

Cultural Policy

Strategic Alignment - Our Community

Public

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City Community Services and
Culture Committee

Program Contact:

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Approving Officer:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement of the draft Cultural Policy (the Policy) in **Attachment A**.

The endorsement of this Policy delivers on a key target of the Strategic Plan 2024–2028 to establish a Cultural Policy that promotes and supports the City's unique cultural identity and opportunities. The Policy will serve as a strategic framework for the City of Adelaide (CoA), embedding cultural responsibility across Council operations and decision-making processes, and shape the City's cultural vitality through to 2036.

The draft Policy outlines five guiding principles aligned with the Council's Strategic Plan 2024–2028:

- Amplifying Our Creative Capital
- Culturally Inclusive and Socially Connected
- Reconciliation and Truth-Telling
- Preserving Cultural Heritage, Embracing Progress
- Creating Space for Cultural Expression.

Over 1,100 individuals and stakeholders participated in a two-stage consultation process, helping to shape the Policy. Feedback reaffirmed the importance of Adelaide's heritage, strong cultural identity, inclusiveness, affordability, and the role of the Park Lands and public spaces in cultural life.

The consultation also identified areas for improvement, including stronger equity commitments, clear implementation actions, increased accessibility and connections for migrant communities, international engagement and attention to ensuring digital tools and platforms are accessible and support cultural diversity, equity and inclusion. The Policy for endorsement reflects this feedback in tracked changes in [Link 1](#).

If adopted, the Policy will replace the Cultural Strategy 2017–2023 and will be implemented within key organisational strategies and action plans, and across our subsidiaries.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 10 June 2025 for consideration

THAT THE CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CULTURE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL
THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the public consultation summary on the draft Cultural Policy as contained in Attachment B to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 3 June 2025.
2. Adopts the Cultural Policy as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 3 June 2025.
3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to make minor, typographical, syntactical and technical updates to the Cultural Policy as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 3 June 2025, to finalise the document.

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Community Our Objective is to support our communities to thrive, create fun, lively and interesting experiences and celebrate and honour community and cultures. This draft Policy delivers on a key strategic deliverable in that Strategic Plan that is to: <i>Develop a Cultural Policy by 2024 that promotes and supports the City's unique cultural identity and opportunities</i>. The draft Policy also supports the pillars of Council's Strategic Plan: Our Environment, Our Economy and Our Places.
Policy	Council does not currently have a Cultural Policy. If adopted, the Cultural Policy will supersede the <i>Cultural Strategy 2017-2023</i> .
Consultation	Extensive consultation has been undertaken from November 2024 to April 2025 over two distinct stages with the community, key industry stakeholders, Council's Committees and Subsidiaries. The first stage consultation was presented to Council on 8 April 2025; the second stage consultation summary is presented in Attachment B .
Resource	Development of the draft Cultural Policy and associated consultation has been delivered through existing resources.
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Not as a result of this report
Opportunities	The City of Adelaide will explore funding and partnership opportunities across government, private, and philanthropic sectors—including State and Federal Governments—to support the achievement of the Cultural Policy's aspirations.
24/25 Budget Allocation	\$22,500 has been expended on the Policy development to date.
Proposed 25/26 Budget Allocation	Policy implementation will be resourced from within existing operational budgets for 25/26.
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	The Policy has a 10-year framework from 2025 to 2036, to be reviewed every four years.
24/25 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

1. As a key action in its Strategic Plan 2024-2028, Council has committed to, 'Develop a Cultural Policy by 2024 that promotes and supports the City's unique cultural identity and opportunities.' Responsibility for the implementation of the Cultural Policy will extend to all areas of Council including subsidiaries.
2. The draft Cultural Policy (the draft Policy) provided in **Attachment A** has been developed following a Stage 1 community consultation between November 2024 and March 2025.
3. At the meeting of 8 April 2025, Council endorsed the draft Policy for public consultation and noted the consultation feedback and summary from Stage 1 consultation.
4. Stage 2 consultation on the draft Policy commenced on 9 April and closed on 30 April 2025.
5. Consultation was primarily facilitated through Our Adelaide.
 - 5.1. 76% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the draft Policy principles and priorities.
 - 5.2. During the 21-day consultation period, 25 community survey responses were received online, and the project page recorded 582 visits. Our Adelaide recorded 241 downloads of the draft Policy.
 - 5.3. Eight hardcopy submissions were received from the following organisations and individuals: Adelaide University; Art Gallery of South Australia; Arts Industry Council of South Australia; Australian Hotels Association (SA); Festivals Adelaide; Festival City Adelaide; Government of South Australia (Department of Multicultural Affairs); Renew Adelaide; and TAFE SA.
6. The consultation summary in **Attachment B** outlines key themes and feedback arising from the Stage 2 consultation.
 - 6.1. Respondents recognised the draft Policy as an important foundation for both Council and the City's cultural life over the next decade with overwhelming agreement to its principles and strategic priorities.
 - 6.2. Despite strong support for cultural inclusion, feedback revealed differing community perspectives and a perceived prioritisation of certain cultural expressions. This reinforced the importance of clearly articulating the City of Adelaide (CoA)'s commitment to cultural rights.
 - 6.3. Respondents also highlighted the need for the draft Policy to more explicitly address the impact of the digital world on the City's cultural future and Council's evolving role in this space, and the importance of international engagement.

Revisions to the draft Policy

7. In response to consultation feedback, minor adjustments have been made to the priorities, and Council's proposed roles and responsibilities. The draft Policy reflects this feedback through the track changes in the draft Policy document [\[Link 1\]](#).
8. Core expectations and requests from the community focus on the application and implementation of the Policy by the CoA including:
 - 8.1. A desire for actions and measurable commitments in realising the draft Policy.
 - 8.2. Stronger partnerships with sectors such as education, hospitality, and festivals to support implementation and evaluation of the draft Policy.
 - 8.3. Greater transparency around funding models to ensure long-term cultural investment and sustainability.
 - 8.4. Specific opportunities for the CoA to meaningfully engage and recognise our multicultural communities through established networks and designations.
9. In response to the feedback received, the following amendments were made to the draft Policy:
 - 9.1. Clarification that all principles hold equal value and are not presented in any hierarchical order—acknowledging the dynamic and interconnected nature of Adelaide's cultural life.
 - 9.2. A revised definition of *Cultural Infrastructure*, which now explicitly includes *festivals* as key spaces for art, culture, and community engagement.
 - 9.3. Updates to the glossary to reinforce clarity and inclusivity, including references to the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and *disability*.
 - 9.4. In addition, the review cycle for the draft Policy has been adjusted to four years, consistent with Council's Policy and Operating Guideline Governance Framework.

Implementation and Application of the Cultural Policy

10. If adopted, the draft Policy will supersede Council's *Cultural Strategy 2017–2023*.
11. The CoA will develop metrics and evaluation tools to assess the impact of the Cultural Policy.

Analysis of Cultural Policies of the Government of South Australia and City of Adelaide

12. The Government of South Australia (State Government) released its own Cultural Policy, *A Place to Create* on 30 March 2025 [Link 2](#). *A Place to Create* is a 10-year whole-of-government policy framework that will be implemented through short-term strategic delivery plans.
13. The State Government is also introducing the *Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Bill 2025*, which will recognise the importance of the arts, culture, and creative industries in South Australia, ensure that all South Australians can benefit from and participate in the state's vibrant cultural and creative life, and support the long-term development and sustainability of the sector.
14. At the City Community Services and Culture Committee meeting on 1 April 2025, an undertaking was given to include in this report a high-level summary of how the CoA's draft Policy aligns with the State Government's Cultural Policy, *A Place to Create*.
15. The cultural policies of the State Government and CoA align in the following ways:
 - 15.1. Both adopt a whole-of-government or whole-of-organisation approach to implementation.
 - 15.2. Each policy prioritises accessibility and cultural inclusion, though they address distinct but complementary community needs and backgrounds.
 - 15.3. Both recognise the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural leadership and contributions.
 - 15.4. Each supports investment in cultural infrastructure and opportunities for creative expression.
 - 15.5. Both emphasise the role of arts and creativity in driving economic development and enhancing community wellbeing.
16. Potential partnership opportunities for the CoA and the State Government arising from *A Place to Create* could include:
 - 16.1. Activating a network of diverse, community-led places for arts, cultural and creative outcomes.
 - 16.2. Working with the private sector and government authorities to develop creative hubs in the City.
 - 16.3. Delivering major public art projects that reflect the diversity of the South Australian community.
17. The Cultural Policy enables the elevation of arts and culture in conjunction with precinct and event activations in alignment with the Economic Development Strategy 2024-2028.
18. The Administration acknowledges that aligning the principles and priorities of the Cultural Policy with budget commitments and work plans across the organisation, including Council subsidiaries, can create efficiencies by targeting existing public resources through annual Business Plans and Budget processes.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 - Revised Cultural Policy in Track Changes

Link 2 – [A Place to Create](#)

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Final Revised Cultural Policy

Attachment B – Stage 2 Consultation Summary Report

- END OF REPORT -