

Wangaratta Jazz and Blues Festival Strategic Framework 2016 - 2021

The Wangaratta Jazz and Blues Festival

Conceived by a group of locals in 1989 as a way to attract visitors and raise the profile of the town, the first Wangaratta Festival of Jazz (as it was then known) was staged in 1990, with attendances at around 2500.

Since then – with blues added to the program in 1994 – it has grown to become an internationally renowned event, attracting around 25,000 visitors, and more than 200 jazz and blues artists from the USA, the UK, Europe and Australia.

With a diverse, eclectic mix of jazz greats and rising stars, each year the program showcases jazz and blues of all styles, including original, contemporary, traditional, mainstream, experimental and improvised. A central feature remains the National Jazz Awards; a competition designed to encourage and promote young musicians.

The Festival has won numerous tourism and sponsorship awards, and is recognised internationally as the foremost jazz and blues event in Australia.

Building on Success...

Building on twenty-five successful years, the Wangaratta Jazz and Blues festival is ready to grow and claim its position as a prominent cultural event on the local, national and international stage. The Board has consolidated its financial and strategic position in recent years and is now focusing on artistic growth and its contribution to the national music ecology. It has identified four key strategic areas, which focus on artistic excellence, artist development, audience growth and engagement with the Wangaratta community and surrounding region. The festival will define and showcase the Australian Jazz and Blues sound and influence the art form on a national and international scale.

***Our Vision:** A world-class music experience in Wangaratta that inspires audiences, develops artists, invigorates the community and shapes the national jazz and blues scene.*



Foremost Jazz and
Blues Event in
Australia

Attracts 25,000
Visitors Annually

Over 200 Jazz &
Blues Artists from
Around the World

Celebrated its 25th
Festival in 2014

Seriously Great
Music Seriously
Relaxed Place

Wangaratta Festival of Jazz and Blues

Vision: A world-class music experience in Wangaratta that inspires audiences, develops artists, invigorates the community and shapes the national jazz and blues scene.

Successful Organisation

A an organisation that grows and improves.

Good governance incorporating succession planning.

A diverse and sustainable funding model.

Retention of highly skilled people building on knowledge and leadership.

A strong, connected and financially diverse organisation

Great Art

Influence the national Jazz and Blues scene and shape the artform from a uniquely Australian perspective

A program defined by excellence, integrity and diversity.

Art that encompasses collaboration and experimentation.

Artistic programming that balances local, national and international content.

Influential connections with national and international jazz and blues scene.

Understanding and awareness of Wangaratta Jazz and Blues experiences as original and distinctive.

Brilliant Artists

Provide artists with a vehicle to experiment, learn and create distinctive and original music

A showcase of Brilliance, originality and leadership

Young and emerging artists, producers and artistic directors supported by the Festival.

Cross art-form collaborations.

Artists who supported to connect with each other and the broader jazz and blues scene.

Artists challenged to experiment and develop their own unique sound.

Inspired Audience

Present music experiences that captivate and resonate with audiences

An immersive visual and musical festival experience.

Audiences who participate actively and connect intellectually and emotionally.

Feedback which provides opportunities to reflect and grow.

Young / new audiences relating to the festival and attending regularly.

A dialogue with and by the audience.

Engaged Community

Engage the people of Wangaratta and surrounds, stimulating cultural expression and economic growth

Community represented as a valued partner and contributor sharing in the success of the festival.

A showcase of Wangaratta's story and cultural identity.

Economic growth and connected local businesses.

Connections between community and artists through schools and community organisations.

Accessible and culturally relevant programs that celebrate local identity.

Strategic Actions

Great Art

Develop and document a programming framework that focuses on excellence, integrity and diversity and maintains the balance of local, national and international talent

Build the Wangaratta Jazz and blues brand and promote Australian musicians and music on the international stage through digital streaming and international collaborations e.g.: The Wangaratta Jazz stage or pop up event at the Montreal Jazz Festival.

Develop a forum for dialogue around the Australian Jazz sound for musicians, fans and the media both physically and digitally.

Focus on links from one festival to the next and develop events that call on the Australian Jazz 'alumni' and 'returning home' musicians.

Continue to recognize and award excellence in Jazz and Blues through awards and competitions.

Brilliant Artists

Actively program opportunities for artists to collaborate and experiment and develop initiatives that bring different styles of jazz and blues together with other types of music.

Develop mentoring and training programs for Musicians, Producers and Artistic Directors.

Provide opportunities for associate Artistic Directors to curate a section of the festival as a special guest.

Develop young / emerging artists fringe event 3 - 5 months prior to the Oct/Nov festival.

Develop a showcase event that involves the collaboration between festival artists and other art-form artists such as filmmakers, sculptors, writers or digital artists.

Connect with universities to link education pathways with performance outcomes at the festival.

Inspired Audience

Collect and reflect on audience feedback and channel into festival development

Engage artists to develop immersive environments throughout festival venues & linkages combining jazz aesthetics with the local landscape.

Introduce an under 30's ticket / performance incentive program incorporating elements of "hipster" culture

Capitalise on the new CBD streetscape with pop up events, visual arts and street performers.

Present Jazz & Blues Jam Club and Band Camp for adults on a quarterly basis.

Develop a "people's choice" program or award category.

Develop a jazz review / Wangaratta experience platform inviting people to share their experience of the jazz festival and review artists.

Engaged Community

Document and promote the Festival story from the perspective of the community highlighting the 'Wangaratta face' and quantify the value of this economically and culturally.

Transform volunteer and friends programs into Ambassador alumni, providing a conduit for community members to help shape the festival.

Develop Jazz for dummies lecture series and instrument familiarization sessions.

Develop Fringe festival building on other local tourism products and culture, e.g. jazz cycle tour.

Develop "Festival Dollars" Program linking visitors with local business and introduce / document a local buy policy for the Festival.

Work with TAFE and local tourism to develop Festival Hospitality program

Announce a Jazz and Blues School / Community Group Award and school age jazz performer award.

Successful Organisation

Develop continuous improvement policy and process including identification, reflection and change.

Recruit Board members according to the strategic needs of the organisation.

Develop an innovative case for investment template and refine according to target audience.

Introduce change management strategy to reduce Boards operational tasks and enables focus on strategy and relationships.

Conduct biennial Board evaluation and skills audit and implement Board structure that incorporates skills development and succession opportunities.

Review Festival Brand to articulate year-long cultural profile of Wangaratta.

Improve ticketing structure to improve income stability and volume.