SOUND LINKS

COMMUNITY MUSIC IN AUSTRALIA

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Final report of the ARC Linkage project Sound Links: Exploring the dynamics of musical communities in Australia, and their potential for informing collaboration with music in schools
ISBN: 978-0-646-51338-6

Sound Links is a project of Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, Griffith University, in partnership with the Music Council of Australia, the Australian Music Association and the Australian Society for Music Education.

The project was realised with a two-year research grant (2007-2008) under the Linkage scheme of the Australian Research Council.

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Book design: Davina Purnama.
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*Sound Links* examines the dynamics of community music in Australia, and the models it represents for music learning and teaching in formal and informal settings. While the project finds itself in an environment where the importance of learning music is hardly disputed, it addresses a major gap in research and literature, and indeed in awareness at large, of the activities of vast numbers of Australians who engage in learning and making music outside of formal (music) education.

The Saatchi & Saatchi report *Australians and the Arts* (2001), and the two consecutive reports for the Australian Music Association *Australian Attitudes to Music* (2003, 2007) indicate that 36% of households contain at least one person who currently plays a musical instrument. For instrumental music alone, this equates to a rough estimate of four million people of all ages (5+ yrs) who engage in practical music-making on a regular basis. Such numbers constitute a significant artistic, social and economic force in the country’s cultural landscape. Recent major reports and reviews (most significantly the 2005 *National Review of School Music Education*) have indicated—but not examined—the important realised and potential role of community music activities for a vibrant musical life across Australia. As the first national study of community music in this country, this report aims to address that hiatus through an in-depth qualitative analysis of both actual practices and ideas.

In addition, from an international perspective, *Sound Links* constitutes the first study that considers six widely different practices with a consistent approach, creating the opportunity to draw conclusions about site and project specific characteristics, as well as more general features of community music activities and their potential to inform music education in schools.

Designed and executed in close collaboration with partner organisations Music Council of Australia (MCA), Australian Music Association (AMA), and the Australian Society for Music Education (ASME), the project has been rooted in actual practice from the start, and aimed at producing and disseminating outcomes that serve a vibrant musical life across the country.
Through a close examination of six case studies, ranging from multicultural suburbs to largely monocultural country towns, from rural networks to remote Indigenous communities, the project offers a revealing picture of musical activity that has been hardly visible outside of its circles of participants, and delivers a model to understand, plan and assess community music activities that should prove highly valuable to facilitators, cultural officers, local administrators, policy makers, funding bodies, and schools that seek to connect their musical activities more firmly to their environments.

Assessing the project, external moderator David Price OBE from the UK observes in the Foreword to this study how Sound Links is unique in its combination of academic rigour and determination to follow the practice, resulting in outcomes that he believes will support the project’s aims: stimulate understanding and appreciation of community music activities, facilitate their practice, advocate their importance, and stimulate the dialogue on learning styles and possibilities of collaboration with formal music education.

We present this report in the hope that it will inform and open the eyes of Australians to the value of the work of the six hundred community musicians who contributed to this research and their many colleagues, whose enthusiasm, drive, and resourcefulness help Australia sing, play and dance.
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RESEARCH TEAM

PROFESSOR HUIB SCHIPPERS (CHIEF INVESTIGATOR)

Huib Schippers has a long, diverse and profound history of engagement with music research, performance, and education. Trained as a professional sitar player, he proceeded with (partially overlapping) careers in performance, teaching, research, journalism, the record trade, arts policy, and project management. He founded the World Music School in Amsterdam (1990-1996), was the driving force behind the World Music & Dance Centre in Rotterdam (2001-2006), chaired the ISME Commission for Community Music Activities, and served on the Community Arts & Education Committee of the Netherlands National Arts Council. Currently, he is Director of Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre at Griffith University, from where he leads three ARC projects, including the $5 million Sustainable Futures for Music Cultures: Towards an Ecology of Musical Diversity. Schippers has lectured and published widely; his monograph on learning and teaching music across cultures, Facing the Music: Shaping Music Education from a Global Perspective, will be published by Oxford University Press later this year.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR PETER DUNBAR HALL (CHIEF INVESTIGATOR)

Peter Dunbar-Hall is a music educator and ethnomusicologist known for his research on contemporary aboriginal Australian music and Balinese music. He teaches music education and is the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies) at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. His current research focus is on music transmission in Balinese gamelan music. He is also a performing member of Sekaa Gong Tirta Sinar, a Sydney-based Balinese gamelan gong kebyar. He has published widely in the areas of the history and philosophy of music education, Australian cultural history, Aboriginal music, popular music studies, and Balinese gamelan music and dance. He is the author of Strrella Wilson: The Career of an
Australian Singer (Redback Press, 1997), and is the co-author of Deadly Sounds, Deadly Places: Contemporary Aboriginal Music in Australia (UNSW Press, 2004) with Chris Gibson.

**Dr Richard Letts (Partner Investigator)**

Richard Letts is the Executive Director of the Music Council of Australia and President of the International Music Council. He holds a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley and was director of two performing arts schools in the USA before returning to Australia as Director of Music for the Australia Council, the national arts policy and funding body. Subsequently, he was Director of the Australian Music Centre, the resource centre for Australian music composition and creation, before founding the national music council in 1994. He is a musician, author, editor, researcher, policy maker and music advocate. He was awarded Australian Honours by the government in 1996.

**Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartleet (Research Fellow)**

Brydie-Leigh Bartleet is a Research Fellow and Lecturer at Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University after working as a sessional Lecturer at the University of Queensland (2002-2006). She has conducted primary school, university and community bands from Australia, Thailand, Singapore and Taiwan. She has published widely on issues relating to community music, women conductors, peer-learning in conducting and feminist pedagogy, and is currently co-editing three books on music research, music education and musical autoethnography. She has served as a reviewer for a number of national and international music publications and serves on the editorial board of the International Journal of Community Music. She has been actively involved in community music-making and music education as a conductor and trumpet player, in Australia and internationally, over the last ten years.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In addition to the Australian Research Council, which funded this project through its Linkage Grant Scheme, the Research Team would first like to thank the Partner Organisations, who, in spite of their not-for-profit status, have brought substantial in-kind and cash contributions to the project:

- The Music Council of Australia (MCA): The MCA has a network of 600 members and direct access at the highest level to all sections of the Australian music sector. Of the Council’s 50 members, 15 are nominees of national music organisations such as the Australasian Performing Rights Association, Symphony Australia, Music Viva Australia and the Australian Music Industry Network. The remainder is comprised of distinguished individuals elected to particular positions of musical activity.
- The Australian Music Association (AMA): The AMA represents wholesalers and retailers of musical instruments, print music, sound products and music technology. It exists to pursue goals collectively, to enhance the industry’s development and prosperity. Current membership includes 84 wholesale companies, 325 retail stores and 56 associate businesses.
- The Australian Society for Music Education (ASME): ASME is the largest network of music educators in the country, and is the official national body representing Australia in the International Society for Music Education (ISME). ASME aims to support the right of every Australian to access a quality music education and to assist educators to develop and extend their professional knowledge and skills in music education. ASME also seeks to improve the status of music education in Australian schools, to promote the rich diversity of Australian music and to encourage innovative pedagogies in music education.

These organisations contributed most directly through the Sound Links Steering Committee which included representatives from all the industry partner organisations: Dr Richard Letts (MCA), Mr Ian Harvey (AMA), Dr Jennifer Rosevear (ASME), and Ms Tina Broad (Music. Play for Life).
Secondly, our gratitude goes to the **Reference Group** consisting of MCA and ASME members: Ms Beverley McAlister (MCA), Ms Pat Rix (MCA), Ms Kerry Digby (MCA), Ms Catherine Threlfall (MCA), Dr Anne Lierse (MCA), Ms Julie Montague (ASME), Associate Professor Kathy Marsh (ASME), Mr Ron Sisson (ASME), Dr Robin Stevens (ASME), Professor Margaret Barrett (ASME), and Dr Anne Power (ASME).

Thirdly, we would like to thank **Research Assistants** Jodie Taylor and Jocelyn Wolfe, who analysed the online survey and Music in Communities Awards data respectively. Indigenous musician and community worker Sarah Patrick assisted in the interviews with young people for the Stylin’ UP case study. We would also like to thank our **Community Liaisons** who assisted in setting up the fieldwork schedules in their respective communities: Beverley McAlister (Dandenong Ranges), Sheena Prince (Albany), Greg John (McLaren Vale), Tiffany Lee-Shoy (Fairfield City), Elizabeth Mackinlay (Borroloola) and Jeremy Wellard (Inala).

But most of all we would like to thank the hundreds of community music workers across Australia that have contributed to this project for their time and cooperation, and for their commitment to bringing music to Australians of all backgrounds, often in the face of considerable challenges in terms of funding, organisation, and infrastructure. We hope that *Sound Links* can assist in making your work more visible, appreciated, and supported.
FOREWORD BY DAVID PRICE OBE

Sound Links offers a rare and rigorous analysis of what constitutes best (and in some cases, next) practice in community music. By combining an academic perspective with a determination to follow the practice, and—perhaps most importantly—by juxtaposing six very different practices in a single consistent study, the project team has achieved a number of milestones:

- Significantly enhancing the understanding of community music practices in Australia, and delivering a model that has considerable potential to be applied globally;
- Providing practical help for those wishing to stimulate music activity in specific localities;
- Demonstrating and advocating more effective school-community collaborations;
- Initiating a cross-sectoral dialogue on the factors involved in determining appropriate interventions in this field (formal, non-formal and informal); and
- Accelerating the development of effective infrastructural support for community music.

Whilst it is natural that Australian organisations and practitioners should be the main beneficiaries of the Sound Links findings, I am convinced that the conclusions and recommendations will have international application and be received with great interest. The comments that follow are intended to confirm (and, in some cases, contrast) the findings from the six case studies, set against a UK (and, where appropriate, international) perspective; offer suggestions on aspects of school and community links, and, finally, pass suggestions on how best to disseminate, and make practical, the report’s recommendations.

During the project’s final three day meeting at Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (October 8-10, 2008) to which I was invited as an external moderator, the expert panel have, in my view, identified an important framework against which the report’s findings can be set, particularly in locating nine ‘domains’ of community music activity: Infrastructure; Organisation; Visibility and public relations; Relationship to place; Social
engagement; Support and networking; Dynamic music-making; Engaging pedagogy and facilitation; and Links to school. Where appropriate, I will refer my comments directly to those domains.

UNDERSTANDING THE TERRITORY

During the discussions, the expert panel were reminded of the elusive nature of attempting to define community music. However, the report has wisely sought to present ways of seeing community music practice without becoming enmeshed in either inclusive or exclusive definitions. Put another way, a completely inclusive analysis inevitably means that all music is seen as community music, making attempts to strategically prioritise actions, funding or civic support, almost impossible. This was resolved by seeking to define only in so far as it would benefit measures to support and explain, rather than as an exercise in itself. Having the case studies to refer to here was invaluable.

Seen through the categorisations developed through the Musical Futures project, music education activities can be seen as either formal (delivered by professionals in schools, colleges, and other statutory organisations through formalised curricula), non-formal (led by professionals in non-formal contexts—which may include extra-curricular activities in schools and other formal settings) and informal (where groups are self-organised and often self-sufficient). This report’s focus, therefore, is on non-formal and informal activities, though with a particular urgency in connecting with the formal. Within those two categories, discussions raised a number of circumstances where precise further pinning-down soon becomes problematic, but it may be more fruitful trying to list a number of characteristics which may inform strategic actions.

The challenge, particularly for those seeking to support community music, is how to best target support, and I would argue that both non-formal and informal activities should have a strong social function (the intentional outcomes are as much educational, social and personal development as they are musical) and very low, or no, entry barriers. Whilst informal activities will still benefit from supportive intervention (even if it is simply the provision of space, event promotion or recognition) it is likely that many, if not most, interventions will be in the field of non-formal activities. Such distinctions are, it seems to me, less contentious than ‘top down/bottom up’ labels.
CASE STUDIES

By investigating each of the six case studies we were able to validate the research team’s methodology and identify the nine domains and learner benefits. This is no small achievement and one which will, I am sure, find resonance beyond Australia.

The Dandenong Ranges is perhaps the case study which offers most scope for further analysis, particularly because of its clear sense of intervention, strong leadership and links with schools. It is clearly a model of excellent practice and one which needs to be championed so that others may be persuaded to incorporate some of the thinking behind the project. I noticed many similarities to UK models; in particular, the development of the Get Sorted Music Academy in Rotherham, England, which was initiated by one determined volunteer and over the years has grown and secured a strong physical presence and shared sense of ownership by its members. Whilst I was unable to ascertain the quality of music facilitation, it would seem to score very highly indeed in most of the nine domains.

The Albany study appears to suggest a strong potential model for small, detached, fairly homogenous communities. As with the Shetland Isles in Scotland, the high levels of musical participation seem to be attributable to joined-up provision across all three sectors. One reservation here might be how transferable this model might be, in terms of class and diversity.

McLaren Vale seems to show what is possible when outstanding, and outward-looking music teachers are at the heart of community music-making. In this respect, it has similarities with rural Norwegian community music schools and ‘culture houses’. The musical community seems to grow out of an already strong sense of culture, place and community—visibility, strong and diverse pedagogies, and supportive infrastructure all seem to be high.

Of all the case studies, the one which most resembles best multi-ethnic urban youth music practice in the UK is perhaps Fairfield City. As we discussed, there is relatively little connection across and between the ethnic groups, not least because the musical activity by its very purpose, is defining the cultural distinctiveness and identity of each of those groups. However, umbrella community music organisations (such as Sound It
Out or Urban Voices in the UK) offer the prospect of closer proximity and equality of provision and such interventions might be appropriate here, where social engagement, a variety of approaches to music-making and pedagogies as well as relationship to place, are at a premium.

European comparisons come up short in the case of remote Indigenous communities like Borroloola and I would not pretend to have anything other than a basic understanding of the complex range of challenges which the report, and our discussions, unearthed. That said, the requirements of communities such as these appear to be very modest in resource terms and would appear to warrant prioritisation by state and regional governance.

The final case study, Inala, highlights both the potential and the difficulties of intervening to support initiatives ‘owned’ by the community, especially in locating the authentic ‘voice’ of a community. Here, social engagement, organisation and infrastructure are both paramount and complex. It also demonstrates the apparent tension between one-off, highly visible, projects on one hand, and apparently scalable, sustained, (though less visible) year-round commitments on the other. The methods deployed in scaling-up Stylin’ Up in Logan City, Ipswich and elsewhere may benefit from further explanation in subsequent reports. The reinvention of wheels is rife in community music and, since we are likely to be championing some of these case studies, help with how to replicate them would help others enormously.

**Success factors and challenges**

The identified ‘critical success factors’ are consistent with most observations, evaluations and analyses I’ve been engaged in. I expect that weighting will differ in respect of location (for example, one might reasonably expect ‘community ownership’ to be of greater importance in rural communities than in complex urban environments) but, in general the list is as one would expect. In a UK context, one might expect the ordering to begin with leadership, planning, financial support and facilitation and have choice of musical repertoire, intergenerational interaction and support from retailers close to the bottom of the list.

The nine domains (outlined in greater detail in Chapter Six) have the potential to prove important internationally in planning, executing and assessing community music activities, and may well constitute the most significant outcome of this project.
ENGAGING SCHOOLS

One of the drivers behind the research was to ascertain the extent to which productive partnerships with schools were in evidence. It seems clear, from the evidence presented, that this potential is not being fully explored. The case studies offer some exemplars but, more generally, the picture is a familiar one: community groups not establishing close links with schools; music teachers in schools unaware of local music activity, and having no time to find out. Unsurprisingly, most young people in the UK who are faced with this situation see their participation (at school and at home or in the community) in two completely isolated worlds. There would appear to be a number of key factors which might unblock this unhelpful division:

- Enticements for schools to be more accessible to local community groups;
- School Principals who are able to see, and clearly transmit to their staff, the benefits of closer links with community musicians and groups;
- A brokerage agency who may assist community musicians and organisations in bringing mutual benefit to music projects in schools, invariably through a commitment to capitalising upon the complementary skills of community musicians and skilled educators;
- State and national training initiatives which can help both sets of practitioners understand their value to partnership projects;
- Incentives for schools to offer their physical resources out of school hours.

There would also be merit in commissioning a series of practical resources which would benefit each set of practitioners in gaining a better understanding of each other’s pedagogies. Funds earmarked for music projects which have clear and supportive links to schools and their students have been shown to incentivise better relations between schools and community musicians.

It is also important to see the longer view. Investing time in the difficult process of trying to get more non-formal and informal pedagogies into teacher preparation programmes may seem an unrewarding pursuit.
But even modest success here would benefit from the ‘multiplier effect’ in years to come, making a generation of newly qualified teachers more likely to react favourably to approaches from community musicians and organisations. Programmes I have been involved in elsewhere like whole-class instrumental tuition and Musical Futures seem to ‘infiltrate’ non-formal teaching and informal learning ideas into the classroom, thus opening up schools to more inclusive pedagogies. These in turn can improve the numbers of sustained music learners and encourage schools to utilise more fully skills within their local professionals, parents and indeed students. It may be that these initiatives are not transferable. If so, consideration should be given for home-grown solutions to the vexed question of dislocated pedagogies. The only way, in my view, to move toward stronger school-community links is to regard the differing teaching and styles as complementary, not competing.

**Conclusions**

I am grateful for the opportunity that the project team led by Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre has given me to take part in this project. It has been a privilege to witness the care and integrity with which the consultations for Sound Links have been conducted. It augurs well for the continued development of community music in Australia. As long as enquiries are practice-driven and outcomes are practitioner-focussed, there is every likelihood that the essential grass-roots support needed will be obtained. Beyond that, the quality of expertise—in both industry and academia—which has steered this project can be confidently relied upon to give the strategic impact of the project the best possible chance of success.

*David Price OBE is an educational consultant based in the UK. After a career as a performing musician and community music facilitator, he was the inaugural Director of Learning at the Liverpool Institute for the Arts, Chair of the Commission for Community Music Activities of the International Society for Music Education (ISME) and later Board Member of that organisation. He also initiated the project Musical Futures, which has contributed greatly to engaging youth with music in schools throughout the UK by introducing aspects of informal learning into the curriculum. Currently, he is working for the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.*
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The term ‘community music’ refers to a wide range of endeavours, such as extra-curricular projects for children, multicultural initiatives, working with youth at risk, ensemble programs and community music therapy sessions. While there have been numerous debates about what exactly constitutes community music, it is widely acknowledged that it is a group activity where people join together to actively participate in the music-making process. It encompasses a wide and diverse range of musics, which reflect and enrich the cultural life of the participants and their broader community. Common features of these activities are a primary focus on the specific competencies and ambitions of the participants (rather than didactic teaching of a predetermined repertoire), and a sense of social cohesion that supports musical development, often with a strong drive for excellence in process as well as product (cf Veblen & Olsson, 2002; Schippers, 2004).

Over the past 20 or 30 years, a diversity of community music practices have grown in Australia and played a significant role in the wide and varied musical landscape of this country. As the Australia Council for the Arts describes in the discussion paper, Planning for the Future: Issues, Trends and Opportunities for the Arts in Australia:

The musical landscape in Australia today is broad and diverse, consisting of different cultural traditions, genres and practices. Increasingly, previously defined boundaries between musical genres are being crossed and exciting new genres are being created. Australia, with its multicultural make-up, is uniquely placed to lead the world in this development. The many interrelated layers that contribute to this musical landscape include grassroots music-making, music education, youth music practice, amateur music practice, moving through opportunities offered for professional development, to emerging artists, through community music practice and peak youth bodies, to
professional artists and organisations creating and presenting music of the highest quality. (2001, p. 44)

A scan of the Music Council of Australia’s *Community Music Bulletin* affirms this vibrancy and high level of activity in the community music sector, as does the recent response of over two hundred entrants in the inaugural *Music in Communities Awards* run by MCA’s *Music. Play for Life*. Entrants included choirs, music therapy programs, Indigenous groups, bands, festivals, orchestras, regional conservatoriums, country music clubs, samba schools, folk clubs, drumming circles, thistle pipe bands, studio recording projects and community music organisations, to mention just a few. In the 28 finalists’ applications there was a stated belief in the power of music-making to strengthen people’s self image, personal skills, relationships with others, and ability to engage in community life. In other words, community music-making fosters life skills, and music is considered powerful as a community builder, cultivating community identity, breaking down barriers, promoting cultural awareness (of music cultures and of ethnic cultures) and cultural exchange. (See Appendix 6 for a full report on the 28 finalists.)

The Australian Government’s culture and recreation portal lists a large number of community music projects that range from Indigenous music to country, folk, rock, jazz, military and ethnic musics. Some States have community cultural development organisations, and Regional Arts Australia and its State and Territory organisations also provide strong support to community arts programs, including community music. However, this high level of activity is not without its problems. In the Australia Council’s recent Community Partnerships Scoping Study Report, *Creative Communities*, Dunn (2006) identified a number of challenges facing musicians and the music sector, ranging from a devaluing/worsening of music education, music not being seen as integral to life/culture/wellbeing, a lack of support and recognition for certain groups including grassroots and community, and inequity in the division of the funding and resourcing pie.

Somewhat surprisingly, the aforementioned high levels of community music activity and considerable challenges have not been paralleled with much in-depth research. Notwithstanding the significant contributions of Hawkins’ (1993) study on community arts in Australia, Breen’s (1994)
study on public funding of community music in Australia, Harrison’s (1996) overview of community music in Australia, Cahill’s (1998) handbook on developing music projects and organisations, and Coffman’s (2006) study of adult community band members in Tasmania, in-depth research into community music in this country has been minimal.

While it is clear that there are high levels of activity across the country, the cultural and social contexts of these activities and their connections to the broader community and schools remain open for further research. For example, in a survey of children’s activities in the 12 months to April 2003, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2003) found:

- 29% of children aged 5-14 years (780,400 children) participated in selected organised cultural activities outside of school hours;
- Across all the states and territories playing a musical instrument was the most popular of the selected cultural activities (17%), followed by dancing (12%), and singing (5%);
- Of those children who played a musical instrument, 45% did so more than once a week. (i.e. practised at home or elsewhere, had lessons or performed with their musical instrument)

While these statistics show a high level of activity, they do not give any information about the nature and social context of these activities and whether they are linked to schools, community organisations, or both; nor, consequently, do they elucidate the nature of these links.

A similar situation can be found from an educational perspective. While considerable research has been devoted to formal Australian school music programs and their curricula, including the recent National Review of School Music Education (DEST, 2005), much less is known about Australia’s informal community contexts and their approaches to learning and teaching music. As Myers (1992) argues, there is a need to think beyond the school level, as the emerging needs of society require an expanded view of education, one that nurtures the lifelong learner. The Australia Council reiterates this by highlighting, “that the formal education system is only one means of influencing the attitudes of children and that it cannot be expected to bring about significant change in isolation” (Saatchi & Saatchi, 2001, p. 90). Recognition of this did reach the general brief of
the National Review of School Music Education, which acknowledges that “communities play a vital role in effective music education” (DEST 2005, p. vii); however, the final report still primarily focuses on music in schools. With this in mind, the Sound Links project has aimed to build a synergy with the outcomes of the National Review, and enhance understanding of Australian community music and education.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT

Sound Links finds itself in an environment where the importance of learning music is hardly disputed. Arts education is part of the national political process and political agenda. In addition to the aforementioned National Review, the Australia Council for the Arts (2004) reports various research projects of relevance to Sound Links, including:

- *Playing for Life*, a comparative international project (with partners in the UK, US and Germany) that explored how young people engage with popular music in post-industrial societies, particularly outside of formal schooling;
- *Risky Business*, a longitudinal, collaborative research project that identified effective diversionary programs for young people experiencing some difficulties in their lives, and analysed the potential impact of the creative arts to assist them in reconnecting with their community;
- A Commonwealth evaluation of school-based arts programs (with Australia Council, DEST, DCITA, ACER), which provided “a bibliography of existing national and overseas research on the effectiveness of arts education on student achievement,” to “identify the attributes of specific arts programs that are of particular benefit for young Australians, including those in disadvantaged groups”;
- *Australian Children and the Arts: Meaning, Value and Participation*, undertaken by The University of Tasmania, funded by an ARC Linkage grant, which identified “the nature of children’s participation in the arts in the Australian community and the meanings and values they ascribe to such experiences.” It specifically sought “children’s perspectives on their experiences of the arts in general and the function of the arts in their lives”;


• Education and the Arts Partnership Initiative, which included four projects in four states and territories—Northern Territory, Western Australia, New South Wales and Queensland—assessed and evaluated various aspects of their respective arts education programs.

Although each of these projects provides information relevant to the Sound Links project, they do not address in depth the issues that are emerging in the international discourse on learning and teaching music: the importance of community music experiences in their own right and their potential to inform music education in schools (cf Veblen & Olsson, 2002), taking into account structural differences in pedagogical approaches between many formal, non-formal and informal settings.

Music initiatives in Australia and other countries also substantiate the importance of this project and the value of community music activities. In most of mainland Europe, in addition to music in schools of varying quality, there is an extensive (and usually well-funded) network of municipally-controlled public music schools, where children go to learn music after school. These activities have led to a considerable democratisation of music learning to skill levels that support sustained amateur musicianship, or lead to professional training for the highly skilled and motivated. In Australia, Music. Play for Life—a joint initiative of the MCA, AMA, and ASME—is a project that is successfully promoting and assisting community and school music activities for children. Sound Links takes the ideas and practices of such community-based initiatives to the next level, by working to enhance understanding of community music practice and its potential to inform and link with the formal education system.

The urgency of explorations in this area is emphasised by Costantoura (2001), who defines a need for “research that delivers a practical, broad-based understanding” (p. 313). Further to this, the National Review highlights, “Music education in Australian schools is at a critical point where prompt action is needed to right the inequalities in school music” (DEST, 2005, p. v). Part of this action has involved supporting “productive partnerships and networking with music organisations, musicians, the music industry and the Australian community” (ibid.). The first-time collaboration of the three industry partners—with their extensive networks in education,
industry, and communities—and Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University—with its experience and academic networks in Australia and abroad—constitutes such an innovative partnership. Hence, this project has the potential to be far-reaching and of practical use to both the fields of music education and community music.

**The benefits of Sound Links**

The key benefits of this project to Australia lie in its contribution to a vibrant musical life, and, by extension, to the sense of wellbeing throughout the country. By complementing the *National Review of School Music Education* and informing *Music. Play for life*, this project will be promoted as a basis for development and refinement of existing music activities, structures and funding. Furthermore, this project provides a framework by which researchers can explore the environments of community musicians and how music assists them to live in these settings. Researchers in the field of well-being also assert that music and the arts are crucial in the maintenance of mental health and well-being (Argyle, 1996; Mathiti, 2002), and this has subsequent implications for the ways in which young people operate in, and contribute to, society (Barrett & Smigiel, 2003). It is hoped that this project will encourage individuals, and their families, to make choices that lead to healthy, productive and fulfilling lives through a greater connection with their community and local musical environments.

As outlined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the information paper: *Key Issues Relating to Children and Youth, Australia* (2005), community participation for youth, including socialising, cultural and leisure activities, such as music-making, are emerging as important in achieving more general well-being outcomes, such as health and education. As the ABS (2005) indicates, current Australian public policy is focusing on building strong communities and social participation is seen as an essential component that encourages crisis prevention and early intervention. Hence, the aims of this project strongly resonate with this current research and policy and add a significant element—in terms of understanding and nurturing the ways in which people positively engage with community music-making in the education process.

Moreover, the project considers rural and remote parts of Australia, which are often excluded from access to high-level music education. As
the National Review identified, “While there are examples of excellent music education in schools, many Australian students miss out on effective music education because of the lack of equity of access; lack of quality of provision; and, the poor status of music in many schools” (DEST, 2005, p. v). It is anticipated that the outcomes of this project may serve to improve that situation, by providing models, encouraging further projects, awareness and funding to these areas. For the Industry Partners, this project also signifies an important step forward in the possibilities to make music-making accessible to all young Australians. As such, the results of the project are feeding directly into the Industry Partners’ campaign Music. Play for Life.

Finally, the research project aims to enable local, regional and national government agencies and private funding bodies to target their investment more appropriately in the cultural development of Australian community music. In this way, the outcomes of the Sound Links project can help more young music learners from different backgrounds find pathways of development that are appropriate to their individual modes of acquiring musical skills and knowledge, with the promise of informing new strategies and approaches for community music activities, music curricula in schools, and their interaction.
CHAPTER TWO

WHAT IS COMMUNITY MUSIC?

INTRODUCTION

In terms of understanding the dynamics of community music, and its relationship to music education in schools, a number of relevant issues are discussed in the literature on the subject. Several international studies on community music and education provide useful exemplars for Sound Links, and point the way to possible frameworks for analysing the musical, social, cultural and educational dynamics of community music from a range of disciplines. The following overview is divided into six sections, which represent the key areas of literature studied in preparation for the Sound Links fieldwork and online survey design: community studies; community music; community arts and community cultural development; learning and teaching; policy and exemplars; and future directions for community music in Australia. Under each of these headings summaries of the major issues covered in the literature are outlined. Selections of quotes from the literature, which encapsulate significant ideas for Sound Links, are also highlighted.

THE CONCEPT OF ‘COMMUNITY’

The first concept that needs to be addressed in order to successfully examine community music is that of community itself. A number of scholars have noted the slippery and problematic task of trying to define what we mean by ‘community’ (e.g. Bruhn, 2005; Johnson, Headey & Jensen, 2005). As Amit & Rapport (2002) caution, expressions of community require sceptical investigation, rather than providing a “ready-made social unit upon which to hang analysis” (2002, pp. 13-14). This is reiterated by Day (2006):

The essential meaning of community might seem obvious enough. It refers to those things which people have in common, which bind them together, and give them a sense of belonging with one another. Clearly this is a fundamental aspect of society, perhaps its very core. But as soon as one tries to specify more firmly what these common bonds are, how they arise, and how they can be sustained, the problems begin. (p. 1)
Likewise, as Mason (2000, p. 19) explains, the concept of community is complex because it involves a number of different elements, and people interpret these elements differently, or weight the presence or absence of them differently; hence they disagree over what counts as a community. Having said this, Wood & Judikis (2002) do offer a number of characteristics of communities which strongly resonate with what can be identified in community music settings. They explain that a community consists of “a group of people who have a sense of common purpose(s) and/or interests(s) for which they assume mutual responsibility, who acknowledge their interconnectedness, who respect the individual differences among members, and who commit themselves to the well-being of each other and the integrity and well-being of the group” (Wood & Judikis, 2002, p. 12). Seen this way, communities are defined by the kinds and qualities of interpersonal ties between the people participating in them.

Despite the problematic issue of definitions, within the fields of sociology, anthropology and community theory, a number of useful theoretical and methodological frameworks for approaching community can be found (e.g. Alperson, 2002; Amit, 2000; Delanty, 2003). Surprisingly, the vast majority of literature on community music does not appear to consult these ideas and frameworks in any in-depth manner, despite the fact that they could provide useful ways of understanding the socio-cultural complexities of many community music settings. A number of relevant issues are discussed in this literature, such as:

- Definitions of the concept of ‘community’; contested aspects of community; and debates on whether a definition of ‘community’ is even useful or necessary (e.g. Mason, 2000; Wood & Judikis, 2002).
- Elements of a ‘healthy’ functioning community, and how healthy communities promote a sense of well-being; and how participation in communities can lead to a sense of value and empowerment (e.g. Kirst-Ashman, 2000; Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2006).
- How the concept of ‘community’ has changed over time in the discourse; how the changing nature of communities has impacted upon people; how globalisation has affected communities; how local community-based groups have reacted to macro-social forces; and how belonging to several
communities impacts upon people in contemporary life (e.g. Amit, 2000, 2002; Delanty, 2003).

- Factors which influence the sustainability of communities; the role that the arts can play in sustaining communities; the role that community assets/resources can play in community development; and the concept of social capital in the study of community development and sustainability (e.g. Eaton, 2002; Hyland, 2005).

- What people learn from the experience of participating in community life; the role that communities play in educating their members; and how communities can be linked with institutions, such as schools and universities (e.g. Decker & Decker, 2003; Sartwell, 2002; Wenger, 2000).

- How recent advances in technology have impacted upon communities; and how the dynamics of virtual communities differ from traditional concepts of face-to-face communities (e.g. Baba, 2005; Evans, 2004; Nieckarz, 2005; Schuler, 1996).

The latter, increasingly apparent in the rise of online communities (such as the social networking sites Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter), herald a radical departure from community as linked to place:

Today global forms of communication are offering many opportunities for the construction of community. This leads to an understanding of community that is neither a form of social integration nor one of meaning but is an open-ended system of communication about belonging. (Delanty, 2003, p. 187)

However, as Baba (2005) is quick to point out, the personal ties that are associated with face-to-face communities still apply in the virtual realm:

While technology can support community, it cannot be relied on at this stage in its development to construct community without the help of many other human resources. Humans are building new forms of community in the twenty-first century and utilizing new kinds of resources to build them. These new communities respond to the economic and political pressures that are gradually shaping our lives in ever more globally distributed patterns, whether or not we like it. Yet, at the heart of community, we still find the ties of
common experience and interest that bind individual people and the choices people make to allow these bonds to embrace them, regardless of where they may be located in place or space. (p. 163)

THE DYNAMICS OF COMMUNITY MUSIC-MAKING

A key factor in community-based music-making appears to be its dynamics. A recent Policy statement of the Community Music Commission of the International Society for Music Education, highlights that

Community Music is a vital and dynamic force that provides opportunities for participation and education in a wide range of musics and musical experiences. Community Music activities are based on the premise that everyone has the right and ability to make and create musics. Accordingly, such programs can act as a counterbalance and/or complement to formal music institutions and commercial music concerns. (http://www.isme.org/en/community-music-activity)

This is echoed in writings from an Australian perspective:

Community music incorporates many wide-ranging elements which contribute significantly to the development of the arts, education, cultural life, the economy, social integration and community cohesion in Australia. Community music is not just a group of amateurs having a good time. The term I use to describe the significance of community music development as a whole is ‘cultural synergy.’ (Cahill, 1998, p. vii)

Within the fields of ethnomusicology, music education, musicology and music therapy, a number of useful studies can be found that examine community music activities from a range of different angles (e.g. Bell, 2002; Finnegan, 2007; Mullen, 2002; Veblen, 2005; Veblen & Olsson, 2002). Sometimes these studies are conducted by practitioners in the field, and while they offer tremendous contextual and descriptive data, as Higgins (2006, p. 3) argues, they often lack substantial theoretical and critical frameworks. Studies from more musicological perspectives come closest to articulating musical experiences in a critically-informed manner. However, they sometimes tend to use the term ‘community’ rather loosely
without fully considering the dynamics of this concept. Despite these tensions, this literature certainly provides an important historical and disciplinary context for the Sound Links project. A number of relevant issues are discussed in this literature, such as:

- International definitions of community music activities and the dynamics of these settings; debates about the limits of these definitions, and whether they are necessary; the ideological underpinnings of community music activities; and how community music is situated within the larger sphere of participatory development (e.g. Higgins, 2006; Veblen, 2005; Veblen & Olsson, 2002).

- The history of community music and its relationship towards the community arts movement; how national development agencies have affected the growth of community music activities; and the profile of community music workers (e.g. Hawkins, 1993; Higgins, 2007).

- The scope of scholarly research into community music; how community music studies might benefit from more theoretical perspectives; and how organisations, such as the Community Music Commission of the International Society for Music Education, have impacted upon the study of community music (e.g. Higgins, 2006; McCarthy, 2004).

- Key themes of identity, context, community, participation and pedagogy, which have been raised in case studies of community music; the role of community music centres and community music schools in the development of musical and social skills for participants; and the impact of youth intervention community programs in music (e.g. Mathiti, 2002; Souza & Müller, 2002; Zeserson, 2002).

- The learning and teaching dynamics of community music settings; suitable teaching and learning models for community music; educational philosophies which are useful to community music; and collaborations between community music and other institutions, such as schools and universities (e.g. Abrahams, 2005; Carruthers, 2005; Garrett, 2002; Louth, 2006; Mullen, 2002).

- How technological developments have impacted upon community music; and how the dynamics of virtual music communities differ
from more ‘traditional’ community music activities (e.g. Bryant, 1995; Kibby, 2000; Lysloff, 2003; Salavuo, 2006).

- How funding issues have impacted upon community music activities; and how policies have affected community music activities (e.g. Moore, 2007; Zilko & Stafford, 2003).

As Veblen and Olsson (2002) point out in their article in the influential *New Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning*:

Community Music is not new—we have always known rich fabrics of participatory music-making. Moreover, music educators, both individually and collectively, have always worked in many settings. What is new is the flourishing of scholarly interest in this area, as well as recent international initiatives. This broadening of vision for music educators promises many opportunities for research, such as investigating the variety of successful teaching and learning strategies found in Community Music settings. (p. 743)

**THE DYNAMICS OF COMMUNITY ARTS AND COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

In much of the literature, community music is explicitly or implicitly linked to community cultural development:

Community cultural development uses involvement in artistic and other creative processes as a way of exploring and expressing our cultures and the values underpinning these cultures and our society. Community cultural development processes can therefore play a vital role in helping people to think critically about their experiences. It is in the act of creativity that empowerment lies, and through sharing creativity that understanding is promoted. This engagement can expose communities and decision-makers to previously unimaginable ideas which challenge our values, leading to personal growth, lifelong learning and change. (Mills, 2004, p. 9)

Within the fields of community arts and community cultural development (which in some instances are discussed interchangeably), a number of common issues and concerns can be found that have strong resonances
with community music. Many argue that community music emerged out of the community arts movement, and many also suggest that music plays an integral role in community cultural development programs, so this literature is certainly relevant. Moreover, within the literature on community arts, a strong tradition of community-arts education research can be found, which could be highly applicable to community music contexts (e.g. Deasy, 2002; Dreeszen, Aprill & Deasy, 1999; Fiske, 1999). A number of relevant issues are discussed in this literature, such as:

- Definitions of community arts and community cultural development, and whether these terms can be used interchangeably; and current issues facing community cultural development in Australia (e.g. Guetzkow, 2002; Hawkins, 1993).
- How community arts can contribute towards a sense of well-being in Australia; factors which need to be taken into account when looking at how the arts impact communities; the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for community cultural development in Australia; the key drivers of change in community cultural development; and the future of community cultural development in Australia (e.g. Argyle 1996; Dunn, 2006; Mills, 2004).
- The impact of community-based arts education; the impact of community schools of the arts; the extent of cross-sector collaboration between arts and education; the benefits of building community arts and school partnerships; factors which contribute towards an effective and sustainable arts and education partnership; and how the arts alter the learning experience (e.g. Dunphy, 2005; Sikes, 2007b).

Despite the rich and varied literature on this topic, some authors emphasise the underexposure of this sector in public awareness and the need to create greater visibility for this work:

For too long the significance of community-based cultural practice has been trivialised and devalued by both policy makers and cultural critics. Yet it is often here that the conditions necessary for democratic cultural production, for formal innovation and for expressions of ethnic, class or gender difference can most easily be established. (Hawkins, 1993, p. xxiv)
THE LEARNING AND TEACHING DYNAMICS

Some interpret community to include all formal and informal settings for the transmission of music:

One of the most pervasive models underlying music education is that of community. Whether it be the Hindustani sitarist instructing his disciple in traditional manner, the Western classical pianist conducting her masterclass, the Australian Aboriginal songman teaching his young kinsman a love song, or the Balkan mother singing her daughter a lament, all participate in a community in which music-making and taking plays a central role. (Jorgensen, 1995, p. 71)

Others emphasise the breadth of approaches it brings to complement formal music education:

By opening out our understanding that there are a multitude of ways in which to acquire musical skills and knowledge, surely we can reach out to more learners and reveal a much higher number of people with the capacity to make music for their own pleasure, a larger proportion of learners who would warrant being ‘counted as musical’ within formal settings, and a more open attitude towards music-making both on the part of those who specialize in it and on the part of amateur networks of families, friends and others in the community. (Green, 2002, p. 216)

Within the fields of education and music education, a number of important issues are raised that are directly applicable to the learning and teaching dynamics of community music settings. In particular, studies that examine the dynamics of more ‘informal’ music learning environments and the interaction of these environments with more formalised settings, such as schools and universities (e.g. Schippers, 1997, 2004; Temmerman, 2006). A number of relevant issues are discussed in this literature, such as:

- The current social and cultural contexts of music teaching and learning; and how concepts of formal, non-formal and informal education relate to communities (e.g. Colwell & Richardson, 2002; McCarthy 2002).
• How classrooms can be thought of as communities and how education, in general, can be thought of in terms of community; the ways in which community music programs nurture the creativity of students; issues relating to ‘communities of practice’; and the impact of arts participation on students’ learning and development in Australia (e.g. Barrett & Gromko, 2002; hooks, 2003; Jorgenson, 1995).

• Current issues in the ‘formal’ / ‘informal’ education debate, and the relevancy of these debates to community music settings; how children relate to music informally ‘at home’ in comparison to formally at school; and how developments in technology have affected these music learning contexts (e.g. Folkestad, 2006; Jaffurs, 2006).

• Specific characteristics of formal and informal learning environments, including the spectrum from analytic to holistic approaches, and aural to notation-based teaching; approaches to tradition and creativity, the role of the teacher/facilitator and other aspects of the intricate interactions that frame learning processes within and across cultures (e.g. Campbell, 1998; Folkestad, 2006; Green, 2002).

• The examination of school and community partnerships; the dynamics of community-based music education, and how they can be of use to music in schools; and how an assessment of the positive influence of music in community development programs can be made (e.g. Albrecht, 1997; Burton, 2002; Finn, 1997; Herbert, 2005; Robinson, 1998).

• Issues regarding Indigenous community-based education; and challenges in facilitating intercultural understanding and cultural diversity in music education (e.g. May, 1999).

• Issues arising in the education and training of community musicians (e.g. Addo, 2003; Cole 2000; Everitt, 1997).

• The importance of children’s voices in research about music education; and methodological issues for including children’s voices in research (e.g. Barrett & Smigiel; Eder and Corsaro 1999).
Progressing insight into how people ‘construct’ knowledge, skills and understanding through combined experience from targeted and ‘messy’ learning situations pervades this literature (in contrast to the idea that all learning takes place in a predetermined, one-size-fits-all, school-based, one-way didactic process). As Salavuo (2006) explains:

Institutional music education can cover only a small part of the musical activities of today’s young people. Music educators can benefit from the awareness of musical activities their students are involved in during their spare time. We should recognise the rapid changes that shape the comprehensive learning environment. Teachers should be aware of the possibilities the online communities offer in terms of collaborative, on-demand based reciprocal learning, and social searching of information. (p. 267)

Likewise, Temmerman (2005) reiterates:

A central issue for all involved in the musical education of young people is how to connect the three contexts of the school, home and community to enhance positive attitudes towards music-making, to build on existing opportunities to engage in music-making, and to bring together the wealth of music activity, resources and expertise. The question ‘why connect?’ is well answered by the fact that music plays an important role in young people’s lives and that school, home and out-of-school musical experiences all contribute in important, differing ways. (pp. 118-119)

RELEVANT POLICY DOCUMENTS, PROJECTS, PUBLICATIONS AND ORGANISATIONS

While one of the recognised strengths of community music activities are their ability to self-start and sustain, most do see a role for government:

If governments wish to more effectively enhance community wellbeing, they need to recognise or incorporate the community’s culture (and thus values) within government policies and strategies. They can do this through participatory creative processes. (Mills, 2004, p. 9).
Various policy documents, in particular from the Australia Council for the Arts, provide useful contextual information for the *Sound Links* study. These include, but are not limited to: *Children Their Parents and the Arts: Some Guidelines for Working with Parents of Young Children*; *Creative Communities; Strengthening Communities through the Arts*; and *Young People and the Arts*.

A number of international examples of arts projects, publications, networks and organisations also touch on important issues regarding the provision of community music activities and the dissemination of related research (e.g. Dunn 2006; Spokes 2005). Relevant projects and publications for *Sound Links* include, but are not limited to:

- Community arts projects, such as *Artwork* (New Zealand), *Engaging Art* (Australia), *Arts for Everyone (A4E)* (UK), and *Musical Futures* (UK), amongst many others.
- Community arts publications, such as *Heartwork* (Australia), *The Great Yarn Event* (Australia), *Culture Art Fusion* (Australia), *Hands up!* (Australia), *Better Places, Richer Communities: Cultural Planning and Local Development, a Practical Guide* (Australia), amongst countless others.
- Community arts networks and organisations, such as Feral Arts (Australia), Community Cultural Development Australia, Cultural Development Network (Victoria), Queensland Community Arts Network, Community Arts Network SA, Community Arts Network Western Australia, Regional Arts Australia Online, Centre for Creative Communities (UK), The Sage Gateshead (UK), MENC Adult & Community Music Education Special Research Interest Group (US), The Arts Education Partnership (UK), Community Music Research (UK), Create (Ireland), Music Network Ireland, Institute for Community Research (US), Mailout (UK), Nomus (Nordic Music Council), and Sound Sense (UK).

These networks and organisations are particularly useful for relevant resources and exemplars. The Sage Gateshead, undoubtedly one of the most advanced (and well-funded) community music initiatives, summarises its engagement with this work eloquently and succinctly in its program:
Cultural diversity and community cohesion are key issues in our communities. We aim to illustrate how music can be a powerful tool in the rebuilding and development process, engendering strong, positive community bonds, as well as developing advanced skills, musical and social. Community music both reflects and influences social reality. Teaching and learning activities in the community context offer participants a range of opportunities for growth, development and articulacy, ranging from specific musical skills through to social and cultural extension and challenge. Community music projects and activities can offer the framework and tools for social and political expression, advocacy and enfranchisement. (Zeserson, 2002)

**Future directions (Towards 2020)**

In Australia, community music practitioners have not known many effective avenues for exchanging ideas and practices. In September 2008, the Music Council of Australia gathered 70 Council members and other leaders in the field at Sydney Conservatorium of Music for an intense day of discussions and brainstorming under the title *Towards 2020: Australian Musical Futures*. The event was conceived as a sequel to the Rudd government’s *Australia 2020* summit and one of the reports that emanated from that summit, *Towards a Creative Australia*. Participants in *Towards 2020* were encouraged to read the report from the Rudd summit and consider how its recommendations might apply or be adapted for music. The purpose of this particular meeting was identifying key issues specifically facing the music sector, creating ways of addressing them, and making recommendations for action.

One of the strands of discussions (facilitated by the *Sound Links* research team) was community music. The group that focused on this topic noted a number of significant factors that affect the community music sector in Australia at present. Firstly, it observed that the unregulated nature of community music can mean that it sometimes becomes invisible. Although iconic initiatives and celebratory events like the ‘Choir of Hard Knocks’, ‘As it is in Heaven’, and ‘Sing Australia’ promote the value of community music, it was felt that generally, people don’t realise the value of music. Therefore, it was deemed important to educate people about the value of music in life, which some considered as important as having psychiatrists/doctors etc. in terms of well-being.
Reversely, it was considered important to ensure community music practitioners were well-equipped and facilitated to do their work well. It was noted they need to understand budgets for music/arts projects at a local government level, as well as related opportunities like council/shire funding for sport and recreation. In this, the local government cultural liaison officer can be proactive. Highly developed support structures like Community Music Victoria also play a crucial role, and may serve as a model for other states.

Many emphasised the need for training community music practitioners in strategy and accessing support and funding, either on the ground (within the organisation) or through the post-secondary (TAFE/University) sector. Another need highlighted was for a hands-on, practice-based knowledge/skills bank that will make available information about skilled mentors, successful workshop formats, advocacy, and funding application techniques. It was suggested this could be built on the current MCA knowledge bank.

The group highlighted the relevance of community music for ‘social inclusion’, with implications for physical health, disability, refugee, and mental health services. While discussing how to maximise the potential of Community Music as a vehicle for social inclusion, the group specifically referred to rural, Indigenous, aged, disabled, and mining communities. It also referred to world music as a presently underdeveloped, under-resourced area, and observed how even Sydney, the most multicultural/ethnic music city in Australia, did not yet have a dedicated multicultural music venue. At the same time, the group also referred to Australian identity, and the opportunity to create a cultural body of knowledge unique to Australia, connecting to a sense of place.

Finally, the discussion turned to creating better reciprocal links between education and community music. There was support for models derived from community sport, highlighting that music does things that sport doesn’t do, but the two need not be mutually exclusive. An active, federally funded after-school program would make excellent sense in that context. Tertiary training in community music could also raise the practice and profile of community music in education, and centres of excellence could then be created in rural areas to train people from the region.
CHAPTER 2 WHAT IS COMMUNITY MUSIC?

After a morning of animated discussions, the community music discussion group identified five key questions for further consideration and concrete action:

1. How do we create greater understanding and visible celebration of community music in Australia?
2. How do we build a strong, interactive community network that enables shared access to resources (people, funding, best practices, knowledge)?
3. How do we optimally equip community music leaders (present and future) and facilitators?
4. How do we build stronger, mutually beneficial links between community music and education?
5. What are the key strategies for community music to increase diversity, a sense of identity, place and social inclusion?

Each of these is briefly addressed below in the form of recommendations for further action.

1. Actions to create greater understanding and visible celebration of community music in Australia:
   - Continue and profile initiatives such as the Music in Communities Awards.
   - Establish a national ‘Community Music Week’ to celebrate music in communities.
   - Hold an annual Community Music Conference at which the winners/finalists of Music in Communities Awards are presented with their awards, as well as Community Music ‘Champions’ such as important local supporters (for example, Musical Mayors).
   - Create stronger links to festivals with target groups interested in community music (especially folk music festivals and festivals with a multicultural focus such as Womadelaide).
   - Stimulate ABC/SBS to produce series/documentaries on community music in addition to constant exposure in local media.
   - Research community music and publish findings for advocacy purposes.
• Feature flagship events to link music to issues the community is passionate about (water, bushfire, the environment).

2. Actions to build a strong, interactive community network that enables shared access to resources (people, funding, best practices, knowledge):
   • Create a National Community Music Network as a physical and interactive organisation with a prominent presence, using international initiatives such as the UK based ‘Sound Sense’ as a model.
   • Develop an attractive and accessible website with forums, links to YouTube, and examples of successful community music projects, blogs, and information on best practice. Practitioners and their experience/qualifications can be listed on the website, as well as ‘stories’—positive examples of the value of community music.
   • Engage local government more intensively through cultural officers and presenting research findings at conferences.
   • Investigate the option of state-based community music organisations, based on the Victorian model.

3. Actions to optimally equip community music leaders (present and future) and facilitators:
   • Create mentoring programs for community music leaders where the action is, closely linked to practice, including musical leadership, facilitating peer learning, administrative support/mentorship, and use of technologies such as video links/video conferencing. Link these to local and national community cultural development networks.
   • Integrate Community Music experience into undergraduate programs (especially music education) and create mentoring programs for tertiary students (young conductors, composers, emerging artists) mentored by senior practitioners, much like fieldwork or ‘prac.’
   • Establish a postgraduate Masters program for Community Music to build upon existing skills like choir conducting or instrumental teaching, adding attributes needed for working in communities such as dealing with diversity.
in culture and learning styles, project management, advocacy and grant writing.

4. Actions to build stronger, mutually beneficial links between community music and education:
   - Locate community music activities in schools physically after hours with the view to enriching rather than substituting school music or instrumental programs.
   - Use schools as a space resource as well as an instrument resource.
   - Mentor/support community music practitioners to go into schools.
   - Encourage senior practitioners in partnerships with schools (and other community forums) to provide workshops and examples of good practice.

5. Action on the key strategies for community music to increase diversity, a sense of identity, place and social inclusion:
   - Grow and develop tailored programs for different community groups, such as disabled, rural, Indigenous, culturally diverse, and marginalised social groups, providing role modelling and mentors.
   - Engage local and regional Arts Officers to realise and finetune initiatives for social inclusion, making use of their insights, expertise and connections.
   - Find, define and promote sustainable models for community music projects that can be self-funded or at least receive multi-year support.
   - Go into communities and speak to people to find out what they want. Identify if and why people feel excluded, and how they can be included.

Many of the issues and ideas raised in the literature and by community music practitioners at the Towards 2020 Summit resonate strongly with those that originally prompted the Sound Links study. They help shape the practical and intellectual framework for the remainder of this publication, in particular the case studies, which will test the theory against lived experience.
CHAPTER THREE

APPROACH

INTRODUCTION
To accommodate the aims of Sound Links, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used, with emphasis on the former. These included ethnographic case studies of selected communities, analysis of available documentation, field visits, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, participant observations, and an online survey to validate the findings of the case studies. This brief summary outlines these methodological approaches, as well as the processes followed for the selection of the six case studies.

OUTLINING THE ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH
As an ethnographic approach focuses on openness and reciprocal exchange, with its point of departure being the lived experiences of the researched, it was necessary for the research team to come face-to-face with the community music participants themselves. This entailed the research team entering into a close interaction with the community musicians and educators in their everyday musical lives to better understand their beliefs, motivations, and behaviours (see Tedlock, 2000, p. 455). In order to facilitate this, a large amount of forward planning was necessary. In each community, the research team identified a key facilitator who had significant local knowledge and a wide network of contacts within the community. In the Dandenong Ranges this was the executive officer at the music council, in Albany this was the senior teacher at the local high school, in McLaren Vale this was the head of performing arts at the Lutheran College, in Fairfield City this was a senior member of the cultural policy team at the local city council, in Borroloola it was a researcher who has been involved with the community for many years, and in Inala it was a senior council worker. These key people introduced the researchers to a number of community musicians, educators and groups, which not only made the organisation of the trips more efficient, but also enabled tapping into local knowledge and coverage of the community’s activities in greater depth. Participants in each community gave ‘informed consent’ for their identities and words to
be used in resulting publications in accordance with the ethical clearance granted by Griffith University to undertake this research. Furthermore, the case study reports were sent back to each community for perusal and feedback before publication. In order to finetune this ethnographic approach and trial it in a local community music environment, a pilot study was undertaken with the Queensland Youth Orchestra’s program in Brisbane (see Appendix 2 for a full report).

Each fieldwork trip lasted five days, and entailed approximately 30 interviews or focus groups with 60-100 participants. These participants included primary school students, secondary school students, school music teachers, school principals, parents, community music facilitators, community music participants, cultural development workers, youth workers, settlement workers, festival organisers, local council workers, instrument repairers, radio presenters, and music retailers (see Appendix 1 for a list of the participants). As the focal point of each interview was the participant’s individual stories, we used semi-structured interviewing techniques, where we had a list of questions we wanted to ask, but allowed the conversation to determine how the information was obtained (see Appendix 3 for a list of the questions asked).

These questions were drawn from the research team’s extensive experience in community music and education, issues raised in the online survey, ideas discussed at a Sound Links workshop run at the Australian Society for Music Education’s national conference in 2007, and broader theoretical ideas identified in the literature (see Chapter two).

The team also attended rehearsals and performances in a variety of settings, such as community centres, schools, churches, sports fields, recording studios, farmers’ markets, arts centres, galleries, teaching studios, hospitals, halls, clubs, and temples. It visited local councils and community centres to gather documentation about the broader communities surrounding the music activities being examined. The research also went beyond the more formalised interviews and observations; there were many coffees, post-rehearsal drinks, as well as family meals with participants in some of the communities. At times team members were hauled into the action and handed various instruments to try out, other times they were told to sing or dance along. The research also included attending church services,
radio interviews, book launches, and other social occasions, including a civic ceremony held by the mayor of Albany to welcome *Sound Links* to the town. All of these experiences led to new insights about the people involved, the broader communities and how music functions within these settings. As ethnography is a method that is about forming relationships, these interactions were obviously significant, but could never be exactly reproduced; as such, each community case study was subtly different (see Behar, 1999, p. 480).

Likewise, the research team also differed slightly from trip to trip. Having the most time dedicated to this project, Research Fellow Bartleet attended each fieldwork visit, which ensured a consistency of approach. Sometimes she was on her own, but most times she was accompanied by another team member. These changes in personnel undoubtedly subtly influenced the dynamics of our interactions with the community musicians. It is also worth mentioning that each of the team members had been actively involved in community music-making prior to this project; in fact, they often drew on an ‘insider’ status as a point of introduction and a point of common ground with the participants. This meant sharing experiences during interviews, sometimes giving advice, while asking for guidance at other times.

The data analysis phase then involved identifying a number of key themes and coding and sorting the data into these broader categories. Some themes arose spontaneously from the participants themselves, other concepts arose whilst being immersed in the experience of fieldwork, and further ideas were generated from the literature. As the data analysis phase progressed, nine key domains emerged as significant factors in all case studies and became the framework for the reporting of the results. These nine domains include: Infrastructure; Organisation; Visibility and public relations; Relationship to place; Social engagement; Support and networking; Dynamic music-making; Engaging pedagogy and facilitation; and Links to school. This process of analysing and then writing about this ethnographic research within these domains has called for a balance between the individual participants’ stories and a broader positioning of each community within a national context.
DEFINING THE COMMUNITY CONTEXTS

Selecting the locations and parameters of the project was a challenging process that brought to the surface a number of debates about the ‘definition issue’, which have been documented extensively in the literature on communities and community music. As Elliot, Higgins and Veblen explain, the concept of community music is “situated, contested, contingent, and hard to pin down” (2008, p. 3), hence making the selection of field sites a complex and complicated process. The purpose of this section is not to re-open the debate that has been going on for many years within the literature about what community music is. As Higgins amongst many others has argued, discussions of definitions can lead community music into a “discursive cul-de-sac” where insights into both practice and theory are limited (2006, p. 2). However, when it came to selecting the specific locations to be examined, our own preconceptions and definitions of community music did require scrutiny in order for us to reach a productive discussion about what we were studying, what we were hoping to find out, and where we thought we should visit. As different research questions require different definitions, we had to make sure that ours were aligned for this particular project’s focus. Of course, each member of the research team also brought their own assumptions to the discussion, as did the project’s industry partners with their extensive network of community music organisations. When choosing the locations, debates raged about whether small isolated ‘communities of interest,’ such as our pilot study with the Queensland Youth Orchestras, should be included in this project, given that their level of interaction with what many would perceive as their broader community is sometimes modest. Likewise, the team debated about whether festivals and annual events could be included, given that they often cater to audiences outside the local community and do not necessarily service the local community on an ongoing and regular basis.

In the end, we had to embrace the ‘slipperiness’ of this concept, but at the same time make sure we didn’t become too vague and variable in how we used it. As Elliot, Higgins & Veblen (2008, p. 3) suggest “community music is a complex, multidimensional, and continuously evolving human endeavour.” Taking into account the slipperiness and ever-evolving nature of the concept, we did agree on a number of essential elements we wanted the communities we were studying to have. Firstly, we were keen to visit
community music programs, of whatever style of genre, that included a group of people who had a sense of common interest for which they assumed mutual responsibility, who acknowledged their interconnectedness, who respected the individual differences among members, and who committed themselves to the well-being of each other and the integrity and well-being of the group (see Wood & Judikis 2002, p. 12). Following Cahill’s definitions, we also looked for community music programs which were ‘owned’ by the local community, with a “management committee or board [that] is elected from within that community” (1998: vii). Following Higgins’ suggestion that community music revolves around “people, participation, places, equality of opportunity and diversity” (2006, p. 83), we also wanted to study community music activities which connected with the broader community—whether that broader community is defined in terms of geography, interest, ethnicity, and so on—and were aware of their ‘place’ within that broader social, cultural, and oftentimes economic context. This led us to select communities that were widely dispersed geographically, as indicated on the following map (see Figure 3.1). These communities also represent a cross-section of Australian social contexts, including a culturally diverse urban city (Fairfield City), a middle class suburban location (Dandenong Ranges), a remote Indigenous setting (Borroloola), an urban Indigenous setting (Inala), a small rural town (McLaren Vale), and a large established regional centre (Albany).
Figure 3.1. Map of Australia showing the musical communities involved in the Sound Links project.

A number of other community music facilitators in locations not included in the six case studies were also interviewed to enhance our understandings of community music across the country. These included Jonathon Welch (Choir of Hard Knocks), Nora Farrell (media artist), Nigel Bird (West Australian Music Association), Simon Faulkner (Drumbeat Program), Rebecca Cockran (Country Arts WA), and Fiona Taylor (Arts Edge Program).

OUTLINING THE ONLINE SURVEY APPROACH

To contextualise the findings from the case studies, an online survey was distributed to a wide-range of music educators, community music facilitators and practitioners, music therapists and arts administrators in June 2007. Over 200 people responded from across the country and the results show a number of interesting trends, particularly in terms of success factors, learning and teaching models and the need for more dynamic school-community collaborations. The survey was designed in consultation with the project’s industry partners, the Steering Committee and Reference Group. The survey was built using the online Survey Monkey program and included a select number of open and closed questions, giving
respondents the option of only answering questions which were relevant to their experiences and expertise (see Appendix 4 for the list of survey questions). It was then distributed across the country via the following professional networks: MCA, ASME, AMA, MPFL, ABODA, Country Music Association of Australia, BEMAC, Nexus, KULCHA, Multicultural Arts Victoria, Dorrigo Folk & Bluegrass Festival, Woodford Folk Festival, Folk Alliance Australia, AUSTA, Port Fairy Festival, and Dandenong Ranges Music Council.

While a diverse array of teachers and practitioners working across a range of different styles and cultural traditions responded to the survey, school teachers made up the highest proportion of respondents (60.3%) and a large proportion of those respondents were involved in choral music (48.6%) at the time of responding. This is most likely due to the strong involvement ASME had in promoting the survey to its members, and inevitably influenced the outcomes of the survey. However, efforts were made to diversify the scope by sending it to a range of other peak bodies to distribute to their members.

In the end, the online survey provided another layer of data which enabled Sound Links to validate the findings of the case studies, and measure them against national perceptions and opinions. Meanwhile, the multi-method approach lent itself well to uncovering the individual stories of the community musicians and educators, the dynamics of their practice, and the broader socio-cultural issues and structural frameworks that arose from these settings. The ethnographic component provided a method that was structured enough to provide a sense of coherence across the six case studies, but flexible enough to accommodate the differing dynamics of the case study settings.
INTRODUCTION

The scope for case studies in community music is vast: across Australia, there is a baffling array of activities in this field, ranging from almost invisible small-scale initiatives to fairly major organisations. From this wealth of possible examples, with input from Music. Play for Life, the partner organisations and their vast networks, six were selected from a list of over 20 as best representing the wide spectrum of settings, locations, approaches and outcomes. In each of the six Sound Links case studies in this chapter, a wide range of perspectives and ideas from interviews and focus groups, field materials and observational data are woven together. While it is impossible to capture all the voices, the issues, the experiences and the sheer vibrancies of practices observed during this research, each description does attempt to at least offer an overview of some of the most striking dynamics encountered in each setting. Additional material and video footage will be made available through the websites of Community Music Network Australia and Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre.

In order to ensure a sense of coherence across such a diverse range of case studies, each section is discussed under nine key domains, which have emerged as significant factors in the dynamics of community music-making in Australia. These domains have also been identified through a comprehensive analysis of the case study data, and include: Infrastructure; Organisation; Visibility and public relations; Relationship to place; Social engagement; Support and networking; Dynamic music-making; Engaging pedagogy and facilitation; and Links to school.

These domains provide a cohesive framework to enable meaningful comparisons across the six case studies. They highlight many commonalities, particularly in the areas of social engagement and dynamic music-making. However, they also point towards a number of significant differences and even stark contrasts, predominantly in the provision of infrastructure and support. In Chapter six, these nine domains are synthesised and tabulated in light of these findings, charting an individual profile for each case study.
This exercise reveals areas of strength within and across the case studies, as well as those where the outcomes and recommendations discussed in Chapter seven can be strategically targeted.

**Dandenong Ranges—Victoria (September 2007)**

![Map of Australia highlighting Dandenong Ranges](image)

**Background to the Dandenong Ranges (Shire of Yarra Ranges)**

The Shire of Yarra Ranges is located on Melbourne’s eastern fringe (about an hour’s drive from the CBD). The Shire’s population is currently estimated at 145,596 people and covers an area of almost 2,500 square kilometres. The Shire balances a mix of urban and rural communities. There are over 55 suburbs, townships, small communities and rural areas within the Shire. Yarra Ranges can be characterised as a ‘young’ Shire, with a higher than average proportion of the population aged between 5 and 17 years and more family households than typical across Melbourne. While cultural
diversity is certainly not pronounced, almost 10,000 residents of the Shire are from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The Shire of Yarra Ranges has long been recognised for its natural beauty and diverse habitats. The Shire contains some of the most environmentally important areas in Victoria, which are a significant factor in attracting residents and tourists. The Yarra Ranges has a diverse economy of around 10,000 businesses, employing some 35,289 people. Manufacturing continues to represent the single most valuable sector of the economy in Yarra Ranges, with construction, property and business services, retail trade and agriculture and forestry (including wine-making) other key sectors. Each year, over 2.2 million tourists visit the area, including the wineries of the Yarra Valley and the townships and gardens of the Dandenong Ranges.

**BACKGROUND TO THE DANDENONG RANGES MUSIC COUNCIL**

The Dandenong Ranges Music Council Incorporated (DRMC) is an arts organisation located in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. Formed in 1979 by a group of people keen to bring music to the community, the DRMC is now considered to be a model for community music organisations throughout Australia. It serves the community of the Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley in the Shire of Yarra Ranges and has been funding, facilitating and teaching community music in this region for thirty years under the guidance of Bev McAlister and her dedicated staff. The DRMC has made a major contribution to music in the community by providing learning and performance opportunities for musicians of all ages and abilities. Quite a number of members have gone on to become professional performing musicians, teachers, or stage management professionals. Of particular note are some of the large projects that have been successfully run by the DRMC. These include the Fire Cycle, Hillsongs, Composers Connecting Community, the Water Cycle Project, Centenary of Federation Concerts, and Ballad of Birdsland.
Defining the Field

Over a five day period Sound Links undertook 30 interviews and focus groups with over 60 participants. These participants included primary school students, secondary school students, school music teachers, principals, community music facilitators, DRMC participants, parents, and local council workers. All of these participants are involved with the DRMC.

Sound Links attended rehearsals of the Ranges Young Strings, the Dandenong Ranges Orchestra, the Attitude music therapy program, the Hilltop Singers, and the Dr Swing Show Band, and a DRMC Board Meeting. Sound Links observed singing and didgeridoo lessons with Upwey High School students at the DRMC, and travelled out to Ferny Creek Primary School and Monbulk Primary School (both heavily involved in a number of DRMC projects) and also visited the Shire of the Yarra Ranges Council offices to meet with local council workers responsible for community cultural development in the region.

Infrastructure

The DRMC has high levels of infrastructure, which have been built up over the last 30 years. The DRMC was administrated from private homes from 1979 until 1990 when the Community Music Centre (CMC) was established at Upwey High School. The CMC was established in a building refurbished after a fire at the school. The refurbishment was funded by the Ministry for the Arts and Education, the Shires of Lilydale and Sherbrooke and the Potter Foundation, a rare combination of partners. The Centre contains the offices of the DRMC and Ranges Community Music School. There are two large spaces for rehearsals, workshops and small performances, a music library, kitchen facilities, storage rooms, trailer for band equipment and garage for the trailer. The DRMC provides each of its ensembles with a venue to rehearse, public liability cover, and oversees their individual budgets. Members of each DRMC ensemble pay membership dues.

In terms of funding, the DRMC is assisted by the Shire of Yarra Ranges, the Australia Council through triennial funding and Ozco through an annual program key organisation grant. This allows the DRMC to employ staff to administer the weekly running of the organisation and assist in the planning of large-scale projects. Upwey High School also provides assistance with
utilities. Its permanent location on the school grounds is also beneficial in any grant or funding applications they submit; this physical permanency shows that the organisation won’t fold easily, has a sense of outreach, is sustainable, is visible, has a commitment to education and young people, and is worth funding. Although the DRMC’s level of funding is somewhat high in comparison to other community music programs around the country, members of the DRMC still speak about the challenges of securing funding in order to be able to plan ahead for flagship projects.

For the weekly programs and flagship projects the DRMC employs a number of local composers, teachers, therapists, stage managers and administration officers. The work of the DRMC has also contributed towards a small music industry in the ranges that is able to sustain local music shops.

**Organisation**

There are a wide range of instrumental and choral ensembles under the DRMC’s care, which range in skill level from beginner to advanced. These include an adult orchestra, a youth string ensemble, a swing band, a women’s choir, a men’s choir, a travelling singing group who visit aged-care facilities, an adult beginners’ band, an early childhood program, and a music therapy group. The DRMC ensures its sustainability by encouraging their various ensembles to become both artistically and financially independent. Many ensembles which first started through the DRMC have become incorporated and are now functioning successfully as independent community organisations.

Dion Teasdale (Cultural Planning & Marketing, Shire of Yarra Ranges Council) reiterated the key role that the DRMC plays in supporting established ensembles and nurturing new community music ventures:

> Probably the DRMC is one of the major players in connecting musicians and creating opportunities for musicians to come together and perform together, or rehearse and create work together. It has probably also been a major device in, I guess, auspicing or creating other new groups as well. [...] So they’re a major player in attracting community members to music and to performance opportunities and I know they do work closely with schools (Dion Teasdale, personal interview, 14 September 2007).
One of most significant reasons for the DRMC’s vibrancy and sustainability has been the inspiring organisation and leadership shown by Bev McAlister, the DRMC Board and administrative team. They are highly attuned to the needs and interests of their local community. When asked about the success of her organisation and leadership Bev McAlister (Executive Officer of the Dandenong Ranges Music Council) attributed it to her ability “to listen” to what the community want, rather than superimposing something on them. She also spoke about the importance of leading by example:

I like to think, and I can see it happening, that we as the elders, I guess, through community music are showing leadership and setting examples [...] that a lot of young families who come into the hills to live suddenly find themselves involved in helping set up a concert band, taking responsibility for supporting the Fire Cycle. That Fire Cycle project had over 200 performers, but it would have had a cast of 250 backstage who felt a commitment and showed willingness. (Bev McAlister, personal interview, 14 September 2007)

This organisational approach also extends to the facilitators of the various ensembles and visiting experts. Bev McAlister spoke about the importance of not becoming insular and described the importance that the DRMC places on inviting visiting experts into the community to enhance the level of music-making and open community members up to new possibilities and ideas.

Having said this, such a level of organisation is not without its challenges. During interviews, administrators of the DRMC spoke about the challenges of creating a sense of cohesion between the DRMC’s ensembles and an appreciation of the DRMC’s services. Given the length of time the DRMC has been servicing the community, administrators suggested it can sometimes be taken for granted. Another organisational challenge is succession planning. During the fieldwork period, concerns were expressed that when Bev McAlister retires there will not be a wage allowance for her successor (as much of her work is unpaid). However, in subsequent discussions with Bev McAlister they have been able to secure funding for this, and the administrative load is currently being shared between a few members of staff.
VISIBILITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS
The DRMC is an excellent example of what might be called a ‘tennis court’ of music. In other words, it is a place that visually communicates to the outside world what activities they are offering. The location of the DRMC Music Centre on the Upwey High School grounds ensures that the organisation is highly visible, not only to the school community but also to the general public who utilise the school facilities. The Centre and Community Music School are well signed from the main road and easy to locate.

The DRMC also has a high level of visibility in the community beyond the Music Centre at Upwey High School. The DRMC has maintained a very strong presence at local community events with ensembles providing music, at a number of local schools and community organisations (such as the fire and police services) through major flagship projects, and at community places such as aged-care facilities with their travelling ensembles.

By inviting key members of the local community to the Board of the DRMC, the organisation has maintained a strong sense of presence within the broader community. Likewise, the DRMC’s patrons have played a significant role in furthering the profile of the organisation. These include the late Hon. W. A. Borthwick A. M. (who was Deputy Premier and Minister for Health), the late Emeritus Professor Sir Joseph Burke K.B.E. (who was a notable Professor of Fine Arts at Melbourne University) and Professor Robin Batterham AO, BE, PhD, LLD (Hon. Melb), AMusA (an eminent scientist and organist at Scot’s Church in Melbourne).

RELATIONSHIP TO PLACE
All of the DRMC’s flagship projects focus on issues that have significant local interest and deep connections to place, such as fire prevention, water conservation, local tourist attractions and well-known poets and composers. For example, in 2006 the Composers Connecting Community project involved over 400 schoolchildren in workshops and a performance
of the work of C. J. Dennis, an acclaimed Australian poet who lived in the Dandenong Ranges, set to music by local composer Dr Calvin Bowman. Calvin Bowman wrote a *Suite* consisting of seven songs based on text from C. J. Dennis’ *A Book for Kids*. The project gave students and community members the opportunity to work with a ‘living composer,’ and gave them insights into the compositional process. Additionally, the project reintroduced the works of C. J. Dennis to a new generation of readers. Some teachers from local schools also integrated this project into their music curriculum.

Bev McAlister highlighted the importance of giving people the opportunity to participate in music activities that are strongly connected to their local community and support local music teachers:

> The philosophy I think is about creating the opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to make music. And for music to be performed and integrated into the lifestyle of the community. And then the other part of that is in partnership with the local music teachers and schools and the professionals that actually live here so that we create work for them. (Bev McAlister, personal interview, 14 September 2007)

**Social Engagement**

Every ensemble or project run by the DRMC has developed ‘organically’ through close community consultation, and this has ensured a high degree of social engagement and a strong sense of ownership. Bev McAlister spoke of the ways in which community members come to the DRMC with an idea or need and then the DRMC play a role in facilitating community discussions that lead to the development of the project.

The DRMC also shows a genuine commitment to providing opportunities for musical participation to *all* community members regardless of their abilities or disabilities. This is evidenced by the Attitude music therapy program, where participants with disabilities are given the opportunity to create, play and experience music based around particular themes. The Attitude group also collaborate and share concerts with other DRMC units, including the Dandenong Ranges Orchestra, Ranges Young Strings, Happy Wanderers and members of the Outer Eastern Country Music Club.
Many of the participants who were interviewed emphasised the social and physical benefits of participating in these DRMC programs. As members of the Hilltop Singers (a group of retired women) described:

It’s a good excuse to get up in the morning. [Everyone laughs] It really is; it’s like a workout. It’s like a physical workout. It’s very healthy. It’s a very healthy thing to do because you feel good and it’s good physically for you as well as mentally. (Hilltop Singers, focus group interview, 12 September 2007)

**Support and Networking**

The DRMC has been highly successful in collaborating with a number of diverse partners, such as community service providers, schools, universities, and community centres, amongst others. A striking example of this was found in the Fire Cycle Project, which was created in consultation with the community and designed to educate and heal the community after a number of serious fires had taken both homes and lives in the area. It involved community song writing workshops with composers, commissioning of new music especially composed for the project, as well as visual arts and dance to tell the community’s fire stories. It also included the production of a Fire Education music CD with fire brigades and community musicians, the premiere performance of the *Song of the Fireys (We’re Not Heroes)*, a fire fighters torchlight parade at the Knox Festival, and the Fire Cycle Finale Concert at Belgrave Heights Convention Centre in October 2005. This project involved a range of local community singers, musicians, dancers, visual artists, circus performers, composers, choreographers and school students. It also included Parks Victoria, the Country Fire Authority, Shire of Yarra Ranges, environmental groups and emergency services personnel, the Community Forest Project and volunteer helpers and stage crew. The inspiration for this project came directly from current environmental issues facing the community and appeared to spawn new collaborative projects that looked at different environmental issues, such as water conservation.
Ferny Creek Primary students who were involved in the Fire Cycle Project reflected on the power of music as a medium to tell local stories:

I think it’s really good because kids especially, they don’t really want to sit and hear people ramble on about: ‘This happened at this time.’ It’s more interesting especially towards children to actually hear it in a different way. Like telling through singing. Yeah, it just brings out different ways instead of just sitting there and people are going ‘blah, blah, blah.’ [So when you actually sing about something like fire, it actually reaches people in a different way?] Yeah!!! [What do you reckon that says about the power of music?] Well, people are willing to listen to it. With music it’s a lot harder to switch out than if someone’s just talking. [...] Yeah, there was a song we sang about getting prepared for the bushfires. [So, it’s informative as well?] Yes!!! (Ferny Creek Primary, focus group interview, 13 September 2007)

**Dynamic Music-making**

The DRMC offers a range of modes of music-making and instruction, although these are all fairly conventional in nature. One-way didactic instruction is offered in after school music lessons at the Community Music School. Group lessons are offered during school time, in areas such as contemporary voice and didgeridoo. The vocal and instrumental ensembles that meet on a weekly basis all use fairly conventional modes of rehearsing, with a clearly defined conductor managing the process. For the flagship projects, mass workshops and rehearsals are coordinated by the Music Directors, local teachers and professional stage directors.

An excellent example of dynamic music-making offered by the DRMC can be found in the song writing workshops that were part of the Fire Cycle Project. Many have noted the transformative power of community songwriting workshops, including Denborough (2002):

As holders of community knowledge and pride, songs can lift the spirits and hold them aloft. The physical act of singing together, of making music together, can also be transformative. This seems especially so if the process resonates with cultural traditions of community song-making and music making which exist in the vast majority of
communities. In this way, not only can the song itself act as a musical documentation of the alternative stories of the community, but the community performance of this song can act as a demonstration of the continuation of a joyful and inclusive tradition.

The way in which this process Denborough describes is facilitated is obviously critically important to ensure community engagement. For the Fire Cycle this was facilitated by songwriter John Shortis, and is described by Bev McAlister:

This John Shortis [the song writer working on the Fire Cycle Project] has so much integrity with the group he’s working with that he takes their exact words. Like with the ‘Song of the Fireys’ it was ‘what do you want to say to the community?’ and I think their, ‘what was the verse?’ it was about fire education and one bloke said, ‘oh, clean up your block or get a shock!’ [...] And it’s what you do before the fire arrives that gives you a better chance to survive and that became the chorus of that song. And that’s why these Firees ended up performing it because that’s what they wanted to say to the community: ‘Clean up your block, we don’t want it covered in blackberries and undergrowth and stuff that when we get a fire roaring up the north or south face of Mount Dandenong it’s just like an explosion. (Bev McAlister, personal interview, 14 September 2007)

This example shows not only the communal nature of this songwriting process, but also its educative power. The song was then recorded with a local school choir and local adult choir ‘Sing Australia’ and launched at the aforementioned Torchlight Parade of the Fire Fighters. At the major Fire Cycle performance the local fire brigade stood up and performed the song to great community acclaim.
ENGAGING PEDAGOGY AND FACILITATION

The Ranges Community Music School was established in 1993 as a joint initiative of the DRMC and Upwey High School Council. It is a pilot project funded by the Department of Education, with the brief to provide high quality, accessible music education programs to schools and the broader community across all ages and skill levels. This includes an instrumental tuition program, co-ordinating community events and professional development opportunities for local music professionals.

The flagship projects, such as Hillsongs, run by the DRMC also exhibit engaging models of pedagogy and introduce young school students to music and cultural experiences they otherwise might not have encountered. This is exhibited by the following comments made by Monbulk Primary students when speaking about the DRMC Hillsongs Project with Vox Congo (a group of local African musicians):

[What did you learn from doing this that you wouldn’t normally learn if you were just doing choir at school?] That the music in Africa is really jazzy and ‘beaty’ and it’s really good for dance. Yeah, it has a good catchy tune to it. [What else did you learn?] Their cultural music, how African [people] do their music, because we’re all used to our sort of music, like ABBA and all that sort of stuff, and then we see the African guys and they’re just so much different. But I would rather go and do African sort of things. And the way they dress is also colourful and reflects the ways they dance. And they wear make-up on their faces like face-paint when they dance. And when they dance they’ve got so much energy. They dance really good. It’s full of energy, they don’t stop, it’s amazing. [So how important is it to have projects where you get to be exposed to another culture that you wouldn’t normally encounter on a daily basis?] It’s important, because you actually get to find out what they really dance like. If we just stayed at school and stuff we wouldn’t be able to find that out. Yeah. We learnt something new which is from another country. I think that’s really important, that we learn about other cultures, not just ours. (Monbulk Primary, focus group interview, 14 September 2007)
In addition to encouraging projects with powerful cultural learning experiences such as this, the DRMC also offers young musicians a number of different awards to assist them to undertake further music study. For example, the Ann and Chris Krans Award is for young musicians with serious aspirations of making music their career and offered by the family of Mr Chris Krans as a memorial to him and his love of music and young people. The Bill Borthwick Young Musicians Encouragement Prize is offered in honour of the memory of the Patron of the DRMC 1980-2001.

**Links to School**

A number of thriving models for school-community and university-community partnerships were found at the DRMC. This collaboration works on a number of levels from the day-to-day to larger project-based work. Some of the school’s instrumental and vocal music lessons occur in the DRMC Music Centre and as a result, the DRMC is very accessible and visible to the school community because of this connection. The school also provides a steady stream of students into the music activities run by the DRMC, such as after school lessons, evening ensembles, and major community projects. The school is also heavily involved in a number of the major projects that are run by the DRMC, not only providing students to participate, but also support and assistance from its school teachers and administration. Some of these projects have also been the inspiration for new and innovative approaches to the music curricula. It clearly is a mutually beneficial relationship. This is evidenced by the following comment from Greg Holman (Principal, at the time of the interview, Upwey High School):

> It’s really a matter of making sure that the relationship is there and you service that relationship. [...] If I sat back and said, ‘you beauty they’re there and they’ll service our needs,’ well what use is that? So it has to be a two-way thing. [...] We provide certain things for the organisation here too, with lights and the utilities side of things. You have to see it as a two-way thing and you have to make sure you put in your part of that too. To help develop it and promote it.
and therefore gain some benefits out of it too. [...] You know the partnership here is very strong because we’ve seen the benefit that we can gain from it and the input we can have in it. The people who are involved are generally interested in how they can better provide for music in schools not only for their own program [...] but also in schools in general. [...] We see it as another resource for teaching staff to use that provides music education that wouldn’t be available to some students. From a provisional point of view it’s a very important educational organisation because not all schools can provide music education. (Greg Holman, personal interview, 11 September 2007)

Greg Holman went on to suggest that the benefits of building such partnerships are wide ranging; from an improvement to the school’s curricula and the quality of learning, to other factors, such as the active involvement of parents and families in student learning, the professional development of teachers, community leaders, and musicians.

**Summary**

The Dandenong Ranges case study has provided a vibrant model for creative and innovative community partnerships, both through their ongoing activities and through their flagship projects such as the Fire Cycle Project, Composers Connecting Community, and the Water Cycle Project, amongst others. This commitment to partnership building also extends to education, where the DRMC has a proven track record with successful school-community collaborations, which occur on an everyday day level and a flagship level. At the heart of many of these collaborations is a strong commitment towards supporting activities and events that centre on local issues, which have been developed through considered consultation processes with the broader community. The programs offered by the DRMC show a commitment to social inclusion, and provide equal opportunities for participation regardless of age or abilities. Overall, the creative and inspiring leadership given by Bev McAlister and the DRMC team is a striking factor in its success; in particular, how they nurture sustainability and independence amongst the organisation’s various units.
Chapter 4 Case Studies

Albany—Western Australia (October 2007)

Background to Albany

Albany is a city of approximately 33,600 people, and is the hub of a 40,000 square kilometre region known as the Great Southern, home to 52,000 people. It is the largest regional city in Western Australia, situated around a port on its southern coast. It is located 409 km south of Perth, and offers a range of community services, including excellent health care, a well-resourced library, an expansive leisure centre, a well-maintained sports grounds and a host of opportunities for outdoor lifestyles. In addition, there is a university presence. It is a city with strong residential growth and a range of industrial development prospects associated with plantation timber processing, mining, agriculture and retail development.

Defining the Field

Over a five day period Sound Links undertook 38 interviews and focus groups with over 80 participants. These participants included primary...
school students, secondary school students, school music teachers, local Suzuki teachers, principals, community music facilitators, community music participants, music retailers, parents, festival organisers, the local Eisteddfod committee, local council workers, and youth workers.

*Sound Links* attended rehearsals of the Albany Wind Ensemble, the Albany City Band, the Albany Sinfonia, and performances of the Just Fiddling group, the Recipe for Jam program, the St John’s Church Choir, and a local ‘Proms’ night held in honour of Bob Elms (church organist celebrating 75 years of service as an organist). *Sound Links* visited five local schools which offer music programs, including Albany Senior High School, Great Southern Grammar, Bethel Christian School, Yakamia Primary School, and Albany Primary School, as well as the local PCYC music studios where a youth radio program is broadcast. *Sound Links* also visited three local music shops, known for their support of local community music initiatives and provision of music lessons.

There was considerable interest in the *Sound Links* project from the local musical community, with articles in the Albany *Weekender*, October 25, 2007 and the *Albany Adviser*, October 18, 2007 and September 27, 2007. Research Fellow Bartleet was also interviewed on ABC Coast FM (WA). The Lord Mayor held a civic ceremony to welcome *Sound Links* to the city, where Bartleet was invited to present a speech on what she had observed during her week there.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

The city of Albany has a range of spaces which serve as small and medium-sized performance venues. For example, there are a number of churches which cater for community performances, as well as a small town hall, school performance spaces, and the Vancouver Arts Centre which caters for small audiences. The local PCYC has also developed a small, but relatively well-equipped recording studio where demo tracks can be made and the local youth radio show can be broadcast.

A Music Centre, which consists of a large rehearsal room, kitchen and storage facilities is also shared by various community ensembles during the week. While there seems to be no shortage of adaptable rehearsal and performances spaces, many interviewees lamented that there are not enough
adequate purpose-built performance spaces. Others also suggested that a larger venue that could cater for large-scale collaborative community performances would be beneficial to the city. For instance, in the past when the community has come together for a large-scale event they have had to use the Holy Family Catholic Church, and more recently the Baptist Church in order to seat an excess of 500 in the audience. During the fieldwork period, plans were well underway for a new Performing Arts Complex with a theatre that had a large fly-tower and seating for over 200 people. However, many interviewees argued that developing such a large and formalised performance complex would not necessarily suit the needs of the town either.

In terms of equipment, some of the local music retailers are very supportive of community music activities and sponsor the hire of their equipment. For example, one of the music shops allows young popular musicians to borrow their PA set-up and gear for their gigs, and another offers free instrument hire to talented string students. Two of the three music shops visited also provide one-to-one music lessons and both shop owners are active participants and facilitators in local community music ensembles.

Organisation

The city of Albany offers a variety of highly organised community activities, including the Albany Wind Ensemble, Albany Sinfonia, City Brass Band, Choral Society, Light Opera Company, Albany Eisteddfod, Folk Club, and the Country Music Club, amongst many others. There is also a local popular music scene (nurtured through the Recipe for Jam residential program and TAFE at the nearby town of Denmark) and some of the local pubs offer open mic nights. The nature of the music-making that was observed was primarily Western, although not always classical, in nature.

The organisation of these community music activities more often than not falls to local volunteers. Most of these people spoke about these organisational jobs in a highly positive manner. Given that Albany is a relatively small and isolated community, they suggested that there were
more opportunities for willing community members to become involved and try new things. They spoke confidently about the ways in which these administrative, performance and production jobs had allowed them to develop their own skills bases.

**Visibility and Public Relations**

Through the championing of local philanthropists, community music in Albany has retained a relatively high profile. The city also has a long tradition of inspiring community leaders who have actively supported the arts and instituted a number of traditions and organisations, such as the yearly Quaranup Camp (which attracts numerous musical families from the local surrounds and afar), the Mary Thompson House for arts activities, and substantial scholarships for musicians and artists with ambitions to study abroad.

Albany’s visibility as a centre for active music-making is also supported by its festival culture. Albany is the only regional centre in Western Australia served by the Perth International Arts Festival. This is because it is the only regional centre which has been able to sustain sizeable audiences for festival events, and efforts are now being made to develop Albany’s own self-generated elements of the festival based around the local environment, musical traditions and instrument makers.

**Relationship to Place**

A large proportion of the population has chosen to live in Albany because of its beauty and lifestyle. A number of people spoke about its appeal to creative people, who are keen to live in attractive, natural surroundings. Likewise, a large number of musical people have retired there and instigated a range of activities, such as the Fine Music Society, which sponsors visiting artists to the city, and scholarships for local students wanting to study music at a tertiary level. While the types of community music activities in this city are similar to those found across the country, many interviewees described them as deeply woven into the fabric and make-up of this particular place.

**Social Engagement**

As a small tight-knit community there is a high level of interaction between community musicians, music teachers and the broader community.
Numerous community musicians play in a number of different ensembles, making the interaction and awareness between community groups high. In the past there has been a tradition of staging large-scale collaborative events with many community organisations; however, due to a lack of sizeable venues this has been put on hold more recently. This community-mindedness is representative of a general community tendency towards being involved in community activities, such as sporting clubs, the local lions club, rotary, local churches, civic ceremonies such as Anzac Day, and so on. This sense of community-mindedness was emphasised by Sheena Prince (Senior Music Teacher, Albany Senior High School) when she spoke about why Albany is such a vibrant centre for community music:

Increasingly it’s the people, the passion, the joy that they have, the fun that they have, the sort of human connections, the willingness to share. I’ve been really impressed with the number of people who’ve wanted to get better at their craft and whatever it is that they do musically and want to share it with other people. That became really clear to me when I was trying to sort out focus groups and I could see so many overlaps and so many people giving back. You know, not only enjoying it themselves, but giving back. You know, the enthusiasm of people and a number of people have talked about a willingness to compromise or willingness to support one another or step out. I mean you will have picked up that there have been moments of conflict or whatever, but we will so often say the pond is too small, we need to resolve it or sort it out or make it happen or get it organised, or work our way through this. I think that generosity of sharing is a really significant part. The great support of young people wanting to pass it on, is something I’ve seen more and more. There’s sort of both the people, like the Fine Music Society, who want to have the opportunity to go to concerts to enjoy music but also want to share it with young people and finding ways and means of inspiring them or getting them involved. I think it has been really fun, just seeing that, that opportunity! (Sheena Prince, personal interview, 15 October 2007)

While Albany is the major regional centre in the Great Southern region where the majority of community music-making happens, the vibrant satellite towns of Mt Barker and Denmark also strongly contribute towards
the social and musical life of Albany that Sheena Prince mentions above. Many musicians travel from these towns into Albany on a weekly basis to participate in music rehearsals and folk and country club gatherings.

SUPPORT AND NETWORKING

As Albany is a relatively isolated regional centre, people spoke about the need to make their own live entertainment. While some groups do tour to Albany, and the Perth International Arts Festival also has an Albany-based section in their program, the community is primarily reliant on local musicians to provide weekly entertainment. As a result, local concerts are very well supported by the community. Likewise, the city council and local music businesses are supportive of local music activities. However, the greatest support for community music seems to come from local philanthropists.

DYNAMIC MUSIC-MAKING

A variety of different approaches to music-making can be found in Albany. The ensembles that were observed during the fieldwork visit all used fairly conventional modes of rehearsing, with a clearly designated conductor managing the process. Some of the facilitators in these programs emphasised the importance of musical excellence in both the motivation and enjoyment levels of their groups. As Colin France (Director of the Albany City Band) describes:

When I came here 30 years ago to Albany the band was like woeful. It was worse than awful. Over the years we’ve built the standard up and in the last […] well 10 years maybe it has got better and better. And I say to them, ‘We’ve got this standard, we want to keep it up. I came to this town from playing in an [English] A-Grade Band to playing in a woeful band, but I’ve stuck with it to try and help get it better. And you should be happy that you can sit in a band and play at the standard that we’ve got and enjoy it. It’s better that we’ve got a challenge and play something that is hard and master it than sitting there and playing hymns or something simple all night,’ you know. So I think a lot of it is that they want to do better. A lot of them want to do better. They want to play and this is where they get it every week, because that is the drive. (Colin France, personal interview, 13 October 2007)
Less formalised approaches to music-making were also found in the area of popular music and also in the contemporary music programs at schools. One striking example was observed in the music program *Recipe for Jam* run at the Vancouver Arts Centre in Albany. Every year 15 emerging musicians gather together for a one week residential music program that culminates in a free public performance. Mixing jazz, hip hop, rock, heavy metal, folk and roots they work to create the ‘right recipe’ of music to captivate one another and their local community. The program includes workshops on song-writing and instrumental skills with experts and jam sessions with guest artists and bands. As it is a live-in program, there is plenty of time for jamming and experimenting across different genres. In these cases the learning is based on a peer-learning model that is clearly self-directed, where participants feel a sense of common purpose, assume mutual responsibility, respect the individual differences among members, commit themselves to the well-being of each other and the group, and have a sense of ownership over the music. This is described by one of the participants, MJ Rogers:

> There are so many genres, from metal to pop and the fact that you throw them in a house together [...] but the fact that we got along together and collaborated together [...] the diversity is pretty much what amazes me. [...] Very eye-opening; normally music genres tend to hang out together, but to be thrown into every genre at once is such a great experience. Like before, I’d never known how to structure a jazz song or known what’s a blues chord, but just sitting there watching people do it, you just take it all in. [...] That’s why I couldn’t sleep, the music was just permanently there, it was all different styles, you know. (MJ Rogers, personal interview, 14 October 2007)

This self-directed approach resonates with Mullen’s statement that what excites him is the “way that the practice of community music seeks to move away from the expert teacher and willing pupils model of music transmission to a more dynamic and interactive community of participants” (2002). MJ went on to describe how they each were teachers of their own styles and learners of the others, often changing roles. In the case of *Recipe for Jam* motivation to participate and learn is sparked by fun, friendship, identity formation, exploration and ownership of
the music. Such elements then motivate these participants to pursue their musical collaborations after the week has finished and form new groups. Jeremy Jongsma (Southern Edge Arts and Facilitator of Recipe for Jam) spoke about the value of this approach and the importance of connecting musicians in this regional context:

From our perspective the most important thing for the community about this project is bringing musicians together. There seems to be a problem within the country, I think, regionally in the arts generally [...] we’ve seen similar things with dance out here, where if you create the opportunity for people to be literally sitting in the same room, some people might be meeting for the first time or some people might be meeting and actually doing things for the first time, there’s this mentally sometimes of knowing people exist but not necessarily having a reason to jump out and work with them. And to create that environment especially for young musicians who may never have been exposed to other people’s styles and other people’s music, that didn’t know these people even existed in the first place, creates a network which is just valuable for developing music. (Jeremy Jongsma, personal interview, 14 October 2007)

ENGAGING PEDAGOGY AND FACILITATION

There are a number of excellent music teachers who are encouraging students in the school system and heavily involved in the community music scene themselves. Many of these teachers spoke about the benefits of learning music in a community environment. In such settings, community music activities are not bound by restrictive curricula, standards and assessment needs. Instead, musicians are able to enjoy a greater sense of creativity and flexibility, with the opportunity to learn alongside people of different ages, abilities and backgrounds. Some teachers saw community music activities as a healthy supplement to what is currently being offered by schools, particularly in circumstances where schools are lacking in resources and specialist teachers. However, they were also keen to point out that this doesn’t necessarily flow in one direction; often healthy school
programs nourish healthy community music programs, by contributing teachers and students with high musical competencies.

A range of pedagogical models were observed in rehearsals and performances. For instance, in a public performance at the local Farmer’s markets, the Just Fiddling string group displayed strong models of both non-formal and informal learning and teaching as they performed for their local community. The three leaders circled the outside of the group demonstrating the fingerings and bowings to the beginners in the front row and then urged the more advanced players to speed up the tempos. As the music got more difficult the young ones sat down on the floor with their fiddles in their laps, and watched, listened and learnt from the more advanced players. In this setting conventional didactic instruction was combined with peer-learning across a range of age groups and ability levels. Mike Hyder (Just Fiddling Director and local string teacher) also emphasised the stylistic versatility this community program offers:

In Just Fiddling, one of the things they have to learn is to flick a switch because playing a fiddle is different to playing Mozart or Beethoven. [...] We don’t really talk about technique or bow holds or how they hold the violin in workshop, that’s not what it’s about. It’s about them trying to play the notes and get the feel because the difference, as you know, between fiddle music and classical music is the beat, the beat, the beat. You’ve got to try and get that Celtic lilt in the music and not play it like a classical study. So we’ve probably made a rod for our own back, because this week they’ll all come in and play their studies, it’s back to dead white male stuff this week, they’ll come and play it with that Irish lilt, and we’ll have to beat it out of them! But eventually they’ll understand the difference and that you’ve got to flick the switch. [...] So the senior kids actually help in the workshop [...] well they all help with the tuning, they run the warm-ups with physical warm-ups to start with and [...] we might send senior kids out to show them at least just basics, so the
senior kids are learning how to teach and the little kids are looking up. So it is very integrated. (Mike Hyder, personal interview, 15 October 2007)

**Links to School**

Given that there are large numbers of teachers involved in community music activities, a number of informal collaborations occur between schools and the community. For example the local primary school produces a musical each year, where community members become actively involved in the performance and production of the event. School teachers who are involved in the facilitation of community ensembles often encourage their students to become involved in their community programs outside school. However, much of this interaction seems to occur on an individual level rather than an institutional level, and there is certainly more that could be done in terms of school-community collaborations.

Having said this, there were some notable contemporary music programs offered in local schools, such as Great Southern Grammar and Albany Senior High School that were preparing students for popular music performances out in the community. As the Albany Senior High students described:

[What things do you learn here at school that are useful for being out in the community making music?] Setting up for performances. Like lighting. We do all our performances here [at school] and everybody learns to set them up. We do all kinds of music. There are people who do lighting, and stage production. We all get to pursue our interests. We all get a fair chance to do what we’re interested in. Like, for example, in my project I was learning about breaking into the music industry how I wanted to and learning how to get into sound engineering and recording and all those sorts of things. So this gives you a chance to learn more about it and keep your marks up at the same time. Yeah, you have a wide range of different things you can do. (Albany Senior High, focus group interview, 15 October 2007)
SUMMARY

The Albany case study has provided valuable insights into how community music operates in an Australian regional city. There was a striking community-mindedness in this regional centre, which then translated into a commitment towards participating in and supporting community music-making. Due to the scale and close-knit nature of Albany, the interaction and connectivity between the community groups was very high, and this in turn fostered a creative climate and lifestyle which was highly attractive to local residents. This creative climate was also strongly nurtured by community leaders and philanthropists, who are part of a long and significant tradition of supporting and fostering the arts in Albany. From an educational perspective, engaged teachers played a significant role in fostering a dynamic community music environment in Albany. Likewise, highly useful models of informal and non-formal music learning and teaching were found, such as the popular music program *Recipe for Jam* and the Celtic music program *Just Fiddling*. 
**McLaren Vale—South Australia (December 2007)**

**Background to McLaren Vale**

McLaren Vale is a wine region approximately 35 km south of Adelaide in South Australia. At the time of the 2001 census it had a population of about 2,583 people. The research trip also included the neighbouring towns of Willunga, Aldinga, Morphett Vale and Kangarilla. The broader Onkaparinga region (an area of 518 square kilometres) is home to over 158,300 people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds. Most of the population live in established suburbs and residential estates, while others inhabit small coastal communities, farms and country towns. Many of the rural townships have important historical significance for the region and feature heritage-listed buildings. The region has a strong tourism sector, exports quality local produce, and is known for its thriving arts community. While the community seems to be largely monocultural (with the exception of the local Italian community), there does seem to be an eclectic mix of people from different socio-economic backgrounds.
DEFINING THE FIELD

Over a five day period, the Sound Links team undertook 32 interviews and focus groups with over 80 participants. These participants included primary school students, secondary school students, school music teachers, principals, community music facilitators, community music participants, church musicians, instrument repairers, parents, festival organisers, local council workers, a local radio station presenter, and a national ABC Classic FM radio presenter.

Sound Links attended rehearsals of the Nobodies Drumming Group, the Southern District Pipes and Drums, the NEETO (Never Ever Ever Too Old) Orchestra, the Coast and Vines Club (beginner concert band), a session of the McLaren Vale Folk Club, and joint rehearsals of the community orchestra, Sisters of Abundance Choir, Men’s Choir and Children’s Choir. They also attended the Tatchilla Community Carols performance, and a performance of the Willunga Youth Orchestra, as well as a service at the local Lutheran Church (which involves many young musicians), and Bartleet attended a Community Carols Concert with the Onkaparinga Band at the local hospital. They visited Waverley House (the home of STARS, an arts support group), the Academy of Rock, Tatachilla Lutheran College, McLaren Vale Primary School, a youth drop in community centre in Aldinga called the VOLT (where ad hoc guitar lessons and jamming occurs), Pirramirra winery (which hosts music events, ABC broadcasts and Co-Opera), and attended the launch of Peter Tichner’s folk music oral history documentary. Bartleet was interviewed on Great Southern FM (SA) about the Sound Links fieldwork in McLaren Vale.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Within the McLaren Vale region there are a number of specific sites that are centres of community music activity. The provision of space and equipment at these sites is an important factor in the ongoing success of community music activity in this town, and something that interviewees acknowledged as part of the success of their groups. The personal support of the owners or custodians of these sites for music activity was also significant.

Two sites are worth mentioning, as they indicate issues underpinning successful community music activities. The first of these is a disused
church, called the Singing Gallery, that was purchased by an individual and run to provide a location for rehearsals, performances and other arts related events (for example, during the week of fieldwork, the launch of a folk music CD was held there). This building is used almost every night for group activities: a men’s drumming group, a folk club, and so on. Members of groups using the church building regularly mentioned the support of the owner (who had fitted the building out as a small concert space) as an important factor in the successful running of their groups.

The second site of significance is a K-12 school, Tatachilla Lutheran College. This school, run by a religious denomination, provides an extensive music education program including classroom teaching and the usual range of extra- and/or co-curricular activities in the form of instrumental and vocal ensembles, school musical stage productions, pre-examination performances by students, and the provision of music for school events in the religious calendar. The Music Department in the school is also the focus of various community music activities that have grown from school activities, demonstrating a clear nexus between school-based music study and ongoing community music activity.

Location, however, proved to be a problem for many of the people interviewed. These people noted that distance from the nearest large city, where music shops, instrument suppliers and repairers, teachers, and performances by professional musicians could be accessed, was frustrating. These people also indicated that the distances to be travelled in their community to attend rehearsals and performances were problematic if private transport was not available, public transport not existing. Parents were providing transport for children, some driving 3-4 hours for their children to attend lessons and ensembles. Some families had organised overnight accommodation for the days they needed to be in the community for rehearsals or lessons.
Despite the small size of McLaren Vale and its satellite towns, a diverse range of organised activities are on offer, which include drumming circles, folk clubs, a rock school, pipes and drums, as well as more traditional concert bands, orchestras and choirs, amongst many others. The local farmer’s markets even have a choir. However, in a similar vein to Albany, the nature of the music-making that was observed was primarily Western, although not always classical, in nature.

A large number of organised community music activities are connected to Tatachilla Lutheran College and led by Greg John (Head of Performing Arts at the school). A number of the interviewees commented on Greg’s organisational abilities and the way in which he believes in all musicians and encourages them all to ‘have a go.’ His learning and teaching philosophy, which revolves around community engagement and intergenerational interactions, seems to play a significant role in all the music activities he leads. As he explains:

It’s about community building and relationship building and the underpinning thing in all of this is [...] the music. [...] The thread that goes through all this community building around here, where you can get people from the stiff accountant through to the hippy performing together, from an 87 year old to a 13 year old, and the little kids and the mums and dads performing with each other and cheering and saying, ‘isn’t this wonderful?’ and seeing where they can go [...] all of that is only possible because of the music. I don’t know any other medium that could do it. (Greg John, personal interview, 9 December 2007)

Participants in the ensembles involved in the annual Community Carols (organised by the school) also spoke of the importance of structured activities, and support for musical development and shared values amongst ensemble members as crucial elements in their community music groups. These were seen as necessary for adult learners to develop their musical skills and necessary for the smooth running of a large production such as the community carols. They also spoke about the need for non-judgemental leadership, and the opportunity
to participate as being vital elements in the successful organisation of community music activities.

**Visibility and Public Relations**

The region’s visibility as a centre for active music-making is supported by its acclaimed festival culture, particularly in folk music. The annual Fleurieu Folk Festival in Willunga presents a weekend of music concerts and sessions, dance, workshops, bush poets, children’s entertainment, and stalls. The Willunga Almond Blossom Festival is also organised to raise money for the Willunga Recreation Park and showcases local talent and culture. Other annual events, such as the Tour Down Under and the Sea and Vines Festival attract large crowds, and an opportunity for local community musicians to showcase their talents.

**Relationship to Place**

When asked why the region is so vibrant in terms of music-making, a large proportion of the participants mentioned the beauty, lifestyle and sense of community in the McLaren Vale region (in particular, the small town of Willunga). They suggested that such factors appear to attract creative people, who then nurture a creative community around them. This is reiterated by John McFadyen (Arts and Cultural Development Officer, Onkaparinga Council):

I’m amazed by the amount of creative people who congregate by the coast. I know that sounds like a trite thing to say, but I mean if you have a look through our registers you find a large number of visual artists, there’s a number of writers, and we’ve got a Writer’s Festival [...], and I tend to think that when creative people get together it attracts more. I think it’s a lifestyle thing and the climate and also the location, and it’s relatively quiet. So I think all of those factors play a role. I think also if they know they’re supported and there are people down there, younger people and emerging artists or even professional connections, you’ll tend to go there. [...] It sounds terribly amorphous, but there you are. (John McFadyen, personal interview, 5 December 2007)
Some participants also spoke about the importance of nurturing a ‘village mentality’ in this region, and went so far as to suggest that this could allow community members to ‘get back’ to societal values before globalisation.

The region is also well known for its wines, and the local winery Pirramirra has hosted a number of music events, ABC broadcasts and is open to expanding these activities (within reason, given the logistics of clearing the wine barrel room where these events are held). Having said this, people did note that one downfall of this location is its insularity; some interviewees noted that very few people in this region travel to see how music-making occurs elsewhere.

**SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT**

As a small tight-knit community there is a high level of social interaction between community musicians, music teachers and the broader community, which provides participants with a welcome release from their work lives. A member of the Community Orchestra spoke avidly about this:

> The reason why I’ve done it is to switch off from my work. For the first time in five years I’ve actually come here on a Wednesday night and I haven’t thought about my job. And it’s just magnificent. And I’m actually going to be devastated when it stops because I’ve just loved it. I go home and my husband says to me, ‘You look a different colour.’ [Everyone laughs] ‘You actually look alive again.’ Because I’m a bank manager with ANZ and the bank takes my life, I’m basically married to my job and to commit two hours a week to come along and do this has just been magnificent. And to just play again, is just beautiful. And I would love to take it up during the year, I would love to go and find somewhere else to play, but I just don’t have the physical time to go and do it, but it’s a real excuse for me to switch off from my life for two hours. And honest to God, I can’t find anything else that would do that, it’s wonderful. I love my sax; my sax is just so nice to play. (Community Orchestra, focus group interview, 5 December 2007)

The importance of having a social and creative space where people can engage in community music-making was also shown in the following comments from participants in the Singing Gallery’s folk club:
Kathy: I just love the Singing Gallery. I love the community involvement. [...] For me, for many years I’ve wanted to play music and sing and it wasn’t until I met Dave [owner of the Singing Gallery] I really found my heart and passion and a space to be able to play music like this.

Dianna: I think it’s stimulation. There are so many different people doing so many different things and everybody gets encouraged. It doesn’t matter if you’re a raw beginner or if you’ve been around for 40 years, everybody gives you help, they encourage you, they join in, you know, they give you what you need. And it’s one of the few places where nobody criticises and everybody helps. So I’ve been coming along for close on ten years now (Singing Gallery Folk Club, brief personal interviews, 7 December 2007).

Support and networking

A number of participants spoke positively about the guidance and financial support given to community music by the local Onkaparinga Council (although sometimes small). The Arts and Cultural Development Officer at the local council seemed to be closely in tune with the needs of local musicians, and interested in investing in community music initiatives that tap into local resources and the thriving tourist trade.

Dynamic music-making

A range of different approaches to music-making were observed in McLaren Vale. What also emerged from interviews and observations was that groups existed to respond to a perceived need by their members. This is illustrated by the men’s drumming group, known as the ‘Nobodies’ who meet at the Singing Gallery. The men’s drumming group was a disparate collection of people. Leadership, although members avowed that there ‘was no leader’, could be seen at work in that some members set the rhythms to be followed, led group chanting and commanded (through their drumming) dynamic levels and speeds of the drumming. Not having a leader was seen as one
of the tenets of the group’s existence—all members were equal. Equality of membership, however, was implicitly challenged by members’ ownership of their drums. One member, held in high esteem because of this, made his own drums. Some members owned single congas or djembes, while others owned elaborate multi-drum sets or had expensive drum stands and paraphernalia. When asked about membership, individuals expressly voiced their allegiance to an all-male group—allowing partners, wives or girlfriends to join the group was taboo—as one member put it: “if they want to drum, they can form their own group!” (informal personal interview, 4 December 2007).

Performance in a circle (thus indicating intentions for a non-hierarchical situation), a lack of spoken instruction (one member would commence drumming and others would join in), freedom over starting and finishing times (both for the evening’s activity and for individual ‘chunks’ of drumming), members wandering in and out of the venue, striking up conversations and/or drumming were characteristics of the ‘rehearsal’ we attended. All of these issues seemed to fulfil policies of freedom in an all-male atmosphere, and the desire to do away with being told how to behave or what to do. That some members also participated in late night jam sessions at a nearby nude beach also seemed to indicate a wish to move away from authority.

**Engaging Pedagogy and Facilitation**

A number of different learning and teaching methods were observed during the fieldwork visit. For example, the Sisters of Abundance Choir, who perform at the Community Carols, learn their parts by listening and singing along to a CD of the repertoire they’re studying (prepared by their leader, Greg John). The pipers in the Southern District Pipes and Drums sit around a table before the rehearsal begins and play on their Chanters to the notation that the leader’s son has just downloaded from the internet. The local Academy of Rock in Willunga offers lessons with variable formats and strategies that are tailored to the needs and interests of the students. The aforementioned Nobodies Drumming Group use experimental methods of learning as they engage in musical dialogues with one another.

Many participants identified the key role that committed leaders play in this educative process. In relation to this, Greg John and Chris Majoros
(Director and Producer of the Community Carols, respectively), who are both highly experienced local music teachers spoke about what makes the Community Carols so successful:

[What makes the community carols so successful?] Greg: Key people, who are passionate, energetic, and skilful. That’s the only reason. Chris: That was going to be my answer as well! [Key people?] Yes, and people who know the area […]. Greg: […] And they never count the hours, because unless somebody’s doing that, it would fall in a heap. (Greg John and Chris Majoros, personal interview, 7 December 2007)

LINKS TO SCHOOL

Tatachilla Lutheran College is one of the main hubs of community music activities in McLaren Vale, and shows a strong commitment to community engagement and lifelong learning across a range of subjects. On an everyday level it encourages students to perform musical items in local nursing homes as part of their educational experience. This community engagement was avidly described by members of the Tatachilla Troupe (a group of young primary school children):

We go around to places and we sing to young children and old people. [So tell me what that’s like, going to sing for say, elderly people?] We sing, we entertain them with Disney songs from Cinderella and Mary Poppins. [Do you think they like it?] Yes!!! [They all shout] Sometimes they give us big smiles. Yeah, big smiles and sometimes they give us lunch. (Tatachilla Troupe, focus group interview, 7 December 2007)

The school also has a broader commitment to community engagement in other subject areas, such as ecology. On a larger scale, the annual Community Carols involves a large number of community organisations, community musicians, and other local schools (particularly in the children’s
choir), in a production which draws a crowd of 2,000 people. The school also stages regular musical productions, which parents, grandparents and siblings of school children are encouraged to become involved in, either through performance or production. Recent alumni of the school also return home to participate in these seasonal events. For these events, the school provides a venue, musical expertise, performance occasions, and opportunities for participation. The benefits of this school-community relationship are explained by the school principal, Colin Minke:

There has been a huge diversity [of activities] which has been part of the reason I think the success has happened not just in the performing arts and music, but in environmental areas [...]. Music and performing arts are an important part of the college, but there are other focuses as well, which build community links. [...] It’s just that whole package about how a school brings a community in and how the school can go out into the community. (Colin Minke, personal interview, 5 December 2007)

At times it was difficult to separate school-based music from community-based music activity, as in some events, performers simultaneously belonged to the school and to community groups. In some examples, community groups had commenced under the umbrella of school events and had subsequently branched out on their own. For example, the inclusion of parents as performers in school stage productions had resulted in a women’s and a men’s choral group of parents who wanted to continue choral activity after the stage productions were over. These two groups were ongoing, and had developed their own performance histories and ‘careers’ independent of the school through which they had been engendered. Members of these groups discussed this, and commented on how they had been empowered by the music teacher at the school, who had included them in the school’s stage productions, and also how they now had to devise ways of managing performances and rehearsals; the development of these skills was seen by them as necessary and positive—to run community music activity, skills in arts management were needed.
SUMMARY
The McLaren Vale case study has provided a practical model of how a school-initiated community music program can take shape. As was outlined above, Tatachilla Lutheran School is nurturing a number of vibrant school-community collaborations, which show a commitment to intergenerational learning, and in turn enhance the school’s curriculum and students’ learning experiences. These programs, such as the Community Carols, also provide important music educational opportunities for parents, grandparents, and the broader community. Clear structure, support, and key leaders were also identified as crucial elements in the successful running of these events. However, the vibrancy of community music in this region was not simply limited to Tatachilla Lutheran College. In fact, there were a range of other significant venues and places nurturing community music activities both in McLaren Vale and neighbouring towns, such as Willunga. Throughout the region, people attributed this vibrancy to the desirable lifestyle and location, which appears to attract creative people.
FAIRFIELD CITY—NEW SOUTH WALES
(February 2008)

BACKGROUND TO FAIRFIELD CITY

Fairfield City covers an area of approximately 104 square kilometres, incorporating 27 suburbs. It is home to approximately 182,000 people, and is one of the most culturally diverse cities in Australia: more than half of all residents have been born overseas, mostly in non-English speaking countries. The majority of residents speak a language other than English at home, the most common being Vietnamese, Cantonese, Assyrian and Spanish. While Fairfield City has a comparatively young population with many young families, the greatest growth is occurring in the number of older residents, those aged 65 years or more. Income levels are generally low for local residents and the unemployment rate is also much higher than for other metropolitan areas.
Defining the Field

Over a five day period, the research team undertook 30 interviews and focus groups with over 100 participants. These participants included primary school students, secondary school students, school music teachers, principals, community music facilitators, community music participants, cultural development workers, youth workers, settlement workers, festival organisers, and local council workers.

The Sound Links team visited a number of schools, including St John’s High School, Cabramatta High School, Smithfield West Public School, Prairiewood High School, Fairfield City Public School, Fairfield City High School and Bonnyrigg Public School. They also visited the Dr O’Brien Civic Centre in Miller (where community hip hop sessions are organised), the Fairfield City Migrant Resource Centre, the Real Rhythm Studio (a drum studio set up in a caravan by a refugee from Iraq), the Woodville Community Centre, the Bonnyrigg Community Centre, the Blacktown Arts Centre, and Sound Links visited musicians at the Lao Temple Wat Phrayortkeo Dhammayanaram, the Marconi Club, and Action on Cue Performing Arts Studio. They attended rehearsals of the Cofochilex Chilean Group, the Yauguru Uruguayan Drumming Group, the Marconi Italian Choir and the Viet Joeys Vietnamese Children’s Singing Group.

Infrastructure

Fairfield City has a range of spaces which are adapted to serve as small and medium-sized performance venues. There are some community halls which cater for rehearsals, school performance spaces, churches and temples, as well as community centres where weekly community music activities are held. However, many interviewees spoke about the lack of suitable venues and infrastructure in Fairfield City. In fact, many musicians have to travel to Blacktown or Liverpool to perform. From an Indigenous perspective, participants also spoke about the need for a designated piece of land to meet and engage with cultural activities. Fairfield City Council was aware of these needs, and in the process of refurbishing the Bonnyrigg Youth Centre and Fairfield School of Arts at the time of the research visit to better accommodate the community’s performance needs.
In terms of funding, the ongoing costs of running groups (in particular public liability insurance) and the challenges of grant writing were identified as a major challenge for musicians in the Fairfield City area. For example, the Acholi Sudanese group need assistance with writing their constitution so they can apply for funding to purchase performance costumes (they have had some support from the Fairfield City Migrant Resource Centre, but have found this a major challenge). The Cofochilex Chilean Group spoke about the challenges of finding affordable public liability insurance, because without this they cannot be hired for events.

Organisation

Fairfield City offers a variety of community music activities; some highly organised, others very ad hoc. During the week of fieldwork, observations were made of the Cofochilex Chilean Group, the Yauguru Uruguayan Drumming Group, the Marconi Italian Choir and the Viet Joeys Vietnamese Children’s Singing Group.

As in many successful community music activities, inspired leadership and organisation (often in the face of considerable adversity) plays a key role in activities in the Fairfield region. This sense of leadership, however, seems to be relatively self-contained within various cultural activities, and the kind of collaborative organisation and leadership seen in the aforementioned three case studies (where a leader connects different community groups) does not seem to be prevalent in Fairfield City, and only really occurs on Multicultural Festival event days. After discussing this issue in relation to Fairfield City and Schippers’ notion that behind every vibrant community music program is a ‘mad’ person (someone who defies all odds and devotes all energy to the needs of their specific cause), Tiffany Lee-Shoy (Senior Policy Advisor, Cultural Planning, Fairfield City Council) explained:

In Fairfield there’s very strong bonded social capital, so within the Cambodian community, or within the Chilean community, the connections within the groups are strong [...]. Perhaps those ‘mad’ people are the ones who come up with the ideas in those particular community groups, but it perhaps also it is that ‘mad’ person who is ‘mad’ enough, brave enough, to step out of that bonded group and look for other opportunities for that bonded group and plug them into others. The thing is, those bridging
people are rare, even if the various groups are open to interaction.  
(Tiffany Lee-Shoy, personal interview, 18 February 2008)

**VISIBILITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Given the challenges associated with finding appropriate rehearsal venues, the visibility of community music in this region is a problem. Often groups will rehearse in member’s lounge rooms or sporadically in hired halls, meaning their presence in the local community goes largely unnoticed. At other times, groups rehearse in places which serve other related functions, such as the Woodville Community Centre, the Bonnyrigg Community Centre, the Lao Temple Wat Phrayortkeo Dhammayanaram, the Marconi Club, and Vietnamese Women’s Association. In such cases, these music activities are intimately connected to the goings-on of each location, but relatively invisible to the outside world.

Having said this, there are still identifiable places for community music activity. One such example is a small building, affectionately known as ‘The Shed,’ where the Yauguru Uruguayan Drumming Group rehearses. ‘The Shed’ is owned by the Community First Step organisation, and is colourfully painted with murals on the wall advertising it to the local community as a space for community arts. This facility is also used by a number of other creative arts groups during the week.

**RELATIONSHIP TO PLACE**

Despite the relative invisibility of many of the community music activities observed in Fairfield City, many of these activities are significantly connected to the places where they occur. For instance, the Lao Temple musicians and dancers play an important role in the weekly worship activities of the temple. Likewise, the Viet Joeys Vietnamese Children’s Singing Group, who meet every week at the Vietnamese Women’s Association, plays a crucial role in assisting mothers who have recently arrived from Vietnam to acclimatise to their new lives in Australia.
Many of the participants identified that Fairfield City is a vibrant place for community music-making and suggested that this is sustained by its cultural diversity. Many participants also spoke about the large number of outstanding musicians from different cultural backgrounds in the region (who have moved there for affordable housing and social services for recent migrants). However, this cultural mix does not exist without its challenges—cross-culturally and intergenerationally—as Tiffany Lee Shoy describes:

[Fairfield City] is a destination for new arrivals. Partly because, you know, the rent is cheaper, but it’s also because of the social infrastructure that’s here to support them. [...] And Fairfield is known for that. We’ve opened our arms to refugees from the Sudan and from all over Africa and that is starting to create a very different dynamic now. So for example, a lot of new arrivals are settling in the Cabramatta area [...]. Cabramatta’s face is constantly changing—after the second world war it was a destination for a lot of Italian and Greek communities settling into Cabramatta and then of course with the next wave it was very south-east Asian, Vietnamese kind of feel and that’s the characteristic you’ll get a sense of when you’re in the area. But more recently we’ve had waves of, as I said, African migration so there’s this interesting change in the look and feel of the Cabramatta population. It hasn’t yet affected the building and physical infrastructure, but you get that feel of a changing population when you walk around there. It’s a wonderful thing that new communities can settle here, but at the same time, naturally, this brings tensions between cultural groups as well. [...] One of the things that you’ll notice is the use of traditional forms of art, particularly music and dance, to be that conduit of adjusting to life in Australia [...] where there was the leaning on homeland culture to be that connection socially, and to be that connection toward culture as well in Australia. What has happened now is that, and this happens generally with communities when they migrate, there’s about 20 or 30 years of settling in and being very strongly bonded to the community, but when the next generation comes up and they’re in their teens and they’re in their early 20s, there is a pulling away from that culture while the young people create their own identity and explore who it is they are in multicultural
Australia. And quite often it depends on how the community—especially the elders—deal with that intergenerational conflict that will determine the sustainability of that culture, I guess. (Tiffany Lee-Shoy, personal interview, 18 February 2008)

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

In Fairfield City the team observed a very strong connection between local musicians’ cultural identities and their chosen community music activities. Many spoke of the ways that music gives people, young and old, a means to express their cultural identity and feel a sense of pride about whom they are and where they come from. As Ramphay Chittasy from the local Lao Temple Wat Phrayortkeo Dhammayanaram explained:

In the Western society people are always rushing, but when we come here to the temple the young people learn about being graceful. The minute they put the costume on they don't run anymore [...] and they learn how to move their fingers to go along with the music, so it all synchronizes, the teacher, the drum, everything, the music, girls, and boys. It brings out the spirit of the music and you can feel it with goose bumps, you know. It brings back something from our country, which is really needed. When you go out and say, ‘where are you from?’ I say ‘I’m from Laos and I’m very proud that we have something to treasure’ (Lao Temple Wat Phrayortkeo Dhammayanaram, focus group interview, 21 February 2007).

Some of the most vibrant community groups spoke about their organisations in familial terms, discussing the ways in which a sense of cultural community and family is nurtured through their music-making together. As members of the Yauguru Uruguayan Drumming group explained:

It’s just a big family. We’re all just a big family. We all care for one another. We go out on the weekend or whatever and [...] if people from our group are at the same club we all take care of each other and if one is in trouble we all go and say ‘are you alright?’ It’s all a
big family. If you have problems you just go to Ana [...] and they all advise, ‘When I was young!’ [Everyone laughs] (Yauguru, focus group interview, 20 February 2008)

Interestingly, many of these community music groups, such as the Yauguru Uruguayan Drumming group, also provide ‘traditional’ food to their members, and this also nurtures a social aspect to the rehearsals.

Some participants also spoke of the ways in which music activities allow young people in Fairfield City to show the community a positive image of themselves, combating some of the negative stereotypes (such as Cabramatta as ‘ghetto’) recently depicted in the media. A number of other ‘older’ participants also spoke about the value of music in connecting the generations and ‘passing their culture on’. Young people from particular cultures, such as the Pacific Islands, seemed to be accustomed to this, possibly due to their heavy involvement in singing at church and at home. Other children, such as a Vietnamese children’s singing group, seemed to enjoy the opportunity to learn the language that their parents speak at home through music, and their mothers enjoy the social opportunity that this group affords. As Gloria (Viet Joeys Vietnamese Children’s Singing Group at the Vietnamese Women’s Association) describes:

It will sound a little bit selfish but first of all, that’s my daughter [points to one of the children] in the group. I love her a lot and I love her friends and I want her to have good friends with the same interests. So we put her and her friends together in a group with the same interests. It sounds a little bit selfish but it’s a start. It’s how things started. And then the second reason is, as one of the ladies here said, there is not enough music for kids and mums, at least in our community, the Vietnamese community. Not only here, but also in our country, in Vietnam, there is always more music for adults than kids [...]. I enjoy working with the kids; they are active, they are innocent. Believe it or not, my English is not good enough and they even correct my English, so it’s about language. I like their English and they like my Vietnamese. (Viet Joeys, focus group interview, 22 February 2008)
Support and networking within the various cultural communities observed was incredibly high. Likewise, the interaction between cultural groups seemed to be strongest in school settings and designated community events, such as festivals. However, there seemed to be minimal interaction between different community music groups on a regular basis, although when asked, people seemed open to working on this more. The team suggested to the local council that a multicultural festival is a good way of addressing this issue, and could be set up using a folk festival basis, and possibly run in partnership with the nearby Sydney Olympic Park.

Dynamic music-making

Given the culturally diverse nature of community music activities in Fairfield City, the team observed a diverse range of approaches to music-making. One very striking example was found at a community drop-in centre for at-risk young people, run by the South West Youth Peer Group (SWYPG) at Miller near Fairfield City. Essentially, the program is about reengaging with education through creative arts. While the SWYPG provides a space where young people can simply show up between certain hours and use the studio facilities to make their hip hop tracks, there still seems to be a camaraderie between the young people there and commitment to assisting with each other’s tracks.

The young people who come here have built a strong friendship base and say they’re committed to putting Australian hip hop on the map. The social dimension of hip hop music-making and the notion of giving a voice to marginalised, disenfranchised youth was also strikingly apparent in this setting. As the team talked to two Pacific Islander young men, they heard stories, both through the interview and listening to their music, of hardship and incarceration, of pain and unnecessary deaths. However, their stories were also inspirational in how they described the ways in which hip hop music-making in this context, along with the counselling service, have played a critical role in turning their lives around. As Darrell Pologa (a participant), explained to us, he comes here to stay out of trouble and “do right now”:  

Figure 4.17. SWYP Group
A lot of my music I reflect out on my past and the things I’ve been though, so I come here to help me put the words properly, to explain how my life’s been and just try and get on track right now. [...] They make me realise that what I was doing was stupid. You can do better in life without just hanging around on the streets, just chilling out and doing nothing. They said you can just come and here and do something, like a good use of your time instead of just wasting it out there. [...] These guys help you until you can rely on yourself. They’re giving us more of a strong hand than at school. (SWYPG, focus group interview, 18 February 2008)

When asked about the role of music in this process Charles Lomu (the facilitator) commented:

We want to help them break through, I guess help them better their lifestyles and music always seems to be the best avenue for me for expressing their experiences. Because a lot of young ones when you sit down and talk to them, they really don’t want to sit down and spill their guts out or their problems to ya, but as soon as you start working with them on songwriting workshops and that and then they have that avenue, that medium where they can express all their emotions and that, and not be judged by it and judged about how they come out about it, and I find once they get it out in a song and once they see how it can actually become an art rather than actually go out and express it destructively, they realise ‘I can make a living out of this,’ you know. They’ve just spilled their guts out but they haven’t got any harassment for it, or nothing. Yeah, music’s just been a great way for everyone to connect with themselves and creative expression, you know. (SWYPG, focus group interview, 18 February 2008)

ENGAGING PEDAGOGY AND FACILITATION

A number of different learning and teaching methods were observed, from traditional aural transmission in the case of the Cofochilex Chilean Group, Yauguru Uruguayan Drumming Group, and VietJoey’s Vietnamese Children’s Singing Group to strongly technology-based ways of learning used in the hip hop programs run by the South West Youth Peer Group at Miller.
Within Fairfield City there are also a number of local programs that provide important educational and performance opportunities for young people, particularly where school music specialist instruction is minimal. These include IGNITE, Bring it On Festival, School Idol, West is Rock, the Bigg Rigg, Battle of the Bands, and so on. Youth Indigenous programs, such as the Koori Kids are also having a significant impact on the lives of young Indigenous people, assisting them to develop positive attitudes towards their culture, families and education. Some of the facilitators, from the Bosnian Women’s Choir and the Lao Temple for example, are involved with weekend ‘schools’ for children which also incorporate a number of cultural music activities.

**Links to School**

The most vibrant programs in Fairfield schools have head teachers, principals and music staff who recognise the social and cultural benefits of music-making and allow the students to have an important voice in the repertoire they perform, rather than working from a set curriculum based on Western art music. Most schools (and those working in them) appear to have a keen sense of the realities of their communities. Sometimes this leads to musical partnerships, but often the full potential of this connection is still to be explored.

**Summary**

The Fairfield City case study has shown how community music programs operate in a culturally diverse urban location in Australia. In this case study, there was compelling evidence to support the connectivity between community music and cultural identity, particularly in the case of migrant communities. Many attributed Fairfield City’s musical vibrancy to this cultural diversity, and the strong commitment musicians feel towards maintaining their cultural customs and traditions. They also identified the crucial role that community music plays in connecting the generations of particular cultures, and the somewhat complicated situation that then arises when second and third generation migrants look to define themselves in relation to their parents’ and grandparents’ cultures. This case study has hinted at the potential role community music could play in connecting these cultural groups further, although this is still to reach its full potential. At the present time, the most visible cultural connections are being made in schools and various community music educational programs, which are having a very positive impact on the lives of young people in this area.
BACKGROUND TO BORROLOOLA

Borroloola is a small remote town in the Northern Territory, situated approximately 954 km south-east of Darwin, 380 km from the Stuart Highway, and 80kms inland from the Gulf of Carpentaria. Prior to contact with Europeans, four different major linguistic groups traditionally inhabited this area—Yanyuwa, Garrwa, Marra and Gudanji. The Yanyuwa and Marra consider themselves ‘Saltwater People’, and the Garrwa and Gudanji ‘Freshwater People’. With a population of nearly 1000 (80-90% being Indigenous, and representing all four language groups), Borroloola is a vibrant community which is based around the needs of the local people, the surrounding cattle stations, and tourism (particularly fishing). The town consists of a main road (with a few shops, take-away outlets, a school, a church, an arts centre, and administrative buildings), a residential area known as The Subdivision, the Yanyuwa, Garrwa, Marra and Gudanji camps, as
well as 26 outstations. Notwithstanding the vibrancy of this community, unemployment is extremely high, local health statistics are troubling, the provision of housing is inadequate, and cycles of substance abuse are leading young people away from connecting to their culture.

**Defining the field**

Over a five day period *Sound Links* undertook 24 interviews and focus groups with 45 participants, supported by Liz Mackinlay (from the University of Queensland), who has been working with this community for many years. The participants included members of the four language groups, primary school students, the school music teacher and principal, secondary school students, community arts facilitators, the director of the local arts centre, local band members, local artists, council workers, missionaries, and community relations officers for the McArthur River Mine. While the primary focus of this trip was the local Indigenous community, non-Indigenous facilitators and administrators were interviewed at all the organisations visited.¹ For cultural sensitivity reasons, Bartleet interviewed the local Indigenous women and Schippers interviewed the local Indigenous men.

They spent a large amount of time at the Waralungku Arts Centre, met with representatives from the Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Association, visited the Borroloola Community Education Centre and also conducted interviews at the Language Centre, Borroloola Town Council, and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. They spoke with representatives from the McArthur River Mine (a zinc, lead and silver mine about 70kms south-west of Borroloola) and attended a community consultation meeting for the mine’s new $32 million Community Benefits Trust. *Sound Links* also travelled to King Ash Bay (where the annual Borroloola Fishing Classic is held), and Bartleet travelled to two of the outstations and went ‘out bush’ with some of the senior Yanyuwa women.

The team launched the CD *Jalu Yinbayi: The Women are Singing*, which was recorded by senior Yanyuwa women, Liz Mackinlay, and the UQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, and designed and produced with the assistance of QCRC as a gift to the community.

¹ Local people provided contrasting views on the interactions between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in this community. However, the majority mentioned that in general all four language groups and the non-Indigenous community get along well, although sometimes family and clan rivalry does occur.
Prior to the fieldwork, in Darwin, *Sound Links* also interviewed Martin Jarvis, who organised the Darwin Symphony Orchestra’s one-off concert in Borroloola, and met with the ArtStories Team at Charles Darwin University, who are working on a research initiative that measures the impact of shared art-making in five urban, rural and remote NT school communities.

**Infrastructure**

People spoke about the need to support existing venues in Borroloola, such as the Arts Centre and Language Centre. However, many also spoke about the need to develop new infrastructure, in terms of housing and community and health services. Given an impending council merger, where the current town council will be subsumed under the large Roper Gulf Shire and administered from Katherine, this situation might change soon. Arts and culture do feature in the business plan for the new Roper Gulf Shire; however, the ways in which this merger will impact on the support and provision of arts and culture in Borroloola still remains to be seen.

There also appears to be scope within the McArthur River Mine’s Community Benefits Trust for developing current infrastructure—including arts and culture—given its interest in projects with a sustainable, community-focused, commercial imperative. While the Trust seems to offer tremendous opportunities for funding, particularly as the mine is keen to spend the money given their obligation to do so; due to the mine’s past conduct in the community, there is considerable reluctance and scepticism amongst community members about this initiative. How exactly this Trust offers support for the provision of arts, culture and music-making in Borroloola remains to be seen; it depends on who applies and how their applications are received.

In terms of post-secondary education, at present the Batchelor Institute offers a course in remedial English writing and speaking. The Institute provides a well-resourced room, with a number of computers that have internet access (not a common occurrence in Borroloola). The room is

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2 Reception of this concert was highly mixed, some people saying it was the event of the year; others saying it did nothing to engage the local Indigenous people.

3 This Trust was set up after the NT Government controversially approved the expansion of the mine to include an open-pit excavation and part diversion of the McArthur River, which seriously impacted upon Indigenous sacred sites. The development required the mine to administer a $32 million Trust for the 25 year life of the mine.
open to the community for internet banking, phone calls, faxes, and so on. There seems to be great potential for Batchelor to offer the community much more in terms of infrastructure, resources and tuition (although they do only have one staff member working in Borroloola at present). Support for local musicians could certainly fall within its future scope.

**Organisation**

The team certainly observed pockets of incredible vibrancy, most notably within the women’s culture and contemporary band scene, the latter supported by the small but vibrant and well-run Arts Centre. In particular, people also highlighted the local talent that could be found in the arts and culture, some of which is showcased on the local community radio station. Many singled out the NADOC week Dance Festival, where dancers from all four language groups come together and perform for one another, as a positive event that builds community pride. The organisation of such events revolves around considerable community consultation and guidance from trusted elders within the community.

The team observed considerable potential for future growth in the provision of arts and culture for the large national and international tourist trade in Borroloola, which could be organised expediently around initiatives with well-established relationships of trust with the community, such as the Arts Centre.

**Visibility and Public Relations**

The Waralungku Arts Centre, which represents over 40 artists from the four language groups, is a well-known centre for community arts in Borroloola. While its signage does not necessarily communicate the extent of what it offers, it is still a visible presence within the local community. The centre has two arts workers, and has supported a number of significant exhibitions in Australia and overseas. The Arts Centre has also recently converted the old morgue at the back of the property into a recording studio for local musicians. This will certainly increase the profile of the centre, and mean musicians do not have to travel far distances to record their music.
The Borroloola Community Education Centre (which caters for approximately 200 students from preschool to Year 12, but has a much lower actual attendance) and the local Language Centre are also visible sites within the town where various music and cultural activities take place, although the extent of these activities is not publicised particularly widely.

**Relationship to place**

Amongst the Indigenous people in Borroloola, the concepts of ‘community,’ and by extension ‘community music-making,’ are intimately connected to a sense of culture, family, kinship and place. As John Bradley and Liz Mackinlay (2000) elaborate:

Much of Yanyuwa music has its basis in the actions of the Spirit Ancestors. Like the Yanyuwa people of today, the Spirit Ancestors lived their lives by travelling and marking the landscape. The sharpest concentrations of the Spirit Ancestors’ powers are found in such marks: places where they created a landform, left an object behind, raised a tree or entered the ground. These are the powerful places, or in contemporary English usage, the sacred sites, the places where important knowledge is said to reside. This knowledge, much of it associated with music and performance, provides a rich soundscape which can still be used by the Yanyuwa to assist in the maintenance of the life-order which is derived from the events of what they call the Yijan, a word that generally and confusingly is translated into English as ‘Dreaming.’ (pp. 4-5)

When Bartleet asked the senior Yanyuwa women why they are so committed to practising their culture within their community, they explained that singing and dancing are necessary to make themselves, their family, and their traditional country strong. Liz Mackinlay (a long-standing researcher in the community) further explained:

Everybody relates to each other as family, but that family relationship is inherently linked to country and where people live is about country [...]. People are really strong about keeping these relationships to country in place, but those relationships aren’t divorced from family. So I think that’s partly what community is about here; is country and family. [...] Music is one of those very
powerful and potent ways that those two things come together. Whether it’s a public singing, then it’s an opportunity for people to sing about their relationship with country and experiences and memories of country and people, intermingling. And if it’s through ceremony well then that flips over that link between the human and the spirit world, which a lot of people here live day by day. There’s no boundary. They are one in the same thing. Some people talk about it more readily than others, but there is very much that sense of, you know when you go to a place, it’s not ‘Oh, here we are at Robinson River.’ Most people will say, ‘Oh, this is my grandmother’s country.’ So it’s a very different sense of what’s here and what’s in this place and how we relate to it [...] So, it’s quite different I think, but that’s where song becomes really powerful and potent in connecting people with place and each other. In ceremony, particularly, you can act out those things in ways that can only strengthen people further; can make them happy and healthy and make the country happy and healthy. (Liz Mackinlay, personal interview, 25 April 2008)

**SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT**

A number of people identified that women’s culture in Borroloola is very strong. There are a number of senior Yanyuwa and Garrwa women still practising their culture, and the next generation below them in age also seem to be highly involved with this. These women attribute the strength of their culture to their continual work in schools and commitment to teaching songs and culture to young children. As sisters, Nancy and Isa Mcdinny, explain:

Isa: It’s very, very important for us to learn the kids, like my mother and father did; they learned us how to sing, how to behave you know, when we were small. And ‘This is your culture, we’re going to pass it on to you mob and you pass it on to the kids.’

Nancy: We’re just lucky although, like us, you know, Mcdinny

![Figure 4.20. Yanyuwa and Garrwa women](image-url)
family because we learning from our grandfather and our father sitting on their side you know.

[Can you describe that to me?]

Sitting on the side and they were singing. I’d look at them singing you know. I didn’t know how to sing and I kept listening to them. When I grow up big I started to sing, so today I can sing.

Isa: We always dance the aeroplane dance. [They sing and dance the aeroplane song they teach to young children] (Nancy and Isa McDinny, personal interview, 22 April 2008)

A number of these women also travel to the yearly week-long Women’s Culture meetings across the Territory.

This situation is in stark contrast to men’s culture in Borroloola. A number of participants expressed grave disappointment that men’s culture is not being readily practised. Liz Mackinlay explained that a number of the elders, particularly Yanyuwa men, have died and no-one knows how to sing their songs anymore. She also explained that before they passed away, some of the elders decided that they did not want to pass on their songs to the young men for fear that they would not look after them and could cause bad things to happen. She described the sad scene of watching one of the senior Yanyuwa men dancing on the ceremonial ground, while the young men sat around drinking and disrespectfully throwing VB cans on the ceremonial ground. She noticed the torn feeling on the man’s face as he agonised whether to send the young men away or keep them there hoping they might pick up a semblance of what was going on. He eventually decided that these young men couldn’t be trusted with these songs. As a result 4-5 ceremonies have already been lost. However, these ceremonies have been documented by anthropologists, so there is some possibility of future generations resurrecting and recreating them from the footage.

Strikingly, some (but certainly not all) of the functions of ceremony can be seen to live on in the messages about the right approach to living with pride and respect in the texts and motivations of the local rock bands (made up of local men), in strong contrast with the messages of most rock bands in other parts of the world. Four generations of rock bands, or what other scholars such as Corn have labelled guitar bands, have emanated from this town: the Blue Water Band, Malarndirri Band, Sandridge Band, and High
Tide Band. Two of the bands are currently in existence: the Sandridge Band and High Tide. All seem to be well known and respected within the broader community, including male elders. Their repertoire primarily consists of rock songs and ballads, as well as reggae. A number of the first generation of band members were trained at The Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM) at the University of Adelaide, and a second generation in colleges at Darwin and brought their skills back to the community after finishing their studies. The ways in which these bands are set up and then named strongly reflect their connections to both country and kinship: there are close familial bonds between members. When speaking about guitar bands in Arnhem Land, Corn (1999, p. 8) explains that as in other aspects of Indigenous society, band membership is often structured around extended family or kinship networks. This is also the case in Borroloola, where despite being from different tribes, band members are related to members of other bands.

**Support and Networking**

In comparison to all the other case studies, local council support for community music-making activities in Borroloola is virtually non-existent. During the time of the fieldwork, the local council were not supporting any music activities, only sporting and recreational projects. Support for such activities appeared to fall on the local school and the Mabunji Association.

As mentioned above, there appears to be scope within the McArthur River Mine’s Community Benefits Trust for developing support for local musicians; however, the manner in which this Trust offers support for the provision of arts, culture and music-making in Borroloola remains to be seen.

**Dynamic Music-making**

In Borroloola there seemed to be healthy coexistence of traditional and contemporary approaches to music-making and culture. This connection of tradition and contemporary customs is something that Dunbar-Hall & Gibson (2004) also observed in their fieldwork across the country where despite choices of musical style and technological mediation there appear to be consistencies in the themes and aesthetic stances of Indigenous music across the binary of traditional and contemporary or popular:
As with Aboriginal references to land, through which a continuum of ownership is expressed, music is used to sing the past into the present and the future. That some musical expressions from the past resurface in contemporary forms is partly an embodiment of this, and in this way music acts as a vehicle for statement of Aboriginal beliefs and ideologies. (Dunbar-Hall & Gibson, 2004, p. 17)

A strong example of this can be found in the music of the Sandridge Band, where the focus of the band’s lyrics is on spreading the message about good living, safe driving, and community improvement. Gadrien Hoosan (lead singer, Sandridge Band) says “it’s really important for us to sing about improving our community ... we want to be good role models” (http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendid=191179575). Indeed, the band won a ‘drive safely’ song competition and has written an album full of songs reflecting life in a remote community. ‘Think about our Culture’ is the first album released by the group, which was recorded in a Tennant Creek studio over a short space of 4 days. This highlights that while such Indigenous popular music might be aligned to the world of commercial production and distribution, as with the Sandridge Band, it also occupies other kinds of social and cultural spaces and significance.

The vibrancy of the contemporary music scene was reiterated by Peter Callinan (Waralungku Arts Centre):

It’s pretty healthy in terms of people having the skills as musicians. It’s fairly extensive. There are a lot of young people being able to play an instrument or voices too, there’s some pretty amazing voices around this place that cross from the traditional to the contemporary and stuff like that. Music is one of the strongest areas in terms of engagement of community. If you put on a music event in this community, or in a place like Tennant Creek which is down the road with a large regional centre [...] if we took a mob from Borroloola down there you’d have hundreds of people packed into a park. They really enjoy music. So it’s something that I think, like the Aboriginal mob, it sort of remains, I don’t know, some form of being able to express themselves. (Peter Callinan, personal interview, 23 April 2008)
Engaging Pedagogy and Facilitation

In light of the aforementioned concerns about disappearing culture, many people spoke about the need to teach the current generation of Indigenous children about their own culture before it’s too late. While very few of the young people we met seemed to be able to speak their traditional language (although some can understand it when their grandparents speak it to them), they all seemed keen and enthusiastic to learn (unlike their parents, who have sometimes been described as the ‘lost generation’). People spoke about the importance of young people understanding and knowing their culture; from hunting, to bush tucker, to dreamtimes stories, songs, dance and art. Some feel that the responsibility for this lies in the hands of family, and that culture should be taught in a traditional oral fashion from one generation to the next. However, others feel that the responsibility also lies in the hands of the school.

Prior to the new principal taking over Borroloola CEC at the end of 2007, the teaching of traditional culture was not encouraged. However, with the change in leadership, culture classes are being enthusiastically re-introduced into the curriculum and predominantly taught by the Indigenous assistant teachers and local community elders. These classes are not only taking place in traditional classroom settings, but also ‘out bush’ where the students can learn about the land and their culture in a more appropriate environment. Some of the senior Garrwa women singled out the importance of song and dance in this process, given the significant knowledge and meaning that is carried and conveyed in these traditions. Many people also spoke about the need for role models and mentors for young people, to teach them about their culture and make them feel proud of it. This was reiterated by the Geoff Perry (Principal, Borroloola Primary School):

Culture hasn’t been something that’s been strongly taught in this school in the last few years and that’s been very much to the community’s frustration. And as a result the community, for that and a whole lot of others reasons, the community has disengaged from the school pretty much completely. You don’t see many Indigenous people in the school. You’re starting to see more now and we’ve been quite deliberate about working on reintroducing culture back into the school and we’re doing that through our...
assistant teachers and they’ve taken on, in several of the classrooms it’s now spreading, they take on the role of the teacher and the classroom teacher takes on the role of the AT. And they talk about dreamtime stories and bush tucker and they take them out on trips, they do weaving.

We had a harmony day a few weeks ago where they came and did a whole range of things […]. That’s something that we’re trying to bring the culture strongly back into the school because the community is very frustrated that that’s disappearing so quickly. And the young people are not taking it up with the passion they would like to see. So the school can help with that, and that’s including music, art, dance, and a whole range of traditional stuff. And you’re now starting to see more of the community members willing to come into the school to engage with the school and talk about all sorts of different things. It’s going to be a slow process because it took a long time; it’s happened over a number of years that they’ve felt disenfranchised. Now it’s going to take a fair bit of time to get that trust and that engagement back, but […] it’s got to be that relationship with the community and the families otherwise the children don’t value school as well. (Geoff Perry, personal interview, 21 April 2008)

Primary school students at the Borroloola CEC were very keen to show us their Culture Class display and proudly talked us through some of the projects they have recently completed:

We made lily pads. [What did you make them out of?] We made them out of leaves. The flowers made of Mahogany. Like it’s a big tree, do you want me to show you? [Did you learn a story for the lilies?] Yeah [speaks in language] that means the frog, or something like that. They’re nice, hey Miss? [They’re beautiful] (Borroloola CEC, primary school student’s focus group interview, 21 April 2008).
CURRENT STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION IS A MAJOR PROBLEM AT THE LOCAL SCHOOL. THE NEW PRINCIPAL BELIEVES IT IS THE SCHOOL’S RESPONSIBILITY TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE AND FIND WAYS OF RESTORING PARENTS’ CONFIDENCE IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM. THE PRINCIPAL WAS ALSO ATTUNED TO THE DIFFERENT LEARNING APPROACHES WITHIN INDIGENOUS CULTURE AND THE NEED TO NOT ONLY UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THESE DIFFERENT APPROACHES, BUT ACTIVELY INTEGRATE THEM INTO THE CURRENT CURRICULUM AS A WAY OF ENCOURAGING STUDENT ATTENDANCE, GIVEN THAT THE VAST PROPORTION OF STUDENTS ARE INDIGENOUS. ONE WAY OF DOING THIS IS ENCOURAGING THE INDIGENOUS ASSISTANT TEACHERS TO TAKE CULTURE CLASSES AND NURTURE THESE DIFFERENT WAYS OF LEARNING. THE PRINCIPAL ALSO SPOKE ABOUT THE POTENTIAL SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS THAT COULD OCCUR IN THIS SETTING, THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF FACILITIES SUCH AS A NEW BAND STAGE AND POOL.

As another direct strategy for engaging young people in school, a new music teacher has been appointed to encourage and foster music-making across all year levels (this is for a one-year contract, although the school is hoping a longer term commitment might eventuate). This teacher is young, ‘cool,’ and highly enthusiastic about music and learning, and after his first few days at the school made a strong impression on the students. While his program will primarily be based on popular music repertoire and original compositions, he also expressed an interest in collaborating with local musicians and incorporating traditional Indigenous songs into his program. In terms of youth engagement, the local health centre has also just secured funding for a set of drums, which will be located at the youth centre, and used as part of Drumbeat, a juvenile diversion program for ‘at risk’ youth. The school is currently looking at how they can get involved with this initiative.

Summary
The Borroloola case study has illuminated how community music operates in a remote Indigenous context. It showed that in such contexts, notions of culture, kinship and the land are deeply connected to Indigenous concepts.
of community, and by extension community music. In other words, music-making in this particular context cannot be understood independently from its relationship to people and places. In this case study, the strong connections between ‘traditional’ and ‘contemporary’ ways of making music, singing and dancing were observed through the vibrant women’s culture and the recontextualisation of traditional cultural messages through popular music in the four local bands. From an educational perspective, many identified the important role that music could play in connecting young people with their culture, and the potential of school-community collaborations to facilitate this was being explored at the time of the fieldwork. It was also observed that somewhat controversial external forces, most recently the mine, have the potential to positively impact upon the provision of music and the arts in the community.
**Background to Inala**

The suburb of Inala is located approximately 20km southwest from Brisbane’s CBD. The establishment of Inala as a suburb occurred in 1946 in an effort to develop affordable accommodation during the post-war housing shortage. By the early 1960s many Indigenous people moved to the new housing areas in Inala and today Inala is home to the largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Brisbane (approximately 7.2%). Also the influx of people from Vietnam during the 1970s, and other Asian countries in more recent times, has led to a significant cultural diversity in the area.

**Background to Stylin’ UP**

Stylin’ UP is an Indigenous owned hip hop & R’n’B skills development and event program, developed with and for young people in Brisbane’s southwest.
corridor (including Inala, and a few surrounding suburbs). Stylin’ UP aims to increase community awareness of, and engagement in, arts and cultural opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their families and the broader community. Stylin’ UP is a partnership between the Indigenous community of Inala, via the Inala Stylin’ UP Community Crew, and the Brisbane City Council (BCC). The event developed as a result of the community, Inala Elders and the BCC coming together in 2000. While the Elders initially gravitated towards a country music festival, reflecting the predominant musical preferences of their generation, they were convinced that hip hop and R’n’B were more appropriate for engaging Indigenous youth. Due to the popularity and success of Stylin’ UP in the suburbs, the concept has also been taken out to regional and rural communities over the last few years. The event incorporates a year-long consultation and preparation process that culminates in Australia’s premier Indigenous hip hop and R’n’B music and dance event in May each year. In the lead up to the event day, Stylin’ UP offers young Indigenous people an extensive program of skill development workshops that focus on the creative arts such as dance, graphic design, music-making and performance, events management and video production.

DEFINING THE FIELD

Over an extended period of two months Sound Links undertook interviews and focus groups with over 16 key facilitators and participants in the event, and a local Indigenous musician, Sarah Patrick (Research Assistant) undertook 4 focus group interviews with over 26 young people involved in the Stylin’ UP workshops. Participants in both sets of interviews and focus groups included school students, school music teachers, Stylin’ UP facilitators, participants, event organisers, youth workers, and local council workers.

The team visited a number of the workshops sites, including Elorac Place, Glenala High School, the Murri School, and the youth-based organisations, Inala Wangarra, CONTACT Inc, and Speakout. Ironically, the actual Stylin’ UP outside event day had to be cancelled due to rain. However, a small ad hoc community gathering occurred, where a number of young people were given the opportunity to perform. While many in the community were disappointed that the organised event did not occur, this informal showcase was testament to the broader community’s engagement with Stylin’ UP.
For the project, *Sound Links* team members’ experience of earlier editions of the event was sufficient to inform the case study.

**Infrastructure**

Stylin’ UP is a partnership between the Indigenous community of Inala, via the Inala Stylin’ UP Community Crew, and the Brisbane City Council (BCC). It involves a number of local venues Elorac Place (a community centre), Glenala High School, the Murri School (a local Indigenous school), Inala Wangarra (an Indigenous Youth organisation), CONTACT Inc (a youth-based community arts organisation for Indigenous, Polynesian, refugee and migrant communities), and Speakout (a not-for-profit youth-based community arts organisation).

Due to the popularity and success of Stylin’ UP in Inala, the concept has been taken out to regional and rural communities. The Stylin’ UP and Out program has established itself in Goondiwindi, Cherbourg, Woorabinda, Logan City and Ipswich. Organisers aim to expand even further in future years as popularity grows. This outreach program appears to be extending the Inala model and developing it in terms of community consultation processes and community engagement. This is described by Aleem Ali (Speakout and Stylin’ UP and OUT) when he explains the importance of the ongoing nature of the activities offered in these regional communities:

> I think the ongoing stuff is really important. I mean it was really important to build the trust in the communities we’ve worked with regionally. By knowing that we’re always coming back they now trust us. And they kind of build it into what’s going on in their community, so they know we’re coming back for the July school holidays so that’s actively promoted in their community. Because they are so isolated, in some respects, they can really use that as a means to manage what goes on with their young people in their community as well. (Aleem Ali, personal interview, 17 June 2008)

Equipment for the music workshops is provided by the facilitator Luke O’Sullivan, and represents a value of approximately $20,000. The facilitator spoke about way that access to this high quality equipment substantially improves the participants’ motivation and self-esteem levels.
ORGANISATION

A number of the participants suggested that a major factor in the event’s success is the support from the local Indigenous community. The year-long consultation that occurs with the community crew—comprising local elders, youth organisations, school representatives, community organisations, businesses and other relevant and interested parties—leads to strong community involvement and a sense of ownership over the program. Athol Young (Developer of Stylin’ UP, Brisbane City Council) described the process of developing community ownership over the event in the early years of the program:

They acknowledged the change in their own community. They acknowledged all the social indicators. Once again it wasn’t about looking at violence or graffiti or school retention, it was about [...] how do you identify a sense of place and space and connection? And how do you build cohesion? So it was about being able to show a community, there’s a vision, there’s where we can go and all those issues were just part of the package that came on board to that great vision that was set through that process. And it took only a couple of years before you got those community elders who said, ‘Nah, it’s not about homelessness, it’s not about this, it’s about our young people having a future.’ And it was about that vision of saying this can be about your community and your future. It can also be a part of preserving your culture. (Athol Young, personal interview, 12 June 2008)

A number of generations are involved in the organisation of the workshops and event, despite it being a youth-focused program; from the elders who auspice the event, to the community crew and coordinators who are primarily in their 30s, to the facilitators who are mainly in their early 20s, and the participants who are primarily in their teens. When the team started to dig deeper into the ways in which the BCC defer to the elders as a matter of cultural protocol, and the complexities that raises for a youth-focused event, they encroached on sensitive ground. In particular, when not all members of the community are willing to acknowledge the elders chosen to be part of the Stylin’ UP process (some Murri elders are not included, for example) and the power issues that
arise from this (particularly when some of the elders speak on behalf of the community without consulting them).

Many people also identified the importance of high quality arts workers, particularly from the local community, in the successful organisation of the workshops and event. People spoke about the need for them to be able to balance good quality artistic outcomes (which are crucially important in terms of motivating young people and giving them a sense of pride in what they do and the confidence to stand up and deliver) with the ability to look after the needs of the people in the community program and ‘de-ego’ themselves. Many lamented that there seems to be a shortage of such people to employ.

A number of the facilitators also spoke about the strong collaboration with BCC as a major success factor of the program. This collaboration has been built on an enduring sense of trust between the BCC team who founded the event and the local community. They suggested that this collaboration has made the event more coordinated and allowed for a successful interface with major sponsors and stakeholders. However, this collaboration has not been without its own complexities. Some participants spoke about the challenges of trying to map professional frameworks from governing bodies (such as the BCC) onto community programs (such as Stylin’ UP). They spoke of the difficult balancing act between it being a community event that is owned by the community, and the fact that the community does not necessarily possess the know-how when it comes to organising such a big event. Many participants also spoke about the notion of the BCC handing the program over to the community, given that this was one of the strategic goals when Stylin’ UP was originally set-up. While most agreed this was still a desirable concept, they also acknowledged that at present there is not one single organisation which could support the infrastructure needed and the BCC is not keen to hand it over and then let it ‘fall flat.’ The BCC have suggested that they would be happy to hand particular organisational components over, so it becomes compartmentalised sections of the community coming together in a collaborative effort.

Visibility and Public Relations

Within the local community, the Stylin’ UP program is highly visible. A large number of brochures and postcards (designed by young people through
the SpeakOut program) are distributed nation-wide to advertise the event. There is also a large amount of coverage in the local press concerning the program. As a result, the profile of the event is substantially growing. In the eight years since its inception it has expanded from a humble audience of 500 to more than 10,000 people. The audience base of Stylin’ UP is geographically wide, drawing people from Cairns to Newcastle as well as many regional areas, and from a wide range of cultural and ethnic groups. This is also aided by the BCC’s access to corporate sponsorship and wide range of networks, which have assisted in increasing the profile of the event.

RELATIONSHIP TO PLACE

Many of the interviewees were emphatic that this event is unique to Inala, and expressed concerns about it extending to regional areas. Some people also spoke about the complex issues that arise from Stylin’ UP being a specifically Indigenous project, given how culturally diverse Inala is. Christine Hayward (HOD Arts/Business, Glenala High School) spoke frankly about the ways in which the school has worked very hard to create a sense of harmony between the different cultural groups, particularly the large Pacific Islander and Indigenous populations, and that singling out the Indigenous students somewhat counteracts the school’s efforts in creating a sense of harmony amongst the different groups:

Here our philosophy is integration, you know. We’ve got a lot of cultures and I don’t like separating kids off for that reason when we’ve tried to work for so many years in harmony, particularly since the school merged with Richlands. Back in the early days there was a lot of disharmony with the Polynesian students and the Indigenous students. And we worked really hard to try and get them together. So it goes against our grain in some respects, you know segregating kids off. (Christine Hayward, personal interview, 23 May 2008)

However, in terms of the inter-cultural exchange, organisers from the BCC noted that while it is an Indigenous specific event, it is still very multicultural with many different cultural groups participating in the event day, and the workshops are not restricted to Indigenous young people. Indeed, in recent years a number of Pacific Islanders have become involved.
SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Many people spoke frankly about the issues facing young Indigenous people in the urban context of Inala. They suggested that young Indigenous people in this community know their culture and where they’re from, but they don’t necessarily understand it. Many mentioned that substance abuse is now prevalent amongst youth in this urban context, and that there have been a handful of youth suicides in recent years. Such issues—alongside experiences with drinking, breaking into houses and getting chased by the police—appear to be surfacing in the lyrics the young men of this community are writing for the Stylin’ UP program. Despite such issues, people spoke about the importance of giving young people an opportunity to speak about these experiences in order to create a greater sense of pride in themselves and their community, self-respect and personal empowerment.

This is reiterated by Fred Leone (a Stylin’ UP facilitator) when he said:

Before Stylin’ UP there were a lot of angry people, with no outlet. Now Stylin UP’s been here for five, six years you see all these guys expressing themselves and all, in different ways, through dance, music or production, and it’s crazy man. There’s a lot of, heaps and heaps of, really good talent [...]. It’s also like a platform to start off and come back next year, and it gets bigger and bigger [...]. Trying to get young people to voice themselves. Before I started getting into rap I was doing a lot of the stuff that Aboriginal and Torres Trait Islander kids get into because they don’t have that ability to express themselves [...] you know [...] the ability to articulate what they’re going through. Like I went from one extreme, thinking this sucks man, I go to school and get treated like shit, go here get treated like shit, I get served last at stores, and then turn it all around to talking about it with people in a way that’s, like I’m not having a go off my head, saying ‘why is this happening?’ I’m just stating the facts and articulating it and people come up and say, like ‘we didn’t know that happened,’ and I go ‘yeah, that happens all the time.’ So it’s cool to be able to do that, yeah, to tell our story.
and have people listen. Yeah, it’s good. (Fred Leone, personal interview, 13 May, 2008)

While some originally questioned whether hip hop was the most appropriate genre for engendering a sense of community—mainly due to “mainstream manifestations of violent posturing, machismo, misogyny, ostentatious wealth (bling bling), pimping and brutality, which are still embedded in the dominant sounds and images disseminated around the world in music videos and on commercial radio stations” (Mitchell, 2006, p. 127)—many have come to acknowledge that this genre gives the young Indigenous people of Inala a voice to express their sense of cultural identity and experiences. As Kelvin Lui (a community Elder) further explained:

It’s another way of getting the message across. You know you’ve got traditional songs, and traditional dancing, and I mean usually most of the songs if you listen to them they tell a story about something, whether it’s about the wind or the rain or the animals [...]. It’s the same thing, especially with contemporary music, that’s what they try to do. Contemporary music, I think, appeals more to the younger generation of today; this is what hip hop is about. It’s a music for the new generation, you know. [...] It’s a very effective tool that is used to get the message, a positive message out to young people to empower and encourage them. You know, to move ahead, move forward. (Kelvin Lui, personal interview, 22 May 2008)

Indeed, after seeing how it enthuses and engages their young people, many of the other elders who originally thought the event should focus on country music have changed their tune and become strong advocates for the hip hop and R ‘n’ B focus. They are at the centre of the event; the Elders’ tent takes a central position on the grounds where all performances take place.
As Chelsea Bond (Community Crew member) explains, Stylin’ UP has been a means for young Indigenous people to imagine their sense of identity in a positive way:

The one thing I love about Stylin’ UP is that it recognises the diversity of our identity. So while I kind of get annoyed at the rigidity of cultural protocols, in terms of understanding our culture, Stylin’ UP has been really good at doing that. And you know, there were some voices in the early days when they were looking at doing an Indigenous hip hop festival that weren’t too happy about that and thought that hip hop music was evil and that it was the Americanisation of our young people [Should have been country?] Should have been country. What was good is that they listened and respected where young people are at and used it as a medium to engage young people. And the one thing that’s great about Stylin’ UP is that it is an example of where we can feel really proud of our community, of our young people. They're not just criminals. They’re not just a group with immense social problems, they’re actually resourceful, resilient, inspiring people that we can all learn from. So it puts young people up in front, which I think is really good. But it recognises that our identity as Indigenous people is not just grounded in this idea of the exotic Other and that we all have to be in lap-laps and traditional dance. We’ve still retained our culture but we’re articulating it in different ways and that is the main reason why I invest in Stylin’ UP in my own time over the years as a community crew member, is that it engages with an imagining of me and my community that is grounded in the reality of how we see ourselves and I think that’s much of its success is that now people think about aboriginality in very different ways. Stylin’ UP is our corroboree for today and that’s what I think has pulled people in over the years and attracted people to it, is that it’s imagined us very differently to how we’re frequently talked about.

(Chelsea Bond, personal interview, 16 June 2008)
SUPPORT AND NETWORKING

Many agree that this event would not function as well as it does without its community consultation processes and resulting support from the local Indigenous community. As Kevin Lui explained:

The main factor I find is the community support and it’s through the community support that this program has worked, this Stylin’ UP event has worked in Inala, because of the support Brisbane City Council gets from the Inala community. We had to get behind this and drive this [...] (Kevin Lui, personal interview, 22 May 2008)

This sense of broader community support and ownership was reinforced on the 2008 event day when it was cancelled due to heavy rain. The community rallied together at the last minute to arrange a highly successful informal showcase so the young people could still have the opportunity to perform.

DYNAMIC MUSIC-MAKING

Many identified the music workshops as one of the most successful aspects of the program. One of the reasons for this is the access these workshops give young people to impressive music equipment. Another reason for this is the facilitator, Luke O’Sullivan’s pedagogical approach: he views the young people as active participants and collaborators and allows them to be very hands-on. He also strongly involves members from the highly successful local Indigenous band, Indigenous Intrudaz, in the process to give the workshops ‘street credibility’ and an affirmation of the styles and aesthetics the young people appreciate.

In the Laydeez Biz workshops, which are run specifically for young women and girls, a slightly less structured approach is used. Facilitators work to balance the social side of meeting together with the performance side of putting dances together. In this context, the importance of giving young women an opportunity to develop a greater sense of self-respect, personal empowerment, and pride

Figure 4.25. Laydeez Biz
in themselves and their community is the utmost of importance. The success of this is shown in the following comment from Jackie Saunders (a participant in the Laydeez Biz workshops and a traditional Aboriginal dance group):

I like the dancing and the singing and the different Aboriginal dancers that come and do dancing, and the different hip hop dancers you see dancing, and it helps me to not feel shame and make me get up there and have a go. (Jackie Saunders, personal interview, 13 May, 2008)

**ENGAGING PEDAGOGY AND FACILITATION**

When describing the learning and teaching approaches used in the music workshops, the facilitator was quick to point out that they are not modelled on hierarchical teacher-student interaction. Rather, the young people are active participants, to the point of collaborators, with the facilitators. The facilitator gets the young people started, whether on beats or lyrics, and works together with them to add the layers. In other words, the music guides the learning, and this model is very practically based.

When Bartleet was observing one of the music workshops before the May event, she noted the ways in which the group of young men were assisting one another—with lyrics, music production ideas, and stagecraft—and essentially supporting one another’s development. As the facilitator manipulated the accompanying beats on the computer, four young men took the stage with microphones and others sat around the room nodding their heads, and there was a sense of mutual respect and commitment towards a common goal. Their music had to be good: it had to tell the story of their experiences, they wanted to be proud of it, and they didn’t want to feel shame over it. Their nodding heads, moving bodies, grunts and verbal assurances offered critical peer feedback and encouragement to each other. These are all hallmarks of dynamic community music-making. As Mitchell explains:

As an educational format, a vehicle to express anger at discrimination and marginalisation and pride in one’s heritage, a way of binding communities together through dance and performance, a declamatory form of storytelling set to music, and
above all a means of expressing oral history, hip hop’s affinities with Aboriginal cultural forms make it an ideal means for youth to get in touch with their tribal identity, history and cultural background. (2006, p. 136)

**LINKS TO SCHOOL**

The Stylin’ UP model is designed to link local schools with the community through the skills development workshops. This has worked with varying success. Some of the teachers and facilitators spoke of the challenges of bringing outside arts workers into the school, given that they are not always accustomed to fitting in with the school’s rules and regulations. Another challenge is the timing of the workshops—for example, at the Murri School they are always scheduled in direct opposition to school sports which are always popular with Indigenous young people—creating conflicts of interest. As mentioned before, there is also the issue of perceived exclusion of non-Indigenous youth, particularly in the local high school which strongly advocates integration between groups of all cultural backgrounds. These are issues which have been identified as needing attention.

**SUMMARY**

The Inala case study has demonstrated how a community-driven program, strongly supported by a local council, can be used to engage young Indigenous people in an urban context, and allow them to feel a sense of pride about their cultural identity. As was observed in the case of Stylin’ UP, in order to engender this strong sense of community ownership and engagement, a rigorous community consultation process is needed. By and large, this consultation process is highly successful, but is not without its challenges in terms of intergeneration and intercultural interactions. The complex balancing act of meeting the needs of council, community and schools in the organisation of the workshops and event day was also observed. This model thus heavily relies on sensitive and high quality organisers, negotiators, and facilitators who are able to run the skills development workshops, liaise with schools and work closely with the
local community to address such issues. Finally, the case study showed the importance of choosing a musical genre that engages its target group, in this case hip hop and R ’n’ B. The case study has also uncovered compelling evidence to show how such genres can create a sense of cultural identity, community, and empowerment amongst Indigenous and disadvantaged youth at a local level.
CHAPTER FIVE

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

The *Sound Links* online survey was designed to validate the case study findings and benchmark them against national impressions and perceptions. The survey was developed in consultation with the partner organisations, and distributed to a wide-range of music educators, community music facilitators and practitioners, music therapists and arts administrators, mostly through their mailing lists. Over 200 people responded, representing every state and territory.

The results reveal a number of significant trends, particularly in terms of success factors, learning and teaching models and school-community collaborations. While a wide range of practitioners working across many different styles and cultural traditions responded to the survey, school teachers made up the highest proportion of respondents (60.3%) and a large proportion of those respondents were involved in choral music (48.6%) at the time of responding. As the following sections show, there is a remarkable similarity between the findings of the online survey, the case studies, and the data from *Music. Play for Life’s* recent Music in Communities Awards. To view the online survey design, see Appendix 4; for a full report on the online data, including a detailed description of the respondents, see Appendix 5.

COMMUNITY MUSIC SUCCESS FACTORS

In the online survey, inspired leadership, careful planning and the availability of venues and facilities were the most commonly cited success factors in community music-making. These success factors were followed closely by the choice of repertoire, the skill level of facilitators and access to funding (see Figure 5.1 below).
In addition to the tabulated success factors outlined in Figure 5.1, respondents strongly reiterated the need for more funding, sponsorship and voluntary support. In some cases, respondents contextualised the need for funding and other types of support within arguments pertaining to social well-being. This is exemplified in the remarks below:

Greater support from community leaders in all the arts areas would be most helpful as would much greater corporate sponsorship. What people do not seem to acknowledge is that community music in all its forms produces results through co-operation not competition. This is a most desirable outcome in light of the increasing violence within our communities and should be both recognised and supported by the community at large.
The sponsorship of local organisations is paramount to the success of these events and necessary for them to continue, as are the selection of appropriate repertoire in the events. The encouragement of our youth is at the forefront of these types of events, so it’s important that they continue to exist in the local communities.

Some argued that the arts are not valued as highly as other social activities such as sport, while one respondent suggested that the lack of funding for community music activities relates to the value placed upon such activities: “No funding, no publicity, no support = no community participation or value put upon the activity.”

“Fun”, as well as a “sense of belonging and social contact”, “com[ing] together for a common aim” and the desire to feel that one is “contributing” and “achiev[ing] their goals and aspirations in music” were also highly regarded as critical success factors in community music-making. Responses of this nature suggest that community music participants place a considerable amount of value upon musical participation as a means of creating and fostering community connections.

LEARNING AND TEACHING METHODS
IN COMMUNITY MUSIC SETTINGS

It appears that the most common methods used in community settings are one-way instructional teaching and peer or collaborative learning. Central to many of the responses was the need for the musical director/conductor to be flexible, “responsive to participants needs” and to acknowledge that in some cases skill levels differ so notation-based learning may at times need to be complemented by ear training. A focus on the process, the enjoyment of learning and the social factors of playing music together were also noted:

Our current conductor is particularly good—I think this is because he recognises that the players are there because they enjoy music and there is a big social component to the orchestra, but at the same time, when we do concerts we want them to be good.
Development of music ‘communities of inquiry’ that support reflective practice and learning by doing. Intergenerational sharing of knowledge and skills is also important.

Explicit teaching of activities and ideas that can be carried over in other contexts by participants—not just by an ‘expert’ leader as learner—responsive to participant’s needs, interest and strengths and open to learning from other’s collaborative teaching with a focus on process, and on participants’ interests and strengths. Explicit teaching that shares the teaching objectives with all participants in clear language.
**SCHOOL MUSIC SUCCESS FACTORS**

When respondents were asked to identify the critical success factors in school music activities, school support was the standout response. This was followed by support from parents and the broader community, the skill level of educators, access to sufficient facilities and equipment, careful planning, choice of repertoire, inspired leadership and sufficient funding (see Figure 5.2 below).

**SCHOOL MUSIC SUCCESS FACTORS**

![Graph showing success factors](image)

- Multi(cultural) sensitivity
- Clear curriculum
- Links to out-of-school activities
- Links to community
- Attention to sustainability
- Successful pedagogical models
- Synergy between classroom & instrumental programs
- Sufficient funding
- Inspiring leadership
- Choice of repertoire/style/genre
- Careful planning
- Facilities & equipment
- Highly skilled educators
- Support from parents/community
- Support from school

**Figure 5.2. School music success factors**

In the ‘other’ option to this question no standout factors were identified. Rather, respondents’ answers were multiple and varied. In no particular order, the following list highlights the other critical success factors identified, the majority of which were already present in Figure 5.2 above:
- Students’ willingness to engage
- Dedication and skill level of ensemble director/teacher
- Links to the community
- Support from school administration
- Appropriateness of repertoire
- Performance opportunities (not mentioned above)

**Learning and Teaching Methods in School Music Settings**

Respondents noted that one-way instructional teaching, peer or collaborative learning, use of notation and visual aids, digital support, emphasis on tradition or innovation, and focus on process or product were all present in school music settings to varying degrees. However, among these, respondents noted that one-way instructional learning and peer or collaborative learning were most common. Respondents also mentioned inspiration, collaboration, determination, encouragement and esteem-building in their answers, suggesting that respondents not only value high-level musicality and skills but that they also acknowledge the extra-musical outcomes that a successful music education can foster. The following selection of responses suggests this:

As a music tutor I think it is important to provide information and at the same time to experiment collaboratively with making it work. Participants should feel largely that they are ‘teaching themselves’.

Instruction based on empowering the students to trust their own musical voice, stories and creative/intuitive sense.

Student ownership. Focus on the process of learning but with a product at the end that they value and of which they are proud. Flexibility and negotiation combined with open ended tasks that allow students to stretch themselves and shine. It needs skilled ‘masters’ to teach skills and techniques preferably one-on-one but they also need small group experiences as well as large ensemble work. School camps, tours and excursions that give ‘real life’ experience and ‘bonding’ opportunities are highly valued by the students.
School and community music collaborations

Are your school collaborations reaching their full potential?

![Bar graph showing responses to the question about school collaborations reaching their full potential.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answered question</th>
<th>70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skipped question</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.3. School and community collaborations

A number of significant issues that hinder school-community collaborations were raised by the respondents who answered ‘no’ to this question. These are summarised below:

**Commonly cited issues**

- Restrictive school timetables and a general lack of time (very common).
- Lack of resources relating to funding, venues and volunteers (very common).
- Lack of school teacher’s willingness to engage in collaborative projects.
- Schools placing less value on community music-making as a site of music education. (For example, “Schools don’t give their students credit for the plethora of musical activities that the students undertake outside school.”).
- Schools placing less value on music education. In comparison to sport, schools are less likely to acknowledge the importance of music activities.
Other issues

- The level of musicianship in schools is low. Schools “do not challenge their students”.
- Parents do not encourage their children to participate in music activities.
- Many students who take up music in primary school are discouraged in later year levels as academic goals become more significant.
- Community music groups need better organisational skills and need to consider the time it takes to arrange the logistics of extra-curricula activities within schools.
- There is a lack of support across school, governments and industry.

These respondents made a few useful recommendations for how this situation could be improved. These are outlined below:

Recommendations

- Schedule meetings (a few times a year) between school and community music facilitators to plan timetables and agree on outcomes.
- Allow more time for teachers to plan these activities.
- Provide a list of community organisations that schools could access (especially in the local area).

Those respondents who answered ‘yes’ to this question outlined some examples of successful school-community collaborations they have been involved with. However, there was no unified positive response that can be identified as a key success factor in this area. Listed below are the only positive responses to this question (4 positive responses out of 59 total responses):

Artists in Residence sponsored by a local environmental action group worked with students to compose several original vocal works which were recorded and the CDs sold throughout the community.

I’m working on community-related music education software for the web. It’s early days and I think there’s a lot that can and will be done to connect school music and the community.
Actually every single community music group or project that I have ever been involved with has had some significant level of connection to a school. The project I am currently involved in is very new 3 weeks old and apart from using some school facilities, has not progressed beyond that as yet. In the future I believe our new band will become a natural step for musicians leaving school to continue being involved in music.

Aboriginal Children’s Choir is a community music project run by the Yarra Ranges Children’s Choir for the local Indigenous community, conducted at one local primary school with children also attending from two other schools in the area. It started as a language reclamation project for Woiwurrung, but has been so warmlly received that the kids want to learn how to read music, how to sing in parts and how to speak whole sentences in Woiwurrung and Yorta Yorta. All that in 45 min per week with one facilitator!!!

**Music in Communities Awards**

**Finalists’ Applications Compared to the Online Survey**

In order to further examine the success factors and learning and teaching dynamics outlined in the online survey, a comparative analysis was made with the entries of the 28 finalists in *Music.Play for Life’s Music in Communities Awards* (MiCA) (see Appendix 6 for the full report). Not mentioned in the online survey is ‘inclusivity’. This is the most frequently reported success factor in MiCA. In other respects there is a strong agreement with the online survey in success factors: support from broader community, highly skilled facilitators, networking with local organisations, corporate connections and support (mentioned in MiCA as support from business), sufficient funding, careful planning, choice of repertoire (in MiCA this reveals a leaning towards contemporary/pop/original).

The most significant success factor in the online survey is ‘inspired leadership’. This may be the case with MiCA as well, if one correlates ‘vision’ and ‘professional leadership’ with ‘inspired leadership’. There is also some mention of and agreement with the online survey factor of ‘sufficient equipment’. Many MiCA organisations provide recording facilities and equipment in particular, and look to funding to support this.
‘(Multi)cultural sensitivity’ is not so much mentioned as a success factor in MiCA while it is, although not significantly, in the online survey. (In MiCA Multicultural sensitivity does get frequent mention in goals and benefits.)

Two possibly important success factors revealed in the online survey are not clearly revealed in MiCA. They are: ‘support from community leaders’ and ‘location, venue and facilities’. Also ‘effective PR’ is not easily visible in the data of MiCA, while it is quite significant in the online survey.

Other significant factors that have a strong presence in MiCA but not in the online survey are ‘passion’ and ‘fun’. A significant musical activity in both MiCA and the online survey is choral, however the most frequently mentioned activity in MiCA is song-writing, and the activity is related to the pop/rock genre.

**Summary**

The online survey has identified a range of critical success factors in Australian community music, the top five being: 1) Inspiring leadership from an individual; 2) Careful planning; 3) Location, venue and facilities; 4) Support from the broader community; and 5) Choice of repertoire/style/genre. These success factors were all highly evident in the case studies, as well as the Music in Communities Award data, and substantiate the importance of engaging practice and pedagogy, the provision of infrastructure and organisation, and connections to the broader community in vibrant community music-making.

In terms of learning and teaching in community settings, one-way instructional teaching and peer or collaborative learning appeared to be the most commonly cited methods. Many of the responses touched on the need for the musical director/conductor to be flexible, responsive to participants’ needs, and to acknowledge that skill levels differ in some cases. A focus on the process, the enjoyment of learning and the social factors of playing music together were also noted. However, the most striking response to the online survey was in relation to the connections between their schools and community music: 74.3% of respondents believe the connections are not reaching their full potential. This is significant response, even when taking into account the possibly slightly leading wording of the question. It illustrates the importance of not only examining this issue further, but
finding positive models for how these connections can be initiated and developed more effectively. Such models, which have been identified in the previous chapter’s case studies, will be addressed in the following Conclusions and Recommendations chapters.
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS: THE NINE DOMAINS OF COMMUNITY MUSIC IN AUSTRALIA

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that community music as defined—or rather described—in the opening chapters of this publication is a vibrant and widespread phenomenon in Australia, enriching the life of people across geographical locations and social and cultural backgrounds. Community music has perhaps been less recognised than it deserves as a powerful player in the cultural arena because of one of its very strengths: strong local engagement and support, often leading to relative independence from external drivers and funding. Although the brief of this project did not extend into the economics of community music, there is a strong case to be made for a high return on investment: the ‘musical activity for public dollar’ value of community music activities is considerable beyond doubt, and a possible source of inspiration for more effective arts funding strategies at the local, regional and national level.

At a more abstract level, the research team has been impressed with the loose but often very effective organisational structures that have evolved, mostly emphatically as the result of a bottom-up process, highly adaptable to change, challenges and new opportunities, a process often led by a single visionary individual. Underpinning this organisation, in most cases, was a strong commitment to providing ongoing activities. Even if the activities were seasonal and only happened during particular periods in the year, the regularity of these activities was an important factor in their organisation. Related to this is the array of approaches to learning and teaching that were encountered, ranging from what would be termed informal to highly formalised, but in most cases with considerable sensitivity to context and fitness for purpose. The case studies and the online survey indicate that the potential of music education in schools for creating synergies with this powerful and self-energising force is great and far from being fulfilled.

Given the fact that each of the six case studies was selected to represent a very different set of circumstances and environment, many of the characteristics
of the community music activities observed were unique to their specific participants, facilitators, sites, contexts, aims, and infrastructure. However, there were also strongly shared underlying characteristics between the activities. As the data analysis phase progressed, it gradually became clear that nine domains were present (in varying degrees) in all community music activities observed, and indeed in the experience and recollection of such projects across the world: Infrastructure; Organisation; Visibility and public relations; Relationship to place; Social engagement; Support and networking; Dynamic music-making; Engaging pedagogy and facilitation; and Links to school.

This may well constitute the most significant outcome of Sound Links. As it represents the first community music research project that has juxtaposed six widely different practices examined through a single methodology, Sound Links enabled the research team to draw comparisons that were hitherto difficult or even impossible to make. Without aiming to start ‘comparative community musicology’ as a new sub-discipline in music research, the nine domains seem to represent a significant contribution to understanding the workings of most community music activities from an international perspective. It achieves this without forcing normative behaviour or entailing value judgements; the framework of nine domains merely represents a demonstrably successful instrument to describe and gauge community music activities in and between settings.

**THE NINE DOMAINS OF COMMUNITY MUSIC IN AUSTRALIA**

Across the case studies, characteristics of community music, critical success factors and challenges were observed and can be assembled under three major areas: structures and practicalities; people and personnel; and practice and pedagogy. These in turn cover distinct domains: structures and practicalities covers infrastructure, organisation and visibility; people and personnel covers relationship to place, social engagement and support/networking; and practice and pedagogy covers dynamic music-making, engaging pedagogy/facilitation, and links to school. Many of these domains refer to clearly observable factors; others are more intangible: all were topics of conversation with many of the hundreds of participants in this study. The full picture can be represented like this:
### Structures & Practicities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Visibility/PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Buildings</td>
<td>• Method of organisation</td>
<td>• Promotion, audience and membership development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Performance spaces</td>
<td>• Inspired leadership</td>
<td>• Exposure in local press/media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Equipment</td>
<td>• Structures &amp; roles</td>
<td>• Awards/prizes/champions/prestige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regulations (e.g. council by-laws)</td>
<td>• Division &amp; delegation of tasks</td>
<td>• Community centres as identifiable places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Funding</td>
<td>• Mentoring of new leaders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Earned income</td>
<td>• Membership issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Legal issues (e.g. copyright, insurance, incorporation)</td>
<td>• Forward planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Links to peak &amp; related bodies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### People & Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to place</th>
<th>Social engagement</th>
<th>Support/networking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Connections to location (e.g. urban, suburban, regional, rural &amp; remote)</td>
<td>• Commitment to inclusiveness (and sensitivity to issues of exclusiveness)</td>
<td>• Links to the local community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Connection to cultural identity and cultural heritage</td>
<td>• Engaging the marginalised ‘at risk’ or ‘lost to music’</td>
<td>• Links to other community groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pride of place</td>
<td>• Providing opportunities</td>
<td>• Links to local council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Balance between physical &amp; virtual spaces</td>
<td>• Empowerment</td>
<td>• Links to business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Links to well-being</td>
<td>• Links to local service providers (e.g. police, fire &amp; health)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relationship to audience</td>
<td>• Connections to national peak bodies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Practice & Pedagogy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dynamic music-making</th>
<th>Engaging pedagogy/facilitation</th>
<th>Links to school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Active involvement open to all</td>
<td>• Sensitivity to differences in learning styles, abilities, age &amp; culture</td>
<td>• Locating activities in schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responsive to ambitions &amp; potential of participants</td>
<td>• Nurturing a sense of group/individual identity</td>
<td>• Identifying mutual interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Short vs. long term orientation</td>
<td>• Commitment to inclusive pedagogies (ranging from formal to informal)</td>
<td>• Sharing of equipment &amp; facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flexible relationship audience &amp; performers</td>
<td>• Embracing multiple references to quality</td>
<td>• Marrying formal &amp; informal learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Balance between process &amp; product</td>
<td>• Recognising the need to balance process &amp; product</td>
<td>• Exchange pedagogical approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Broad orientation facilitators</td>
<td>• Attention to ‘training the trainers’</td>
<td>• Realising activities as part of the curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.1. Nine domains of community music in Australia
THE PRESENCE OF THE NINE DOMAINS IN THE CASE STUDIES

To illustrate the validity of this framework, in this section the presence and vitality of the nine domains are rated on a scale from ‘not observed’ to ‘very prominent’ for each case study. In themselves, these are not indicators of success; they merely serve to indicate that any specific domain seems to play a more or less significant role in a particular activity or organisation in different levels of prominence, depending on the context. The weighting of their prominence has been sketched according the research team’s observations from their week of fieldwork in each community. The characteristics specified in each domain may play a positive or a negative role in the perceived success of any community music activity. This can easily be demonstrated by examples representing opportunities and challenges in each of the domains.

In Domain 1 (Infrastructure), a building that can be used flexibly in terms of accessibility, time and space can be a major positive force on the success of community music activities. Health and safety regulations (and the accompanying liability insurance requirements) may constitute a major threat for many small-scale community music activities. In Domain 2 (Organisation), the most strikingly consistent factor in successful projects appears to be the presence of an inspired individual. This individual works with the community to create and realise a vision of a vibrant musical community, often against considerable odds. In terms of organisational structure, the success of projects seems to depend on keeping middle ground between too loose (with communication and planning falling apart) and too rigid (with the risk of no longer being responsive to the changing needs of the community). In Domain 3 (Visibility/PR) the skill in involving local press was a striking feature observed in many projects. Often less successful is creating continuous visibility for the activities (beyond public performances); as they often occur in alternating, affordable, multipurpose spaces, it is difficult to create a permanent public face such as many sports possess: everybody knows where the tennis courts are in their area, but few can identify the centre for community music activities.

Place-making is an important factor in Domain 4 (Relationship to place). This is crucial in celebrating the relationship to country in remote Indigenous communities, but can also be a strong factor in changing
perceptions of low self-esteem for a socially disadvantaged suburb. Dispersed activities or participants may be a major challenge to creating and sustaining a sense of community. Domain 5 (Social engagement) is widely considered to be at the heart of many community music activities; inclusion is one of the most widely upheld values, extending to those at the margins of society. While laudable, this breadth also paradoxically entails the risk of exclusion; of losing connection with others in the community on the basis of ethnic background, learning ambitions, or cultural tastes. While some initiatives operate relatively independently, there are many examples where Domain 6 (Support/Networking) is highly developed in relation to local councils, and even police, fire brigades and hospitals. Links to the local ‘for profit’ business sector (whether music dealer or butcher) tends to be underdeveloped.

Obviously, the concept of Dynamic music-making (Domain 7) is central to virtually all activities described in this report, referring to non-reproductive, customised activities for each specific group of people, their skills and their ambitions. As mentioned elsewhere, this may be less of a reality due to the fact that facilitators are only human: they may steer musical activities in (a) particular direction(s), working with a specific ‘box of tricks’, or specific music as ‘one-size fits all’ (which may be referred to as ‘the samba effect,’ by which widely different groups working with a specific facilitator mysteriously ‘choose’ samba as their preferred form of expression). As in most community music settings, the participants have no long-term contract or obligation to participate (unlike music learners in education or in conservatoires), Engaging pedagogy/facilitation (Domain 8) is crucial. According to the situation, there may be a need for strict didactic instruction, or facilitation of peer learning. The tension between producing an attractive performance for an audience and following the dynamics of the natural development of the participants (product or process) may present challenges. Finally, the Links to school (Domain 9) can be realised by activities in the same building after school, ‘borrowing’ pedagogical strategies, or even as part of the curriculum. In many cases, however, such synergies are not realised due to different cultures (real or perceived) of organisation and divergent approaches to learning and teaching; an area that requires and deserves considerable attention.
While it should be obvious from the descriptions above that not all of the domains can (or even should) yield ‘hard data’, the series of ‘snapshots’ on the following pages has been realised by triangulating findings collected before and during the *Sound Links* fieldwork, including documentation, websites, reports, interview materials, observations, and a range of other field resources. Despite the challenge of mapping these domains onto such a diverse range of cultural, social, economic and geographical communities, this process does provide a surprisingly cohesive framework for insightful comparisons and targeted recommendations.

**THE DANDENONG RANGES**

As described in Chapter four, this area on Melbourne’s eastern fringe has a long-standing reputation for diverse, networked community music initiatives. The DRMC led by Bev McAlister has been funding, facilitating and teaching community music in this region for over thirty years (for a detailed account, see Chapter four).

![Profile of the Nine Domains in the Dandenong Ranges](image)

Figure 6.2. The profile of the nine domains of community music in the Dandenong Ranges

As outlined in Chapter four, the provision of suitable *infrastructure* at the DRMC is very noticeable, with purpose-built rehearsal rooms, storage space and offices at the Music Centre. Activities are highly *organised* under the umbrella of the well-connected DRMC, although individual
units and ensembles are encouraged to take ownership of the artistic and financial aspects of their programs. Due to its location on the Upwey High School grounds with clear signage, and its long-standing presence at local community events, the DRMC is very visible to the outside community. A strong relationship to place was observed, particularly in flagship projects that deal with local issues such as fire and water conservation. A keen sense of social engagement was observed in the participants of weekly events, particularly during and after rehearsals. The DRMC also showed a striking commitment to networking within the local community—with local council, businesses, community service providers and schools, amongst others—and this largely contributes towards the high profile of the organisation. From the activities observed during fieldwork, a range of dynamic music-making occurs at the DRMC, with an emphasis on more conventional pedagogies. The links to the school in this case study were very prominent, due to the co-location and collaborative events that both the DRMC and Upwey High School undertake.

ALBANY

This large regional city in Western Australia offers a range of community services, and a vibrant host of community music activities. It is well-known for its appealing lifestyle and attracts large numbers of creative people to its surrounds (for a detailed account, see Chapter four).

PROFILE OF THE NINE DOMAINS IN ALBANY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visibility/PR</td>
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<td>Relationship to place</td>
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<td>Social engagement</td>
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<td>Support/networking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dynamic music-making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engaging pedagogy/facilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Links to school</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>not observed</td>
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<tr>
<td>very prominent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.3. The profile of the nine domains of community music in Albany
In Albany many participants spoke about the need for better *infrastructure* for music-making. However, the answer to this issue of infrastructure was multi-faceted—some community members believing in the need to invest in a large purpose-built performance space, others believing smaller, more intimate venues would suit the nature of this regional centre better. The level of *organisation* shown in the community music activities observed during fieldwork was high, particularly when school teachers were responsible for running these community groups. Due to the somewhat isolated and regional nature of the community, local music activities were very *visible* and reasonably well *supported*. In terms of ‘*place*’, participants spoke about the desirable lifestyle of Albany and how it attracts creative people to its surrounds; however, the activities observed in this setting were very similar to those happening around the country. The level of *social engagement* shown by the participants was high, with many participating in numerous different groups throughout the week. In the activities observed, *dynamic music-making* and a range of engaging *pedagogical* approaches were found, particularly in the informal and non-formal community programs such as *Recipe for Jam* and *Just Fiddling*. Links between *schools* and community music groups were only partly visible, and only really occurring on an individual teacher level.
McLAREN VALE

This South Australian wine country community has a strong tourism sector, exports quality local produce, and is known for its thriving arts community. A range of community music activities are on offer through Tatachilla Lutheran College and a number of other vibrant spaces for the arts (for a detailed account, see Chapter four).

PROFILE OF THE NINE DOMAINS IN McLAREN VALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility/PR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship to place</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support/networking</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dynamic music-making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Engaging pedagogy/facilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Links to school</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.4. The profile of the nine domains of community music in McLaren Vale

In McLaren Vale the level of infrastructure for community music activities was very strong; particularly at Tatachilla Lutheran College, and other spaces outlined in Chapter four, such as the Singing Gallery. Organisational levels were generally high in community music activities arranged through the school, such as the Community Carols, although slightly less prominent in more informal activities run outside the school, such as the Nobodies Drumming Circle. Due to the small size of McLaren Vale, the visibility of community music was high. Many participants spoke about the strong connections they felt towards a sense of ‘place’, and how they were attracted to the lifestyle in this area. The community music activities attended during fieldwork displayed prominent levels of social engagement and support from the broader community and local council. In many of the activities observed, dynamic music-making and a fairly wide range of pedagogical methods were evident. The connections and collaborations between the local school, Tatachilla Lutheran College
and the local community were very prominent, due to the school’s heavy involvement in organising community music events.

**FAIRFIELD CITY**

Fairfield City is located in Sydney’s West, and is one of the most culturally diverse cities in Australia with more than half of all residents having been born overseas, mostly in non-English speaking countries. It has a range of culturally diverse community music activities (for a detailed account, see Chapter four).

**Profile of the Nine Domains in Fairfield City**

As was discussed in Chapter four, many participants in Fairfield City mentioned the lack of *infrastructure* available for community music activities, and commented on the need to develop this further. The level of *organisation* varied from group to group, but in many cases was somewhat ad hoc. Due to the relative insularity of many of the community groups observed, their *visibility* to the broader outside community was not very prominent. Many participants, particularly migrants, spoke loyally about their strong connection to a sense of ‘*place*’ in Fairfield City. In the cultural activities observed, the level of *social engagement* was striking and showed a compelling connection to the participants’ sense of cultural identity. Having said this, significant levels of interaction and *networking* across
community music groups were not readily observed. *Dynamic music-making* and a range of *pedagogical* methods were observed, although connections between local *schools* and community music activities were not highly prominent.

**Borroloola**

This remote Indigenous community in the Northern Territory is home to four different major linguistic groups—Yanyuwa, Garrwa, Marra and Gudanji. The town has pockets of musical vibrancy, namely in traditional women’s culture and the contemporary band scene, mostly inhabited by young men (for a detailed account, see Chapter four).

**Profile of the Nine Domains in Borroloola**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Visibility/PR</td>
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<td>Relationship to place</td>
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<td>Social engagement</td>
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<td>Support/networking</td>
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<td>Dynamic music-making</td>
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<td>Engaging pedagogy/facilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Links to school</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.6. The profile of the nine domains of community music in Borroloola

Many participants spoke about the need for more substantial *infrastructure* in Borroloola, to facilitate further engagement in community music-making as well as other cultural activities. This need also extends to the provision of adequate housing and health services. While some community music related activities were *organised* around key events such as NADOC week, most other activities were much more informal in nature. The *visibility* of places for art and music was relatively high, with many participants being aware of the facilities provided by the local arts centre, language
centre and school, for example. Connections to ‘place’ and traditional country were strikingly high in this case study. Likewise, the level of social engagement in music-making, particularly in traditional women’s culture and the contemporary band scene, was also high. Support for music activities from the local council was not particularly visible, and seemed to fall to organisations such a Mabunji, the arts centre and language centre. Dynamic music-making was certainly observed, as was a strong commitment towards finding suitable pedagogical models to engage young people in learning about their culture. The connection between the school and music activities has been very low until recently; however, the current school principal has made a commitment to improving this situation.

**INALA**

This Indigenous/multicultural Brisbane suburb is home to the Stylin’ UP program. This Indigenous owned hip hop & R’n’B skills development and event program, aims to increase community awareness of, and engagement in, arts and cultural opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their families and the broader community (for a detailed account, see Chapter four).

**Profile of the Nine Domains in Inala**

![Profile diagram](image)

Figure 6.7. The profile of the nine domains of community music in Inala

As was outlined in Chapter four, due to the provision of rehearsal spaces in
schools and local community centres, the level of infrastructure for Stylin’ UP in Inala was very high. Likewise, the levels of organisation shown by the community crew, workshop facilitators and Brisbane City Council were readily observed. The visibility of the event within the Inala community was very prominent, as was a pride of ‘place’ and sense of community ownership over the event. High levels of social engagement shown by the young people involved were certainly observed. Due to the community consultation processes and involvement of local council, the presence of support and networking was also quite prominent. Dynamic music-making and suitable pedagogical methods for engaging young people in hip hop were also readily observed. While links to local schools are embedded within the Stylin’ UP model, the efficacy of such collaborations seemed to fluctuate depending on the support of school personnel.

**The presence of the nine domains in the online survey**

To further examine the presence of the nine domains in Australian community music settings, a brief comparative analysis with the online survey follows. In Figure 6.8 below, the top five critical success factors identified in the online survey are mapped onto the closest corresponding domains of community music identified in the case studies.

**Profile of the nine domains in the online survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location, venue &amp; facilities</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careful planning</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of repertoire/style/genre</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from the broader community</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspired leadership from an individual</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.8. Online survey mapped onto the nine domains of community music

As the table shows, the top five responses from the online survey correspond
to all three levels of the nine domains. The importance of inspired leadership from an individual (Domain 7) and their careful attention to the choice of repertoire (Domain 5), alongside careful planning (Domain 2) and suitable venues and facilities (Domain 1), as well as support from the broader community (Domain 6) were all identified as the most important factors in successful community music practice in Australia, both in the case studies and the online survey.

**Implications for Music Education**

**In Schools and Community Music**

Both the case studies and online survey have illustrated the importance of building stronger connections between community music and school music. Looking more broadly, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA] *Education and the Arts Statement* (2007) recognises not only the importance of the Arts for all children in all phases of learning, but the need to develop and build on partnerships between schools and other arts organisations: “There is great potential for the education, arts and cultural sectors to better work together to share the resources, expertise and knowledge held in this existing infrastructure”. (p. 8) The statement is underpinned by three key principles:

1. All children and young people should have a high quality arts education in every phase of learning.
2. Creating partnerships strengthens community identity and local cultures.
3. Connecting schools with the arts and cultural sector enriches learning outcomes. (p. 5)

As the *Sound Links* study has shown, music programs in schools could be further enriched through greater collaboration and stronger relationships with various community music organisations. There are a number of ways in which community music activities can be used by music teachers in schools. These activities may provide ensemble experiences for students, either to enhance those provided in schools or where a school cannot provide these. By participation in community music ensembles, students can access repertoire, styles of music, and examples of pieces of music for analysis beyond the music that is studied in classrooms. Community music activities can also provide teachers and students with access to
music with cultural specificity, to instruments and performers. Performing
groups that specialise in the music of a specific cultural background
could provide resources for classroom use in the form of notation and
recordings; members of these groups could become interviewees in student
assignments. Performances that integrate local community music groups
and school performing groups provide a means for linking school music
studies with local music activity.

The development of school-community music networks requires careful
planning, which is largely likely to fall onto school music teachers. Schools
have a duty of care to their students, and must therefore ensure the safety
of their students at all times. Thus, music teachers need to ensure that
there is appropriate supervision when there are visiting community music
groups, or excursions to community music groups. Depending on particular
projects, schools may also need to seek out police checks for members
of community music groups. In some states and territories they might
also be required to have government accreditation. If community music
performers/facilitators are to work in schools, or with school students,
there will be expectations that they also have requisite legal/professional
documentation (the responsibility for checking and administering this
would rest with school administration). Working with community music
groups may therefore impact upon the workloads of music teachers, which
must be taken into consideration by school management.

Having said this, the benefits to school music programs from developing
vibrant school-community music networks are substantial, and obstacles
can be overcome through planning and setting achievable goals and
through open dialogue with all contributors. Rather than perceive the
integration of community music activity into school music programs as
additional work to be covered, such activity could replace existing topics
and alleviate expectations on the provision of performing groups. In
situations of an ‘overcrowded curriculum’ and increasing expectations
placed on music educators in schools to cover classroom teaching,
training of instrumentalists, the running of ensembles, and responses
to regular expectations of the school year (for example, assemblies,
prize-givings, religious events, fetes, etc), community music groups can
also provide support. They can provide resources for teaching topics
and ensembles to perform at school events.
In terms of using school facilities for community music activities, under the Federal Government’s new *Building the Education Revolution* (2009) initiative there is great potential for stronger links to be made in this area. For instance, most of the primary schools (around 7,000) will be building a new multi purpose hall, and these are likely to be suitable venues for community music use. In this scheme, high schools have the choice of science labs, libraries, sports centres or performing arts centres. The Government has committed to building 500 science centres; however, this still leaves around 2,300 schools that could potentially build a performing arts facility, once again suitable for community music use.¹

¹ The Commonwealth Government has committed funding of $14.7 billion over three years to provide new facilities and refurbishments in Australian schools to meet the needs of 21st-century students and teachers through the Building the Education Revolution (BER) program.
THREE MODELS OF SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS FOUND IN THE CASE STUDIES

In terms of building these school-community collaborations, three useful models were found in the case studies. These include 1) community-initiated collaboration; 2) school-initiated collaboration; and 3) mutual collaboration, and are outlined below.

MODEL 1: COMMUNITY-INITIATED COLLABORATION (STYLIN’ UP, INALA)

![Diagram showing the community-initiated model]

Schools provide:
- Venues for the workshops
- Timeslot in the school timetable

Community centres provide:
- Venue for the workshops
- Community workers to oversee the workshops

Stylin’ UP provides:
- Overall program organisation
- Facilitators of the programs
- Equipment for the workshops
- Connections to the broader community
- Publicity/connections to corporate sponsorship

Figure 6.9. Stylin’ UP and Inala schools, community-initiated model
Outcomes of this Community-Initiated Collaboration

The key outcomes of this community-initiated collaboration centre on the sharing of resources, the engagement of young people in the learning process, better connections between the broader community, schools and local council, and a shared sense of pride in place, culture and community. For example, in this collaboration the Stylin’ UP program provides music workshops, including the facilitator and equipment. The schools in turn provide students to participate in the program. The schools provide time within the weekly timetable for the workshops to occur, often during sport time. The workshop facilitators accommodate the school timetable and make themselves available to run the workshops during these timeslots. Likewise, local community centres offer their facilities for the workshops out-of-school hours, and community workers oversee these activities. Through this process, the Stylin’ UP program re-engages students in the learning process, who may have become disconnected from the mainstream schooling system. This then has a positive flow on effect to how these young people engage with the local community. The Stylin’ UP program also connects the school to the broader community, as well as other local schools through its event day. The school then connects the Stylin’ UP program to its school community. The local council provides organisational assistance, publicity and connections to corporate sponsorship.
MODEL 2: SCHOOL-INITIATED COLLABORATION
(TATACHILLA LUTHERAN COLLEGE, MCLAREN VALE)

Tatachilla provides:
- Facilities and utilities
- Tuition, teachers and conductors
- Organisational support
- Students to participate

Community provides:
- Participants
- Participant’s instruments
- Audience support
- Connections to the broader community

Figure 6.10. Tatachilla and McLaren Vale community, school-initiated model
OUTCOMES OF THIS SCHOOL-INITIATED COLLABORATION

The key outcomes of this school-initiated collaboration entail significant intergenerational learning opportunities, the sharing of resources, and a positive public image for both community music-making and the school within the McLaren Vale region. For instance, the community-driven programs which the school provides, such as the Community Carols, offer community members the opportunity to participate in seasonal music activities. Likewise, the community provides the school with a large number of participants, which are needed for such large-scale productions. The school provides educational opportunities for community members to extend their musical skills. In turn, the participation of community members in school events introduces students to the benefits of intergenerational learning. In this collaboration the school provides all the facilities and utilities for major community events, such as the Community Carols. This then provides beneficial PR for the school, when approximately 2,000 audience members (in addition to all the performers) enter the school grounds for the event.
**Model 3: Mutual collaboration**

Upwey High School provides:
- Co-location grounds
- Utilities
- Students for DMRC programs
- Administrative support

DRMC provides:
- Music ensemble programs
- Music lessons
- Purpose-built space
- Connections to the broader community and other schools

Figure 6.11. DRMC and Upwey High School, mutual collaboration model

**Outcomes of this mutual collaboration**

The key outcomes of this mutual collaboration involve pooled facilities, opportunities for the community and school students to perform together in weekly and flagship activities, and a well-connected community where the music council, schools and other service providers work hand-in-hand to address local issues, such as fire prevention. For example, this collaboration provides a mutually beneficial co-location arrangement, where the school uses the purpose-built music centre for weekly lessons.
(such as contemporary voice and didgeridoo) and the DRMC uses the school’s utilities and grounds. The DRMC offers the provision of weekly music programs and flagship projects for school students and professional development opportunities for music teachers. These opportunities in turn enhance the school’s current music curriculum. Likewise, the school provides a number of participants for these programs as well as teacher support. The DRMC connects the school to the broader community, as well as other local schools through its programs, and then the school connects the DRMC to its school community. The location of the DRMC makes it very visible to the broader community, due to excellent signage and the large number of people who move through the school on a daily basis. The visible presence of the DRMC on the school grounds also makes the school visible to the broader community, as people attend weekly activities at the DRMC, enhancing its public profile within the wider community.

*

Bringing together the rich and varied data from the six case studies, the literature review, the analysis of the submissions of the Music in Community Awards finalists, and the online survey, a picture emerges of an often invisible but vibrant engagement of Australians with practical music-making in their communities. Sound Links also identifies key obstacles and factors that influence initiatives and why they are perceived as successful by participants and other stakeholders. To realise this with reference to specific initiatives and their interrelationships, the cohesive framework of nine domains has proven to be a powerful instrument. This framework enables a better understanding of how community music operates in a range of different contexts across Australia. It has also highlighted the need to further develop the connections between such community music activities and music education in schools. As such, this chapter has paved the way for a number of targeted recommendations to be made in each of the nine domains featured in this study.
CHAPTER 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER SEVEN

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the Literature Survey and the recommendations from the *Towards 2020 Music Summit* (Chapter two), the Case Studies (Chapter four), the Survey Results (Chapter five) and the Conclusions (Chapter six), *Sound Links* can make a number of concrete recommendations conducive to creating a sustainable environment for community music to flourish in Australia now and into the future, and engage a large percentage of the population in the joys, the challenges, and the benefits of making music together. For the sake of consistency, they are organised along the three major areas and nine domains established in the previous chapter.

STRUCTURES AND PRACTICALITIES

INFRASTRUCTURE

Councils need to be encouraged to make available spaces people can access, so activities can be self-generated, rather than top-down organised. Disused spaces can be refurbished as community music centres through renovation programs and this in turn can render community activities more visible and effective in creating a sense of community.

Community musicians need to be encouraged to consider other locations alongside local council facilities for their activities. For example, churches, community halls, RSL halls, community centres, scouts halls, U3A, art galleries, museums, private music schools such as Yamaha and Forte, and PCYC facilities, can be highly suitable venues for this purpose.

Co-location—using school facilities after hours—can be a highly effective way to create the beginning of collaboration between schools and community music activities.

In order to address the often cited problem of liability, insurance could be offered to community musicians under an umbrella...
organisation to reduce the costs associated. Precedents for this, such as *Sound Sense* (UK) and *AUSDANCE* (AU), indicate that it is relatively easy to accomplish.

**ORGANISATION**

Community music organisations need to carefully negotiate the tension between extreme flexibility to the point of being underorganised on one hand, and on the other overorganised to the point of rigidity and limited responsiveness.

*Sound Links* has demonstrated that there are strong similarities between geographically dispersed activities. Greater exchange of best (and less successful) practice will avoid the risk of many organisations having to reinvent the wheel.

A list (via a website or portal) of community activities that is searchable (for instance by state, genre or target group) can greatly enhance awareness of community music activities across the country.

This or a similar list can also be used by schools to locate local community musicians, and access information about their skills, equipment, and whether or not they have approval to work in schools.

In setting up community music initiatives, it is useful to remember the central importance of an inspired individual to realise the project in terms of relationships with the community and other stakeholders, securing funding and other support (e.g. PR), and identifying the appropriate creative approaches to facilitate learning and presentation of the results.

**VISIBILITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

External relations, in particular visibility, are not a luxury for community music activities, but often a great need. They create goodwill and can attract support in cash and kind, as well as participants. Publicly honouring high achievers (Community musician of the year) or proactive supporters (Musical Mayors) can contribute to such aims.
While some individuals and organisations masterfully ‘play’ the press, others need assistance with press release templates, strategies for access to local politicians, steps for approaching businesses, and so on. Templates and checklists for these processes can be made available through the aforementioned portal.

In positioning cultural activities in specific councils and communities, it is worth engaging in ‘cultural mapping,’ which entails creating a geographical representation of all relevant cultural organisations, activities and needs in a specific area. This subsequently informs choice of activities, strategic positioning, recruitment, partnerships, and fundraising. Internationally, this is an activity that has proved highly successful.

In order to increase the prestige of community music and an awareness of its effectiveness, it is recommended that a well-conceived quantitative study be conducted to investigate the cost-effectiveness of engaging Australians in practical music-making through community music vis-à-vis other initiatives such as formal music education and outreach projects by major cultural organisations.

**PEOPLE AND PERSONNEL**

**RELATIONSHIP TO PLACE**

Community music workers in Australia need to be aware, honour and possibly take inspiration from the strong links to country associated with much of the music of Indigenous Australians.

Locally inspired content, using significant places, or even reviving places without great local appeal (such as shopping centres) with community music can generate a local sense of ownership, well-being, responsibility and pride, and contribute to a sense of unity across the community.

Local councils need to be made aware of the benefits of community music in connecting groups with different or even conflicting ideas and cultural backgrounds. Internationally, this approach has
proved successful even in war zones, so applying the same principle in challenging social situations in Australia makes excellent sense.

While the communities researched in this study are all geographically close, further research needs to be undertaken into virtual communities and how these constitute or challenge the approaches to community music outlined in this report.

**SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT**

Facilitators, supporters and participants need to be aware at all times that social engagement lies at the heart of most community activities, which can be used to engage and empower participants of all backgrounds, including those that are marginalised (such as those with special needs), ‘at risk’ and/or ‘lost to music.’

As community music activities develop in degree of organisation and possibly artistic level, it is important to remain inclusive. Setting high standards to join may raise the level of the end product, but at the same time harm the process of engaging and empowering all participants.

Social engagement creates a sense of belonging; belonging creates a sense of well-being; well-being is conducive to good mental and physical health for groups and individuals.

**SUPPORT AND NETWORKING**

Most successful community music projects rely heavily on successful networking and support structures. Different levels of government can provide a number of facilities and services, as can schools and other public organisations, often to their own benefit.

Local music businesses can simultaneously serve as effective local marketers and assist in the facilitation of community music activities; it is therefore recommended that enduring relationships with mutual benefits be developed with the local or regional music industry.

To do this, community music organisations can: 1) develop their own brand, value propositions and community awareness; 2)
develop an understanding of the priorities of the business owner and how a partnership/sponsorship proposal can be built around those priorities which will improve their chances of initial success as well as offering the potential to build longer term relationships for mutual benefit; 3) target a) local businesses that have strong connections to the local community that may find a partnership very attractive. Or b) target business that have some affinity to an activity; 4) realise the potential of in-kind support; 5) develop a management plan for each existing and potential sponsor so that the relationship can be managed forward; 6) leverage promotion and networking opportunities where the community music organisation can engage in community forums where they can gain access to local business people; 7) develop a top line marketing or promotional statement about what it is the group does; and finally, 8) develop a ‘statement of assets’ (this requires the community music group to measure all its tangible assets, assets that would be laid out in a sponsorship proposal).

In turn, music-related businesses can: 1) complete an audit of all community music groups in their area; 2) develop a plan to actively engage local community music groups to network and leverage new and loyal customers; 3) act on the basis that these organisations have the potential to further develop their brand awareness beyond the community music group’s membership to other supporters and audiences; 4) act on the basis that any support their business offers can include either/or cash or in-kind support; 5) leverage their involvement with community music groups in ways that demonstrates their commitment to music and music-making more broadly; 5) develop a sponsorship checklist and rationale on which to base their decisions regarding partnerships and sponsorship; and 6) plan their sponsorship/partnership on the basis that for every dollar spent in direct sponsorship a further dollar can be allocated to maximising the potential of the arrangement.

While the focus of most community music activities is local by definition, it is also worth considering links to other community groups in the area, as well as in the rest of Australia and abroad,
in order to exchange approaches to networking, advocacy, pedagogy, and practical aspects of community music activities.

PRACTICE AND PEDAGOGY

DYNAMIC MUSIC-MAKING

Much community music has a focus on process (engagement) rather than performance (with its striving for a narrow definition of excellence); it is important to negotiate the creative tension or mere frustration such dual orientation implies.

Although the two can never be fully separated, community music needs to be responsive to the ambitions, needs and possibilities of the participants above the tastes and ambitions of the facilitator. Of all musical activities, community music has one of the most direct feedback mechanisms: if people do not feel engaged, they stay away.

In order to ensure that practitioners are aware of the cumulative experience and diverse approaches to community music, it is desirable to develop a print or online ‘handbook’ for community music in Australia, for instance by updating Cahill’s (1998) manual for community musicians.

ENGAGING PEDAGOGY AND FACILITATION

While it is relatively easy to embrace the idea of a predominantly ‘organic’ and ‘process oriented’ pedagogy, putting this into practice in often challenging circumstances is not a sinecure. While much can be (and is) learned on the job; it is worth investigating whether university or other post-secondary training with a strong connection to actual practice is viable.

Further study into the pedagogic styles of community music is worth undertaking. Community music activities can provide music educators working in schools with models of a range of teaching practices, which can connect to a wide diversity of learning styles, especially in socially and culturally diverse environments.
Music educators working in schools (who tend to have formal education qualifications) can provide models of formalised teaching practices for community music. Both sides of the ‘divide’ have much to offer each other in this respect. Some specific pedagogic issues that relate to community music (but often do not apply in schools) mean that facilitators in community music groups have skills and knowledge that many school based music educators have not had the opportunity to develop.

Narrowing this gap can improve the credibility, authority and position on the job market for community music workers, and create a basis for a more equal school-community dialogue.

**LINKS TO SCHOOL**

In order for the connections between schools and community music to reach their full potential, and bridge the perceived gap between the practices of music educators in schools and community music facilitators, we recommend the development of templates for contracts, protocols, and a code of conduct.

Music educators in schools can be encouraged to consider ways in which local community music activity can assist in curriculum implementation. They can, for example, provide teaching content; allow access to ensembles for student performance opportunities; and link to topics being studied, such as music with a specific cultural background.

Likewise, community music performers/facilitators can be encouraged to consider ways of integrating activity with school performance schedules. Finally, community music performers/facilitators and school administrators can be encouraged to consider the shared use of school buildings and equipment by community music groups.

To ensure the success of such ventures, it is wise to consider which models for community-school music links already exist, such as those outlined in this report and other collaborations such as regional conservatoires in NSW and schools in the provision of...
CHAPTER 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

studio teachers; ensembles; specialised tutors; accompanists;
group entries in eisteddfodau; organisation of public performances;
liaison with local councils and other organisations; access to venues
and facilities; and provision of administration staff and trained
events managers.

* 

Some of the recommendations above are obviously aimed at practitioners,
others at cultural officers, policy makers, music educators or other
stakeholders. Many can be used and implemented at a local level. However,
the geographical spread and relative self-sufficiency of most community
music activities is considerable, and the research team has observed a
strong tendency to ‘reinvent the wheel.’ This causes a significant waste of
energy and resources, and fails to create the potential synergies in exchange
of experience, joint advocacy, and organisational know-how the practice
has to offer. Moreover, Sound Links has observed considerable interest
amongst community music practitioners and other stakeholders to learn
about the activities of similar organisations elsewhere.

Therefore, the key recommendation of this report is to initiate a community
music network in Australia, which connects and serves community music
facilitators across the country, and possibly with international colleagues.
Such a network could arrange meetings to exchange best practice, coordinate
advocacy and public visibility for community music, address legal issues
such as public liability, and make accessible contacts, information,
experiences and examples of broader interest through a dedicated portal.
Models for such organisations exist: in the UK, Sound Sense (www.
soundsense.org) has been highly successful for several decades now. Peak
organisations such as the Music Council of Australia, the Australian Music
Association, and the Australian Society for Music Education can play a key
role in such an effort, with additional roles for local and state governments,
and the post-secondary (TAFE and University) sector.

Implementing this and the other recommendations in a coordinated manner
over the next five years is likely to prove a high return investment in the
cultural life of this country, ensuring a sustained and growing engagement
with music by the wide range of communities in Australia.


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REFERENCES


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APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

DANDENONG RANGES

Karen Noonan  
DRCM

Mac Craig  
Composers Connect

Deirdre Murdoch  
Happy Wonderers

Ralph Holland  
Composers Connect

Upwey High Students  
Contemporary Voices

Rosie Burns  
Young Strings

Ranges Young Strings  
Rehearsal

Dandenong Ranges Orchestra  
Rehearsal

Upwey High  
Music Students

Carm Hogan  
Singing Teacher

Maggie Duncan  
Music School

Greg Holman  
Principal

Kieran Dennis  
Digital Music

DRMC Board  
Meeting

Norma Durmand  
DRMC Chair

Ross Farnell  
Burrinja Centre

John Collins  
Orchestra Director

Anne Elizabeth  
Orchestra Librarian
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

DANDEÑONG RANGES

Cath Russel & Stax
Attitude

Rachel Nendick
Attitude

Upwey High
Didgeridoo Students

Ferny Creek Primary
Music Students

Margaret Edwards
DRMC Parent

Daina Jefimous
Music School

Dr Swing Show Band
Rehearsal

Dr Swing Show Band
Focus Group

Monbulk Primary
Music Students

Ray Yates & Bev McAlister
Monbulk Principal

Bev & Kate McAlister
DRMC

Pat Sanders & Bev McAlister
Founders of the DRMC

Calvin Bowman
Composers Connect

Dion Teasdale
Shire of Yarra Ranges

Hilltop Singers
Rehearsal
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

ALBANY

Just Fiddling
Farmers’ Markets

Colin France
Uptown Music

Eric Wake
Wake’s Music

Julie Parish & Preston Clifton
Classical Music Shop

Dave Mann
Recipe for Jam

Recipe for Jam
Focus Group

Jeremy Jongsma & Nigel Bird
Recipe for Jam

Mick Vertigan
Choral Society

Patrick Elms
Organist

Ruth Vertigan
Choral Society

Yvette Elms
Wind Ensemble

Margaret Dickinson
Organist

Alison McCall
Choir Director

Recipe for Jam
Performance

Beverly Bird
Eisteddfod

Jenny Hipper
Eisteddfod

Maureen Kennedy
Eisteddfod

Jan Clifton
Eisteddfod

Albany Music Teachers
Focus Group

Daniel Martin
ASHS Student
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

ALBANY

Mike Hyder
Just Fiddling

Sheena Prince
ASHS

Albany Wind Ensemble
Focus Group

Ashlin & Louise McKenna
Suzuki Teachers

Lindsay O’Neill
Yakamia Primary

Tammy Flett
Youth Worker

Rod Vervest
PIAF

Jan Cook
Folk Club

John & Ruth Bush
Vicki & Robert Reynolds

Brass Band
Rehearsal

Geoff Waldeck
Music Teacher

Great Southern Grammar
Focus Group

Emma Luxton
HOD (Music)

Peter Welch
Principal

Albany Primary
Focus Group

ASHS Year 11
Focus Group

ASHS Year 12
Focus Group
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

ALBANY

Bethel Student

Bethel Student

Bethel Students

Brenda Ward
HOD (Music)

Bob Elms
Organist

Wind Ensemble
Rehearsal

Recipe for Jam
Focus Group

Mayor’s Civic Ceremony

MCLAREN VALE

Nobodies Drumming
Session

Sue Matena
Children’s Choir

Kylie Kain
Songwriter

Colin Minke
Principal
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

MCLAREN VALE

Tatachilla Troupe
Focus Group

Nicole Weepers
Music Teacher

John McFadyen
Local Council

Youth Workers
Focus Group

VOLT Youth
Informal jam session

Community Orchestra
Focus Group

Anne Lawson & Carolyn Colring
STARS

Lee James
Academy of Rock

Gordon family
Community musicians

Pipes & Drums
Focus Group

Pipes & Drums
Rehearsal

Focus group

music teacher

music student

local Council

volt youth

community orchestra

men’s chorus

community orchestra

st paul’s church musicians

Lee James

Academy of Rock

Gordon family

Community musicians

Pipes & Drums

Focus Group
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

MCLAREN VALE

Mark Matonti  
Primary Teacher

Andrew McDonald  
Music Teacher

Margaret Keath  
Farmers’ Markets Choir

Greg John & Chris Majoros  
Community Carols

Wendy Dyson  
String Teacher

NEETO/Youth Orchestra  
Rehearsal

Tatachilla College  
Focus Group

NEETO/Youth Orchestra  
Concert

Drought Family  
Community musicians

Youth Orchestra  
Focus Group

Marty Summers  
Community Radio

Coast & Vines  
Rehearsal

Coast & Vines  
Focus Group

Sonya Radford  
Conductor

Peter Thornton  
Folk Festival

Peter Harrison  
Instrument Repairer

Mark Delaine  
Conductor

Julie Howard  
ABC Presenter

SOUND LINKS
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

FAIRFIELD

Tiffany Lee-Shoy
Local Council

Peter Hope
Local Council

Stuart Vandegraaff
IGNITE program

JT, Darrell & Charles Lomu
South West Youth Musicians

St John’s Park High
Focus Group

Greg Thwaites
Music Teacher

Cambramatta High
Focus Group

Evan Yako
Real Rhythm Studio

Deena Khamas
Youth Settlement Worker

Robin Zirwanda
Assyrian Band, Azadoota

Cofochilex Chilean Group
Rehearsal

Smithfield West School
Focus Group

Heather Ale
Music & Dance Teacher

Robby Bell
FCC Indigenous Committee

Prairiewood High
Focus Group

Achire Family
Focus Group
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

FAIRFIELD

Uruguayan Drumming Rehearsal

Viet Joey’s Singing Group Rehearsal

Christian San Juan Youth Worker

Sladjana Hodzic Bosnian Women’s Choir

Fairfield Public School Focus Group

Lao Temple Musicians Focus Group

Brian Hughes & Phil Clarke Sydney West Singers

Marconi Choir Rehearsal

Sue French Principal

Fairfield High Focus Group

Melissa Xerri-Vella Action on Cue

Adrian Black & Cindy Fernandez Youth Music Festivals

SOUND LINKS
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

BORROLOOLA

Some photographic images have been omitted where participants have passed away, for cultural sensitivity reasons.

Justin Emmerton
Music Teacher

Geoff Perry
Principal

Maryanne Riley
Language Centre

Mavis Timothy
Yanyuwa

Linda Mc Dinny
Garrwa

Isa & Nancy Mc Dinny
Garrwa

Sam Jansa & Marc Joshi
Macarthur River Mine

Thelma Dixon
Garrwa

Elizabeth Lansen
Kudanji

Peter Callinan
Arts Centre

Borroolooa CEC - Secondary
Focus Group

Mr & Mrs Max Field
Local Church

Moira Johnston
Town Council

John Mason
Bachelor Institute

Alison Doyle
Mabunji

Jemima Miller
Yanyuwa

Rosie
Yanyuwa

Dinah
Yanyuwa

Liz Mackinlay
ATSISU
APPENDIX 1: THE SOUND LINKS PARTICIPANTS

BORROLOOLA

Benjamin Mc Dinny
Garrwa

Miriam Charlie
Arts Centre (Yanyuwa)

Harry Lansen
Gudanji

Borroloola CEC - Primary
Focus Group

Norman Kingsley

Barnabas Timothy
High Tide Band

Shaun Evans
High Tide Band

David K. Keighran

Gadrian Hoosan
Sandridge Band
Photographic images were not taken of the focus groups (run by Research Assistant Sarah Patrick) in order to not disturb the workshop proceedings.
APPENDIX 2: PILOT STUDY

QUEENSLAND YOUTH ORCHESTRAS—BRISBANE (JUNE 2007)

RATIONALE

In order to test the approach developed for Sound Links, the Research Team and Steering Committee agreed that a pilot study should be conducted. The aim was to gain experience with the methods of data collection (non-participant observation, focus groups, interviews with key stakeholders, and study of material by and about the organisation). It would also serve to gauge the range of possible approaches to conceptualising communities, from geographically, socially or ethnically defined ones to communities of interest or practice. For reasons of proximity to Schippers and Bartleet, and availability of sources and key players, it was decided to look at the out-of-school provisions for young players of Western classical music in Brisbane; in particular, at the Queensland Youth Orchestras (QYO).

DEFINING THE FIELD

During the planning and execution of this pilot, it soon became apparent that young people choosing to pursue practical studies in Western classical music form distinct ‘communities of interest’, which are not necessarily defined by a specific geographic location. These young people are drawn to ‘communities’, such as the QYO, or the Young Conservatorium, the Brisbane Regional Youth Orchestra and the State Honours Ensemble program, because they offer them the opportunity to actively participate in high-level ensemble playing with like-minded young musicians. Players feel drawn towards others who take the practical study of music seriously.

This concept of community is inline with current trends in the literature regarding communities of interest, or ‘communities of practice’. These are explained by Wood & Judikis (2002) as “a group of people who have a sense of common purpose(s) and/or interests(s) for which they assume mutual responsibility, who acknowledge their interconnectedness, who respect the individual differences among members, and who commit themselves to the well-being of each other and the integrity and well-being of the group” (p. 12). A community of interest, such as the QYO, then is one small part of a larger network of other communities which young musicians belong
to. As Bruhn (2005, p. 48) explains, contemporary communities are part of a series of networks of varying sizes, densities, and purposes that extend beyond a physical location. These networks are defined by the kinds and qualities of interpersonal ties between the people participating in them. The ways in which this particular community of interest then intersects with the complex network of different communities which operate in the young learner’s lives should be a consideration. This is not to say that a community of interest’s location is not important. Indeed, the heritage Old Museum Building in which the QYO is housed clearly plays a part in the community’s public image and weekly functioning. However, this is not a fundamental requirement for the existence of the QYO community; for instance, the QYO could technically be housed in a different location and still function in a relatively similar manner.

In terms of the QYO’s structural make-up, it currently has eight ensembles: three symphony orchestras, two concert bands, a junior string orchestra, a chamber orchestra and a big band. Each group has its own program of activities including rehearsals, tutorials, concerts, camps and tours. Each October, around 640 musicians audition for QYO before a panel of professional musicians and over 500 musicians are offered positions in orchestras. Performing members of QYO must re-audition for a place each year alongside new applicants. Fees range from $310 to $420 per annum, which is a modest fee compared to private tuition or the Young Conservatorium in Brisbane, but possibly prohibitive for some income groups. QYO employs three full-time staff including a General Manager and Administrator and Marketing Officer in addition to a part-time Venue Manager, seven part-time conductors and over 80 professional musicians employed casually as tutors, audition panel members, accompanists, competition judges and guest artists. The organisation relies heavily on the services of volunteers as orchestra managers, librarians, stage managers and for assistance with concerts, fundraising, the canteen, uniforms, auditions, camps, mail-outs and maintenance tasks.

**THE PILOT FINDINGS**

After studying publicly available material and a Masters’ Dissertation by Collett (2005) on the QYO, Bartleet made an elaborate plan to visit a wide range of activities involving young instrumentalists in the context of the QYO. This had to be downscaled considerably for practical reasons;
not all targeted students and facilitators were available for focus groups and interviews due to concert commitments, upcoming tours and school holidays. In the end, the research focused on the Queensland Youth Symphony (QYS), the Wind Symphony (WS), the Queensland Youth Orchestra 2 (QYO2), and the Junior String Ensemble (JSE).

*Sound Links* observed rehearsals of the Wind Symphony and Queensland Youth Symphony, the Wind Ensemble and concert of the Queensland Youth Orchestra 2. These proved to be solid rehearsals and performances. The student’s motivation for participation in these rehearsals largely seemed to centre on musical factors. Having said this, the students did identify a social side to the QYO, which mainly occurred during short breaks (although the students seemed to primarily socialise within their instrument sections), on camps and ensemble tours. This sense of community appeared to primarily work within ensembles, and not the organisation as a whole; for example, Bartleet noted that very few players and conductors from other ensembles were in attendance at the QYO2 concert during fieldwork. In terms of learning and teaching approaches, Schippers and Bartleet observed that the methods employed were somewhat conventional and one-way. For example, as is customary in most Western orchestras, the conductors rarely asked the group questions, or relinquished their batons to step away and allow the ensemble to learn for themselves.

Three formal focus group discussions were conducted (with a total of 15 participants aged between 11-20 years): one with five members of the WS, and one with seven members of the JSE, and one with three members of the QYO2. This proved to be a very appropriate format, especially since all participants appeared to feel comfortable expressing themselves verbally. The most striking outcomes of these discussions included a sense of community between the members of the ensembles, in spite of relatively little social interaction between them during rehearsals, and the fact that they did not know one another prior to joining the orchestra. A factor identified by the students from single-sex schools is the opportunity to meet and socialise with members of the opposite sex.
The participants also spoke about a strong sense of community in a shared pursuit of musical excellence. The students avidly described the repertoire at QYO as being more enjoyable to play, because it extended their skills and offered more variety in terms of composers, and so on. Most players contrasted this to their experience in school music ensembles, where they often feel under-challenged. The general consensus between the students was that their school ensemble programs do not cater for students who want to excel in music-making. While many acknowledged the encouragement of individual music teachers, they explained that their needs are not being met in many of their school programs. This is one of the key factors they would like to see improved in school programs.

The students identified little in terms of musical, social, pedagogical and other transferable skills that could inspire synergies between schools and this community, beyond the obvious connections that already exist. This is not an uncommon situation; as Curruthers (2005) notes “Although fluidity between communities and schools seems ideal for both constituencies, this does not always occur. A school may function autonomously so that it and the community in which it is located […] “bypass” one another. Conversely, it may be the community that rejects the school’s efforts at outreach. Either way, it is the school that suffers most. The community may remain unscathed by a school’s insularity but the reverse is rarely true” (p. 3). This is an issue worth considering in light of the Sound Links research.

Formal interviews were conducted with two of the key facilitators of QYO: Dr Peter Morris, the conductor of the WS, and Mr John Curro, the conductor of the QYS and Artistic Director of the entire operation, and the General Manager Geoff Rosbrook. Bartleet undertook informal interviews with the Marketing Manager, and administrators and librarians of the WS, WE and QYO2. Curro provided a historical overview of the QYO in the Brisbane community and explained how it was established more than forty years ago to compensate for the lack of opportunities in school music programs. It is now the State’s major orchestral training and performance organisation for young musicians aged 10 to 23. He acknowledged that while the QYO has continued to expand since its establishment, the nature of how young learners engage with the QYO and how the QYO is engaging with other communities have radically changed. Morris spoke about the learning dynamics and opportunities provided by a community such as
the QYO, drawing on his experiences also teaching in schools. While the QYO’s interactions with other music communities and schools appear to be relatively minimal, Curro, Rosbrook and Morris spoke about the need for greater synergy and understanding between the different communities that young musicians divide their time between. They also spoke about the leadership provided by the facilitators of the groups and their importance in the overall success of this community music program.

**Summary**

This modest pilot led to a number of important preliminary observations that informed the previous six case studies of *Sound Links*, which ranged from very practical to more philosophical considerations. The QYO pilot study has shown that not all musical communities are defined by geographical, social or ethnic factors. It also alerted the research team to the fact that they were likely to find many vibrant communities that are linked by shared interests rather than shared location in their subsequent fieldwork. This pilot also highlighted issues relating to the nature, value, complexity, and problems associated with musical communities of interest, and their interactions with other communities, such as schools. When community music initiatives mature over years and become increasingly institutionalised, the dynamics of their interaction with the environment may change. It has also shown that facilitators and support staff play a crucial role in the organisation and sense of community at the QYO.
APPENDIX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Facilitator’s questions

- Could you briefly describe your involvement with CM in [Albany]?
- Could you describe your organisation? What demographics do the participants represent?
- How would you describe the approach and philosophy of your organisation? How are the programs structured?
- What do you consider to be the critical success factors in your organisation?
- What are the challenges facing your organisation?
- What learning and teaching methods do you use when working with your participants?
- Are you involved in other music activities outside this organisation (say for example, in schools)?
- What factors make [Albany] such a vibrant region for music-making?
- Where do you perceive the gaps, and where do you see the connections are between your organisation and more formal school-based activities in [Albany]?
- Where do you perceive the gaps, and where do you see the connections are between your organisation and the broader community in [Albany]?

Teacher’s questions

- Could you describe your role at your school?
- Could you describe your school community? What demographics do your students represent?
- How would you describe the approach and philosophy of the programs at your school? How are the programs structured?
- What do you consider to be the critical success factors of your school programs?
- What are the challenges facing your school programs?
- What learning and teaching methods do you use when working with your students?
- Are you involved in other music activities outside your school?
- What factors make [Albany] such a vibrant region for music-making?
APPENDIX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Where do you perceive the gaps, and where do you see the connections are between your organisation and more formal school-based activities in [Albany]?
- Where do you perceive the gaps, and where do you see the connections?

Focus group questions
- Could you describe the different types of music activities you’re involved with at school and in the community?
- In what ways are these activities different? In what ways are they similar? (In terms of learning, expectations, the way that they’re organised, and so on).
- What aspects of these activities do you relate to most, or enjoy the most, or find the most useful? Why do you think that’s the case?
- What motivates you, personally and musically, in these settings?
- Do you transfer the skills that you pick up in each of these settings and use them in others? How?
- Do your different music activities ever interact? If so, how? If not, how do you think they could?
- What challenges do you face as a musician in this setting?
APPENDIX 4: ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre Griffith University in collaboration with the Music Council of Australia, the Australian Music Association, the Australian Society for Music Education, and the University of Sydney.

**Sound Links Survey**

**Sound Links Information**

Sound Links is an ARC Linkage project that examines the dynamics of community music in Australia, and the models it represents for informal music learning and teaching. It focuses on a selection of vibrant musical communities across the country, and explores their potential for complementarity and synergy with music in schools.

The purpose of this survey is to gain an overview of what is happening around the country in community music. It also aims to find out more about the ways in which community music activities are connecting (or possibly not connecting) with music in schools.
Please return this survey to:
Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartleet
Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, Griffith University
P O Box 3428, South Bank QLD 4101
AUSTRALIA

Please only fill out the sections that relate to your involvement with music. Feel free to leave out questions that are not applicable to your experiences.

Research Team: Professor Huib Schippers; Associate Professor Peter Dunbar-Hall; Dr Richard Letts; Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartleet
Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University
Phone: (07) 3735 6249
Email: b.bartleet@griffith.edu.au

An online version of this survey is available at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=i3IF6bjB2Ch0J_2brUnDVkhQ_3d_3d

Please only fill out the survey once (either in hard copy or online).

A survey information sheet will be distributed with this survey.

Please retain the information sheet for your reference.
Information about you

1. What is your age?
   - □ Under 29 years
   - □ 30-39 years
   - □ 40-49 years
   - □ 50-60+ years

2. Do you have any formal qualifications, or could you describe your areas of expertise (in music or other fields)?

3. What relevant associations do you belong to?

4. In what capacity are you involved with music?
   - □ School teacher
   - □ University lecturer
   - □ Community music facilitator
   - □ Community music practitioner
   - □ Professional musician
   - □ Arts or music administrator
   - □ Music therapist
   - □ Other

5. What is the postcode of where you are involved with music activities?

6. Which of the following community music activities (if any) are you involved with?
   - □ Traditional Indigenous music
   - □ Contemporary Indigenous music
   - □ Choirs
   - □ Bands
APPENDIX 4: ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONS

☐ Orchestras
☐ Musical theatre
☐ Percussion ensembles
☐ World music (please specify in the box below)
☐ Pop groups
☐ Jazz ensembles
☐ Country groups
☐ Folk groups
☐ Composition/song writing
☐ Online music groups
☐ Other / Further details

7. How many years (if any) have you been involved in community music?
☐ 1-5 years
☐ 6-10 years
☐ 11-15 years
☐ 16+ years

8. Could you briefly describe the most striking community music activities, outside schools, you have been involved with or observed?

9. What do you consider to be the critical success factors in these community music settings?

☐ Support from community leaders
☐ Support from the broader community
☐ Corporate connections and support
☐ Political support
☐ Networking with local organisations
☐ Highly skilled facilitators
☐ Inspired leadership from an individual
☐ Sufficient funding
☐ Effective PR
☐ Careful planning
☐ Attention to sustainability
(Multi)cultural sensitivity
Location, venue and facilities
Sufficient equipment
Choice of repertoire/style/genre
Other (please specify)

10. What learning and teaching methods have you observed in these community music settings (consider for instance, one-way instructional teaching, peer learning, collaborative processes, use of notation &/visual aids, digital support, emphasis on tradition or innovation, focus on process or product)?

School music

11. Which of the following school music activities (if any) are you involved with?

- Traditional Indigenous music
- Contemporary Indigenous music
- Classroom music
- Choirs
- Bands
- Orchestras
- Musical theatre
- Percussion ensembles
- World music (please specify in the box below)
- Pop groups
- Jazz ensembles
- Country groups
- Folk groups
- Composition/song writing
- Online music groups
- Other / Further details

12. How many years (if any) have you been involved in these music education activities?

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
13. Could you briefly describe the most striking school music activities you have been involved with (in terms of participants, facilitators, repertoire, approach or potential connections outside the school)?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

14. What do you consider to be the critical success factors in these school music settings?

☐ Support from the school
☐ Support from parents and the broader community
☐ Highly skilled educators
☐ Inspired leadership from an individual
☐ Links to the community
☐ Links to out-of-school activities
☐ Sufficient funding
☐ Careful planning
☐ Attention to sustainability
☐ (Multi)cultural sensitivity
☐ Sufficient facilities & equipment
☐ Clear curriculum
☐ Successful pedagogical models
☐ Synergy between classroom and instrumental programs
☐ Choice of repertoire/style/genre
☐ Other (please specify)

15. What learning and teaching methods have you observed in these school music settings (consider for instance, one-way instructional teaching, peer learning, collaborative processes, use of notation &/visual aids, digital support, emphasis on tradition or innovation, focus on process or product)?
Connections between community music and school music activities

16. If you are involved in a project that has connections between school music and the community, do you believe these connections are reaching their full potential?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, how? If no, how could they be improved?

________________________________________

________________________________________

Further information

17. If you are prepared to offer more advice to the Research Team, please add your contact details here.

Name:

Company/school/institution:

Email address:

Postal address:

City/Town:

State:

Postal code:

Country:
APPENDIX 5: FULL ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 29 years</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-60+ years</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question | 196 |
skipped question  | 5   |

FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS OR AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Out of the 194 people who responded to this question the following percent of these 194 people noted that they had completed studies to the respective levels. In cases where people cited multiple qualifications, the highest award was counted.

- 54% Graduate level studies (Bachelor, honours, grad dip)
- 25% Post-graduate level studies (Masters, PhD)
- 8% Diploma level studies (Dip, A.Mus etc)
- 8% Noted industry/practical experiences
- 5% No formal qualification or gave an unclear response by simply saying ‘yes’

RELEVANT ASSOCIATIONS

Out of the 181 people who responded to this question the following list of associations represents the most common affiliations (1 being the most common, 20 being the least common) that respondents cited.

1. ASME (81)
2. AUSTA (28)
3. Music Council of Australia (MCA) (26)
4. ANCA (16)
5. ABODA (15)
6. ISME (12)
7. KMEIA (9)
8. ANTAS (6)
9. WACOT (6)
10. APRA (5)
11. AMC (5)
12. AMTA (4)
13. MSA (4)
15. AARME (3)
16. Australian Choral Association (3)
17. IAJE (3)
18. MTAQ (2)
19. IKS (2)
20. AMA (2)
+ Various others

*number in (brackets) denotes how many people cited affiliation
APPENDIX 5: FULL ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

THE CAPACITY IN WHICH THEY ARE INVOLVED WITH MUSIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School teacher</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University lecturer</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community music facilitator</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community music practitioner</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional musician</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music therapist</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts or music administrator</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>174</td>
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<tr>
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<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commonly occurring involvement that respondents acknowledged in the ‘other’ section were as follows:
- Private teacher (most common)
- Researcher/research assistant
- Conductor
- TAFE music educator
- Amateur musician/entertainer
- Music examiner

THE LOCATION WHERE THEY ARE INVOLVED WITH MUSIC ACTIVITIES

Responses were received from every state and territory throughout Australia. However, the bulk of respondents came from Qld, Vic, NSW, WA and SA.
APPENDIX 5: FULL ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

THE COMMUNITY MUSIC ACTIVITIES THEY ARE INVOLVED WITH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Indigenous music</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Choirs</strong></td>
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<td>Bands</td>
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<td>Orchestras</td>
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<td>Musical theatre</td>
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<td>Percussion ensembles</td>
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<td>World music (please specify in the box below)</td>
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<td>Pop groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jazz ensembles</td>
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<td>Country groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folk groups</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition/song writing</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line music groups</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The types of ‘world music’ that people listed were:
- Gamelan
- Chinese music
- Celtic fiddling
- German choral music
- Klezmer music (eastern European)
- Bagpipe and drum band (Scottish)

In order of most common to least common, the ‘other’ significant responses that were listed were:
- Church music (9)
- Chamber/small classical ensembles (9)
- Festival/group organisation (7)
- Dance (3)
- Education (3)
- Small vocal groups (2)
- Music therapies/music counselling (2)

**NUMBER OF YEARS THEY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY MUSIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
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<td>11-15 years</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+ years</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 156

skipped question 45

**DESCRIPTIONS OF THE MOST STRIKING COMMUNITY MUSIC ACTIVITIES, OUTSIDE SCHOOLS, THEY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH OR OBSERVED**

Outside of school activities the majority of respondents suggested that participation in choral and orchestral activities were the most striking forms of community music engagement.

32% of respondents mentioned engagement with choral music and vocal ensemble performance. The types of engagement varied; however, singing and conducting were the most common among these. The styles and repertoire of choirs was also mixed. Church choirs, community choirs and youth choirs were the most popular types of choirs. However, some respondents also mentioned involvement with jazz choirs, Indigenous choirs, gospel choirs, German choirs and elderly choirs.

30% of respondents mentioned engagement with orchestral music and chamber ensemble performance. The type of engagement varied between playing, conducting and observing; however, it appears that both playing in and managing/forming/conducting these types ensembles were most common. The types of orchestra/chamber groups varied. Youth and community (regional, city and state) orchestras were most commonly cited.
In response to this question, the following list of activities highlights the other types of community music involvement mentioned:

- 20% noted involvement in band music activities (concert, brass, guitar and rock)
- 7% noted involvement in music camps
- 7% noted a positive experience though various types of involvement in music festivals
- 6% noted involvement in musical theatre

The following selection of useful and positive responses to this question highlights the variety of experiences and the value that respondents place upon community music activities. Among the various responses, respondents cited ‘a sense of community’, ‘personal joy, satisfaction and fun’, the ability to mix with people of various ages and cultures’, ‘the formation of friendships’ and ‘an opportunity for socialising’ as reasons they value community music participation. A selection of direct quotes below exemplifies this:

“I have been involved with community Music practice for 16 years through the Bondi Pavilion, initially as a participant and then as a facilitator and practitioner...We cater for all ages and demographics from pre-school, primary aged, youth, emerging artists, seniors, multicultural and people with disabilities. I think one of the most valuable points for me is to see the look on peoples faces as they create and are a part of music-making—people who never considered themselves musical and discover the joys of working together and tapping in to their musical potential”.

“What I find most striking about music outside of schools is the age mix. It isn’t just that such activities are voluntary, but that people are able to join with groups of musicians who are at the right standard to stimulate their work, move them forward, and extend their interests. Age is usually irrelevant, whereas school music, in my experience, is largely age-dominated”.

“For me personally being a member of a community choir (Allegri Singers) is an intellectual challenge as well as a positive spiritual/
emotional experience...As part of my work as migrant support worker, I started a small women’s choir for migrant women a few years ago. The women are from diverse cultural backgrounds and so we take turns in learning (easy) songs from each other’s cultures. None of us have had any musical training, and we have no musical leader, something that can be frustrating at times. However, we enjoy each other’s company and also practice enough to be able to perform occasionally at local multicultural functions”.

“Seeing very elderly people play unconventional instruments and tell stories about music in their lives”.
## School Music Activities They Are Involved With

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Indigenous music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contemporary Indigenous music</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom music</strong></td>
<td><strong>61.7%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Choirs</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bands</td>
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<td>Orchestras</td>
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<td>Musical theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percussion ensembles</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>World music</td>
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<td>Pop groups</td>
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<td>Jazz ensembles</td>
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<td>Country groups</td>
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<td>Folk groups</td>
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<td>Composition/song writing</td>
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<td><strong>86</strong></td>
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</table>

In the ‘other’ section participants commonly noted involvement in the following activities:
- One-on-one teaching (both instrumental and voice)
- Chamber music ensembles

It may also be useful to note that one respondent mentioned working as a braille music instructor while another mentioned school-based music therapy work.
The ‘world music’ activities that were specified were as follows:
- Celtic music
- Indonesian (Balinese Gamelan)
- African music

Respondents noted a broad variety of school musical activities that they regarded as ‘most striking’. The most commonly mentioned type of activity was choral singing, followed by band/smaller ensemble playing, followed by orchestral playing, followed by musical theatre productions. School music camps also appear to be significant with numerous respondents noting their value. And to lesser a degree cross-year level activities as well as activities that exposed students to professional music-makers and communities outside the school setting were also noted.

Some of the less common, yet striking responses to this question were:

“Students writing their own opera and producing it. Involved composition, technical and artistic direction, costuming, orchestrating songs, conducting, producing, stage sets, lighting, programmes, publicity”.

“Annual Rock Concerts and Album Launch—original works created, arranged, performed, recorded, duplicated and marketed by students. Performers assessed on location at the gigs they have organised”.

APPENDIX 5: FULL ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

NUMBER OF YEARS THEY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MUSIC EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
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<td>21.6%</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
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<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+ years</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
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</table>

Answered question 125
Skipped question 76

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

COMMUNITY MUSIC SUCCESS FACTORS

Inspired leadership, careful planning and the availability of venues and facilities were the most commonly cited success factors. These success factors were followed closely by the choice of repertoire, the skill level...
of facilitators and access to funding (see above). However, in the ‘other’ section of question 9 respondents strongly reiterated the need for more funding, sponsorship and voluntary support. In some cases, respondents contextualised the need for funding and other types of support within arguments pertaining to social well-being. This is exemplified in the remarks below:

“Greater support from community leaders in all the Arts areas would be most helpful as would much greater corporate sponsorship. What people do not seem to acknowledge is that community music in all its forms produces results through cooperation not competition. This is a most desirable outcome in the light of the increasing violence within our communities and should be both recognised and supported by the community at large”.

“The sponsorship of local organisations is paramount to the success of these events and necessary for them to continue, as are the selection of appropriate repertoire in the events. The encouragement of our youth is at the forefront of these types of events, so it’s important that they continue to exist in the local communities”.

Some argued that the arts are not valued as highly as other social activities such as sport, while one respondent suggested that the lack of funding for community music activities relates the value placed upon such activities: “No funding, no publicity, no support = no community participation or value put upon the activity”.

“Fun”, as well as a “sense of belonging and social contact”, “com[ing] together for a common aim” and the desire to feel that one is “contributing” and “achiev[ing] their goals and aspirations in music” were also highly regarded as critical success factors in community music-making. Responses of this nature suggest that community music participants place considerable amount of value upon musical participation as a means of creating and fostering community connections.
Other issues that were strongly reiterated in the ‘other’ section to question 9 were matters of leadership, successful planning, long-term commitment and goals as well as access to and choice of repertoire. Thus reinforcing the most commonly cited responses in the table above.

**Learning and Teaching Methods**

**They have observed in these community music settings**

While many respondents acknowledged that they have observed all of the above methods, it appears that the most common methods are one-way instructional teaching and peer or collaborative learning. Central to many of the responses was the need for the musical director/conductor to be flexible, “responsive to participants needs” and to acknowledge that in some cases skill levels differ so notation based learning may at times need to be complemented by ear training. A focus on the process, the enjoyment of learning and the social factors of playing music together were also noted.

“Our current conductor is particularly good—I think this is because he recognises that the players are there because they enjoy music and there is a big social component to the orchestra, but at the same time, when we do concerts we want them to be good”.

“Development of music ‘communities of inquiry’ that support reflective practice and learning by doing. Inter-generational sharing of knowledge and skills is also important”.

“Explicit teaching of activities and ideas that can be carried over in other contexts by participants—not just by an ‘expert’ leader as learner - responsive to participant’s needs, interest and strengths and open to learning from other’s collaborative teaching with a focus on process, and on participant’s interests and strengths. Explicit teaching that shares the teaching objectives with all participants in clear language”.

APPENDIX 5: FULL ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS
School support was the standout response when respondents were asked to identify the critical success factors in school music activities. This was followed by support from parents and the broader community, the skill level of educators, access to sufficient facilities and equipment, careful planning, choice of repertoire, inspired leadership and sufficient funding (see table above). In the ‘other’ responses to question 14 there were no standout factors identified. Rather, the respondent’s answers were multiple and varied. In no particular order, the following list highlights the other critical success factors identified. The majority of which were already present in the table above.

- Students’ willingness to engage
- Dedication and skill level of ensemble director/teacher
- Links to the community
- Support from school administration
• Appropriateness of repertoire
• Performance opportunities (not mentioned above)

LEARNING AND TEACHING METHODS THEY HAVE OBSERVED IN THESE SCHOOL MUSIC SETTINGS

The most common response to this question was “all of the above” or “most of the above” thus indicating that one-way instructional teaching, peer or collaborative learning, use of notation and visual aids, digital support, emphasis on tradition or innovation, focus on process or product were all present in school music settings to varying degrees. However, among these, respondents noted that one-way instructional learning and peer or collaborative leaning were most common. Respondents also mentioned inspiration, collaboration, determination, encouragement and esteem-building in their answers. Thus suggesting that respondents not only value high-level musicality and skilling but that they also acknowledge the extra-musical outcomes that a successful music education can foster. The follow selection of responses may be useful in arguing this:

“As a music tutor I think it is important to provide information and at the same time to experiment collaboratively with making it work. Participants should feel largely that they are ‘teaching themselves’.”

“Instruction based on empowering the students to trust their own musical voice, stories and creative/intuitive sense”.

“Student ownership. Focus on the process of learning but with a product at the end that they value and of which they are proud. Flexibility and negotiation combined with open ended tasks that allow students to stretch themselves and shine. It needs skilled ‘masters’ to teach skills and techniques preferably one on one but they also need small group experiences as well as large ensemble work. School camps, tours and excursions that give ‘real life’ experience and ‘bonding’ opportunities are highly valued by the students”.

224 SOUND LINKS
CLASSROOM TEACHING METHODS
COMPAred TO COMMUNITY MUSIC TEACHING METHODS

In both cases respondents noted that one-way instructional learning followed by peer or collaborative leaning were most common. Similarly, across both examples respondents stressed critical success factors that were not directly related to musical learning or formal pedagogical methods such as:

- Social factors
- Personal satisfaction and self-esteem building
- Focus on process, enjoyment and inspiration

While in both cases some respondents mentioned that they had observed and/or valued a focus on product, in most cases this perspective was balanced by suggestions that product-orientated outcomes are best achieved by inspiring and well-managed rehearsals that are engaging and meaningful for the participants. Generally, responses relating to the school environment demonstrated a greater emphasis on product outcomes than community music practice. However, the differences were marginal.

While use of visual aids and/or digital support in musical instruction were mentioned in the case of both school and community making, this does not appear to be a prominent feature among either setting. Most accounts of visual/digital learning support were mentioned in regards to school music settings and related to the use of instructional CDs/DVDs, the use of digital software (i.e. Sibelius) and digital support in performance environments (while this wasn’t specified one would assume respondents are referring to sound reinforcement). One school-based respondent did mention the use of “tactile and electronic/digital communication aids for students with sensory impairment (CCTV; Braille embosser; laptop computers; Perkins brailler)”. While another pointed out that “one-way instructional teaching (in ensemble settings mostly), peer learning, visual aids (for example, powerpoint presentations, on-line learning), digital support (for example, Sibelius, loop-based software), emphasis on a combination of traditional and innovative repertoire, focus on process” was most common.
With regards to the issue of traditional vs. innovative teaching methods, in both cases the response to this was vague. Many people acknowledged a combination of both traditional and innovative methods without specifying the methods themselves. However, it can be generally gleaned that traditional methods were interpreted as notation or score based learning, while innovative methods were interpreted as the use of digital aids and in some cases a focus on popular repertoire. As such there was a slightly higher account of ‘innovative methods’ in the school setting than in the community music setting.

**Are your school collaborations reaching their full potential?**

![Bar chart showing responses to the question.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Answered question | 70 |
| Skipped question  | 131 |

**Important issues that impair these kinds of school/community collaborations and recommendations made by respondents who answered NO to this question**

*Commonly cited issues*

- Restrictive school timetables and a general lack of time (very common).
- Lack of resources relating to funding, venues and volunteers (very common).
- Lack of school teacher’s willingness to engage in collaborative projects.
• Schools placing less value on community music-making as a site of music education. (e.g. “Schools don’t give their students credit for the plethora of musical activities that the students undertake outside school”).
• Schools placing less value on music education. In comparison to sport, schools are less likely to acknowledge the importance of music activities.

Other issues
• The level of musicianship in schools is low. Schools “do not challenge their students”.
• Parents do not encourage their children to participate in music activities.
• Many students who take up music in primary school are discouraged in later year levels as academic goals become more significant.
• Community music groups need better organisational skills and need to consider the time it takes to arrange the logistics of extra-curricula activities within schools.
• Lack of support across school, governments and industry.

Recommendations
• Schedule meetings (a few times a year) between school and community music facilitators to plan timetables and agree on outcomes.
• “More time for teachers to plan these activities. List of community organisations that schools could access (especially on the local area)”

Beneficial school/community collaborations and recommendations made by respondents who answered **YES** to this question.

There was no unified positive response that can be identified as a key success factor in this area. Listed below are the only positive responses to this question (4 positive responses out of 59 total responses).

“Artists in residence sponsored by a local environmental action group worked with students to compose several original vocal works which were recorded and the CDs sold throughout the community”.
The Music in Communities Awards (MIC), 2007 is the inaugural national scheme to recognise and reward people and programs that have been most successful in building music-making activities in their community. In June 2008, eight community music organisations were awarded top honours in the inaugural Awards which received 225 entries from around Australia. They were selected from a shortlist of 28 entries. This report investigates the themes that are common to these successful programs.

**INTRODUCTION**

One of the organisations short-listed in the Music in Community awards claims recent Australian studies indicate that three out of four children in government primary schools in Australia have no access to music programs. Nothing could highlight more the need for community music organisations to exist, but why are music programs important? While music education literature may focus on the research that claims learning music aids concentration, language, reading and cross-disciplinary skills, the community music organisations’ responses in these awards concentrate on enhanced social outcomes, like strengthening relationships and on personal development, like building self-esteem. Evidently, music is empowering. Amongst the organisations there is a stated belief in the power of music-making to strengthen people’s self image, personal skills, relationships with others, and ability to engage in community life. In other words, community music-making fosters life skills and music is powerful as a community builder, cultivating community identity, breaking down barriers, and promoting cultural awareness (of music cultures and of ethnic cultures) and cultural exchange. These underlying themes are present in the following responses:
What is the purpose (goal) of the program?

The question of purpose was answered mostly in terms of goals. Across the 28 short-listed organisations there is a strikingly straightforward division in goals. Of the 28, 13 organisations clearly aim to bring music to the community and engage people in music-making for the sake of music itself. The desired music outcomes were expressed in terms of the experience of music-making such as “participate in, perform, engage, encourage or build musical skills, make music, run a quality music festival...”. The winner of best all-encompassing program, the Dandenong Ranges Music Council, aims to create opportunities for people of all ages to listen to, learn, participate in and perform music. And Leichardt Express Chorus, the best community outreach program, aims to promote choral music to children. While excellence in music-making is not explicitly pursued as a goal, excellence in learning and teaching is.

Amongst these organisations there is a commonality of “taking music to the people”, as expressed by the Cairns Municipal Band, and there is virtually no mention of non-musical goals. This is only surprising when compared to the goals of the other 15 organisations. Across these 15, the goals have a commonality of “bringing people together” and concentrate on promoting music-making for health and well-being, and building self-esteem on a personal level, and strengthening relationships within and between communities on a macro level. Essentially non-musical goals are being achieved through making music and expressed in ways such as to inspire change, to empower people, to heal, to strengthen community connectedness, to build relationships... . One organisation, the Rhythm Project expressly uses music “to make change” and focuses on world poverty.

Many programs clearly want to bring about positive change and hope in the lives of people. Community music making is overwhelmingly stated to help disadvantaged, disabled, the young, the indigenous, the old and there is emphasis on participating rather than being entertained. Givers are receivers.

Another scenario shows an organisation setting up primarily with the purpose of having a festival to bring a community together in time of hardship, such as the Mungindi Music Festival’s aim to “boost town morale”
in a time of severe drought. Here, the organisers realise however, that the festival not only successfully did that but also successfully increased “enormously” the number of people wanting to learn and play music.

‘Outreach’, a term that typically refers to connecting people, ideas and practices, is a clear underpinning of the majority of the programs, but the term in some cases refers to connecting non-professional musicians with professional musicians and in other cases it refers to connecting people within a community, connecting individuals with their broader community or connecting a community with another community.

There is also an underlying theme that community music-making does not serve the purpose of entertainment, with some organisations actually stating this (Hand-in-Hand states that the aim is “not to entertain others but to engage”). At the same time, music-making is fun, with many organisations stressing the fun and stress-free environment they are able to provide.

A more detailed analysis of the stated purposes across the 28 organisations revealed 100 explicit goals, many of which were repeatedly mentioned. These are listed in Appendix I.

**WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE COMMUNITIES SERVED BY THESE ORGANISATIONS?**

The profile of a community is complex, but clearly the organisation serves a community that is characterised by a need, with musical involvement in some manner fulfilling the need.

There is a clear sense of community being defined by geography or location (Dandenong Ranges Music Council, Mungindi Music Festival, Charters Towers Country Music Inc, Geelong Concert Band, Brunswick Women’s Choir). Some are urban (Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra and Brisbane and Alice Springs for example); some urban centres reach out to regional and remote communities and even across states to connect with like-minded or needy communities. On the whole, most are regional communities being served by an urban centre.

The goals and missions of organisations reveal something about the nature of the target community: indigenous, culturally diverse, disadvantaged, marginalised, isolated, young and old. Other communities can simply be identified by the wish to be involved in
music-making and include young and old with all ranges of musical abilities – from none to expert.

The community is characteristically amateur however, professional musicians are involved in teaching, leading master-classes and workshops, and especially in mentoring. In a minority of cases, schools are involved. Eight of the 28 organisations work with schools. In all of these cases, it is the community organisation that supports music in the school by providing an additional program (such as Kool Skools providing contemporary songwriting, and Tangentyere providing a drumming program); an entire music program such as in the case of The Song Room supporting remote schools where there is no funding for music programs; or the means for collaboration (Sweet Freedom). One organisation, Hand-in-Hand, supports school music teachers in taking their music-making out into the wider community.

Something about the nature of the community is also revealed in the venues mentioned. The bush, peoples’ homes, health centres, jails, hospitals, aged care facilities, indigenous centres, non-specific community centres, commercial sound studios, schools (though the absence of schools is more notable), and in one case a Conservatorium (Orange) and another, a university (ANU).

**What is the nature of the organisation?**

The structure of organisations is not fully revealed in the responses though a significant number describe themselves as not-for-profit organisations receiving government and or private funding. Many provide free services to members in order to be inclusive and accessible to the target group. Significant is the presence of Health and Community Organisations as instigators (such as Nganampa Health Council, an Aboriginal owned health service, and Music Together, run by a Child, Youth and Family Care agency) providing administration, resources and staff of a non-musical nature (eg health workers). In these cases, musical expertise is hired or volunteered, either from the community or from professional organisations, to provide the teaching.

More often than not, the instigation of the program comes from the community, highlighting the absence of schools as instigators. Only one organisation reveals a religious affiliation.
WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS IN COMMUNITY MUSIC?
While many programs target youth and disadvantaged (including homeless, aged, refugees, addictions, mental disorders, physical disabilities), there is also a significant dedication to all ages, specific indigenous communities and diversity in ethnic background. Only one organisation mentions that it is exclusive to one ethnic group (Bosnian). Some programs are exclusively all women/girls but none mention that they are exclusively all men/boys.

A full list of participants identified in response to this question is provided in Appendix II.

WHAT ARE THE MUSICAL PREREQUISITES FOR THE PARTICIPANTS?
Mostly, no musical background is necessary or all levels are welcome. Few organisations mention that some musical skill is required to begin with; one states that an audition is necessary and one (Charter Towers Country Music Inc) is in fact a talent quest. Little mention is made of the need to be able read music to join and neither is it mentioned as a goal. It may be assumed that reading music is at least taught in some cases (Geelong Concert Band, Cairns Municipal Band, Maruki Community Orchestra).

WHAT IS THE BREADTH OF ACTIVITIES?
On the whole, most organisations express their music activities in terms of engagement. Music is an activity to be engaged in rather than to be an audience for. There is plentiful use of the expression ‘music-making’ amongst the responses. In all cases, that music is an activity to be engaged in as opposed to an object of study is clearly the theme.

The type of activity depends largely on the genre of music. The most common genre is contemporary pop/rock involving original song-writing (10 out of the 28 organisations) and this is mostly conducted through bands. Recipe for Jam, Kool Skools, Pulse Youth Health Centre and Catalyst Arts engage almost exclusively, in original song-writing. Recording is also high on the agenda and a sense of ownership of music prevails. The organisations that promote creating their own music, often have social messages. In the case of indigenous bands, there is mention of connecting contemporary with traditional culture. Sweet Freedom goes so far as to tell the personal stories of refugees through original songs. Another song-writing theme is seen in
the Yilila program, in which music is a part of language education with linguists involved in teaching traditional indigenous language via songwriting and The Song Room works with immigrant children assisting them with English language learning.

Choral music activities feature more than orchestral (7 out of 28 organisations are specifically choirs). Here, original material also has a presence, as well as ethnic content though the latter is not significantly present. Two organisations are specifically concert bands and one is specifically orchestral. Classical music repertoire is significant in its small presence with only one organisation mentioning that its purpose is to engage in Classical music. Five organisations are comprehensive and offer a broad range of activities and types of music. Three can be counted amongst the winners and runners-up – Dandenong Ranges Music Council, Mungindi Music Festival and Hand-in-Hand (ANU).

Further to these more common activities, two organisations focus specifically on drumming, a small number include dance (eg. rap), theatre and/or circus and the indigenous organisations mention a link to traditional culture activities. One organisation specifically engages in music therapy activities.

Competition as an activity is virtually non-existent, which may seem surprising given the pervasiveness of amateur music competitions on TV. “Performing”, however, does get a mention and is a goal activity of nearly all programs. In fact, concert events are common activities participated in or run by almost all of the organisations despite the fact that there is a sense of purpose that music is not so much for entertainment but “for everyone, by everyone”. The latter is borne out in the commitment to workshopping and collaborating across most of the organisations.

Music teaching as an activity is not always stated, but is evidently undertaken in some form by all of the organisations. This is discussed further under pedagogical approaches. “Rehearsing” is referred to more commonly than “teaching” and “mentoring” is a frequently mentioned role.

The diversity of activities includes touring, administration, marketing, stage management, and event management. There are several mentions
of promoting and commissioning Australian music, mostly through choral and more comprehensive programs.

A full list of activities and styles of music represented in the responses to this question is in Appendix II.

**HOW DOES THE COMMUNITY BENEFIT?**

As already mentioned, in the responses to goals, 13 organisations identified clear musical goals, in terms of bringing music to people, providing opportunities to learn music and/or gaining musical skills. Interestingly, in the responses to how the communities and participants benefit, the outcome of such aims, namely, musicianship or being able to play or read music, are not stated benefits. The music-making is not an end in itself. Overwhelmingly, organisations talk about the benefit of music-making for building relationships within a community, making connections, supporting, and breaking down social and cultural barriers (“Sinhalese stood together with Tamils and sang “Stand With Us – enemies in their own country of Sri Lanka – music is their common ground.”). Some talk of gaining a musical identity for the community, especially those that engage in community festivals or events like Mungindi (“Music has become part of the fabric of town life”, “There is now live music at weddings”, “The Festival has profoundly changed the way Mungindi residents see their own community”). Community music festivals and events are also seen to boost the economy of towns and regions, specifically through tourism.

Some mention that their organisation in some way “challenges stereotypes” that only skilled musicians can make music. Sydney Street Choir for example, challenges the negative stereotype that homeless people can not contribute to society.

There is a prevailing theme amongst the benefits that music-making is an activity that “connects”, and promotes as sense of “belonging”.

Appendix iii provides a list of the identified benefits retrieved from the responses to the question of community benefits.
HOW DO THE PARTICIPANTS BENEFIT?

That community music-making has a positive effect on physical, mental and emotional health and well being of people is by far the most mentioned benefit. There is a resounding theme that community music-making has a positive effect, in particular, on at-risk people. “In 1999 the unexplained pain and the ultrasounds were underway ... my mother’s life was spiralling downhill... The Choir was a constant, one of my sandbags ... against the rising tide of work that threatened to drown [me].”

According to Kool Skools: “It is strange that while all young people list music as their number one love in life, very few list music education.” Community music-making clearly changes that notion, providing stress-free, encouraging, supportive environments where people who might otherwise not have access to being involved in music can participate at little or no cost to them.

“... I found myself surrounded by positive energetic and like-minded individuals ... no judgement, no restrictions, just nurturing, creativity and encouragement ... I am truly empowered.”

“I’m shy. I love that there is no audition process to join the choir ... if you have enough patience you can get in ...” and continues “[now] I can’t stop singing out loud ... in the shower ... riding my bike to work.”

Skills learnt are not just musical, but are often skills for life, skills for employment, skills for enjoyment. This kind of music-making develops self-esteem and gives individuals (at-risk or isolated, in particular) a community to belong to, becoming a catalyst for building strong relationships.

Also high on the agenda of benefits is that music changes lives. “Droughts are so depressing .... Music is fun, it happens with other people ... [it] adds a dimension to people’s lives that is unexpected and welcome. It changes your own beliefs about what you can learn and do as an adult.” Another comments: “So the choir changed me. Taught me to like being a woman. And to be proud of that. As I grow wise, I sing because I’m happy”.

A list of participant benefits can be found in Appendix iv.
A further list of benefits that underpin the value of community music-making is provided in Appendix v.

**WHAT PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES ARE PRESENT IN COMMUNITY MUSIC-MAKING?**

The significant factor is the stress-free, welcoming, inclusive environment provided in all settings, and in the majority of cases, more informal approaches to teaching and learning are visible. Of the 28 organisations, only Orange Regional Conservatorium makes a clear statement that the purpose is to provide “music education”. Their activities focus on instrumental and vocal “tuition” and from the description this would appear to be “tuition” in the formal sense. A further six organisations identify with formal teaching arrangements in their activities. Seventeen organisations mention mentoring, collaborating and workshopping as their key activities. The nature of these organisations and their participants suggest that these activities represent a more informal approach to teaching and learning music. Another two base their music-making on a music therapy approach. One organisation facilitates a talent quest and has no stated underlying approach to teaching and learning. Dandenong Ranges Music Council, winner of best all-encompassing program, fittingly covers a broad range of approaches from formal to informal. The role of teaching or directing is, ostensibly in all cases, taken by professional musician mentors, professional musician peers, or professional music teachers.

**WHAT ARE THE SUCCESS FACTORS?**

The most commonly mentioned factor of success is inclusivity. Next is professional leadership which can mean both in terms of the musical tutorship and administrative leadership and good governance. These factors are highly correlated with passion for both music and the cause and support provided for the organisation through sponsorship, government funding and volunteers. The factor of accessibility through being able to provide free or subsidised services is mentioned. Another significant factor of success is the mentor role which suggests that personal relationships formed in informal relaxed settings are important to the music-making experience.

A full list of the success factors mentioned is given in Appendix vi.
Compared to the Sound Links Survey (SLS):

Not mentioned in Sound Links is ‘inclusivity’. This is the most frequently reported success factor in the CMA. In other respects there is a strong agreement with SLS in success factors: Support from broader community, Highly skilled facilitators, Networking with local organisations, Corporate connections and support (mentioned in CMA as support from business), Sufficient funding, Careful planning, Choice of repertoire (in CMA this reveals a leaning towards contemporary/pop/original).

The most significant success factor in the SLS is Inspired Leadership, this may be the case with CMA as well, if one correlates ‘vision’ and ‘professional leadership’ with ‘inspired leadership’.

There is also some mention of and agreement with the SLS factor of Sufficient equipment. Many CMA organisations provide recording facilities and equipment in particular, and look to funding to support this. (Multi)cultural sensitivity is not so much mentioned as a success factor in CMA while it is, although not significantly, in SLS. (In CMA Multicultural sensitivity does get frequent mention in goals and benefits.)

Two possibly important success factors revealed in SLS are not clearly revealed in CMA. They are: Support from community leaders and Location, venue and facilities. Also Effective PR is not easily visible in the data of CMA, while it is quite significant in the SLS.

Other significant factors that have a strong presence in CMA but not in SLS are Passion and Fun.

A significant musical activity in both CMA and SLS is choral, however the most frequently mentioned activity in CMA is song-writing, and the activity is related to pop/rock genre.
APPENDIX I

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION OF PURPOSE (IN SUMMARY):

- To have fun through music making.
- To have an enriched life through music making.
- To engage in artistic endeavours through music.
- To build a sense of community and cultural identity through music.
- To have well being through music making.
- To engage in music making rather than have music the entertainment.
- To build relationships through music making.
- To promote the social emotional and educational values of music.
- To reach out and engage others through music making.
- To foster excellence in making music.
- To promote Australian music.
- To build relationships between urban, rural and outback communities through music making.
- To take music to remote areas.
- To engage young people in creative arts.
- To provide performance, mentorship and professional recording opportunities for young musicians.
- To provide work experience and employment in the arts industry for young people.
- To engage at risk indigenous youth in music making.
- To create pathways to education through music making.
- To build self-esteem through music making.
- To assist community inclusion through music making.
- To change lives through music making.
- To inspire, equip, empower people through music.
- To bring positive change through music making.
- To bring hope through music making.
- To heal through music making.
- To strengthen community connectedness/relationships through music making.
- To strengthen parent/child relationships through music making.
- To support socially/ economically disadvantaged people through music making.
• To promote childhood development and family functionality.
• To engage youth, at risk youth, in music making.
• To provide musical skill development.
• To provide the opportunity to convey messages through music making.
• To build confidence.
• To sing with not for (music making not music entertaining).
• To encourage young people to get involved with contemporary music making and song writing.
• To provide a vehicle for relationship between school and community.
• To provide a link for amateur musicians with professional music community.
• To encourage original music making.
• To bring local people together in hardship through making music.
• To engage amateurs with professional organisations.
• To teach music.
• To reduce social isolation.
• To engage people, build relationships between people, through drumming.
• To encourage participation in music making.
• To provide opportunities for change through music making.
• To build musical skills, networks and music industry knowledge.
• To build self-esteem through music making.
• To encourage teamwork through music making.
• To provide professional development opportunities through music making.
• To introduce music making to disadvantaged children in schools and communities.
• To make music in the community by the community for the community.
• To encourage inclusivity in making music rather than expertise.
• To reach out through music making.
• To develop musical skills.
• To encourage enjoyment in music making.
• To provide entertainment through music making.
• To provide access to classical music through music making.
• To build economy, cultural activity and cultural education through music and dance business (indigenous).
• To develop musical skills.
• To encourage participation in a diverse range of music activities.
• To promote new Australian music composition.
• To explore music from different (diverse) range of cultural traditions.
• To promote music for life.
• To use musical talent to inspire change.
• To raise awareness and financial support for aid projects.
• To use music as an asset to invoke change.
• To bring women in community together through music making.
• To encourage quality singing.
• To inspire, motivate, empower, build solidarity through music making.
• To entertain through music making.
• To promote cross cultural exchange.
• To engage people in diverse music repertoire.
• To make connections between people (build relationships) through music making.
• To heal through music making.
• To provide high quality music education and performance.
• To promote Australian music.
• To promote the health benefits of singing.
• To have fun in music making.
• To promote the value of music in society (music for life, community).
• To connect, support and provide opportunity to people through music making.
• To make music accessible to people.
• To reach out through music making.
• To harness musical skills from the community for entertaining the community.
• To take music to the people (reach out).
• To provide high quality performance.
• To educate amateurs in singing techniques.
• To rehabilitate people through music making (therapy).
• To perform music.
• To develop English skills.
• To enrich the practice of music in Australia.
• To connect (reach out) to disadvantaged and homeless people through music making.
• To inspire, empower, rehabilitate, heal, have fun through music making. To build a fraternity (relationships) through music making.
• To encourage self-expression through music making.
• To promote a healthy lifestyle through music making.
• To provide a forum for young people through music making.
To provide mentoring in making music.
To provide expertise and equipment for music making.

APPENDIX II

A. RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION OF ACTIVITIES

- Workshop, song writing, recording, circus, dance.
- Rehearsing, performing, touring, ceremonies.
- Performing, collaborating, connecting with universities and other institutions.
- Maintaining a website, teaching, performing.
- Workshops, administration, marketing, connecting, touring, performing, hosting.
- Teaching, connecting with schools and supporting school resources, providing resources, Outreach, performing, providing leadership.
- Collaborating with other cultural and ethnic choirs, workshops, rehearsing, performing, composing.
- Rehearsing, performing, touring, recording.
- Music therapy, stage productions, workshops, commissions, tutoring, connecting with school communities.
- Recording, touring, workshops, performing, engaging with other communities, providing
- Employment.
- Rehearsing, performing, festivals.
- Teaching.
- Workshops, song writing, recording, stage management, mentoring, jamming.
- Training/teaching.
- Rehearsing, workshops, festivals.
- Recording, song writing.
- Expressing people's message through song writing, rehearsing, performing.
- Studios sessions (tutoring), recording, mentoring, song writing.
- Music therapy.
- Camp, online forums, workshops, touring, performing, diverse activities (not just music).
- Mentoring, workshops, performing.
• Song writing, recording, providing equipment, connecting people, facilitating.
• Workshops, rehearsing, performing, touring, mentoring, festivals, engaging with schools, outreach.
• Engaging with schools and community, teaching.
• Tutoring, workshops, masterclasses, music therapy, collaborating, composing, commissioning, recording, connecting with schools.
• Song writing, collaborating, mentoring, composing, recording, performing.
• Performing, song writing, talent quests, festivals.

B. IDENTIFIED STYLES IN COMMUNITY MUSIC

• Country music
• Choral, drumming
• All types of music
• Vocal and instrumental
• Choral
• Contemporary, original
• Contemporary, original
• All kinds of music and other activities
• All kinds of music
• Contemporary, original
• Contemporary, original
• Contemporary, original
• Contemporary, original
• Contemporary, original
• Drumming
• Contemporary, original
• Classical
• Traditional influenced contemporary, original and dance (indigenous)
• Rock, music theatre
• Choral, rap, drumming, hip hop.
• Choral Ethnic
• Instrumental Ensembles
• Choral
• Brass band, concert band, stage band
• Choral Ethnic
• Choral
• Contemporary, original, circus, dance
• Concert band
APPENDICIES I-VI

APPENDIX III

PERCEIVED COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM MUSIC MAKING:

- Provides a variety of bands to choose from.
- Provides service for Rotary, Lions etc
- Connects community to city centre and provides a festival.
- Allows profits from recordings sales to go back into the target community in need.
- Means less crime in the streets.
- Breaks down barriers
- Supports other music programs in community.
- Attracts professionals from the community to engage with emerging artists.
- Promotes belonging and connection.
- Promotes tourism through festivals.
- Attracts professionals to an otherwise remote/regional community (connects outback to city)
- Provides facilities, equipment
- Provides connection for people in the community.
- Breaks down barriers set up by formal music in schools.
- Promotes engagement with local business (locals store sell CDs)
- Promotes community identity and history.
- Promotes collaboration (connection) amongst community members and outreach.
- Supports ceremony.
- Promotes positive change in a community.
- Brings people together (connection).
- Overcomes isolation (connection).
- Supports other community events.
- Brings different nationalities together (connection).
- Gives the community a musical identity.
- Has a positive economic effect on the community.
- Promotes social capital and cultural awareness.
- Connects people in need during times of hardship.
- Provides a social network.
- Provides charity support.
- Provides connection between musical organisations.
• Provides high quality entertainment.
• Build relationships across the community.
• Builds cultural awareness.
• Challenges stereotypes, eg only skilled musicians can participate in music making.
• Outreach – regional centre to rural areas.
• Involves local businesses.
• Promotes tourism.
• Bridges gaps between community and mainstream Arts (connects).
• Strengthens sense of community.
• Helps communities to recover in times of hardship.
• Engages Arts with non-arts organisations (eg charities).
• Provides a vehicle for fund-raising for charities.
• Provides effective diversionary activities for at-risk people.
• Give a community a set of common goals.
• Provides employment.
• Connects indigenous people to the wider community.
• Connects older indigenous people with younger indigenous people.
• Promotes goodwill.
• Promotes healthy family relationships.
• Promotes healthy lifestyle.
• Increases community connectedness.
• Promotes tolerance.
• Provides facilities.
• Connects people and organisations.
• Leads to new curriculum making in schools.
• Provides employment.

APPENDIX IV

THROUGH COMMUNITY MUSIC MAKING, PARTICIPANTS:

• Have opportunity to progress to tertiary study.
• Develop self-esteem.
• Develop musical skills.
• Have opportunity for creative self-expression.
• Have opportunity for socialising.
• Have opportunity for music in the home.
• Build relationships.
• Feel Motivated.
• Develop self-confidence.
• Get respite from stress of life.
• Develop self-esteem.
• Improve social behaviour skills.
• Develop skills, not just musical, for careers.
• Have opportunity for self-expression.
• Develop self esteem.
• Improve social behaviour and overcome physical difficulties.
• Improve physical, mental and emotional health and well-being (of aged people).
• Improve relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous people.
• Develop musical skills and motivation to learn music.
• Connect with others.
• Improve physical and emotional well-being.
• Have a vehicle for self-expression.
• Improve health and well-being.
• Develop musical skills.
• Gain opportunities (for non-professional) to mix with professional musicians.
• Gain a positive focus in life (for at-risk people).
• Develop self-confidence.
• Develop skills for life.
• Improve physical health and well-being.
• Gain opportunity for travel.
• Gain opportunity social interaction.
• Feel empowered.
• Gain a sense of belonging.
• Receive personalised music tuition.
• Have a purposeful leisure time.
• Gain a social network.
• Develop skills for life.
• Develop self confidence, self-esteem and self worth.
• Strengthen family relationships.
• Gain hope comfort and social inclusion.
• Gain happiness.
• Receive music tuition for free.
• Have access to facilities and resources.
- Have opportunity to travel.
- Learn leaderships.
- Develop self-confidence.
- Are inspired.
- Take ownership of music.
- Gain a broad music experience and diversity of music.
- Develop music skills, literacy skills, business skills.
- Have an opportunity to travel.
- Have opportunity for employment.
- Have opportunity to perform.
- Gain ownership of music.
- Are able to change their lives in a positive way.
- Gain an opportunity to engage in music in a stress free less formal than schools context.
- Are able to change their lives in a positive way.
- Gain social skills.
- Learn teamwork.
- Have the opportunity to connect with others.
- Have reduced stress and anxiety.
- Develop self-worth.
- Develop relationships.
- Feel empowered.
- Gain a positive use of leisure time.
- Develop mentorship skills and receive tuition from mentors.
- Develop skills for employment.
- Develop self-esteem and confidence.
- Improve language and learning skills.
- Improve social skills.
- Develop musical skills.
- Have opportunity to engage in music without the need for expertise.
- Have improved health and well-being.
- Have the opportunity to make positive change in life.
- Make friends.
- Develop self-esteem.
- Receive support from mentoring and learn to mentor.
- Develop skills for employment.
- Gain access to professional musicians and music events.
- Learn music in an affordable way.
APPENDIX V

FURTHER BENEFITS OF MUSIC MAKING –
A CASE FOR MUSIC ADVOCACY:

- Builds self-esteem.
- Builds musical skills.
- Provides a vehicle for creative self-expression.
- Promotes socialising.
- Promotes music in the home.
- Is a catalyst for building relationships.
- Promotes recognition of music skills in the community.
- Permits realisation of dreams.
- Motivates.
- Builds self-confidence.
- Provides respite from stress of life.
- Builds self-esteem.
- Improves social behaviour skills.
- Builds skills, not just musical, for careers.
- Provides a vehicle for self-expression.
- Builds self esteem.
- Reengages classroom teachers with music making.
- Has a positive effect on at-risk children, improving social behaviour and physical difficulties.
- Has a positive impact on physical, mental and emotional health and well-being of aged people.
- Has a positive effect on relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous people.
- Builds musical skills and motivation to learn music.
- Is therapeutic.
- Connects adolescents with children through mentoring.
- Promotes physical and emotional well-being.
- Provides a vehicle for self-expression.
- Improves health and well-being.
- Builds musical skills.
- Provides opportunities for non-professional to mix with professional musicians.
- Provides a positive focus for at-risk people.
• Builds self-confidence.
• Builds skills for life.
• Rehabilitates.
• Promotes physical health and well-being.
• Provides opportunity for travel.
• Promotes social interaction.
• Is empowering.
• Provides a sense of belonging.
• Music for life. Music can change for the positive.
• Music can reflect a community and give identity to a community.
• Music is a vehicle for cultural exchange – ethnic and between country and city.

APPENDIX VI

SUCCESS FACTORS:
• Quality of music
• Inclusivity
• Diversity of program
• Vision
• Connectivity
• Professional leadership
• Volunteers and partnerships
• Leadership and vision
• Community driven
• Good governance
• Passion
• Well-trained and dedicated volunteers
• Dedicated committee
• Variety of music
• Professional music directors
• The volunteer support
• Inclusivity
• Professionalism
• Inclusivity
• Mentoring
• The courage of the organisation
- Professionalism
- Commitment
- Regularity of rehearsals
- Opportunity for performance
- Delivers entertainment
- Is pro-active through web/ promotions
- Resources provided
- History
- Diligent management
- Mentoring
- Inclusivity
- Opportunity
- Inclusivity
- High quality of tutoring
- Responds to community needs
- Provides a community within a community – identity
- Professional leadership
- Buddy system
- Access to ‘good’ music
- High standard of tutors
- Strong vision
- Focus on youth
- Leadership
- Strong governance
- Financial support from community and government.
- Inclusivity
- Financial accessibility because of government funding
- Inclusivity
- Diversity of music presented
- Vision
- Love for traditional culture
- Professional leadership and standard of musicianship
- Sponsorship, funding, grants
- Contemporary music focus
- Multi-media approach
- Volunteer support
- Passion
- Fun
• Accessibility
• Research based
• Free to users
• Professional tutors
• Intensive nature – being residential
• Belief
• Expertise
• Interaction with community
• Enthusiasm
• Encouraging environment
• Financial support from local community
• Inclusivity
• Passion
• Commitment
• Collaborative nature
• Inclusivity
• Profits go back to the community
• Dedication
• Professional help available
• Continuity
• Fun
• Non-judgemental
• Inclusivity
• Support
• Targeting at-risk community groups
• Accommodating range of youth sub-cultures
• Interaction
• Inclusivity
• Excellence
• Exciting
• Engaging
• Opportunity for performance
• Inclusivity
• Government support
• Outreach philosophy
• Passion
• Outreach
• Private organisation support
• Accessibility
• Welcoming environment
• Subsidies provided for those who cannot afford
• Makes use of local centres
• Professionalism
• Free to youth
• Peer mentoring
• Self-driven, provides access to equipment
Sound Links examines the dynamics of community music in Australia, and the models it represents for music learning and teaching in formal and informal settings. Through a close examination of six case studies, ranging from multicultural suburbs to largely monocultural country towns, from rural networks to remote Indigenous communities, this publication offers a revealing picture of musical activity that has been hardly visible outside of its circles of participants, and delivers a model to understand, plan and assess community music activities. In this way, it should prove highly valuable to facilitators, cultural officers, local administrators, policy makers, funding bodies, and schools that seek to connect their musical activities more firmly to their environments.

As the final report of the Australian Research Council Linkage project Sound links: Exploring the dynamics of musical communities in Australia, and their potential for informing collaboration with music in schools, it combines academic rigour with a strong focus on the actual practice of hundreds of remarkable musicians whose enthusiasm, drive, and resourcefulness make Australia sing, play and dance.

ISBN: 978-0-646-51338-6