



Stirling Street Arts Centre

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028





Stirling Street Arts Centre is a vibrant, community-focused space where people of all ages and backgrounds can come together to explore and enjoy the arts. Located in the heart of the South West region of Western Australia, the Centre offers a wide variety of creative activities.

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Foreword

We are proud to present the Stirling Street Arts Centre Strategic Plan 2025–2028—a renewed vision for our future, grounded in community, creativity, and collaboration.

This plan reflects the collective voice and aspirations of our members, staff, volunteers, and community partners. It is also a testament to the resilience and dedication of our organisation during a period of significant transformation.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our Centre Manager, Shelley Pike, whose outstanding leadership and tireless efforts have been instrumental in steering SSAC back on track and laying the foundation for a sustainable and vibrant future. We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our Board and staff, whose strategic insight and hard work have shaped this plan. To our volunteers—your generosity and commitment are the lifeblood of our Centre. And to our members, thank you for your continued involvement, feedback, and belief in the power of the arts to connect and inspire.

The strategic priorities outlined in this plan provide a framework for the Board and Staff to work closely with Members and community stakeholders to expand the capacity and impact of our Centre. While we acknowledge the challenges posed by tightening funding and other external factors, the consultation process revealed a strong sense of optimism and enthusiasm across all parties.

Together, we are committed to positioning SSAC as a Centre for Excellence in the Arts for the South West region.

In a rapidly changing Not for Profit landscape, The Stirling Street Arts Centre must adapt to remain competitive. This strategic plan responds to evolving market dynamics and technological advancements. We aim to expand market share and increase customer satisfaction by focusing on key areas, e.g., innovation, improved marketing of our services, expanding our services and strengthening our financial position.”

It is an exciting time to be with SSAC with the Board, members and staff pulling together as a team and in the same direction.

Shelley Pike
Centre Manager

Stirling Street Arts Centre Board

Responses from some of our Board members when asked “What is the best thing about SSAC?”



“The connectivity that’s typical of regional communities”



“The change to ‘yes’ within the organisation in recent times”



“Making change together”



“Incredible artists here and it’s inclusive”



“Great facilities, the connections and potential opportunities”



“Passion of the people here and the positive impact of SSA on our community”



1. Executive Summary

The Stirling Street Arts Centre (SSAC) Strategic Plan 2025-2028 outlines a renewed vision to position SSAC as a Centre for Excellence in the Arts in Western Australia's South West. Rooted in community, creativity, and collaboration, the plan builds on recent achievements and addresses key challenges such as funding constraints, infrastructure needs, and evolving community expectations.

Guided by six strategic pillars—Community Engagement, Marketing & Partnerships, Financial Sustainability, Organisational Development, Artistic Excellence, and Facility Infrastructure—the plan sets clear objectives to expand inclusive programming, strengthen governance, diversify income, and modernise facilities. It incorporates insights from member surveys and stakeholder consultations, emphasising accessibility, cultural diversity, and artistic innovation.

Key performance indicators and risk management strategies are embedded to ensure accountability and resilience. With strong support from the City of Bunbury and a committed team of staff, volunteers, and partners, SSAC is poised to grow as a vibrant cultural hub that inspires creativity and strengthens community connections.

2. Introduction

Stirling Street Arts Centre is a vibrant, community-focused space where people of all ages and backgrounds can come together to explore and enjoy the arts. Located in the heart of the South West region of Western Australia, the Centre offers a wide variety of creative activities—from workshops and classes to group sessions, exhibitions, and our popular annual Summer and Winter Schools.

Thanks to the generous support of the City of Bunbury, the South West Community, grant providers, donors, members, volunteers, and our dedicated management staff and Board, we're able to provide a welcoming environment where everyone can get involved in arts and cultural experiences.

Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned artist, there's something for you at SSAC. All our programs are inclusive and open to everyone, celebrating creativity in a safe and respectful space.

Key performance indicators and risk management strategies are embedded to ensure accountability and resilience. With strong support from the City of Bunbury and a committed team of staff, volunteers, and partners, SSAC is poised to grow as a vibrant cultural hub that inspires creativity and strengthens community connections.

3. Strategic Vision

To be recognised and celebrated as the leading Centre for Excellence in the Arts across the South West region, where creativity thrives, community connects, and artistic expression flourishes.



“Inspiring Creativity,
Celebrating Community
SSAC is the Heart of the
Arts in the South West.”

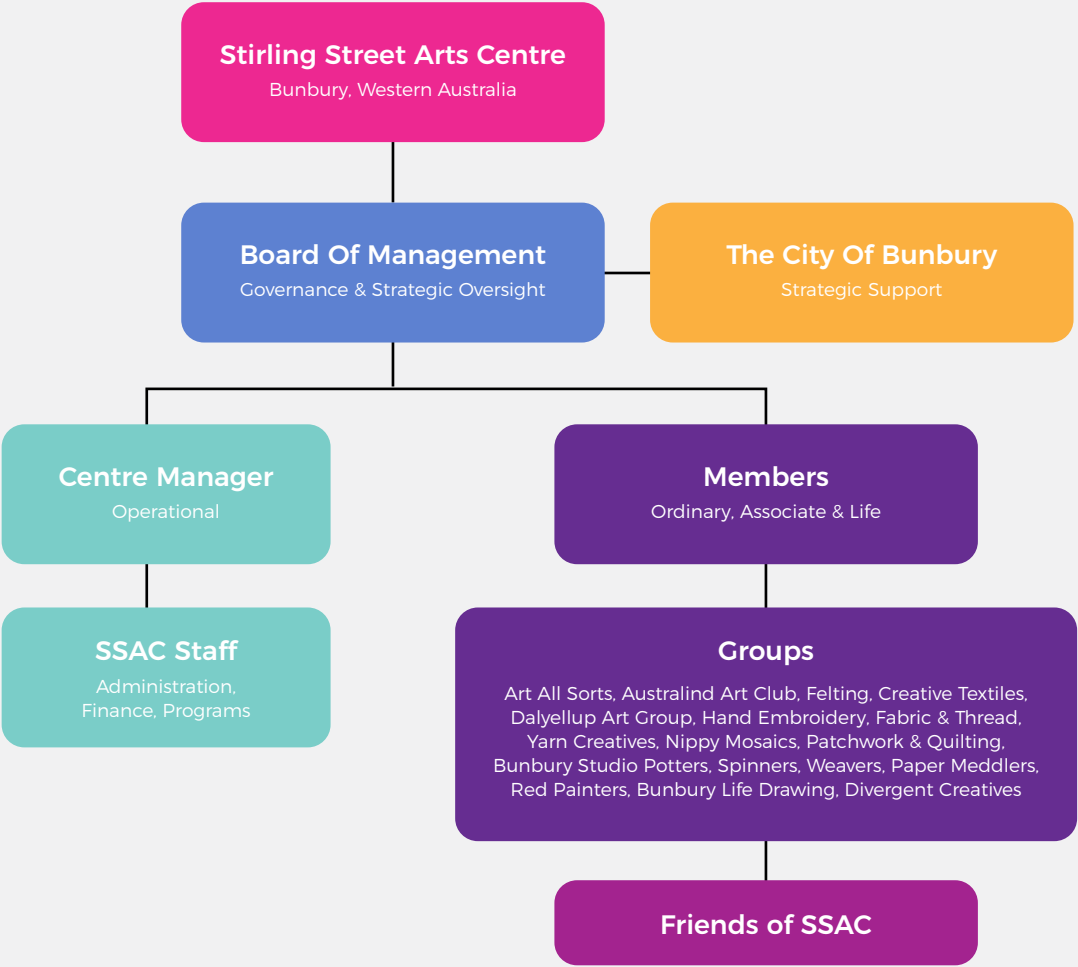
4. Purpose of the Stirling Street Arts Centre

At SSAC, we are dedicated to supporting and promoting the arts by providing a welcoming and inclusive space where artists and the community can come together to connect, learn, and create. We believe in the transformative power of the arts to enrich lives, foster understanding, and build a vibrant, resilient community.

Our mission is to inspire creativity in all its forms—nurturing emerging talent, sustaining the beauty and wisdom of traditional crafts, and embracing bold, new artistic ideas that reflect the evolving spirit of our region. Through collaboration, education, and celebration, we aim to cultivate a thriving cultural hub where imagination is encouraged, diversity is honoured, and artistic expression knows no bounds.

This purpose is achieved through a structure of 18 different membership groups under the umbrella of Stirling Street Arts Centre. The success of the Centre is furthermore underpinned by strong support from the City of Bunbury and meaningful collaboration with similar like-minded organisations such as the Bunbury Regional Art Gallery (BRAG), Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre (BREC) and the soon to be launched Wardandi Wanil Aboriginal Art Centre.

Organisational chart



5. Core Values of the SSAC

At Stirling Street Arts Centre, our values reflect who we are and how we work together as a creative community. These five guiding principles were shaped in collaboration with our members and staff, and they continue to inspire everything we do:



Welcoming

We strive to create a warm and inviting space for everyone.

- We listen with empathy and communicate with kindness and clarity.
- We celebrate diversity and encourage collaboration and fresh ideas.
- We lead by example and aim to inspire those around us.



Honesty

We believe in being open, transparent, and trustworthy.

- We communicate clearly, make ethical decisions, and take responsibility for our actions.



Respect

We value every voice and every perspective.

- We welcome people from all backgrounds and embrace different opinions with openness and understanding.



Integrity

We hold ourselves to high standards.

- We are committed to ethical, responsible, and accountable practices—socially, financially, and operationally.



Inclusiveness

We make sure everyone feels seen and heard.

- Our team, members, programs, and services reflect the diverse cultures, values, and voices of the South West region.

6. The Business Model for the Stirling Street Arts Centre

Stirling Street Arts Centre (SSAC) operates through a dual approach: sustaining core activities led by member groups and volunteers, while pursuing strategic growth through inclusive programming, partnerships, and income-generating initiatives. It fosters social connection, mental wellbeing, and artistic development. The model emphasises community engagement, low-cost access to arts, and sustainable social inclusion, aligning with the City of Bunbury's goals.

Stirling Street Arts Centre (SSAC) Business Model

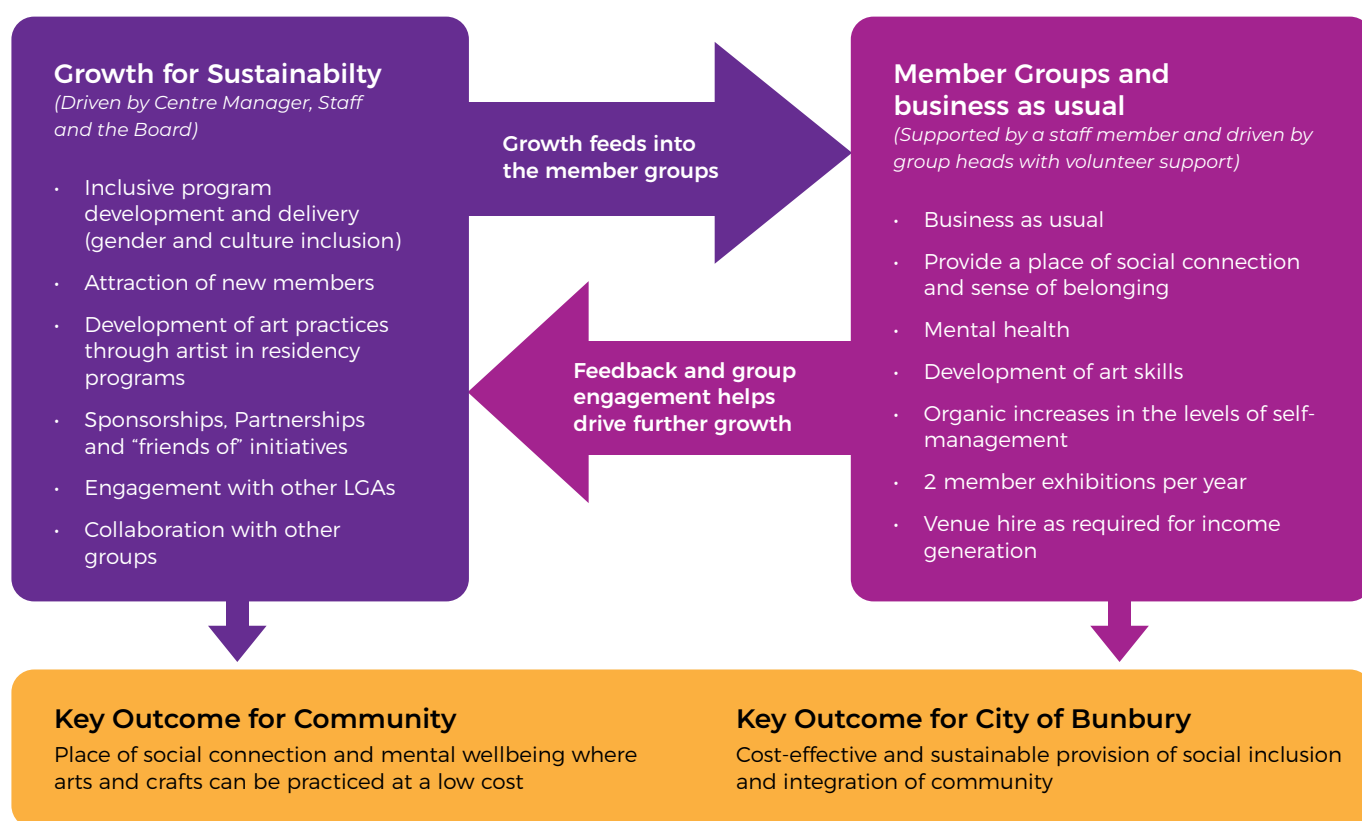




Image credits: Photography by Abby Murray

7. Key Stakeholders

Key Stakeholders for SSAC include some of the following:



Local Artists

Individuals and groups who use the Centre's facilities and programs.



Community Members

Residents who participate in workshops, events, and exhibitions.



Staff and Volunteers

Individuals who manage and support the Centre's operations.



The City of Bunbury

Provides funding and various forms of support.



Other surrounding LGAs

To contribute funding and assist with marketing and engagement



Partnerships, Sponsors and Donors

Financial and in-kind supporters who contribute to the Centre's sustainability.



Other service providers in the Culture and the Arts

Examples include BREC, BRAC, Fringe Festival



Educational Institutions

Schools and colleges that collaborate on educational programs.



Image credits: Photography by Abby Murray

8. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The key Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats can be summarised by the following:

Strengths

- Strong community presence and support
- Diverse range of programs and workshops
- Dedicated staff and volunteers
- Strategic location in Bunbury CBD
- Substantial membership base

Weaknesses

- Limited funding and financial resources
- Dependence on volunteer support
- Aging infrastructure requiring maintenance
- WHS concerns (including access constraints)

Threats

- Economic instability affecting funding
- Competition from other cultural and recreational activities
- Changes in government policy or funding priorities
- Insurance requirements and Working with Children regulations can restrict the activities of volunteers

Opportunities

- Growing interest in arts and culture
- Potential for new partnerships and collaborations
- Expansion of digital and online programs
- Increased community engagement through targeted outreach
- Collaboration with other organisations in the Culture and the Arts (eg. BREC, BRAC, Independent Bunbury Aboriginal Art Facility, etc.)



9. SSAC Strategic Pillars

Over the past 8 months since the 2024 Strategic Plan was approved, various actions from the plan have been implemented. Given the significant change in the Board structure during this period, a review of the Strategy was required. Furthermore, given the number of actions implemented over these past 8 months it would be prudent to develop an updated strategy that reflects only actions that have not been achieved yet with the 2024 Strategy and to identify new actions for the 2025 strategy which reflect the current business model and Strategic Pillar. For clarity, below are listed some of the actions that have been implemented over the past 8 months:

- A Strategic Planning workshop was held with June Moorhouse (expert in the operation of Art Centres with more than 35 years of experience)
- Two WHS audits performed (one by CoB and another by an external consultant) and a WHS hazard identification workshop held
- Key Strategic and Operational Risks identified at a workshop
- Board member skills matrix established
- Online action list developed and tracked
- Board meeting agenda template redeveloped for efficiency and improved minute-taking
- Draft budget developed and deficit of \$80,000 for the current financial year identified and addressed to deliver a balanced budget for 2025/2026
- A total of six new Board members identified and currently participating in Board meetings (to be formally voted in at the November members meeting)
- Member survey sent out and the results analysed to identify burning issues
- KPI's developed for the Board and the Centre manager
- Business model and Key Pillars developed
- Variables discussed for social impact measurement
- Enhanced practices of collaboration commenced with other services and facilities that are practicing in the arts (e.g. BRAC, BREC, NAP program and the upcoming Independent Aboriginal Art Facility).
- Secured an increase in the operational funding from the City of Bunbury and a commitment from the City to apply CPI indexing for future years. The City has also undertaken to contribute the \$66K that makes up the loss of financial operational support received from the City over the past 10 years where no funding was applied.
- Community Member survey held in February 2024/2025. A total of 163 responses were received of which 58% were members. See Appendix 1 for an interpretation of the results.
- Members skills audit distributed to Members to help determine which individuals can assist with gaps in staff / Board skills and availability

Based on the 2024/2025 member survey outcomes and discussions held with Board members, Staff and Members over the past 6 months as well as the information provided in this document, the following 6 Strategic Pillars and Strategic Objectives are proposed to achieve the desired outcomes for Stirling Street Arts Centre:

Pillars		Strategic Objectives
1 Community Engagement & Inclusion	Broaden SSAC's appeal and accessibility to diverse community groups	• Expanded workshop offerings and availability • Flexible pricing models • Enhanced communication • Enhanced inclusivity
2 Marketing & Partnerships	Raise SSAC's profile and build strategic partnerships	• Sound partnerships established • Enhanced Marketing of the Facility • Social spaces established
3 Financial Sustainability	Ensure long-term financial health and resource management	• Diversified Income streams • Improved financial management practices • Fundraising plan developed and implemented
4 Organisational Development & Governance	Strengthen internal systems, governance, and strategic direction.	• Strategic Plan developed and implemented • Improved governance • Essential policies identified and developed • Enhanced transparency • Adoption of best practices and continuous improvement
5 Programs & Artistic Excellence	Deliver high-quality, diverse, and innovative arts programming	• Expand programming • Promote artistic excellence • Collaborate with similar organisations
6 Facility Infrastructure	Improve and modernise facilities while preserving heritage value.	• Attain compliance with WHS • WHS concerns addressed • Enhanced accessibility • Improved safety and Security • Enhanced signage and visibility

10. Risk Management

10.1. Organisational Risks

The Key Strategic/Operational risks for the Stirling Street Arts Centre include the following 4 risks. The SSAC risk profile is illustrated in the diagram below.

The actions identified in this strategy, under the 6 pillars, attempt to address these risks largely. Risk analysis and the identification of mitigation steps still needs to be performed to ensure the sustainability of the Centre.

- 1. Funding Shortfalls:** Limited financial resources could impact the Centre's ability to offer programs and maintain facilities.
- 2. Community Engagement:** Insufficient community involvement could reduce the Centre's impact and relevance.
- 3. Operational Challenges:** Issues such as staff turnover, facility maintenance, and technological needs could hinder operations.
- 4. External Factors:** Economic downturns, policy changes, or natural disasters could affect the Centre's activities and funding.

	External Relationships	Asset Management	People/ Organisation	Finance/ Commercial	Product/ Service Quality
GOVERNANCE RISKS		Asset Valuation	Organisation Culture	Conflict of Interest	
		Asset Renewal	Strategic Objectives		
STRATEGIC RISKS	Community Group Relations	SSAC Identity/ Brand	Board Performance	Funding Access	Community Social Challenges
	Private/ Public Partnerships	Cyber Security	Organisation Structure	Cash Reserves	New Technology
	Advocacy Impact			Balance Sheet Structure	
OPERATIONAL RISKS	Government Relations	Data Protection	Quality Staff	Budget Delivery	Events
		Art Collections	Available Staff	Contract Management	Business Continuity
		IP Protection	Safe Facility	Debt Covenants	
		Confidential Information	Fraud/Corruption	Bad Debts	
		Secure Facility	Volunteer Management		
COMPLIANCE RISKS		Data Related Legislation	WHS Legislation Compliance	Procurement Process Compliance	
			Employee Related Legislation	Financial Management Regulations & Accounting Standards	
			Payroll Accuracy	ATO Compliance	



10.2. Work Health and Safety (WHS) Risks

The top 7 Work Health and Safety risks for the Centre were identified at a workshop held for Board members and group leaders. These have been incorporated as key themes for the development of a WHS plan with specific actions to address key areas of WHS concern. Various actions have already been implemented or commenced to address these areas.

Risk identified



Lack of the required
WHS Policies and
Procedures



Particles and Fumes
(Silica in clay, glazes,
pottery, mosaic, cutting
of tiles, clay dust when
sanding down and
soldering with no vented
hood exhausts in studios)



Storage and usage
of Chemicals



Physical safety and
Security of Members



Accessibility and
Tripping



Occupational hazards



Manual Handling

11. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

11.1. Centre Manager KPI's

Pillar	KPI Description	KPI Target	Detail
Community Engagement & Inclusion	Increased participation in events, activities and programs	Participation exceeds FY25 by 20%	Report quarterly on attendance numbers. Result should be the difference between last years participation and this years (for the previous 3 months) displayed as a %
Programs & Artistic Excellence	Deliver high-quality, diverse, and innovative arts programs.	Satisfaction Rating of 70% on feedback questions on quality, diversity and innovation	Feedback and ratings from participants through surveys for the previous 3 month programs. Data to be provided as a %.
Financial Sustainability	Program return on investment	Each program to return 20% profit to the centre	Measure to be the subtotal of the previous 3 month programs income, less all related expenses, provided as a %
Marketing & Partnerships	Increase Community awareness of SSAC	Marketing plan to be developed and funded by Dec 25 (100%), Implemented by Mar 26 (100%)	Develop and implement marketing plan - Report progress quarterly, % in December and June as per KPI Target
Organisational Development & Governance	Enhanced staff retention and employee satisfaction	Report to be presented to Board on staff turnover trends and employee satisfaction Dec 25 and Jun 26	Report to be presented in December and June. With strategy to improve in 2 areas.
Facilities & Infrastructure	The highest 6 WHS hazards mitigated	100% mitigation by Jun 26	Policies and Manuals developed and communicated to address key issues identified, report progress quarterly

11.2. Board KPI's

Pillar	KPI Description	KPI Target	Detail
Financial Sustainability	Provide Strategic Guidance on Optimisation of expenses and return on investment	Income exceeds expenses by 10%	2025/2026 budget and subsequent Monthly financial reporting to indicate an improvement in financial outlook for SSAC compared with end June 2025
Organisational Development & Governance	Improved culture and efficiency of the Board	Board meetings to be run according to best practice principles	Quarterly survey for Board members to determine Board efficiency
	Enhanced governance with the Potters group and Australind Association	Follow principles of consistency and fairness across groups	Establish Rules of engagement with all groups (incl Incorporated groups)
Marketing & Partnerships	Establish ongoing stakeholders relationships	Intentional relationship building with identified stakeholders to position for future financial or in-kind support	Measurement based on regularity of meetings, dollars leveraged and longevity of commitment



12. Implementation Actions (2025–2027)

The following actions have been identified for implementation against the 6 Strategic Pillars and Strategic Objectives:

Strategic Objectives	Actions
1. Members and Community Engagement & Inclusion Broaden SSAC's appeal and accessibility to diverse community	
- Expanded workshop offerings and availability - Flexible pricing models - Enhanced communication - Enhanced inclusivity	- Expand workshop offerings to include evening and weekend sessions, youth-focused and family-friendly programs, CALD and Indigenous arts workshops. Resourcing to be covered by income generated. - Introduce flexible pricing models such as pay-as-you-go options, scholarships and subsidies for low-income participants, membership tiers and payment plans - Provide clear, accessible information on group activities and costs - Regular newsletters and social media updates "Welcome Days" and open house events - Improve members internal marketing and encourage members to interact on social media to promote events/exhibitions - Develop an advocacy document to promote SSAC as a community-based organisation - Partner with local governments on specific projects. Conduct audit of member post codes and use this in discussion with LGAs - Initiate an annual Recognition Program for volunteers – Quiet Achievers Award? - Ensure members are included in decision-making where appropriate. Develop a process to enable this.
2. Marketing & Partnerships Raise SSAC's profile and build strategic partnerships	
- Sound partnerships established - Enhanced Marketing of the Facility - Social spaces established	- Use professional marketing materials and social media campaigns - Collaborate with local media for event promotion - Promote SSAC as a tourist destination - Collaborate with Bunbury Museum, Art Gallery, BREC, Fringe Festival - Engage local businesses for sponsorships and support - Partner with schools, universities, and community groups - Investigate sponsorships with local and Southwest businesses. Talk to businesses promoting SSAC - Identify a Patron for SSAC - Create and grow Friends of SSAC (2024/2025) - Strengthen Partnership with COB - Develop new partnerships with Bunbury Brighter, Art Geo, Bungeo Magazine - Investigate forming partnerships with Regional Arts and regional Art Galleries E.g. Wildlife Park - Introduce low-cost classes for low-income earners as a partnership with industry/business

Strategic Objectives	Actions
3. Financial Sustainability Ensure long-term financial health and resource management	
• Diversified Income streams • Improved financial management practices • Fundraising plan developed and implemented	• Develop a Fundraising Plan by identifying potential funding sources and create a strategy to secure financial support. ◦ Identify Fundraising Goals ◦ Target Donors (Individuals, Corporations, Foundations, Government Grants) ◦ Develop Fundraising Strategies (Annual Campaigns, Personalised Outreach, Naming Opportunities, Events, Gala Dinner, Art Exhibitions and Sales: Membership Programs: Corporate Sponsorships) • Provide training for key staff/members in grant writing and increase grant applications • Offer venue hire for events and performances • Monitor cash reserves and funding access • Cost all events and ensure that they do not run a deficit
4. Organisational Development & Governance Strengthen internal systems, governance, and strategic direction	
• Strategic Plan developed and implemented • Improved governance • Essential Policies identified and developed • Enhanced transparency	• Develop and implement comprehensive induction & orientation program which includes evacuation processes & procedures. • Develop and implement a comprehensive policy and procedures manual • Develop customer service charter and code of conduct • Clear communication between Board, staff, and members • Develop and implement regular member feedback mechanisms • Engage with the McCusker Foundation and ECU to 'employ' an Intern to assist with policy development
5. Programs & Artistic Excellence Deliver high-quality, diverse, and innovative arts programming	
• Expand programming • Promote artistic excellence • Collaborate with like-minded organisations	• Invite national/international artists-in-residence • Offer new workshops (e.g., ceramics, printmaking, dance, digital arts, team building workshops) • Collaborate with schools and local artists • Charge artist fees for exhibitions • Showcase member work through regular exhibitions and sales – eg. Gallery shop • Encourage cross-group and cross-organisation collaboration and mentorship
6. Facility Infrastructure Improve and modernise facilities while preserving heritage value.	
• Address WHS concerns • Enhance accessibility • Improve safety and Security • Enhanced signage and visibility	• Improve disability access and studio conditions • Increase electrical capacity and kitchen facilities • Install facade lighting and outdoor seating • Prominent, attractive signage on Blair Street and town-facing sides • Digital signage for events and exhibitions • Create coffee shop or drop-in lounge • Garden revitalisation and shaded outdoor area

13. Resource Capacity

The table below highlights the trend in the population and resourcing position of the Stirling Street Arts Centre over the 2-year period between 2022 and 2023.

Resource Profile	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of Members	275	260	300
Employees	2.5 FTE	3.24 FTE	3.4 FTE
Membership Fees	\$56,105	\$65,860	\$79,574
City of Bunbury Funding	\$66,625	\$66,625	\$100,000 (+\$66,000)
Other Revenue	17,457	32,653	?
Revenue from providing Goods & Services	182,967	255,587	?
Capital Expenditure	\$20,000 (CoB)	\$20,000 (CoB)	\$20,000 (CoB)
Operational Expenditure*	\$379,971	\$353,010	?
<i>Net surplus/(deficit)</i>	-\$25,612	+\$14,850	
Value of Assets	\$276,955	\$192,933	?
Total Revenue	\$354,359	\$367,860	?
Total Expenditure	\$379,971	\$353,010	?

Appendix 1: SSAC Community survey

2024/2025 – Interpretation of Outcomes

Based on the comments and suggestions provided in the 2024/25 member survey, the following themes and frequencies could be identified:

Themes	Mentions	Comments
1 Workshop Variety and Scheduling	20	• More diverse workshops (dance, craft, ceramics, printmaking, etc.) • Workshops outside typical work hours (evenings, weekends) • Workshops for young people and school-age children • Affordable workshops for low-income earners
2 Inclusion and Diversity	6	• More inclusive and diverse workshops • Indigenous and CALD workshops • Engaging younger members (18-40 years)
3 Affordability and Accessibility	10	• Lower membership and workshop fees • Pay-as-you-go options • Payment plans for fees • Special offers for local performance groups and schools
4 Facilities and Infrastructure	8	• Better facilities for events (electrical power, kitchen) • Improved maintenance (gardens, signage) • Security improvements (after hours, secure fencing) • New ceramics studio
5 Communication and Advertising	12	• Better communication about art groups and events • Improved advertising (social media, local papers, signage) • More information on membership benefits and costs
6 Community Engagement and Social Interaction	9	• Social events to bring groups together • Increased collaboration with schools and other organisations • Volunteer opportunities for members
7 Perception and Profile	5	• Changing the profile to attract younger and diverse demographics • Addressing the perception of exclusivity and high costs
8 General Positive Feedback	4	• Appreciation for the current efforts and improvements • Positive comments about the facility and programs

Priority areas based on frequency:

1. Workshop Variety and Scheduling
2. Communication and Advertising
3. Affordability and Accessibility
4. Community Engagement and Social Interaction
5. Facilities and Infrastructure
6. Inclusion and Diversity
7. Perception and Profile



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