidelines.

Reflections, Directions and Implications

The research outcomes presented in this book contribute significantly to the current range and scope of community-building approaches and strategies available to remote/rural communities by providing a previously largely unexamined focus on the role and potential of the arts in broad-based community development. Specifically, the creation of the creative community development pyramid makes an important contribution to new knowledge in the field of community development. The CCDP provides a mechanism through which community stakeholders can work collaboratively to develop holistic, innovative and creative solutions to community problems. It also facilitates communities in the process of recognising and building on existing community resources and, importantly, allows them to incorporate many of the positive features of current community thought and action. The CCDP allows communities to develop visions, directions and programs that are both integrated and interdisciplinary. The primary focus on creativity and innovation supported by the CCDP has the potential to (i) facilitate community access to new ideas, information, people and organisations, (ii) provide opportunities for the development of new modes of economic development, social cohesion, personal expression and cultural development, (iii) respond to the needs of business and industry in communities, (iv) create and develop new and positive images of rural and remote communities, and (v) develop new ways of looking at and seeing problems.

The proposition that skills and processes such as creative decision making, problem solving, critical analysis, presenting alternative viewpoints, collaboration and networking, which are inherent in the

artistic practice, have high potential relevance in assisting rural and remote communities to address the challenges and opportunities arising from social, cultural, technological and economic transformation is well supported by the research. The study's aim to develop new arts-based models, strategies and approaches to provide a framework for the development of practical strategies to be used by remote/ rural communities has been met through the creation of the CCDP. The CCDP provides a planning tool through which communities are enabled to work collaboratively in the achievement of integrated responses to community development. It encourages communities to identify, recognise and use the idiosyncratic talents and resources existing in the community, including local artists, government officials, members of community organisations, business owners and other key stakeholders.

While the CCDP represents the culmination of the current research, its development and creation have been possible only through the achievement of the first three research aims. That is, the CCDP draws on the research findings that have identified and documented (i) the contemporary challenges facing remote/rural communities, (ii) current ways of using the arts to support community development in remote/ rural communities, and (iii) contemporary strategies that recognise the centrality of creativity and innovation to the survival of remote/rural communities.

Given that this research focuses on remote/rural communities, its findings can only, at this stage, be demonstrated as relevant to communities with populations of fewer than 4,000 people located farther than 400 kilometres from a major population centre. That acknowledged, it is clear that, for remote/rural communities, the CCDP offers an important starting point to stimulate novel ways of thinking about and facilitating the design and implementation of new approaches to community development in remote/rural communities. Crucially, it provides a framework on which further work may be undertaken. The scenarios provided in this chapter exemplify the ways in which the CCDP might be used by communities in practice. While modifications may be needed as communities begin to apply the tool to real problems and challenges, it is also anticipated that the application of the CCDP will create new opportunities for further development of complementary and supplementary tools and methods to support community decision making and problem

solving. For example, communities adopting business incubation as a community strategy may create further models, guidelines and tools to assist key community members to implement strategies to stimulate and support new business development.

Implications for Further Research

The research has direct implications for further research in three major areas:

1. The evolving role of the arts and artists in community development including social, cultural, economic and environmental development

2. The continuing application of new approaches to community development through the trialling and further refinement of the CCDP

3. The implications of the growing recognition by communities, government and business of the centrality of creativity and innovation to growth and development.

The Evolving Role of Arts and Artists

Firstly, in challenging the conventional lauding of the arts as maverick, the research advocates for arts-based community development approaches based on more inclusive strategies that encompass the talents and experience of all community stakeholders. In particular, it challenges artists and arts workers to be less insular and to apply their knowledge and skills broadly across a range of community concerns. Specific further research projects arising from these findings might include:

• An exploration of the leadership potential of artists: As communities seek to address the increasingly urgent need to adapt to changing economic and social circumstances, they will need creative and innovative leadership. Such a project might initially determine the contemporary leadership qualities required by communities to respond to contemporary changes and challenges. Using these qualities as benchmarks, the current knowledge, skills and capabilities of local artists would be identified and mapped against

the required capabilities. Ultimately, the project would determine the extent to which artists are equipped to take community leadership roles and, if necessary, investigate mechanisms for the professional development of artists in leadership.

- The potential for innovative partnering: As communities increasingly appreciate the necessity to build on existing community resources and talents they need to investigate the development and maintenance of collaborative networks and partnerships. In this context, it is important to examine existing community networks and partnerships to determine their structures, function and operations. This information would provide the basis for (i) a critical analysis of the benefits and deficits of current networks, (ii) a broadly based investigation of other approaches to networks and partnerships, including franchise arrangements, regional hubs and business networks, to determine their appropriateness in community settings, and (iii) the development of new models of more inclusive and integrated collaborative networks and partnerships.

- The potential for joint problem solving: The National Review of Visual Education begins by citing the decision by Rolls Royce to send its trainee engineers to the Tate Gallery to work alongside artists in visual problem solving (Davis, 2008). Other examples of diverse problem solving with artists are also cited. Yet no in-depth research has been conducted into the relative and distinctive contributions of the partners in such ventures. There is a strong case for research that examines the operation of such problem-solving partnerships in order to devise principles from which to set these up purposively rather than serendipitously.

- Listening in community consultation: Henderson & Mayo (1998) mentioned in part the critical role of listening in community development, arguing that stakeholders need training in how to listen to and work with communities. Given that artists have traditionally operated on the fringe in communities, active and careful listening is likely to be a key tool in achieving both mutual respect and integration. Research to explore the roles and functions of listening in community consultation has the potential to provide further strategies and tools to help develop comprehensive and integrated approaches to community development.

Trialling and Refining the CCDP

Another area of further research arises from the implementation of the CCDP developed by the current research. Subsequent research projects could usefully focus on the critical evaluation of the CCDP in operation in remote/rural communities. These could include:

- An examination of the CCDP in practice in specific remote/rural settings to enhance and refine the model. Benefits of such an examination would include (i) the provision of information on which to commence continuous improvement of the CCPD, (ii) increase the data on which remote/rural communities build capacity, (iii) build experience and skill within communities, and (iv) contribute to the further enhancement of the model.
- A further project could take elements of the CCDP and analyse the processes that take place within communities as they work through the process. For example, research may test the hypothesis that a key practice from the middle planning layer of the pyramid (integrative practices) is ideas generation by examining and documenting the processes used by a range of communities. The project could then use the resultant data to develop specific models and tools to help other communities working through specific elements of the CCDP.
- While the CCDP was developed specifically for use in remote/rural communities, its usefulness in other environments warrants further examination. A potentially useful project could test the application of the CCDP in other communities including larger rural communities, regional communities and maybe even outer urban communities.

Creativity and Innovation in Community Development

Finally, the current research's primary focus on creativity and innovation provides new challenges for researchers examining community development. By focusing on the concepts of creativity and innovation rather than specific community contexts such as community arts or community health, future researchers may be challenged to examine opportunities for the development of integrated modes of economic development, social cohesion, personal expression and cultural development. They may also be challenged to move away from what seems to be a research fixation on the examination and

evaluation of government policies and programs towards research that explores the potential role of businesses and industries in community development. There are also opportunities for research to conduct and document best practice case studies arising from development approaches creating and developing fresh and positive images of remote/rural communities.

Implications for Education

The research also has implications for education, particularly arts education. If the arts are to adopt a more integrated role in the nation's economic, social and cultural life, particularly as creativity and innovation are recognised as crucial to growth and development, then arts education at all levels needs to be reassessed, redirected and realigned towards the centre rather than the educational periphery. Teaching approaches, especially at school level, will need to adopt more integrated, interdisciplinary approaches, building links between the arts and other disciplines. National arts curricula will need to focus on the development not just of artists but of critical and creative thinking for all students. The acquisition of creative problem-solving skills will enable all students to gain the additional confidence and the flexible, adaptive tools to understand and appreciate the complexities and challenges of their role in everyday twenty-first century life. Through appropriate national curricula, students will discover that artists work individually, in and across groups, and that the arts inform divergent creative and mainstream industries and contribute to the development of vibrant and inclusive communities.

At colleges and universities, arts education approaches will, of course, need to continue to consolidate specialist skills development but will also need to develop new programs and learning strategies that seek to encourage broader connections between artists and critical social and economic agendas. Programs might also adopt action learning strategies, encouraging and facilitating arts students to undertake learning projects in partnership with government, businesses and/or other organisations. At one end of the spectrum such projects might facilitate arts students working with architecture firms to incorporate art solutions/products into new buildings. More radically, at the other end of the spectrum, arts students might work with local governments

and property developers to design new neighbourhoods, ensuring art and liveability are compatible with economic returns and sustainable outcomes. In higher education, art colleges and universities may consider adopting mentoring programs that match students not only with other artists but with business people, government officials or community leaders.

Implications for Policy

The outcomes of the research also have implications for government policy development. State governments interested in stimulating community development through creativity and innovation will need to review policies and funding programs to ensure that communities have increased flexibility and enhanced ownership. Current policies and funding regimes operate in ways that encourage the segmentation of community work — for example, community health programs are controlled and funded separately from education and community welfare programs while current funding for arts programs is segregated from all other community activities. State governments need to ensure policies for community development are formulated with a view to breaking down barriers and encouraging integrated, seamless approaches to whole-of-community development. While global government approaches have become popular in recent years, the policy focus has, to date, been on the achievement of cost-efficiencies and the reduction of duplication. While these objectives are important, it is timely that the policy focus be broadened to address the potential benefits of integrated approaches to communities and the people who live and work in them.

It is also recommended that local government policies be reviewed in light of the outcomes of this research. As local governments provide a direct interface with their community they are in a unique position to facilitate change through practical approaches to community growth. Local governments need to become less focused on tradition and conventional approaches to community growth; they need actively to seek more innovative and imaginative ways to stimulate positive change in their communities. They also need to ensure that their policies facilitate and encourage integrated approaches to the design and implementation of community programs and projects.

Equally, local governments need to ensure that their planning processes are inclusive, not just to ensure thorough and proper consultation but to identify existing community talents and resources that can contribute to planning and implementation processes. In this context, the CCDP developed by the research provides a framework for the development of new policies and practices and is an appropriate tool for immediate use by local governments in the review and analysis of current policies.

Implications for Artists, Arts Workers and Arts Organisations

Finally, the research has strong implications for artists, arts workers and arts organisations. The outcomes of the research encourage artists to become much less insular and inward looking, and to actively seek opportunities for engagement with broader community issues and concerns.

Likewise, arts organisations need to work with artists to assist them in developing not just new skills but also new attitudes. If artists are to accept the challenge of the research to engage more broadly in community life, they will need to emerge from their silos, hone and redirect existing skills, and acquire a range of new skills. While they will always benefit from professional development in their specific art forms, they will also need skill development in communication, consultation and negotiation. Those who wish to work in new areas and with innovative concepts may need skill development in project management, financial management and human resource management. Importantly, all will need to develop attitudes focused on seeing the arts as a part — perhaps in many instances and projects a key part — of a wider community agenda of change and development. In each instance and opportunity, the challenge for artists is to determine how the arts might contribute to key community concerns and to plan concertedly with other community members to ensure such contributions are brought to fruition. Failure to engage in such issues may mean that artists and their contribution to community life become even more marginalised.

Artists have, possibly more than any other group, enjoyed the freedom associated with the unpredictable, the unconventional, the maverick that lurks within us all. The Janus face of the maverick offers societal freedom — the licence to cock a snoot at the confines of society's norms — but often the vice-like restriction of penury is the other face of that life. The revaluing of creativity now offers artists an opportunity to explore different dimensions of freedom in partnership with individuals and groups previously seen as strange bedfellows for the arts. It offers opportunities to embark on a trajectory of challenge by collaborating on solutions beyond the known and enjoying the professional, creative, social, cultural and economic rewards implicit in such activities.