

2024 Audience Development Fund

The 2024 round of the Audience Development Fund, a devolved funding program of the NSW Government through Create NSW and administered by Museums & Galleries of NSW, was assessed on 6 August 2024 by a three-member panel comprising Megan Fizell, Special Collections, UNSW Library Gallery; Brittany Nguyen, Assistant Program Curator, Powerhouse Museum; and Kelly McDonald, Assistant Gallery Director/Senior Curator, Mosman Art Gallery.

The panel assessed 11 applications from public galleries across NSW and awarded five grants to programs that aimed to develop new ways of engaging diverse audiences, connecting them to exhibitions and artists. The successful applicants developed proposals that targeted specific audiences, established need through consultation with target groups and demonstrated how ongoing engagement would be achieved. High scoring proposals included staff training to ensure the sustainability of engagement programs.

The assessment panel encouraged all applicants to: contact M&G NSW staff prior to submitting their application to check the eligibility of their activities; address the selection criteria as this forms the basis of assessment; ensure artist fees are consistent with NAVA rates; and make engagement programs the primary focus of the applications.



Orange African Women's Group at the *Together in Harmony Garden Party, 2024*. Image: Courtesy of Orange Regional Gallery.

Front row:
Prisca Moses, Orange City Council Migrant Support Officer Anni Gallagher, and Joyce Muriithi.

Second row:
Heather Phiri, Naomi Cooke, Tsvakai Gama, and Elizabeth Makgeta.

2024 Audience Development Fund Recipients

Orange Regional Gallery - *Connecting to Place* (\$10,000)

Connecting to Place aims to build new and ongoing relationships with migrant and refugee communities in Orange in partnership with Orange Migrant & Refugee Support Services, artist educator Gill Nicol and artist Sammy Hawker. The project includes staff training and eight artist educator led structured workshops interacting with contemporary art, with a focus on wellbeing and social connections. Participants will talk about, look at and make art, connecting to place, both individually and collectively.

Lismore Regional Gallery – *Strengthening Inclusion* (\$10,000)

Strengthening Inclusion is a series of programs designed to address diverse accessibility needs, improve gallery spaces, and enhance communication with audiences. Programs include the recording of curator and artist talks for exhibitions creating an accessible podcast; filming of AUSLAN tours to be available online; the design of autism friendly visual stories and wayfinding signage; 10 noisy hour programs over 12 months incorporating performance, dance and embodied arts tours; and the design and creation of a sensory kit for visitors.

Blue Mountains Cultural Centre - Blue Mountains City Art Gallery - *ARTbabies* (\$5,009)

ARTbabies will provide drop in artist-led creative sessions for 0-5 year olds and their carers, including activities that foster connection and learning through exploring texture, colour, shape, sound and touch. The project will partner with Council's Community Development Department, Blue Mountains Theatre and Hub teams and artist Jennifer Brady.

Newcastle Art Gallery - *Access and Audio Guide* (\$10,000)

The Gallery will develop an innovative *Access and Audio Guide* to enrich visitors' experiences with its collection and exhibitions. The project will provide permanent onsite programming for audiences with disability or who are d/Deaf, and artist led staff workshops on how to write audio descriptions through collaboration with industry experts.

Broken Hill City Art Gallery - *Digital Art Hub* (\$9,991)

The Digital Art Hub project will empower young people with workshops in new technologies and digital art. Working with schools, community organisations, and local artists, it bridges the technology gap and equips participants with essential skills for future opportunities in creative industries. The project will facilitate collaborations with the AACES (Aboriginal Art and Cultural Education Sistas), a partnership between Broken Hill High School, the Broken Hill City Art Gallery and Maari Ma Health Service, guest artist Charlotte Hayward, and local artists, Jarrod Prince and Priscilla McIntosh.

For more information or to discuss a project please contact: Susan Wacher, Exhibitions, Funding & Programs Manager: susanw@mgnsw.org.au or Vanessa James, Funding & Programs Coordinator: vanessaj@mgnsw.org.au

The Audience Development Fund is a Create NSW devolved funding program, administered by Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW) on behalf of the NSW Government.