

LIFECYCLE PROJECT - GRIFFITH

Organisations Involved & Contact Details

Organisation: Griffith City Council

Contact: http://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/Page/Page.asp?Page_Id=106&p=1

Aims & Target Group

Aims: The objectives of the LIFECYCLE project were to bring people together, to establish links within and between the sub-communities that form our shared community. LIFECYCLE provided a forum for interculture, intergenerational and interfaith sharing and storytelling. The project also offered the chance to celebrate the multiculturalism of Griffith and surrounding areas, as well as demonstrating respect for and acknowledgement of the first people of the region, the Wiradjuri. The LIFECYCLE model works to build the capacity of the community by equipping them with the skills to plan, design, create and install artworks that tell the story of our community. This model is planned to be used across the Griffith LGA, working with a variety of artistic outcomes.

The over arching strategy was to ensure that community and cultural development arts and cultural practice was innovative and of exceptional quality. We also wanted to develop a sustainable model which would go beyond the life of this project. This was the nexus of our strategy and realised that if successful, these would be transferable to other projects and communities. We have succeeded in ensuring this strategic outcome was met.

Project Description & Components

The LIFECYCLE project was a community cultural development / community art project. This initiative was a celebration of culture of indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse peoples, honouring the contribution of diverse ethnic community to Griffith's cultural life.

The public artworks created through the LIFECYCLE project charts the various journeys and relationships different cultures have with this region, from the Wiradjuri people to the soldier settlers to the recent arrivals. LIFECYCLE provided an opportunity to develop community cohesiveness through the strengthening of our sense of place, shared culture and community identity. The LIFECYCLE model has striven, and continues to strive, towards meeting and advancing the aspirations of our community members. LIFECYCLE also provided a framework to enable sustained participation and interaction between service providers in the community.





Process

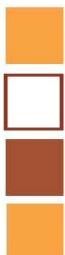
Processes and Activities

The process driving this project was to ensure equitable engagement with less advantaged target groups, with particular involvement from refugee, Aboriginal and older Italian Migrant Groups. To ensure relevance and efficiencies, we linked in with existing support structures such as Tafe, ESL and Bi-lingual HACC programs.

- A steering committee was established (the committee is ongoing with a long term view towards other CCD projects) consisting of representatives from the Griffith City Library, the Griffith Adult Learning Association (GALA), the Multicultural Resource Centre, Griffith City Council, Griffith TAFE and the Griffith Bi-Lingual HACC worker. Memorandum of Understandings were established with GALA, TAFE and the Bi-Lingual HACC service, the onus of the project was on accessible participation rather than duplication of services and overcommitting these disadvantaged target groups.
- A local artist, Di Tarr, was appointed as the project facilitator. Di is a well respected artist in the Griffith region who has previously completed large mosaic artworks for public spaces. Di is well known to the community, and had made many previous contacts with the target groups involved in the LIFECYCLE project.
- Under the auspices of GALA, mosaicing workshops were held over time with various groups. Public workshops were held at the GALA art studio at a variety of times to ensure the greatest accessibility for participants. During the workshops, stories would be shared and themes discussed. These discussions resulted in the design of the final artwork. Di also worked closely with the Aboriginal Arts and Practices program at TAFE to create the stand alone works, a series of irrigation pipes mosaiced by the indigenous students to create "The Poles".
- The artworks were installed in the forecourt of the Griffith Regional Theatre, within the Council and TAFE precinct of Griffith. Some of the students from the Aboriginal Arts and Practices program were employed as Di's installation assistants.
- A public launch of the LIFECYCLE artworks was held on 31 July 2004. The launch was attended by hundreds of people. The Honourable Rods Kemp, Minister for the Arts, who could not attend, sent a speech and policy announcement to be read on the day. The launch was a true celebration of the diversity of Griffith with all groups represented, and included dances from Pacific Islander children and speeches in Italian. It was also the occasion of Griffith's first public smoking ceremony by the local Wiradjuri people, and offered a chance for young indigenous dancers to perform publicly not only for their family and friends, but also for members of Bangarra Dance Theatre who were in town for a performance that night.
- All aspects of culture were shared during the launch – food, dress, dance, language, art, stories, histories, hopes and future dreams.

Stakeholders and Partners

- Griffith City Council – admin support, project management, promotion, launch coordination, installation site, DA, CC and OC application and compliance, catering, venues, staff time and expertise





- Griffith Regional Theatre – venue for workshops and installation of artworks, launch venue.
- Primary Artist and workshop facilitator Di Tarr – skills taught including public art (mosaic) design, creation, installation
- Griffith Adult Learning Association (GALA) – provide support, venue for workshops and classes, advertising and promotion, staff time and expertise, access to clients, translation and support services, access to English as a Second Language classes for participants.
- TAFE – support, staff time, technical advice and expertise, access to facilities and venue for workshops, storage of artworks, access to class of Indigenous Arts and Practices Program, installation support.
- Griffith City Library - support, resources, promotion, staff time and expertise.
Griffith Multicultural Resource Centre – promotion amongst clients, referral to clients, assistance with cultural sensitivities and language considerations, staff time and expertise.
- Bi-Lingual HACC worker – referral to clients, interpreting services, support for participants, staff time and expertise.

Outcomes

A longer term outcome from the project that was achieved was the formation of a stronger network of agencies and service providers ensuring greater service delivery, interagency referrals and unity in programming. The project also provided innovative pathways to local government for non-traditional users. These stronger networks enhance community connectedness and cohesiveness.

An unexpected outcome was the strategic links to Council planning processes. Griffith City Council was developing its Social and Community Plan. This project created a dialogue and a pathway between Council and the communities. This enabled Council to engage these communities in the Social and Community Planning strategies resulting in better planning and decision making.

The evaluation and feedback from this project also went towards cultural mapping and planning for Griffith City Council “Cultural Awakening” – Cultural Plan.

Challenges & Obstacles

Funding

The total budget for the LIFECYCLE project was \$92 020. This comprises of \$33 000 from the Australia Council through the Community Cultural Development Board; \$2000 from the Country Arts Support Program, funded by Regional Arts NSW; \$57 020 in-kind support from Griffith City Council and the key stakeholders, agencies and service providers involved.





Images

