

NORTH AUSTRALIAN FESTIVAL OF ARTS

**2025 - 2028
STRATEGIC PLAN**

TOWNSVILLE, QLD



North Australian Festival of Arts (NAFA) respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we gather, the Wulgurukaba of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun, Bindal, Gugu Badhun and Nywaigi people. We pay our heartfelt respects to their Elders past, present, and all future generations. We honour their enduring connection to the lands, waters, and skies of the region.

NAFA also recognises that First Nations people from this land and throughout Australia were the original dancers, poets, singers, musicians and artists for countless generations and remain a vital part of Australia's modern cultural fabric. NAFA is committed to celebrating and amplifying First Nations' voices, ensuring their stories and contributions are at the heart of our festival.

We extend our acknowledgement to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who call Gurambilbarra (Townsville) and North Queensland home; we celebrate the diversity, strength, and resilience of their communities.

Let us walk together, with respect and unity, toward a shared and vibrant future.



SPIRIT & STYLE

NAFA speaks with a vibrant, salty charm – full of warmth, inclusivity, and creative energy. It’s a voice that invites everyone to join in, celebrates the region’s unique identity, and boldly champions the transformative power of art. Playful yet purposeful, NAFA’s tone reflects the essence of North Queensland: unapologetically bold, deeply connected to community, and always ready to inspire.

VISION

The arts are our tide, rising to connect, strengthen, and transform our lands.

MISSION

NAFA celebrates the heart and soul of North Queensland by bringing communities together through brave, inclusive, and innovative artistic experiences. It is a festival that amplifies diverse voices, nurtures artists and creativity, and inspires deep connection – showcasing the best of regional Queensland to the world.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. **RESPECT** First Nations heritage by sharing the knowledge, traditions, and voices of North Queensland's First Nations people with care and reverence.
2. **SUPPORT** artistic freedom by promoting authentic and inclusive representation that uplifts diverse perspectives and nurtures the artistic and cultural ecosystem of North Queensland.
3. **CELEBRATE** regional stories by bringing regional Queensland's unique, diverse narratives and voices for audiences locally, nationally and internationally.
4. **INFUSE** North Queensland's natural beauty into the canvases for creation of stunning and powerful creative experiences.
5. **THINK** big with imaginative programming and innovative management, taking calculated risks and embracing change.
6. **NURTURE** kindness, inclusion, and connection throughout the festival; listen deeply with curiosity.

VALUES

1. **BRAVERY:** approach every aspect of the festival with courage, love and an open heart.
2. **JUSTICE:** create equitable, inclusive, and accessible opportunities for all.
3. **ENTANGLEMENT:** foster contagious positive energy and a sense of inter-connection between people, art, and place.
4. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** ensure all contributors feel seen, supported, and celebrated.
5. **PRIDE:** glow with evangelical pride about who we are and where we are, including the necessary truth telling.



FESTIVAL IN NUMBERS

	YEAR 1 (2019)	YEAR 6 (2024)	FUTURE DIRECTION
AUDIENCE	45k+	60k+	Increase
NEW ATTENDEES	N/A	16%	Increase
MEDIAN AGE	35	47	Decrease
TICKETS SOLD	20k+	16k+	Increase
NET PROMOTER SCORE	N/A	57	Maintain
ARTIST ENGAGED	1002	799	Increase
FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS	10%	34%	Increase
PERFORMANCES	191	322	Maintain
ECONOMIC IMPACT	\$5m (Direct) \$10.1m (Multiplied)	\$7.9m (Direct) \$23m (Multiplied)	Increase
VISITORS	8.2%	16%	Increase
NIGHTS STAYED	10k+	14k+	Increase



STRATEGIC GOALS AND SUCCESS METRICS

1. EXPAND ACCESS AND INCLUSIVITY

To plan for our communities' future, we will broaden NAFA's engagement:

- 1.1. Reduce median key audience age (eg from 40-49 into 30-39);
- 1.2. Maintain 40-49, increase 30-39, and increase family attendance;
- 1.3. Attract new attendees and first-time participants - improve from 16% to 20%;
- 1.4. Ensure inclusivity is more than just physical access.

2. GROW CULTURAL AND ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

To embed NAFA into the broader North Queensland region, we will strengthen NAFA's position as a cultural tourism destination:

- 2.1. Attract more "Out of Town(svill)ers" - improve from 16% to 20%;
- 2.2. Forge partnerships with tourism organisations to expand reach;
- 2.3. Develop and implement inclusive tourism frameworks and services to ensure equal access and enhance travel experiences for individuals with diverse abilities;
- 2.4. Boost the economic impact to the Townsville region's economy, particularly with the multiplied impact.

3. BUILD A RESILIENT ORGANISATION WITH TANGIBLE IMPACT

To ensure long term sustainability, we will prioritise organisational capability and capacity:

- 3.1. Build lasting connections with artists, communities, and stakeholders;
- 3.2. Foster a culture of innovation, improvement and collaboration within the festival eco-system;
- 3.3. Champion equity and accessibility in programming, pricing, opportunities, operations and design.





4. EMBED SUSTAINABILITY

To lead by example while achieving environmental and creative sustainability goals:

- 4.1. Reduce waste through innovative sustainability actions and eliminating single use plastics;
- 4.2. Reduce carbon footprint by prioritising sustainable travel and fuel use;
- 4.3. Communicate and promote sustainability goals and achievements;
- 4.4. Support and champion festival stakeholders to follow sustainable practices;
- 4.5. Cultivate financial sustainability through innovative funding and partnerships;
- 4.6. Invest in homegrown talent to create a strong and sustainable arts industry.

5. CHAMPION ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

To honour artistic integrity, we will ensure that art and creativity remain central to NAFA's purpose:

- 5.1. Foster First Nations' artistry by supporting the creation and showcasing of First Nations-led art and performances, ensuring representation and respect – increase from 34% to 40% of projects including artists or employees from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background by 2028;
- 5.2. Commission new works and invest in the development of bold, innovative works that amplify regional artists' voices – aim for 6 annual commissioned or co-commissioned works by 2028;
- 5.3. Build regional recognition elevating the profile of North Queensland artists on a national and international stage – advance national and international opportunities for NAFA's performers;
- 5.4. Engage communities through art delivering interactive, hands-on art experiences for audiences of all ages and backgrounds – offer 10 hands-on experiences annually by 2028.

WHAT OUR SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

CULTURAL

Increased Representation: A visible rise in the number of First Nations and regional artists and performers with additional needs featured in the program.

Audience Engagement: Increase attendance year on year including high participation in art workshops, exhibitions, family focused and interactive events.

SOCIAL

Recognition of Excellence: NAFA-commissioned works being showcased beyond Townsville, including at other festivals and arts venues.

Industry Recognition: NAFA being recognised as a key player in the national and international arts scene for innovative and inclusive programming.

ECONOMIC

Financial Stability: Establish diversified funding streams through long term partnerships, government funding, philanthropy and earned income.

Financial Impact on the North Queensland Region: Increased visitor and overnight stay numbers directly related to NAFA events with broad benefits across the hinterland's eco-system.



**Best Queensland Cultural, Arts or Music Event 2023
Australian Event Awards**

**Winner: Excellence in Accessible Tourism 2023
Townsville Tourism and Event Awards**

**Best Regional Event Nationally 2022
Australian Event Awards**

**Best Regional Event Nationally 2020
Australian Event Awards**