

Cultural planning in local government

Statewide forum series, April – July 2014

Presented by the Cultural Development Network in collaboration with the Arts and Culture Committee, Municipal Association of Victoria, and the Melbourne City Council, Corangamite Shire Council, Gannawarra Shire Council, Mitchell Shire Council and Latrobe City Council.

Culture in its broadest sense is about what matters to people and communities. It encompasses history, identity, sense of place and creative imaginings for the future. Cultural planning deals with the unique values and experiences of local communities. It encourages integration of cultural issues and activities with broader council plans, and assists councils in promoting the quality of life of communities, through targeted cultural activity.

In Victoria to date, there has been no sector-wide approach to cultural planning, while councils increasingly invest in cultural development and activity and require staff to carry out professional standard work. This series of forums provides the first opportunity for shared processes and standards in the sector, across the whole of the state. It offers local government cultural development workers skill development in cultural planning, and the chance to share expertise and experience. A 'theory of change' focus encourages a deep examination of outcomes that are sought and methods to determine how these are achieved.

- Learn how to consult, research, develop, implement and evaluate your cultural plan.
- Develop skills in use of national, state and local data to inform your planning.
- Share knowledge and ideas with councils in your region.
- Link in to worldwide networks and resources on culture and planning.
- Consider your own council's plan in the light of a shared statewide approach.

The format will include presentations, group discussion, case studies and information about resources.

The forum series will contribute to the development of an agreed cultural planning framework for Victorian councils.

Date and location: This series of three workshops will be held between April and July in central Melbourne and each of four regional locations: Camperdown (Corangamite Shire); Kerang (Gannawarra Shire); Seymour (Mitchell Shire) and Morwell (Latrobe City Council).

Who should attend: The forums are directed at local government staff who are involved in developing and implementing cultural plans. We recommend that participants attend all of the forums, as they are an interlinked sequence, but we welcome attendance at any of them. The final forum will be followed by an informal briefing session to which other stakeholders in the cultural planning process (CEOs, elected representatives, senior managers, community leaders, local artists and organisations) are invited to share a brief overview of the series.

Forum facilitators: John Smithies, Director, and Dr. Kim Dunphy, Research Program Manager, the Cultural Development Network, Victoria, with contributions from local professionals in each location.

Cost: \$65 each forum, \$180 for series of three. **Registration:** <http://www.mav.asn.au/>

These events are presented by the Cultural Development Network in collaboration with the Arts and Culture Committee, Municipal Association of Victoria, and host councils.

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Program

Forum 1	Instigation
Content	The first forum introduces the policy frameworks for cultural planning in local government in Victoria, considering international, national and local contexts. It then focuses on the early stages of the planning process, particularly consultation with communities and establishment of values and setting of goals. The importance of evidence and data as a basis for planning will be explored and the concept of theory of change, to underpin logical and SMART planning processes.
Dates and locations: 9.30 - 4.30 each day.	Melbourne, Melbourne City Council: Tuesday April 29. Camperdown, Corangamite Shire: Tuesday May 6. Kerang, Gannawarra Shire: Thursday May 8. Seymour, Mitchell Shire: Tuesday May 13. Morwell, Latrobe City Council: Thursday May 15.
	<i>This forum is suitable for those involved in the planning and implementation of councils' cultural development work, as it provides an overview of the framework for planning. The second and third forums particularly address the needs of those creating and implementing cultural plans.</i>

Forum 2	Implementation
Content	This forum considers the endpoint of the planning process: what we are seeking to achieve and how we know we have got there. This includes a focus on indicators for cultural development in local government; data collection and use; evaluation approaches and the setting of targets for our work. We will explore how we establish a baseline for our activities, including mapping of cultural assets in our communities: examining what we have and what might be missing. This leads to the final topic of assessment of resources, before we determine activities. A model for managing cultural development projects, engaging across the five sectors (council leaders, culture managers, elected representatives, community leaders, local artists) will be discussed in relation to participants' own planning process.
Dates and locations: 9.30 - 4.30 each day.	Melbourne, Melbourne City Council: Thursday June 12. Camperdown, Corangamite Shire: Tuesday June 17. Kerang, Gannawarra Shire: Thursday June 19. Seymour, Mitchell Shire: Tuesday June 24. Morwell, Latrobe City Council: Thursday June 26.

Forum 3	Integration
	The final session moves us from 'theory of change' to 'theory of action': what actions we will take to achieve these goals. It brings together all the work over the series, with an intense focus on council's own plans (current or future), and development and examination of key activities.
Dates and locations: 9.30 - 4.30 each day.	Camperdown, Corangamite Shire: Tuesday July 15. Kerang, Gannawarra Shire: Thursday July 17. Seymour, Mitchell Shire: Tuesday July 22. Morwell, Latrobe City Council: Thursday July 24. Melbourne, Melbourne City Council: Wednesday July 30.
4.30 - 6 pm: Information session, over drinks and finger food.	This forum will be followed by a briefing session for other stakeholders in the cultural planning process: CEOs, senior managers, local artists, local leaders and elected representatives.

