

The logo consists of a stylized orange graphic in the top right corner, resembling a knot or a series of loops. The main text 'ACTNATIMUK' is in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The 'ACT' part is in a smaller, outlined font, while 'NATIMUK' is in a solid, larger font.

ACTNATIMUK

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028

ACT Natimuk

Strategic Plan - 2025-2028

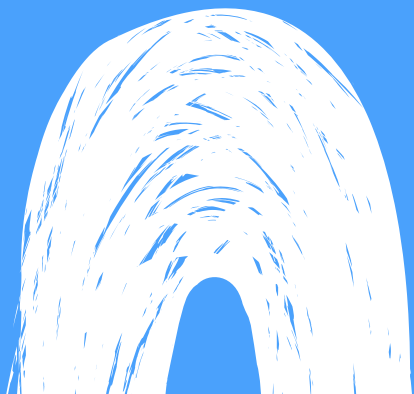
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Acknowledgment of Country

ACT Natimuk acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we are located, the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Jupagulk and Wergaia and all the lands on which we meet and work. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge their sacred connection to land, water, and community.



Letter from the Chair



Hello from Natimuk, situated on Jadawadjali Country and a part of the Wotjobaluk Nations. Welcome to ACT Natimuk in 2025.

This Strategic Planning document is the consensus view of ACT Natimuk; including the committee, staff, and other members. It builds on the work that we have previously done but it ultimately is a road map for the future. Through many group facilitation meetings and writing and editing sessions, we are re-positioning and pivoting to the mission, goals, values, skills, and will of our organisation as it currently stands. Particular thanks to Anna Loewendahl and Jacquie Tinkler for their work in group facilitation, and to General Manager Tracey Skinner for her help and coordination in arriving at this finished plan.

I would like to thank all ACT Natimuk staff, committee, members, volunteers, and the audiences that engage with and support our work in our region and further afield. Thanks also to Creative Victoria (CV) for the multiyear Creative Enterprises Program (CEP) funding we receive through their organisation that currently allows us to employ 3 part-time staff. We appreciate the support from both our current Relationship Manager Karen Sovitslis, and our previous Relationship Manager Victoria Jones.

Over the past four years, ACT Natimuk has continued to provide opportunities for local artists to enjoy creative growth and success in our arts communities while also making a significant contribution to the long-term viability and vibrancy of the arts in the Wimmera region of Victoria. Many artists and creatives in the Natimuk community have come to live here as a direct result of our lively arts scene and find rich opportunities to engage and collaborate with a diverse range of artists and audiences across the region, state, and nationally.

During this four year period there have been many highlights, including: the 2022 Nati Frinj Biennale festival, 11 Creative Lab grants (which includes a variety of outcomes), Reconciliation Week events, many commissioned projects like Gatherings, and also ongoing programs like the annual GoatFest, Palais de Pixel, and Circus Jam. We have faced challenges, including: the COVID-19 pandemic which significantly disrupted public and social art programming and postponed the Nati Frinj Biennale to 2022, successfully navigating changes in staff and committee members, and changing the prospective date of the 2024 Nati Frinj Biennale festival until 2025.

With the support and guidance of Reconciliation Australia, we developed our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in 2023. This plan means we now belong to a network of over 3000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation. This plan is supporting ACT Natimuk to incorporate reconciliation into our organisational objectives and has underpinned the development of our strategic plan. By upholding the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity unity; and historical acceptance; ACT Natimuk can deepen its understanding and capacity to influence and contribute to reconciliation in our community and the regional arts sector. It will also enable us to increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership to guide our support of Indigenous artists and their creative practices.

Enjoy our Strategic Plan. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Dr D'Arcy Molan

ACT Natimuk Chair

Executive Summary



ACT Natimuk, a dynamic arts organisation founded in 1979, has evolved over 45 years to become a key player in community-based creative experiences. Located in the rural town of Natimuk Victoria, ACT Natimuk fosters a strong connection to its place while showcasing significant state-wide creative impact. The organisation engages artists from diverse disciplines, many of whom have deep ties to the local and national cultural scene. ACT Natimuk's commitment to reconciliation is central to its mission, aiming to create spaces for people to engage with and reflect on First Nations peoples, art, culture, and history.

Driven by a volunteer committee and supported by a broader community, ACT Natimuk has delivered a variety of impactful arts experiences through its own programming – this includes the Nati Frinj Biennale, Creative Lab, and Natimuk Open Studios Art Trail (NOSAT), as well as through its partnerships and commissions via the organisations product and services arm, Made in Natimuk(MiN). Between 2014 and 2024, some notable examples of these initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- Touring of MiN product to Singapore and throughout Regional Victoria
- The Verj- RAV Small Town Transformation grant
- Ansett Aflight in partnership with Hamilton Performing Arts Centre
- Opera in the Air, Yea
- In My Day, Singapore
- Lantunda The Story of Mannanon for the National Celtic Festival.
- Red versus Blue for Tyrendarra Show
- Regional Cultural Centre Commission for Poppet Bendigo 2018 - Space and Place
- Lantunda Time Machine Oakleigh for Monash City Council
- Lantunda, The Story of Mannanon for Geelong after Dark
- Galaxis at Geelong After Dark
- Styckx at Nati Frinj 2019
- Gatherings 2022 and 2023 partnering with Northern Grampians Shire Council.

Over its history, ACT Natimuk has employed hundreds of artists and production crews, supported thousands of volunteers and engaged with thousands of diverse audience members.

Looking ahead, ACT Natimuk will continue to develop its marquee event, the Nati Frinj Biennale, which focuses on participatory, collaborative art. The new Made in Natimuk (MiN) Creative Services initiative will offer adaptable creative expertise to a range of clients, including festivals and local governments. Programs like Goatfest, Palais de Pixel and Circus Jam will be reinvigorated with an aim to engage wider audiences and new initiatives like The Studio will be assessed and adapted accordingly to ensure that it aligns with the organisations mission and provides support and opportunities for the wider artistic community.

ACT Natimuk is focused on increasing funding through passionate sponsors and philanthropists, expanding board membership to ensure succession, and providing cultural competency training to all staff and board members. Additionally, the organisation will continue to seek funding to support First Nations artists and access advice.

Funds generated through these channels will be reinvested to build ACT Natimuk's capacity, enabling the employment of additional creatives to expand both our existing and new programs. We will also continue to support and mentor both emerging and established artists, ensuring our national, regional, and local reach remains strong.

If future CEP (or equivalent) funding is not secured after 2025, ACT Natimuk will adapt by scaling back to deliver a smaller program and pursuing project-based initiatives. Given the current uncertainty around grant funding, we recognize the need to strengthen our philanthropy, sponsorships, and Creative Services marketing to diversify and stabilize our revenue streams.

About ACT Natimuk

History

ACT Natimuk is an artist-led, and artist-run organisation first established in 1979 as Arapiles Community Theatre. ACT Natimuk has since expanded beyond musical theatre production and developed into the diverse and vibrant cultural entity it is today. We support a much wider range of artistic practices including dance, visual arts, film, new media, projection, aerial performance, and experimental works. The organisation provides a vibrant program of artistic and creative activities that supports and develops local artists' practices and the development of outstanding work that is unique to Natimuk and our diverse community.

ACT Natimuk members have a range of relevant research knowledge in multiple cultural and creative disciplines. The organisation harnesses these skills and insights into local, national, and international contexts for different applications and audiences.

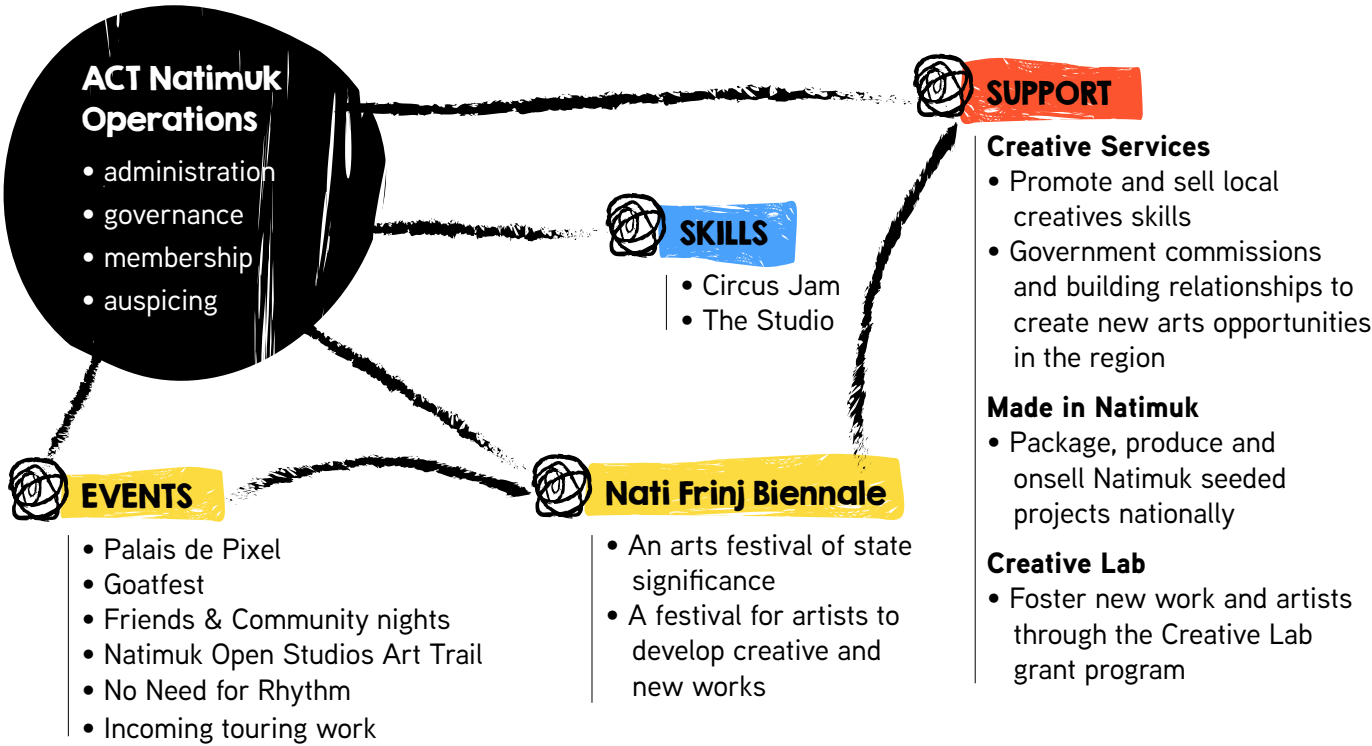
The Natimuk Community

The community of Natimuk is on the traditional lands of the Wotjobaluk peoples, half-way between Melbourne and Adelaide, and 25 kms from the regional centre of Horsham. Dyurrite (Mt. Arapiles) overlooks this tiny town and is a significant cultural, environmental, and recreational space, with particular cultural significance for the Indigenous community. Natimuk is home to approximately 500 people who are a mixture of farmers, rock climbers, professionals (working locally and remotely), and artists from diverse disciplines. Many of the creatives in Natimuk have enduring and significant connections to national and international artistic and cultural practice. As a reconciliation-led arts organisation we work to support people to engage, learn and reflect on ways we can develop inter-cultural exchange and create spaces and audiences for First Nations artists and community.

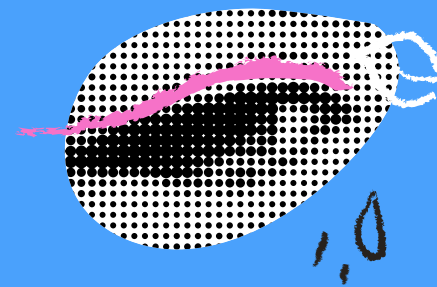
Governance

ACT Natimuk's Board comprises seven members, drawn from the membership of the organisation. Current Executive positions are Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and three Committee Members. Executive meetings take place every two months, alternating every two months with general Committee meetings that are open to our wider membership. In addition, ACT Natimuk has a wider membership of artists and supporters who are drawn from the Natimuk community, the Wimmera region, and from those with an enduring connection to Natimuk.

The strength of ACT Natimuk's board has been an ability to draw on its many talents to arrange and adapt its capacity around the projects and events it aims to deliver in creative and responsive ways. This model has allowed our organisation to achieve a high level of cultural agency (self-determination and creative independence). ACT Natimuk currently employs a small number of part-time staff including a General Manager, a Frinj Festival Director and Made in Natimuk (MiN) Producer through funding support from Creative Victoria and its multi-year funding program. This has enabled ACT Natimuk to move away from a solely volunteer-based organisational model and allow creative professionals to dedicate their time and talent to driving ACT Natimuk as well as providing opportunities for paid employment to creative professionals in our community.



Our Purpose



Our Values

Place

ACT Natimuk continues to evolve from a small and remarkable rural town in Western Victoria and supports the artistic development and practices of artists in and connected to our unique place in Natimuk and the Wimmera. We continue to develop meaningful and authentic ways to support First Nations artists through cultural awareness and engagement with the arts and ensure that the arts can create positive change in our community.

Belonging

ACT Natimuk creates opportunities for our community to participate, collaborate, and contribute to the arts in ways that are meaningful as artists, audiences, and volunteers, and that ensure the community feels that they are both welcomed and belong in the arts. The ongoing identification, acknowledgment, and removal of barriers to participation and engagement for all community members is foundational to this work.

Quality

ACT Natimuk is proud of its reputation for quality and professionalism as leaders in regional arts, and for the artistic excellence of the creative producers and artists it supports. Our reputation for excellence and integrity is a result of the extraordinary talent and capability of our staff, volunteers, and members, and is built on a foundation of community participation and engagement, inclusive leadership, generosity, and accountability.

Daring

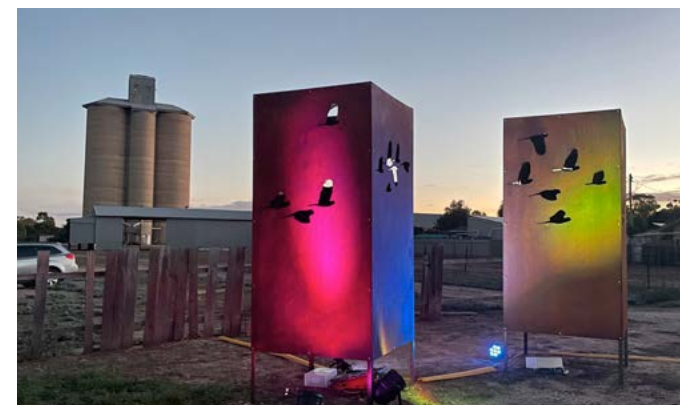
Creating, experimenting, and engaging with contemporary art works and practices requires daring, bravery, and authenticity from artists, audiences, and our organisation. Imagination, taking risks, and daring to be different, are all part of what makes ACT Natimuk remarkable, and they fuel our shared passion for the arts as an organisation and in our community.

Joy

ACT Natimuk creates spaces for the experience of joy and celebration for artists, audiences, and the community, through the creation and experience of art works and performances. Joyous, playful, and authentic participation in the arts is a vital part of human well-being and provides hope, meaning, and connection with community and place.

Our Vision

ACT Natimuk's vision is to position Natimuk at the heart of the regional arts community by fostering artistic excellence and vibrant community engagement, that honours the unique spirit of Natimuk and the rich cultural heritage of First Nations peoples.



Our Mission

ACT Natimuk's mission is to:

- Support and enable artists and performers to make daring, impactful, and quality art that reflects the unique spirit and energy of Natimuk community.
- Provide a culturally safe and inclusive environment to attract and care for our staff, volunteers, artists, and audiences, that will enable them to participate in the arts and create outstanding work in ways that foster inclusion and belonging.
- Continue the ongoing work of reconciliation with First Nations peoples by creating opportunities and programs to support First Nations artists and to develop audiences for their work.
- Model and encourage engagement in the arts for positive social change and community well being in rural towns.



Our Programs

Our programs broadly fit into three categories: events, support, and skills, and they evolve from our responsiveness and connection to our artistic and broader community. In our small town, artists, their practices, and our audiences shift and develop over time, and one of ACT Natimuk's keys strengths is our ability to shift and develop our programs and directions with them.

Program Overview

Events

Nati Frinj Biennale

Frinj is a powerful and meaningful placemaking initiative that injects visual and performance art into the heart of Natimuk in the form of a bi-annual three day festival. It focuses on the creation and presentation of new, experimental works, inviting collaborations between local artists and artists from other places, whether through innovative platforms or unconventional presentations. Enveloping the town streets, public spaces and building, the diverse artistic program aims to offer multiple ways for local community and visitors to participate, therefore attracting the largest audiences of all the ACT Natimuk activities.

By serving as an arts hub, Frinj places Natimuk firmly on the cultural map, fostering tourism opportunities for the local businesses while reinforcing its identity as a centre for artistic innovation.

Natimuk Open Studios Art Trail

NOSAT provides a unique opportunity for visual artists to reveal their creative practices and explore the distinction between a studio and a gallery. A bi-annual arts trail held on the off Frinj year, it offers an accessible platform for presentation and impacts artists' practices by responding to the growing number of visual artists in Natimuk. NOSAT raises the profile of these artists, fostering tourism and visitation to Natimuk. It also showcases the process of art-making, answering questions such as how art is made and who makes it. By promoting artists and their dual lives, it supports artistic practices and encourages cultural tourism.

Goatfest Climbing Film Festival

Goatfest annually celebrates Natimuk's vibrant rock climbing community through filmmaking. Brought together in an evening program it showcases the skills and people behind this iconic outdoor activity, providing a space for creative experimentation in film. Attracting large audiences for this one event contributes significantly to tourism and generating revenue for the town. By engaging with the Natimuk Soldiers Memorial Hall, Goatfest strengthens community ties and highlights the unique culture of Natimuk.

Palais de Pixel

Palais de Pixel is a monthly film society night that presents alternative and arthouse cinema. As a regular contact point, it creates an opportunity for community connection and contributes to individual well-being. By offering high-quality cinema locally, it reduces the need to travel and fosters a shared cultural experience in Natimuk.

Support

Made in Natimuk (MiN)

MiN supports the ongoing presentation of existing works from Natimuk artists, showcasing their art to new audiences. It operates as a revenue-raising business model selling product while sustaining and promoting the professional practices of local artists. By highlighting the skills and creativity of Natimuk artists, MIN fosters sustainability and strengthens the town's artistic identity.

Creative Lab

The Creative Lab grant program connects artists with Natimuk and seeds new projects and collaborations. It offers a platform for experimentation, exploration, and development, serving as a critical space for the creation of new works. Many of these projects feed into the larger Nati Frinj festival, ensuring a diverse range of artistic practices, including a targeted focus on supporting First Nations artists through its dedicated First Nations grant opportunity.



Skills

Circus Jam

Circus Jam provides a regular series of workshops throughout the year for learning physical and circus skills in a safe and structured environment. It promotes physical movement and social connection across cultures, ages, and abilities while fostering a sense of inclusivity, belonging, and wellness. Participants benefit from improved self-esteem, mental well-being, and a supportive community.



Projects in Development

Creative Services (Support)

Creative Services will provide a range of professional services to support the development of an artists' professional practice in Natimuk. This project is a pivot from the current MiN strategy of onselling product. It will contribute to the outcomes of Made in Natimuk and Creative Lab, using a business model that will also raise revenue to sustain these goals.

The Studio (Skills)

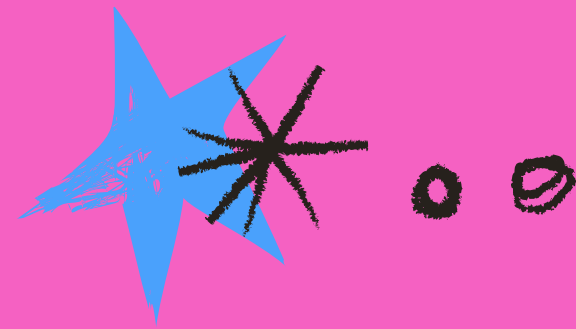
The Studio is a printmaking studio space created for use by printmakers and painters and accessible 7 days a week. Created in response to the donation of printmaking and painting equipment from Federation University Horsham, The Studio is located in partnership with Beyond Community Inclusion (BCI) at its site in Horsham and at Horsham College Alternative Programs. This project is in development and being considered in relation to existing ACT Natimuk projects in Natimuk.

No Need for Rhythm (Events)

No Need for Rhythm is a monthly dance event, aimed at enabling all community members of all ages and abilities to dance without limits in a supportive and inclusive space. It is designed to connect and foster community belonging and wellbeing.



Our Achievements



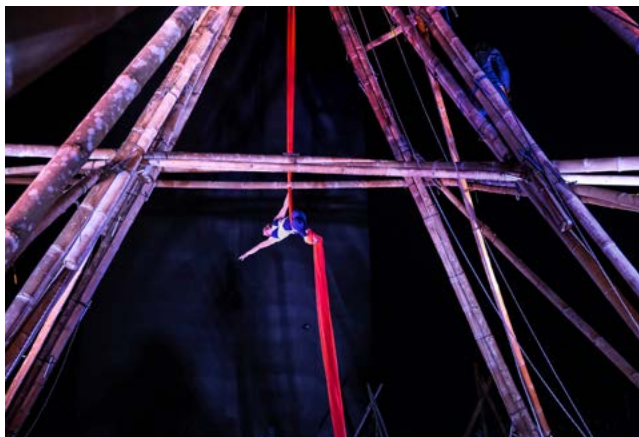
Our Achievements 2021 - 2024

The COVID-19 pandemic provided many significant challenges for ACT Natimuk, our community, and the arts sector. Despite this, and in true 'Nati style', we adapted, modified, pondered and pivoted, but kept working with our artists, audiences, and the community in creative, authentic, and engaging ways.

Our achievements over this time include:

Artistic Programs and Events

- Nati Frinj Biennale
- Made in Natimuk (MiN)
- Creative Lab Program
- Natimuk Open Studios Art Trail (NOSAT)
- Goatfest Climbing Film Festival
- Circus Jam
- Palais de Pixel



Reconciliation and Cultural Leadership

- The development and adoption of a First Peoples' Cultural Protocols policy and a First Peoples Cultural Safety policy.
- The development and endorsement of our Reconciliation Action Plan.
- The provision of Cultural Competency Training for all board, staff, and selected volunteers.
- Focused support of emerging and mid-career First Nations artists in events, exhibitions, and community projects.
- Supporting the protection of Cultural Heritage at nearby Dyurrite/Mt Arapiles.

Community Engagement and Inclusion

- Engaging the local community in ACT Natimuk's plans and events by hosting regular social events for friends and community. These evening get-togethers foster local connections and dialogue between artists and the community.
- Promoting and enacting artistic and cultural inclusivity by providing targeted support for artists and programs from diverse or marginalised communities.
- Developing and presenting regular events and workshops that engage children, families, and the broader community while promoting community well-being through the opportunity of art experiences.

Governance and Strategy

- Instigating an in-depth review and renewal of our governance structures, policies, and procedures.
- Analysing our insurance liabilities in relation to programming and duty of care.
- Engaging a philanthropy consultant and beginning the development of a Philanthropy Patron prospectus.
- Securing multi-year funding from Creative Victoria's Creative Enterprise Program.

Infrastructure and Resources

- Securing a permanent office site at the Natimuk Soldiers Memorial Hall.
- Receiving a donation of printmaking and painting equipment and presses from Federation University Horsham and establishing a studio to provide specialist equipment and mentoring to local artists in a studio space in Horsham.
- Establishing online membership systems and enhanced communication through a monthly newsletter and social media strategy.
- Creating Grist and Wide Load: an innovative mobile art and performance venue that provides a unique and alternative space for numerous community events and performances.

Adaptation and Resilience

- Pivoting our activities during COVID-19 restrictions to provide continuity and engagement in the arts through hybrid events and online performances and exhibitions.
- Supporting the wellbeing of artists and community members through collaborative, adaptive, and flexible approaches to arts engagement and support during the challenges created by COVID-19, lockdowns, and the collective community distress.
- Initiating the development phase of ACT Natimuk's Creative Services, a pivot of the MiN strategy that addresses future arts and community industry needs for our expertise within the region and across Victoria.



Our Present

As one of the most dynamic and impactful rural arts organisations in Australia, ACT Natimuk has continued to shape-shift and evolve in order to present daring and joyful creative works with our artists and audiences. Currently, we are working on:

Nati Frinj Biennale – Planning for 2025

Our most famous and popular event, we are working on a dynamic and vivacious new program for our next Nati Frinj Festival in November 2025. The hiring of a new Festival Director has enabled us to not only build on the previous successes of Nati Frinj, but to inject energy and creative new ways and approaches to a festival that is famous for its ability to provide a space for artists to experiment and work with diverse and engaged audiences. Frinj 2025 aims to be more visible, collaborative and accessible than ever before.

Creative Services

ACT Natimuk is transitioning from its Made in Natimuk model of offering creative products to providing creative services. This change aims to support Natimuk-based artists in sustaining their regional arts practices and to expand the opportunities for their work to be showcased beyond the Nati Frinj Biennale. For the past decade, creative products developed for the festival have been packaged and sold to various presenters locally, across Victoria, and internationally.

Natimuk artists possess a diverse range of skills, including directing, producing, curating, sculpting, writing, project management, workshop facilitation, technical production, academic research and arts administration—skills honed through years of regional practice and creative problem-solving in a remote location. The transition to a creative services model will offer greater flexibility to tailor services for each project, allowing ACT Natimuk to leverage its broad artistic expertise both locally and beyond.



Building our Capacity

To strengthen our organisation, mitigate risk, and build our capacity and capabilities, we are in the process of updating our governance structure by evaluating, revising, and developing new and existing policies, procedures, and processes.

To attract, retain, and support our hard-working staff and volunteers, we are exploring creative and innovative ways we can make ACT Natimuk an organisation that is a sought-after organisation for volunteering opportunities.

To ensure we are providing programs and opportunities that are effective, impactful, and accessible for artists, audiences, and the community, we are using continuous improvement processes to evaluate and strengthen our current suite of events and programs and identify opportunities for new programs.

To strengthen ACT Natimuk's position as a leading rural arts organisation, we are exploring ways of building on the successful establishment of our permanent location at the Natimuk Soldiers Memorial Hall through the continued development of an 'arts precinct' in Natimuk.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

To reinvigorate and strengthen our online presence, and its critical role in stakeholder engagement, marketing approaches, and communications, we are in the process of redesigning our digital communication tools and strategies.

To build and expand our external stakeholder relationships, we are continuing to engage with the political, cultural, and environmental landscape of rural and regional arts and the organisations that create and support them.

Guided by the recent development of our Reconciliation Action Plan, we are currently navigating significant change and community tensions around new areas of Indigenous cultural heritage protection and the associated impacts on access for the climbing/recreation community.



Our Goals: 2025-2028



Evolving from careful consideration and renewal of our Values and Vision, and aligned with each of our Mission statements, the next four years of ACT Natimuk will be focused on the following goals:

Mission Statement: Support and enable artists and performers to make daring, impactful, and quality art that reflects the unique spirit and energy of the Natimuk community.

Goals:

- To create and promote projects, opportunities, and services in responsive and flexible ways that help local artists to professionalise their creative practice.
- To facilitate impactful professional development opportunities for local artists to support their ability to make quality art works and performances.
- To develop supportive and rigorous processes for the establishment, implementation, and evaluation of new and ongoing projects.
- To increase our engagement with artists, audiences, partners, and supporters through the redesign of our online presence, communications, and marketing.

Mission Statement: Provide a culturally safe and inclusive environment to attract and care for our staff, volunteers, artists, and audiences, that will enable them to participate in the arts and create outstanding work in ways that foster inclusion and belonging.

Goals:

- To integrate inclusive approaches and practices throughout our organisation and projects to ensure diversity and belonging are at the core of what we do.
- To expand and support our network of volunteers with a focus on inclusion and diversity and provide volunteers with opportunities to develop personal and professional skills while working with ACT Natimuk to achieve our vision.
- To develop inclusive approaches in attracting diverse audiences to the arts in and around Natimuk.

Mission Statement: Continue the ongoing work of reconciliation with First Nations peoples by creating opportunities and programs to support First Nations artists and to develop audiences for their work.

Goals:

- To ensure that the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan is integrated across all our organisational practices, policies, and approaches in ways that are authentic and impactful.
- To continue to provide appropriate cultural awareness professional development for staff and volunteers.
- To engage and liaise with First Nations artists, communities, and organisations in culturally appropriate and respectful ways.

Mission Statement: Model and encourage engagement in the arts for positive social change and community well-being in rural towns.

Goals:

- To review our current community engagement strategies and explore new ways of providing collaborative and participatory events for ACT Natimuk members, volunteers, and the broader community.
- To strengthen and build our existing leadership to continue to model the role of the arts for positive social change in rural communities.
- To build sustainable sources of funding and support by developing new and innovative partnerships and philanthropic opportunities.
- To value the contribution of individuals, groups, organisations and to establish formal associations and partnerships
- To further advance the development of an arts precinct in Natimuk, exploring demand, potential opportunities, and identifying possible partnerships and funding sources.



Financial Summary



As a not-for profit organisation, ACT Natimuk operates with stringent governance oversight.

There is a renewed, reinvigorated and on-going commitment by ACT Natimuk board of management and staff, to maintain existing programs and services with funding and support, while continuing to build base membership subscriptions, community and cultural relationships, confidence and stability in our organisation and services. The genuine relationships developed within our broad and diverse community is demonstrated in a steady growth in equity during the 2021–2024 Strategic Plan.

2021	\$140,000
2022	\$80,000 (Nati Frinj Biennale Investment)
2023	\$95,000
2024	\$107,140

In 2024, the decision was made to invest \$12,000 for 2024-25 Creative Lab projects and within MiN a further \$6,000 to initiate Creative Services.

Income Generation Strategies

The following income generation strategies will be detailed in each program’s operational plan and are as follows:

ACT Natimuk Operational Plan

1. Develop and implement a philanthropic and sponsorship policy and plan.
- 2.Set a base fee of 5% for projects auspiced by ACT Natimuk.
- 3.Re-apply for multi-year state government funding from Creative Victoria.
- 4.Increase the number of entrepreneurial fundraising programs.

Nati Frinj Operational Plan

1. Increase box office and event sales.
- 2.Increase merchandise and fundraising bar sales.
- 3.Charge a production support and marketing fee from major presented projects.
- 4.Stage a major annual fundraising event to contribute to funds needed for Production staff.

MiN Operational Plan

1. Increase the number of MiN – Creative Lab artists and range of work to on-sell.
- 2.Add MiN Creative Services and charge for creative consultancy services for the skills of artists.

INCOME	2025	2026	2027	2028
CEP or similar	100,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
Commonwealth Government Funding	50,000	0	64,000	0
Other Victorian State Government	50,000	20,000	53,000	20,000
Local Government Funding	12,500	7,000	17,000	7,000
Box Office	18,000	1,300	19,700	6,500
Retail	9,000	0	9,200	0
Other Activities and Income	20,000	29,300	46,800	82,100
Memberships	1,000	1,000	1,500	1,200
Donations	1,300	12,000	12,000	13,000
Philanthropy	10,000	9,000	11,000	4,000
Sponsorship	15,000	5,200	10,600	5,000
Fundraising	10,000	10,000	6,000	10,000
Interest	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Other Vic (non govt)	30,000	35,000	25,000	35,000
TOTAL INCOME	328,000	251,000	397,000	305,000

EXPENDITURE	2025	2026	2027	2028
Salaries, wages, fees, performers, artists, arts workers	135,500	93,740	153,600	123,690
Salaries Marketing/Promo	8,000	6,000	12,000	8,000
Salaries, wages and fees production	30,000	22,000	34,000	28,000
Salaries, wages and fees, management and administrative	45,000	59,765	62,880	68,000
Production, exhibition, touring	65,000	34,795	80,700	43,110
Other programs and expenses	25,500	19,150	33,790	19,150
Marketing	7,500	3,130	9,580	2,630
Administration	11,500	12,420	10,450	12,420
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	328,000	251,000	397,000	305,000

Appendix I:

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Strengths

- ACT Natimuk has an established reputation for producing vibrant, creative, quality art events and programs, and widely known for delivering popular and successful arts events such as the Nati Frinj Biennale, and the Goatfest climbing film festival
- Our activities serve a wide variety of local, state, national, and international audiences
- We live in a diverse community, with many engaged in creative practices. Our community includes visual and performance artists, arts workers, farmers, rock climbers, educators, health professionals, academics, and others, who contribute to the creative vibrancy of the organisation, our community, and its activities
- Diversity of creative talent in Natimuk and surrounds attracts other artists and creatives
- Versatile established volunteer base of members and non-members, which can expand or contract depending on the event
- History of developing collaborative projects between local artists and creatives with national and international artists and creatives
- Our collective artistic experience enables us to more easily attract and work with collaborators, both locally and external to our area

Weaknesses

- We are reliant on a small base of volunteers for executive and committee positions, and volunteer burnout can occur
- We are over-reliant on annual funding cycles as well as external funding to fund our programs and activities
- Our reliance on external funding can lead to missed collaboration opportunities if unsuccessful

- The economic benefits of the arts in rural areas such as Natimuk are not well understood or supported by Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC), Business Horsham and Grampians Tourism
- Our limited capacity to collect and analyse some types of program data makes it difficult to demonstrate ACT Natimuk's economic and social impact in ways that assist us to obtain further funding
- Developing new collaborative programs and partnerships is challenging due to limited volunteer and staff resources
- Our limited digital presence does not reflect our organisation's creative or professional presence and needs updating
- Our position in the Wimmera as a reconciliation led arts organisation is challenging for some members of the community
- ACT Natimuk is situated in a town without an existing ongoing creative hub or other arts organisations

Opportunities

- We have an existing range of creative project models currently in place that enable us to strengthen, promote and empower local arts practice, such as Nati Frinj, MiN, and Creative Lab
- The development of our physical environment and existing relationship with the unique natural environment in and around Natimuk, presents unique opportunities to work with artists in the context of place and rurality
- Our work with First Nations artists presents opportunities to build and develop our work that is guided by our Reconciliation Action Plan
- The activation of the Soldiers Memorial Hall and establishment of our Office there has provided the opportunity to continue to develop an arts precinct area

- Increasing focus on funding for projects that support disadvantaged and marginalised people and communities will create a range of opportunities for the role of ACT Natimuk and the arts to have positive impact for these people and their communities
- The reputation of our Frinj Festival attracts a wide range of artists and audiences to Natimuk and the work produced fosters collaboration with other local and regional artists
- The lack of educational opportunities in the arts means there is room to provide arts skills and support for new and emerging artists to engage in the arts and develop an artistic practice
- Redevelopment of our digital online presence will create a much greater range of opportunities to reach artists, audiences, and funding bodies and partners
- Further development of our policies and procedures will provide further opportunities for a wider range of funding opportunities

Threats

- Current political climate regarding the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage and the subsequent limitations on climbing and other access has created local hostility towards Indigenous peoples and organisations that support or work with them
- Confusion and media misinformation about climbing restrictions has impacted on the number of climbers visiting the town, particularly international visitors
- Contact and consultation with BGLC as the main Aboriginal cultural organisation, including requests for their cultural services, is limited due to the size of their organisation.
- Committee and staff burnout threatens our capacity to expand our work and to attract new volunteers, and keep an active succession plan.
- The ability of local artists to make new art and engage in our programs has been reduced due to cost-of-living challenges

- Lack of educational opportunities in the arts in the area mean there may be fewer emerging artists to attract to the area or to engage in our programs
- The constant risk of not obtaining ongoing or multiyear funding or financial support means our staff positions are precarious which limits our ability to plan for growth and sustainability
- The lack of sufficient public transport within the town and between larger towns and the region limits engagement and accessibility
- In our remote location, the distance from Adelaide and Melbourne limits the hiring of resources like staging, food vans
- Very limited accommodation options for visiting artists and large audiences for events such as Frinj
- Increasing competition within the region and sector for limited regional arts funding
- ACT Natimuk projects are so varied that insurance must be customised to be adequate which may create risks regarding litigation and incurs greater insurance costs
- Resident artists and creatives can be transient or have greatly geographically dispersed work locations
- The effects of climate change affecting local liveability



Appendix 2:

Reference Links

ACT Natimuk Reconciliation Action Plan
First Peoples Cultural Protocols Policy
First Peoples Cultural Safety Policy
– actnatimuk.com



Photo Credits:

Front/Back cover

Gatherings 'Night Blooms' St Arnaud 2023.
Photo: Rogan Hando

Pg 2 Dyurrite Walk & Talk with Gail Harradine.
Reconciliation Week 2025. Photo: Tracey Skinner

Pg 7 Friends & Community night.
Photo: Tracey Skinner

Pg 8 Top - Douglas Hockly Memorial Project
Dave Jones. Photo: Dave Jones

Bottom - Someone in the Dark Black Hole Theatre,
Nati Frinj 2022. Photo: Michelle McFarlane

Pg 9 Gatherings 'The Moth Trail' 2023 Halls Gap.
Photo: Anthony McKee

Pg 11 Top Left to Bottom - Circus Jam. Photo: No Mi Che
Signals in the Dark Anthony Pelchen, Frinj Trim 2021.
Photo: Anthony Pelchen

an apology I was never given and the one I never made
Sam Burke, Nati Frinj 2022. Photo: Michelle McFarlane

Bottom Right – Forest Jillian Pearce, Nati Frinj 2022.
Photo: Michelle McFarlane

Pg 12 Bamboo Exquisite aerial silks Bec Hopkins,
Nati Frinj 2022. Photo: Suzanne Phoenix

Pg 13 Truck Kat Pengelly, Nati Frinj 2022.
Photo: Suzanne Phoenix

Pg 15 Top - Bamboo Exquisite Tower Moment,
Nati Frinj 2022. Photo: Michelle McFarlane

Left to right – Painted with Light Tanisha Lovett
Photo: Mary French

Face Off Dave Jones, Adelaide Unleashed.
Photo: Dave Jones

Gatherings 'Night Blooms' St Arnaud 2023.
Photo: Tracey Skinner

Slackline community workshop, Nati Frinj 2022.
Photo: Michelle McFarlane

Pg 17 Top - Bar Tropicana, Nati Frinj 2022.
Photo: Suzanne Phoenix

Left to Right – Now More Than Ever Reconciliation
Week 2024 Exhibition. Photo: Jacquie Tinkler

Opening Parade, Nati Frinj 2022.
Photo: Michelle McFarlane

Five Angry Men, Gatherings 'Out of the Box'
Stawell 2022. Photo: Tracey Skinner

Goatfest 2024. Photo: Tracey Skinner

Pg 22 The Hothouse Mary French & Desiree Cross,
Gatherings St Arnaud 2023. Photo: Tracey Skinner

Pg 23 Opening Parade, Nati Frinj 2022.
Photo: Michelle McFarlane





ACT NATIMUK

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Instagram | [act_natimuk](#)

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A large, leafy tree is the central focus, illuminated with vibrant green and blue lights. The trunk and lower branches are lit with a warm orange glow. In the background, a building with large windows is visible. Several people are standing in the foreground, some looking towards the tree. To the left, there are some decorative lights, including a spiral one. The overall scene is a nighttime outdoor event.