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Research reveals central NSW cultural facilities and activities boost regional economies and build stronger communities

Today Museums & Galleries NSW launched its latest research paper **Value Added! The social and economic contribution of cultural facilities in Central NSW**. Commissioned by Museums & Galleries NSW, in partnership with, Orange City Council, Bathurst Regional Council and Dubbo City Council, the study for the first time reveals in hard figures the positive contribution to the local and regional communities and their economies made by the council operated museums, galleries and performing arts centres.

The study showed that the facilities create an additional 8.5 jobs across the region for every 10 full time equivalent positions and generates almost \$9 million in household income.

It also showed that these facilities funded by local government in fact provide an economic return on their investment by adding more than \$14 million across the region.

The facilities, and their related activities, were also found to help residents of the three local government areas to think differently about their world, enhance connection within communities and contribute positively to an individual's sense of place.

The significant contributions by the volunteers working in these institutions were also identified by the study. These 500 plus volunteers generate an additional \$1.3 million dollars in economic activity, over half a million dollars of household income and 14 additional full time equivalent jobs across the region.

The research also revealed households are willing to pay over \$1.1 million per annum to maintain their cultural facilities and current levels of access and service quality.

Cr Allan Smith, Mayor of Dubbo said:

This study confirms that our recent investment of \$27 million over the last 10 years has more than just cultural benefits but adds real value to our community, both for the point of view of the economy but also contributing to the great lifestyle available in regional NSW

Cr Paul Toole, Mayor of Bathurst Regional Council said:

Facilities such as these are very important to Bathurst. They not only enrich our Region culturally, but this study shows that they create employment opportunities across the entire community and provide a significant boost to our local economy.

Mayor John Davis from Orange said:

This study shows that our volunteers give much more than just time. Apart from undertaking valuable tasks it is great to see their effort goes much further than just their time in the galleries, theatres and museums.

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VALUE ADDED!

KEY FINDINGS

This study examined 12 of the more than 75 local government funded performing arts venues, public art galleries and museums which contribute to the cultural and economic life of regional NSW

The study found that the performing arts venues, public art galleries and museums in Orange, Bathurst and Dubbo collectively:

- create an additional **8.5 jobs** outside the cultural sector across the region for each 10 full time positions within the cultural sector.
- add over **\$14 million** to the local economy across the region.
- create almost **\$9 million in household income** across the region.
- engage a large sector of the community through volunteer opportunities. **Volunteers generate \$1.3 million in economic activity**, over half a million dollars of household income and 14 additional full time equivalent jobs across the region.
- **contribute positively to social capital** by helping people to think differently, enhance connections and trust between people and develop a sense of place.
- are valued by the community with households across the region **willing to pay a combined total of over \$1.1 million per annum** to maintain current levels of service.