

CULTURE MATTERS

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Pinnacles Gallery



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Strand Ephemera 2011

Winner

Festivals and Events Award
Townsville Airport North Queensland Tourism Awards 2012

Strand Ephemera 2013

Winner

Best Tourism and Events Communication Award
Government Communications Australia
Awards for Excellence 2014

Brick by Brick

Highly Commended

Temporary or Travelling Exhibition Level 2 Award
Museum and Galleries National Awards 2014

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Louvre-Lens Art Museum
Lens, France



Culture Matters

Governments, industry and the private sector worldwide have long understood the significant and transformational impact that cultural and creative activity and investment has within communities, regions and nations.

Culture is expressed in many ways - through our stories, the way we live, speak, conduct public life, relate to others, celebrate, remember the past, entertain ourselves and imagine the future.

Our creative expression gives voice to us as individuals, challenges perceptions and helps us see the world through the eyes of others, and importantly, helps the world see us, our diversity, uniqueness and the richness of our Australian identity.

There's a social dividend in investing in the cultural and creative sectors with the return in strengthening our underlying values of inclusiveness, openness and democratic practice. There's another benefit from investing in the arts and artists to build a rich cultural life: **the economic dividend.**

A cultural and creative region is a productive region. Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing global tourism markets. Culture and creative industries are increasingly being used to promote destinations and enhance their competitiveness and attractiveness.

Many locations are now actively developing their tangible and intangible cultural assets as a means of developing comparative advantages in an increasingly competitive tourism marketplace, and to create local distinctiveness in the face of globalisation.¹

However, despite the proven social and economic significance of cultural and creative activity and investment, Townsville remains inactive in pursuing or capitalising on these trends in the short, medium and long term.

The Townsville City Economic Development Plan 2013-2017 outlines the strategic agenda for Townsville City Council that supports Townsville's growth as one of Queensland's most important regional cities.²

Present discourse surrounding cultural infrastructure and growth within the Townsville region is primarily focussed towards the development of a world-class “Super Stadium”, adding to the numerous other world-class sporting facilities existing within the region.

This vision is strongly supported and identified within the *Townsville City Economic Development Plan 2013-2017* as the key cultural investment within the region as part of the defined strategy **Building Capital City Services**. Although presented as an overarching analysis and strategic plan that showcases the region’s diversity and resilience the *Townsville City Economic Development Plan 2013-2017* lacks critical analysis of the true social and economic benefit and outputs of cultural and creative activity within the Townsville region.

Culture Matters discusses the significance and economic impact that cultural and creative activity has within local, state and federal portfolios and analyses visitation trends over the 2013-14 Financial Year in the areas of sport and cultural activity in the Townsville region.

Culture Matters identifies clearly that Townsville’s true social and economic growth market is cultural tourism and its cultural and creative industries.

With the State Government’s focus firmly set on selling assets and the region’s push to ensure that a portion of the proceeds are returned to the Townsville region for infrastructure and development, Townsville and Townsville City Council have a unique opportunity to capitalise on its cultural and creative strengths.

Through the provision and development of transformational cultural and creative infrastructure and by placing this at the forefront of discussion and planning Townsville City Council can enable generational change that will activate and stimulate the region economically, socially and culturally on a global level.





“Brick By Brick” exhibition
Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville

The Economic Impact of Cultural Activity

Australia is increasingly recognised as an exciting, unique, diverse, and sophisticated tourist destination that has much to interest visitors beyond its world-renowned natural attractions.

Australia has a wide range of cultural assets including museums, art galleries, historic and Indigenous sites, performing arts and live concerts designed to enrich, educate and entertain visitors.

Investigating the spending patterns and economic contribution of cultural visitors - domestic and international - goes a long way to highlighting the economic role of arts and culture in the community.

Over the last two decades Federal and State Governments have undertaken intensive studies and analysis of the social and economic benefits of cultural activity and tellingly realised that not only do arts and culture develop our sense of identity and knowledge as a community, but also contributes significantly to local economies across Australia.³

The key factors underpinning the significance of cultural activity is the change in attitudes by Australians in participation in the arts. Whilst it has been clearly demonstrated that international visitors maintain a dedicated and strong interest in Australian cultural activity and frequently dedicate visitation to our galleries, museums and events - the behavior of domestic cultural activity has dramatically changed in the last decade.⁴

This increase in visitation and participation has also dramatically changed the economic impact of the cultural sector into local, state and the national economy. At all levels of government Australia is widely promoted as a “sporting” nation and that non-profit and elite sports is a primary cultural and economic generator within our social fabric.

Whilst sport certainly plays its part, the reality is that cultural and creative activity injects far more into the local, state and national economy per year through incubation and leadership in thinking, ideas and design capabilities, added value across all spheres of economic activity – from innovation, research and development through to interdependent relationships and shared identity.



In 2009 key findings [Figure 2] highlighted that:

- ⌘ **Cultural activity injected \$86.8 billion into Australia's GDP.⁵**
- ⌘ **Sporting activity injected \$24.9 billion into Australia's GDP.⁶**

In 2010 the Victorian Government undertook a comprehensive analysis of the economic impact of the arts and cultural sector in Victoria.

To measure these benefits, Arts Victoria commissioned consultants, KPMG, to undertake a broad review of the economic contribution of the arts and cultural industries in Victoria, and the impact of Government investment.

The report⁷ estimates that, in 2010-11, the Victorian arts and culture sector:

- ⌘ **added direct value to the economy of \$6.1 billion;**
- ⌘ **employed the equivalent of 68,000 full time workers.**

Rigorous economic modelling was applied to identify linkages of the arts and cultural sector with the broader economy, and to calculate indirect impacts and flow-on effects.

As a result of these links, in 2010-11 the total contribution of the arts sector was:

- ⌘ **\$11.4 billion of annual Victorian GSP;**
- ⌘ **110,000 Victorian full time equivalent jobs.**

Victorian cultural facilities and activities are an important drawcard for international and interstate visitors.

Close to 400,000 domestic and international cultural tourists (defined as those who attend three or more cultural attractions during their visit) visited Victoria in 2011.

Cultural tourists' expenditure represents a significant input into the state economy. As well as spending directly on cultural activities, these tourists purchase other local goods and services, such as meals, accommodation, gifts and transport.

In 2011 this expenditure was estimated to be almost \$695 million.

The Victorian Government provides significant support for arts and cultural facilities and services. It is estimated that in 2010-11 Victorian Government funding of \$580 million stimulated around \$340 million contribution to the Gross State Product and an additional 3,500 full-time equivalent jobs - identified by the Victorian Government as **representing a greater return on investment than other areas of Government spending.**

Figure 1
Gallery Services Visitor Origins 2013/14



- Townsville Region: 68% [192 549]
- National: 26% [73 623]
- International: 6% [16 989]



FACT #3

The Brick by Brick exhibition attracted 102 320 visitors of which 31% or 31 719 people were interstate and international visitors

Figure 2
 Australian GDP Contribution:
 Sport and Culture (in \$ billions)

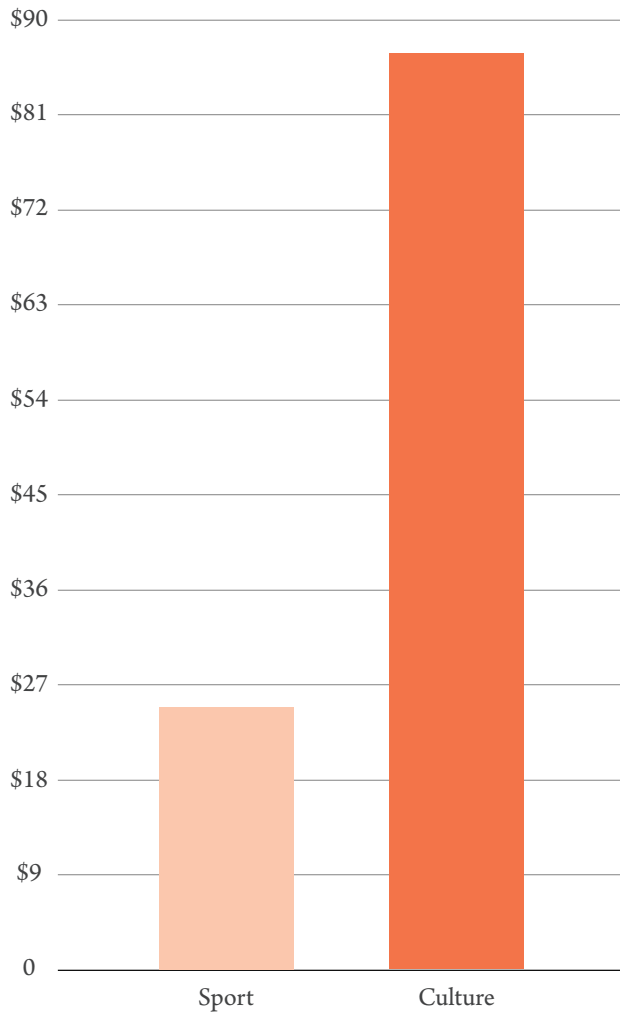
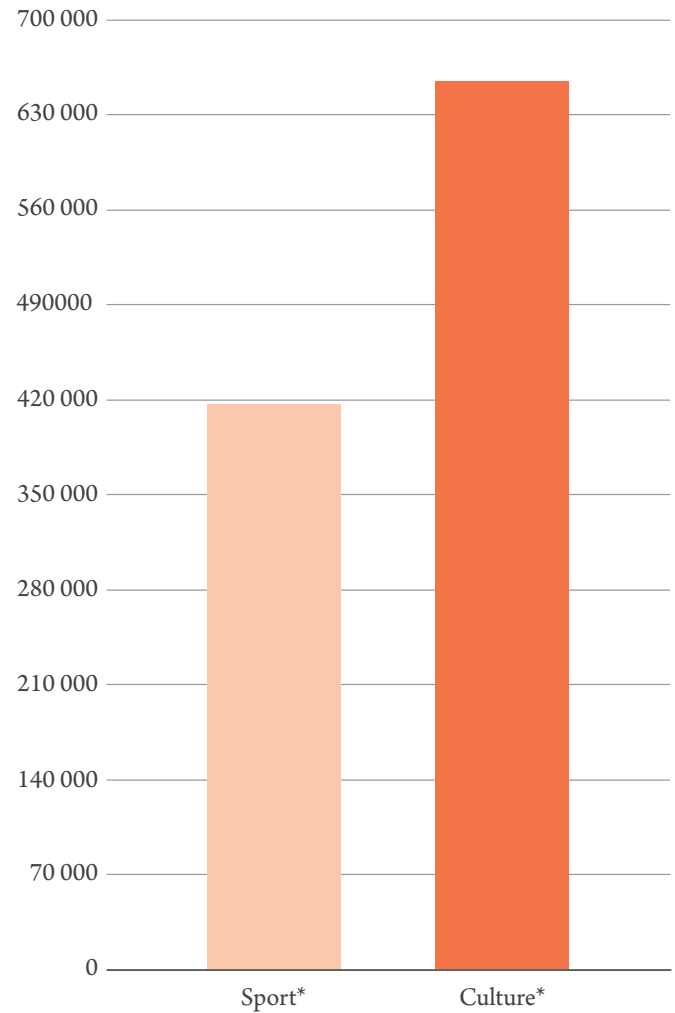


Figure 3
 Visitation Trend Comparison:
 Leading 5 cultural and sport
 total attendance Townsville 2013/14





The drawing room in “Matisse: Drawing Life”
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

Although Queensland hasn't commissioned a thorough examination of the economic impact of arts and culture on the State's GSP overall, rigorous assessment in collaboration with Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) and the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) has been undertaken on an exhibition-by-exhibition basis for a number of years.

As an overview the following examples provide an insight into the economic impact of art exhibitions held at QAGOMA.

The 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art

QAG and GOMA | 8 December 2012 – 14 April 2013

Total attendance: 565,248

31% Interstate and overseas visitors

Associated economic impact: \$26.88 million

Andy Warhol

GOMA | 8 December 2007 - 13 April 2008

Total attendance: 232,389

23% overseas & interstate visitors

Associated economic impact: \$14.24 million

Valentino, Retrospective: Past/Present/Future

GOMA | 7 August – 14 November 2010

Total attendance: 202,849

28% overseas & interstate visitors

Associated economic impact: \$18.4 million

Quilts 1700-1945

QAG | 15 June – 22 September 2013

Total attendance: 42,111

32% overseas & interstate visitors

Associated economic impact: \$4.13 million

The aforementioned exhibitions are but a small proportion of the projects held at QAGOMA on an ongoing basis.

Additionally the figures provided by TEQ are specific to the visitation of the nominated exhibitions and do not account for the other areas of interest located in the Southbank Cultural Precinct such as the State Library of Queensland and the Queensland Museum (which received 1 085 363 visitors in 2012-13 FY).

Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing global tourism markets. Culture and creative industries are increasingly being used to promote destinations and enhance their competitiveness and attractiveness.

Many locations are now actively developing their tangible and intangible cultural assets as a means of developing comparative advantages in an increasingly competitive tourism marketplace, and to create local distinctiveness in the face of globalisation. A person is defined as a cultural and heritage visitor if they participate in at least one of the following activities or experiences during their trip:⁸

- ‡ **attend the theatre, a concert, or other performing arts event**
- ‡ **visit a museum or art gallery**
- ‡ **visit art and/or craft workshop or studio**
- ‡ **attend a festival, fair or similar cultural event**
- ‡ **experience Aboriginal art, craft or cultural display**
- ‡ **visit an Aboriginal site or community**

Interestingly the 2009 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) key study⁹ into international and domestic cultural tourism found that:

- ‡ **Of Australia's 2.6 million international cultural and heritage visitors in 2009, 57% had visited a museum or art gallery.**
- ‡ **Cultural activity accounts for 51% of Australia's international tourism.**
- ‡ **Visiting museums or art galleries was the most popular cultural activity for both domestic overnight visitors and day-trippers with attendance of 43% and 36% respectively of all domestic tourism in 2009.**
- ‡ **Domestic cultural tourists spend nearly double per overnight stay than non-cultural tourists [Figure 8].**

The 2011 *More than bums on seats: Queenslanders and the arts report*¹⁰ found 94% of Queenslanders aged 15 years and older participated in the arts by making something themselves or attending a live event, exhibition or reading.

This level of participation is equivalent to participation rates nationally, and directly contradicts negative perceptions of the place of arts and culture in Queensland.

More than seven in ten Queenslanders believe that investment by both local and state government is needed to ensure that arts and cultural activities are available to all Queenslanders.

Eight in ten agree that a vibrant arts and cultural sector is very valuable to Queensland and when families, friends or communities come together across the state at concerts, performances, galleries, museums and public festivals and ceremonies, they help shape and reflect our cultural diversity, identity and heritage.

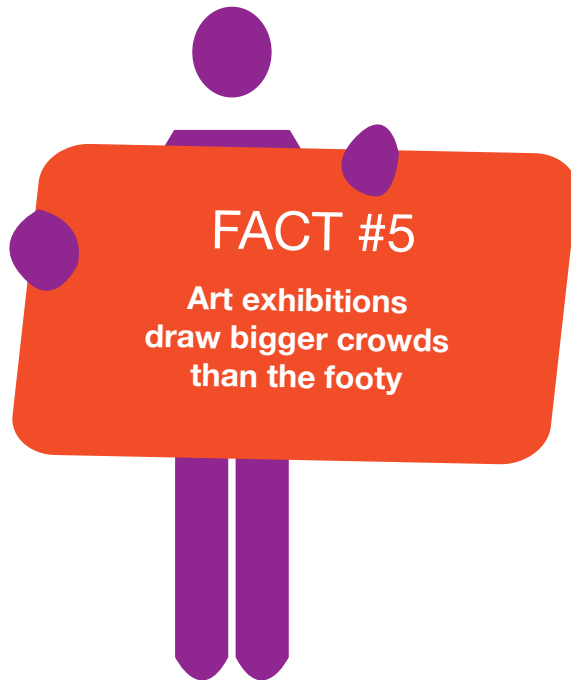
Queenslanders unequivocally value the arts, which is demonstrated through the substantial visitors that the cultural precinct at Southbank (QAGOMA, State Library and QLD Museum) receives annually.

The value of the arts is not only recognised by everyday Queenslanders but also the Queensland Government whom in early May 2014 announced another strategic investment into the Southbank Cultural Precinct which will further capitalise on the lucrative cultural tourism market and creative industries injecting tens-of-millions of dollars into the South-East Queensland economy annually.

“In 2013/14 Gallery Services attracted 283 161 visitors”



Townsville - as a culturally active region - is no exception. In fact, Townsville's appreciation and participation in cultural and creative events, organisations and activities is above the national average and far exceeds the participation of sporting activities and events for any defined period of analysis.



In the 2013-14 FY **three of the top five** visitation destinations in the Townsville region were cultural and creative industries [Figure 6].

The economic and social impact that the cultural and creative industries inject into the Townsville region remains largely overlooked and under-capitalised and therefore provides Townsville City Council with a unique opportunity to celebrate and capitalise on its cultural success through visionary planning and the provision of world-class infrastructure.

During the 2013 AFCM an analysis of the economic impact of the event was undertaken by TEQ in partnership with the AFCM.

Utilising industry recognised modelling and surveying techniques the report concluded that the 13 234 attendees to the 2013 AFCM generated an estimated \$2.24 million into the Queensland economy, of which \$1.91 million was accrued to the Tropical North.



Exhibition Gallery: Louvre-Lens Art Museum
Lens, France

In 2013/14 Perc Tucker Regional Gallery developed and displayed the exhibition **Brick by Brick** which became the largest ever attended exhibition in regional Queensland's history with a record breaking visitation of 102 320, capturing the attention and imagination of audiences worldwide [Figure 4].

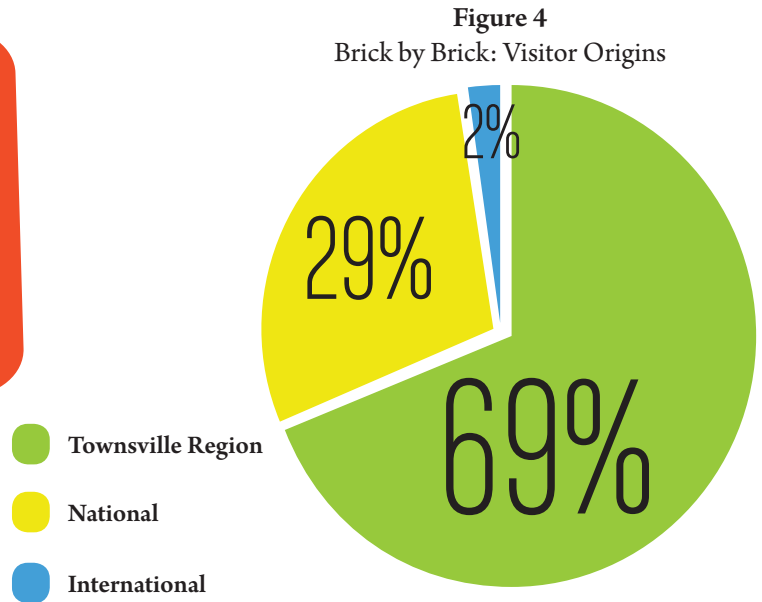
Utilising the same methodologies as those employed by QAGOMA, TEQ and AFCM, and through thorough visitor analysis, the **Brick by Brick** exhibition showcases the potential impact that cultural tourism can play upon the Townsville region.

Brick by Brick is an example of what a single exhibition can achieve. The provision of world-class infrastructure would allow the Townsville region to compete on the world stage and attract numerous high-quality, blockbuster and exclusive cultural material for display - frequently.



FACT #6

51% of Australia's international tourists are "cultural tourists" visiting art galleries and museums.



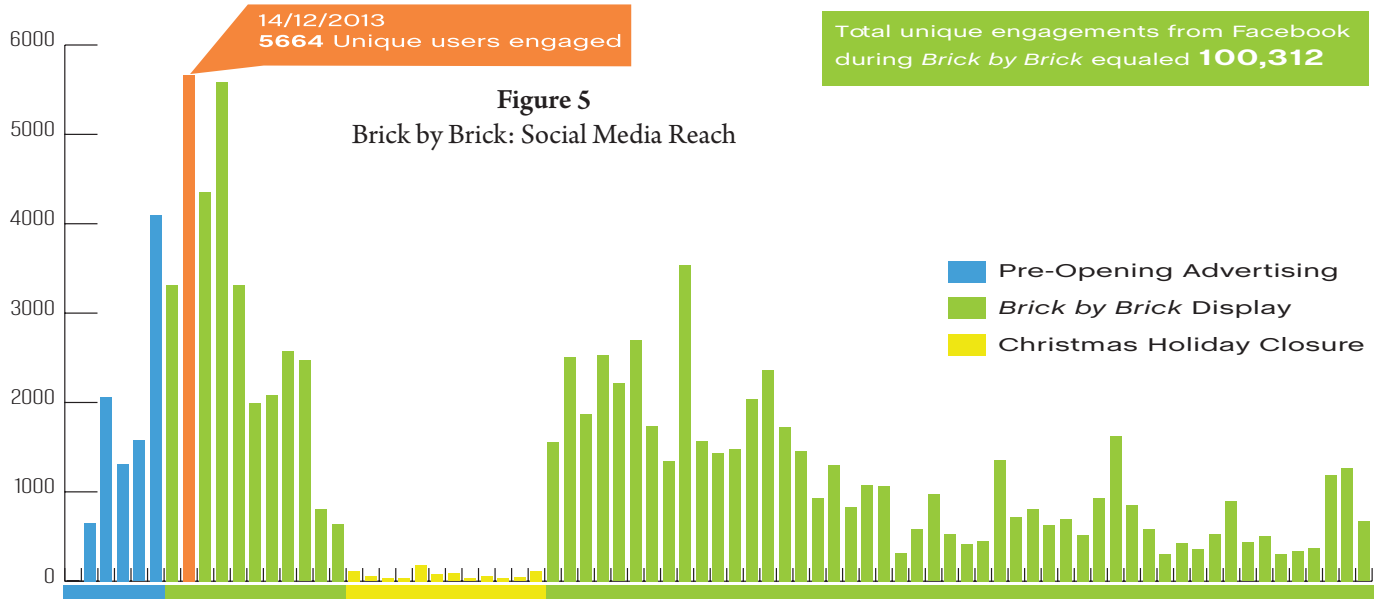
Brick by Brick

PTRG | 13 December 2013 - 23 February 2014

Total attendance: 102,320

31% overseas & interstate visitors (31 719)

Associated economic impact: \$6+ million



A world-class facility demands attention, captures the imagination of the world, and elevates the prestige and negotiating capacity of the region within the cultural sector.

Through considered programming and national reputation Gallery Services (through PTRG and Pinnacles Gallery) remains year-after-year in the top five destination attractions for the Townsville region. Often exceeding or meeting the region's population base in attendance, the 2013-14 FY showcased the true impact and contribution that the public galleries play within Townsville's appeal.

In this reporting period the public galleries were by far THE key attraction in the Townsville region with 283 161 visitors recorded - seconded only by the NQ Cowboys with 197 828 visitors [Figure 6].

“Townsville is home to 188 cultural organisations”

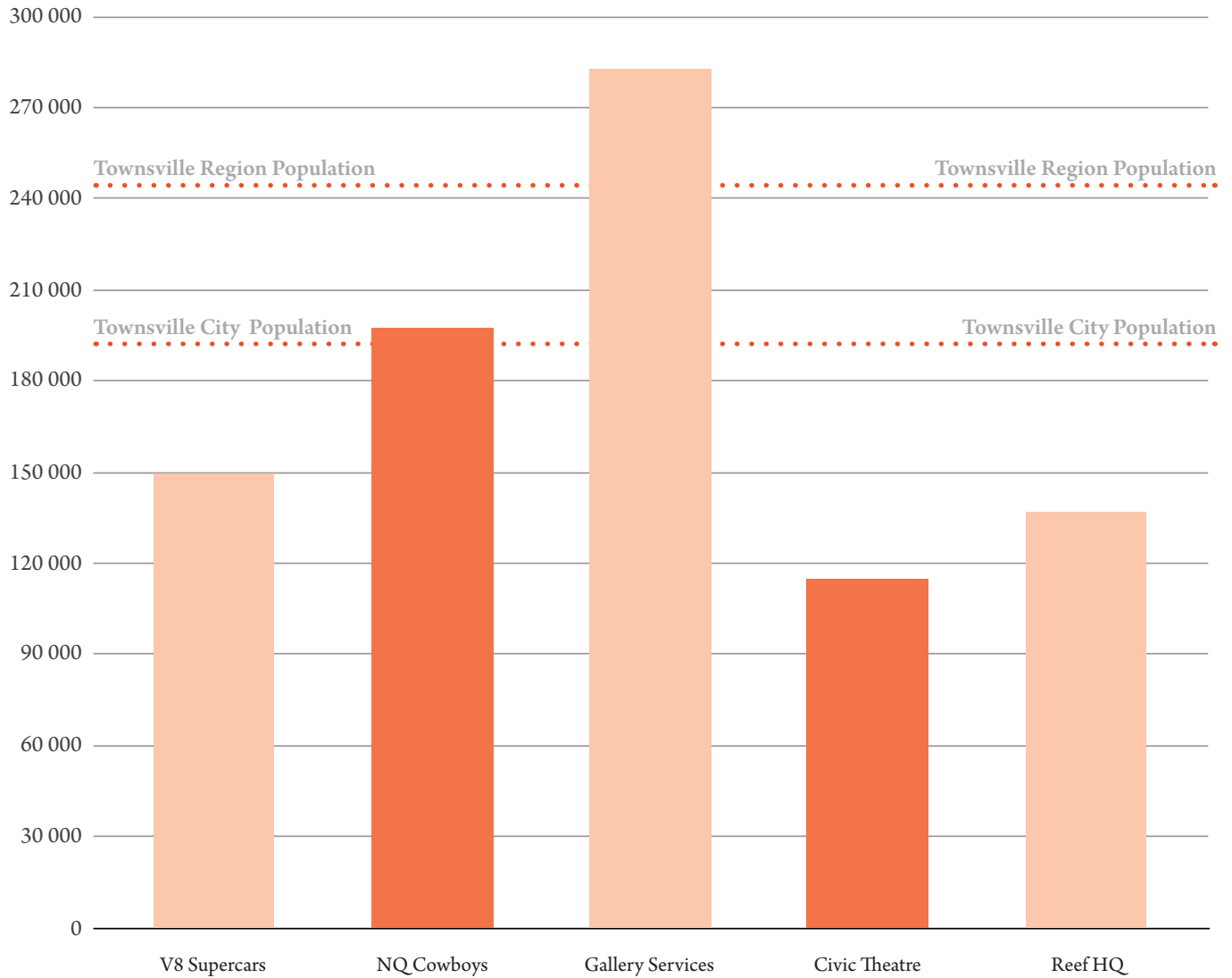
This reputation is at risk.

Due to accommodation that is inadequate and grossly overdue for renewal it is increasingly difficult for Gallery Services to negotiate, secure and develop for the region world-class cultural experiences that not only engage the Townsville community but also encourage and promote destination cultural tourism.

Exhibitions and special projects like **Brick by Brick** require a competitive edge to be hosted in Townsville. This competitive edge is defined by the prestige and scale of the cultural institution in accordance with international standards. **Simply, Townsville needs a defining cultural facility to attract blockbusters to the region.**

Without the appropriate facility to host projects of this scale, worth and cultural significance the Townsville region will be, and is, frequently overlooked and lacks the standing to compete on the world stage. The value of major exhibitions cannot be understated as they provide unprecedented opportunities to the host region through increased visitation from local, national and international visitors, provide profound economic benefits that far surpass the cost to stage, and firmly transform the cultural identity of the region into a cultural destination of substance.

Figure 6
Visitation Trends: Top 5 Townsville Region 2013/14



Investing in Culture: Why This Matters

When compared with our regional counterparts Townsville's cultural offerings attract more attendances than any other regional city [Figure 9] in Australia yet the region remains overlooked in key infrastructure initiatives that could further elevate and secure Townsville as an international and national cultural destination of substance.

Over the last decade the QLD Government has invested significantly in cultural infrastructure in Cairns with very little funding provided to Townsville in this area of activity.

It is clear that Townsville has an image problem when it comes to regarding the city as a cultural or tourist destination, yet the reality paints a very different picture.

Investing in an iconic gallery and substantial cultural creative precinct should be a key driving impetus of this region, and the local government, ensuring that Townsville capitalises on the lucrative global cultural tourism market, nurtures and advocates the enabling of creative industry and transforms the city to a destination that promotes investment.

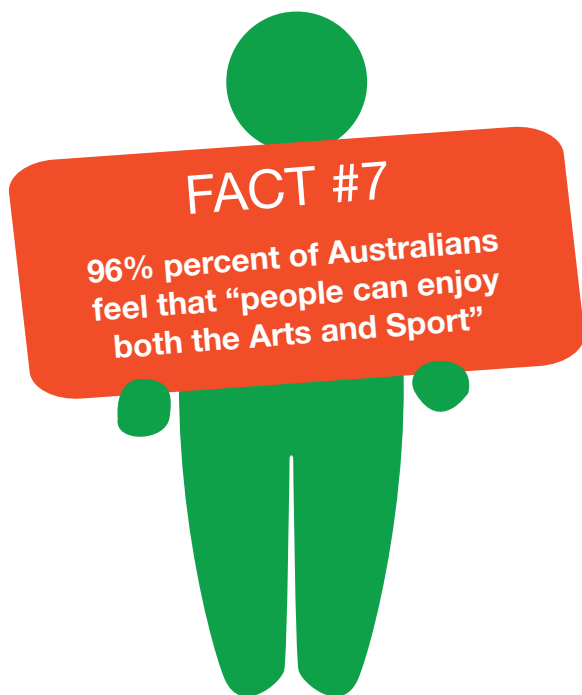
This expansion would make a critical contribution to the Townsville region's vibrant lifestyle, providing for residents high quality cultural, educational and entertainment experiences, as well as access to information for personal and working purposes. Importantly, this revitalisation would also encourage more regional, national and international tourist visitors to spend time and money in Townsville's CBD. It would also attract and retain new corporations, businesses and skilled people as residents, who would perceive Townsville as a vibrant place to live, work and recreate.

Creative professionals or "the skilled middle class" is exactly the demographic that Townsville needs to attract and retain if it is serious in establishing growth and economic development. Over-investing in a "Super-Stadium" in isolation to any significant strategic vision to expand the cultural and creative framework of the region will not attract the key demographic that the EDP is targeting as part of the identified high-density CBD residential plan.

An iconic gallery as a flagship facility amongst a centralised cultural/creative precinct in Townsville's historic heart alongside a well overdue transformation of Ross Creek would enhance and continue the urban renewal strategy of the city centre linking The Strand, established dining precincts, performing arts, V8 racing circuit, high density residential riverside development and a super stadium.

A holistic renewal strategy is the key to defining and transforming Townsville as a whole. The benefits of such urban planning has been clearly identified and achieved in other cities worldwide (demonstrated in Case Study: Guggenheim Bilbao and Case Study: Southbank Brisbane) with Townsville still failing to recognise and promote such activity. International research has demonstrated the role of cultural organisations in regenerating older cities (especially de-industrialised centres) and in attracting the creative community to cities and centres. Cultural organisations are major contributors to the energy and inspiration which re-builds community confidence, and attracts creative industries, cultural entrepreneurs and innovators to certain cities and centres above others. Broadly; the work of Australia's major cultural organisations extends far beyond what is traditionally regarded as 'the arts', into the environment, education, history, science, industry and innovation.

Their creative output is multi-disciplinary and crosses traditional portfolios. This provides unique advantages in considering the development of an expanded cultural/creative precinct - as the role of the public institution underpins the dynamism of a holistic expanded cultural/creative precinct through interdependent relationships and shared identity.



The winning submission for the new
Gold Coast Cultural Precinct



In addition, it is recognised that the creative industries are an enabler in the wider economy. They provide leadership in thinking, ideas and design capabilities, and add value across all spheres of economic activity – from innovation, research and development to investment. **Skills and talents deployed by the creative sector enhance other sectors of the economy.**

Good design (in its broadest sense) is a key to good business, giving us a competitive advantage internationally in industries as diverse as mining, manufacturing and fashion design. Creative industries influence economic growth. The creative industries are a significant platform on which Townsville can position and brand itself, amalgamating cultural identity and economic growth.

Townsville competes not just nationally but internationally for talent, attention and revenue. Maximising the economic potential of creative production requires harnessing the opportunities that are generated in the interaction between arts, creativity, culture and the marketplace. Encouraging the creative industries is one of the most powerful means of enhancing the city's identity and distinctiveness, while simultaneously creating employment and generating social capital.

In a world where every place is beginning to feel and look the same, cultural products and activities mark one place from the next and tangible differences create competitive advantage. So what does all this mean and what is the evidence telling us? Unequivocally it highlights:

1. **That cultural activity yields greater returns on investment than other major infrastructure projects for governments. Cultural infrastructure attracts new revenue into localities in addition to economic stimulation through public consumption externalities.**
2. **That cultural tourists outlay nearly double on average per overnight spend over other tourists and visitors.**
3. **Townsville's cultural sector is a significant contributor to the region's diversity and economic activation and has matured beyond the regional perspective .**
4. **That a holistic and integrated urban renewal and revitalisation strategy that harnesses the city's unique attributes alongside sporting and cultural development – such as the success of Melbourne – yields generational cultural, leisure and economic benefits.**

Case Study : Southbank Brisbane

Originally a meeting place for the traditional landowners, the Turrbal and Yuggera people, South Bank became a central focus point of early European settlements from the early 1840s.

It would become the business heart of the settlement from the 1850s, and by the 1930s was activated through a busy river port, industrial zone, markets, wharves, dance halls and theatres.

However, following World War II, South Bank fell into gradual decline. While in 1977 the Queensland Government committed to build the world class, architecturally impressive Performing Arts Centre on the riverfront alongside Victoria Bridge, this single investment did little to halt the area's demise.

By the time it was selected as the site for World Expo '88 in 1984, South Bank had been reduced to a near-derelict port with a couple of old hotels and a handful of industrial buildings.

World Expo '88 provided the prime catalyst for the resurrection of South Bank and the emergence of Brisbane as a vibrant, world class city. The event showcased an almost continuous program of entertainment and events that sparked new life into the city and the South Bank Precinct, and captured the world's attention.

By the time World Expo '88 reached its conclusion after six months of activity, over 18 million people had experienced the event. This number far exceeded the 8 million visitors it had been anticipated the event would attract.

With such demonstrated success, the site was cleared of buildings apart from three heritage buildings and the Boardwalk and the Queensland Government's plans to sell South Bank for commercial development were scrapped, particularly following feedback from locals about its potential as a public space.

Southbank, Brisbane



Public lobbying saw 17 hectares of South Bank remain public parkland.

South Bank Corporation, a Queensland Government statutory corporation, was established under the South Bank Corporation Act 1989 to oversee the development and management of a new South Bank.

An international competition was held to find an innovative plan for its development and in 1992 the South Bank Parklands opened. The Parklands featured:

- ‡ **a man-made beach and lagoon with CBD views**
- ‡ **garden and rainforest walks**
- ‡ **picnic and barbeque areas**
- ‡ **more than 20 restaurants and cafes**
- ‡ **paid tourist attractions**
- ‡ **cycling and pedestrian walkways**

With more than 6.3 million people visiting the Parklands in the first year, it was obvious that South Bank Corporation had successfully achieved its vision of developing a precinct that would be embraced by the people of Brisbane and tourists alike.

Urban renewal of the South Bank precinct continued over the next three years, with the construction of:

- ‡ **Rydges Hotel South Bank**
- ‡ **Queensland Conservatorium of Music**
- ‡ **Griffith University**
- ‡ **Park Avenue residential apartments**
- ‡ **Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre**

South Bank Corporation's pivotal role as a place maker and manager saw the implementation of the 1997-2001 Master Plan Redevelopment.

Key objectives of the Master Plan were to:

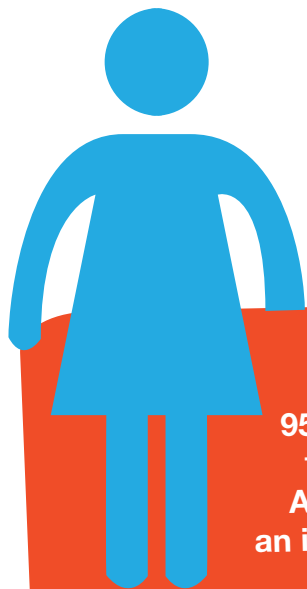
- ‡ **strengthen the precinct's identity**
- ‡ **diversify its offer to the public and business**
- ‡ **improve access and connectivity with surrounding areas**

This inspired Master Plan saw greater connection between the South Bank Precinct, and the city's expanding arts and cultural facilities and institutions.

Resulting rises in visitation to these facilities – particularly from interstate and international guests – underlined the potential for investment in arts and cultural infrastructure and multi-purpose social precincts to help drive the city's economy.

While the positive impacts of developing such a precinct is clearly demonstrated, this collection of co-located cultural institutions (which includes the Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland Museum, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, and the State Library of Queensland) on a single site was, at the time of its development, unique in Australia and remains rare worldwide.

The precinct represents a major investment by the Queensland Government, however its years of demonstrated success have prompted yet more investment in arts and cultural infrastructure in the precinct with the announcement of the Queensland Cultural Precinct Draft Master Plan in May 2014.



FACT #8

95% of Australians engaged in the Arts in 2013 and 89% of Australians believe the Arts is an important part of the education of EVERY Australian

Key indicators of the success of the South Bank development and its close proximity to the existing and soon-to-be expanded Cultural Precinct include:

- ‡ **almost five millions visits in 2012-13 growing from 3.8 million in 2007-08. The popularity of new infrastructure such as GOMA and the redevelopment of the State Library opening in 2006, along with outstanding programming and exhibitions, has played a key role in this increase.**
- ‡ **both QPAC and the Queensland Museum and Sciencentre have also enjoyed increases in visitation in recent years following capital improvements in 2009 and 2012 respectively.**
- ‡ **QPAC's Lyric theatre and Playhouse theatre operate at near capacity with 95-98 per cent venue utilisation – forecasts indicate demand for a new 1500 seat performing arts theatre by 2021.**
- ‡ **Queensland Museum is currently the second most visited museum in Australia with over a million visits in 2012-2013 (almost 200,000 of those paid entry to visit the Sciencentre).**

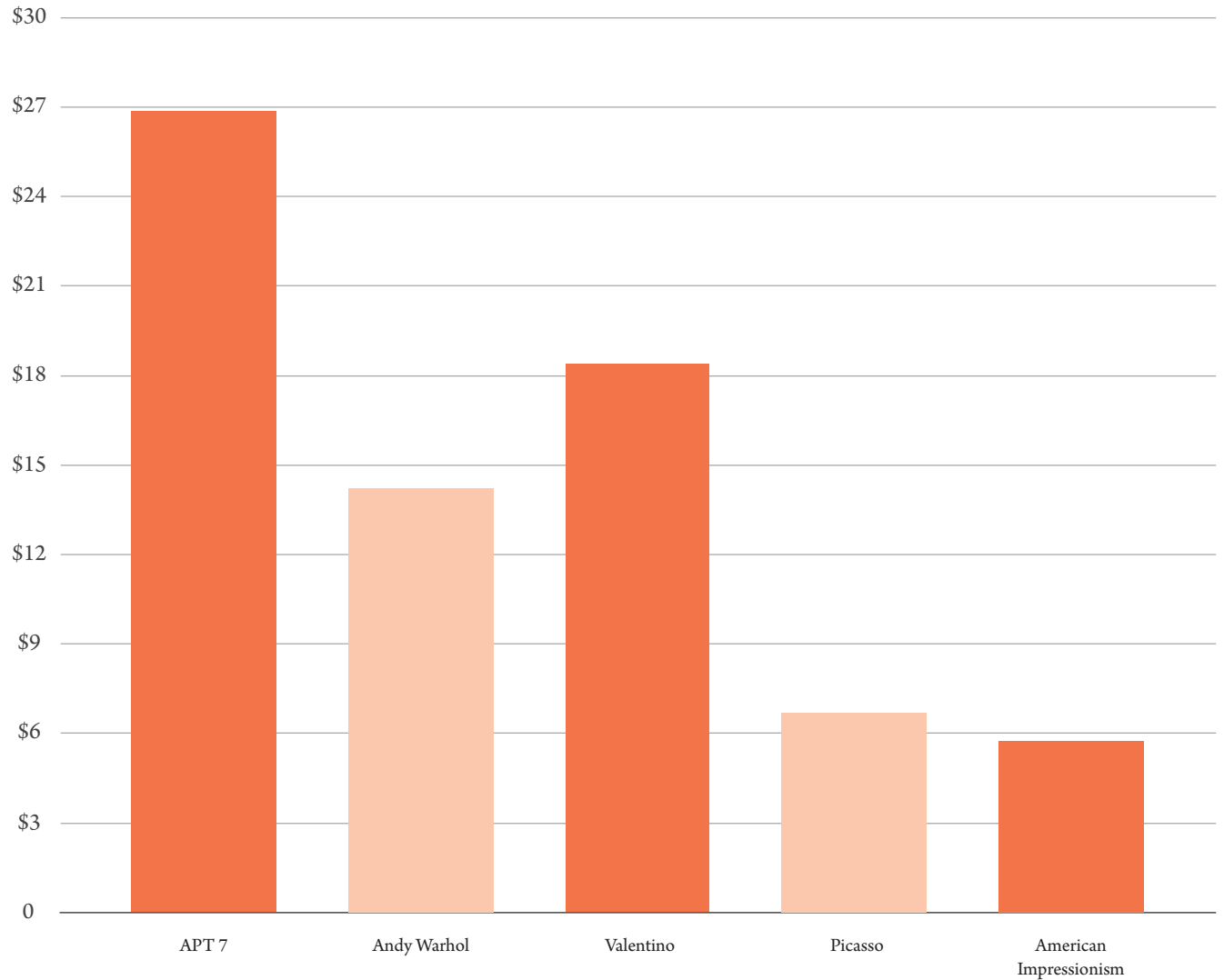
- ‡ **Interstate cultural tourists from Victoria and New South Wales comprise about 17 per cent of the visitors to QAGOMA paid exhibitions.**

In addressing a Townsville audience in 2013, Chris Saines, the recently appointed Director of QAGOMA, further articulated cultural tourism's role in driving destination development.

Visitation rates previously discussed– particularly those of interstate and overseas guests bringing money into Brisbane's economy – to a handful of QAGOMA's flagship exhibitions and events further emphasised Saines' belief in the value of arts and cultural precincts and considered programming within [Figure 7].

These results clearly point to the potential of job creation and generation of cultural tourism resulting from investment in arts and cultural precincts and infrastructure, but do not begin to broach the development of pride and affection amongst residents stemming from such projects.

Figure 7
QAGOMA Exhibitions: Economic Impact in \$ millions





Guggenheim Art Museum
Bilbao, Spain

Case Study: Guggenheim Bilbao

Instantly hailed as the most important structure of its time, Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum Bilbao has celebrated well over a decade of extraordinary success.

With over a hundred exhibitions and more than ten million visitors to its credit, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao has changed the way people think about museums, and it continues to challenge assumptions about the connections between art, architecture, and collecting.

Significantly, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao not only changed people's views on museums and their role in society, it shaped the development of an entire city and the global opinion of it.

Commonly referred to as 'The Guggenheim Effect', the visionary investment in this piece of iconic cultural infrastructure has reversed a host of worrying trends that were crippling the city.

Located in Spain's Basque country and considered a third or fourth-tier city in the country, Bilbao was supported primarily by a decaying industrial sector while other traditional industries had become obsolete, suffered an extremely high unemployment rate approaching 25%, and at its centre had a busy river port plagued with severe traffic congestion.

Further stunting the city's growth were acts of violence from extremist Basque separatists, urban deterioration, poor public transport, and a reputation as one of the most polluted cities in the world as smog from its mines and furnaces mingled with the humid Basque air.

While the construction of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao could not address all of those issues mentioned, it was undoubtedly the jewel in the crown of a thoroughly considered redevelopment plan for the city that would allow it to fully exploit other pivotal projects.

Such complementary projects included a new subway line, new drainage and water/air clean-up systems, an airport, residential, leisure and business complexes built within the town, new river and sea waterfronts, a seaport, and industrial and technology parks built away from the urban centre.

Fortunately, Townsville does not suffer from this plethora of serious impediments; rather it is well positioned to invest in visionary cultural and creative infrastructure to encourage increased tourism and job creation to complement its existing natural beauty and diversified economy.

The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao also provides an interesting case study as the Museum, while undoubtedly the iconic drawcard, was not built in isolation from other cultural infrastructure.

Rather, an expanded precinct was conceived which also included a concert hall and incubator for young artists, amongst other initiatives, to promote art and cultural tourism as a means of diversifying the economy and reducing unemployment.

The Deputy Director of Activities at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao explains just some of the benefits of this tactic, stating “You have a lot of other cultural institutions, you have architectural projects, the city can offer more jobs because of the tourists coming to Bilbao, and also, for example, we have a much higher tax income.”

So what of the investment, and importantly return on investment both economically and socially, from the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao? The primary aim of Bilbao’s facelift was to increase the quality of life for the citizens. This did occur in more ways than expected. In fact, more than 10 million people have visited Guggenheim Museum Bilbao to date.

Table 1: Number of Visitors to Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (annual data from 1997 to 2006)

Years	Number of Visitors to Guggenheim Museum Bilbao
1997 (October–December)	259,234
1998	1,307,065
1999	1,109,495
2000	948,875
2001	930,000
2002	851,628
2003	869,022
2004	909,144
2005	950,000
2006	1,008,774
TOTAL	9,143,237
Number of months opened	111
Average monthly	82,372
Non-Basque Country Visitors (80%)	65,897

Source: Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

The museum has brought hope to citizens and city officials and has united political parties, trade unions and civic associations in a gigantic urban regeneration still underway.

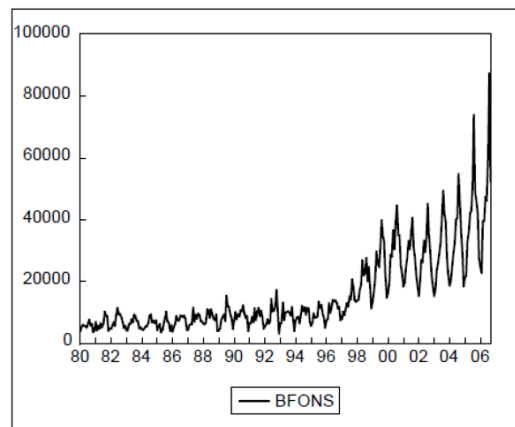
Guggenheim Museum Bilbao faced some serious financial challenges. Signature architecture is overwhelmingly expensive. The iconic building's budget was \$119.6 million, whereas the total GMB project before opening totalled \$228.3 million.

This includes \$12.1 million for architect Frank Gehry, \$6.4 million for executive architect Idom, \$100.8 million to construct the building and surroundings, \$24.7 million to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in New York, \$9.9 million for the land, \$44.5 million to establish the collection and \$30.3 million for other operative costs before opening.

While the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao was a costly venture, its return on investment (not including the value of the permanent art collection) was complete as early as seven years after opening.

Figures show that since the museum's opening, the city has received an average of 779,028 new yearly overnight stays and has created 907 new full-time jobs. Guggenheim Museum Bilbao earns around \$39.9 million annually for the Basque treasury.

Figure 1: Overnight Stays of Foreign Visitors in the Biscay Province (monthly data from January 1980 to September 2006)



Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE).

Note: The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao opened its doors in October 1997. Bilbao is the capital city of the Biscay province of the Basque Country (Spain).

Following this model of careful and holistic planning for an iconic and inclusive arts and cultural precinct, Townsville could similarly expect to increase jobs locally, further diversify its industry, and boost both its economy and national and international reputation through the generation of cultural tourism.

Case Study : Louvre-Lens France

Guy Baudelle writes in his paper *The New Louvre in Lens: A Regionally Embedded National Project* that the “creation of a second Musée du Louvre in Lens, a declining manufacturing city, clearly refers to the prototypical case of the Guggenheim Bilbao.

“However... the motivation and origin of the Louvre-Lens museum are very different, since it was decided by the central state and primarily funded by the regional authorities with a shared belief in the necessity of bringing art to the working class in a city lacking cultural facilities.”

The staggering success of the Louvre-Lens, which was designed by Japanese architects SANAA and New York studio Imrey Culbert and opened its doors on 12 December 2012, paints the picture of a small regional centre committing to a visionary cultural project to establish itself as a destination of note on the world map.

Lens, located in the Nord-Pas de Calais region of northern France, boasts a population of just over 36,000, and with no discernible natural landmarks or cultural amenities it had traditionally struggled to assert itself as an attractive tourist destination.

In the first 12 months following the opening of the Louvre-Lens the museum had attracted over 900,000 visitors, clearly breaking the region’s established reputation, as well as exceeding the already stunning anticipated visitation rates of 700,000 for the first year of trading.

Henri Loyrette, President and Director of the Louvre Museum, writes that the project’s genesis took place in 2003, when the nation’s “Minister of Culture put out a tender for sites throughout France: of all the regions, only Nord-Pas de Calais responded as a candidate, offering five cities, from among which Lens ultimately was selected by the President of the Republic. More than one hundred twenty candidates from the world over participated in the architectural design competition. The project selected in September, 2005 was that submitted by the Japanese architect SANAA, offering a decidedly contemporary building of glass and light that was both easily accessible and close to the ground, in harmony with the charming and fragile land of the site.”

Exhibition Gallery: Louvre-Lens Art Museum
Lens, France



The Louvre-Lens is centred on some 28,000m² of land, and comprises four major buildings – a total of 7,000m² of which are dedicated to the display of both permanent and temporary exhibitions.

The decision to build the iconic structure on the defunct mining site was poignant as it was seen as a metaphoric healing tool for the community; rehabilitating the land and its people.

Further, the broader project sought to break the commonly shared view that cultural activity undertaken in France was heavily weighted towards Paris – a metropolitan favouritism that is reflected in contemporary Australian society.

Loyrette continues, “This ‘other’ Louvre, this museum of glass and light, set deftly atop a former mine works, Shaft 9-9b of Lens, is not simply an annex of the Louvre, it is the Louvre itself. It is the Louvre in all its dimensions and all its components, in its geographic and chronological breadth, a universal museum. An amalgam in harmony offering new possibilities to visitors, such as going behind the scenes to find out about all the facets and professions of a museum, observing the restoration of art works in progress, going into the storage areas, understanding the guiding principles of conservation and museography.”

So why Lens? How Lens?

And what other benefits has the institution’s construction prompted?

Daniel Percheron, President of the Nord-Pas de Calais Region, explains that the project gained momentum, “Because I dreamed it! In 2003, I read a short item in *Le Monde* that an annex of the Louvre was to be established somewhere in the provinces. As President of the Region, I immediately thought that Nord-Pas de Calais could accommodate this annex.”

“The energy of desperation is what propelled this disproportionate ambition on the part of the Region. We need so badly to hold our heads up, to gaze at the horizon and to show the way to our population, that in many areas we take on the extraordinary gambles. I could have adopted the position of a ‘normal’ Region President and sought funding from the Auditorium de Paris, the Opéra or even MuCem in Marseille, in a right-minded town where the previous government spent extensively.”

“I did not do so because I am the President of the Nord-Pas de Calais region, I didn’t do it because of the hundreds of thousands of jobs that have been bled from this region, I did it because I respect the women and men of my region, I respect their patience and their courage.”

“Through me, they have been treated to the Louvre and we recognise that they deserve it, and they deserve it a lot.”

The Louvre-Lens has also, arguably, resulted in the mining area recently being ranked as a UNESCO heritage site, as “thanks to Louvre-Lens, it has acquired centrality. The establishment of the museum and the activity that has arisen with it have bolstered the credibility of our candidacy as an example of evolving cultural heritage.”

And the entire Nord-Pas de Calais region is now benefitting from the world’s attention being turned to Lens. Percheron explains how the region is “using the opening of the Louvre-Lens to attract the entire world’s attention to the museographic vitality of Nord-Pas de Calais.”

“With 49 museums labelled Musée de France and over 150 themed museums, we are a genuine ‘Region of museums’. We are the only region that offers visitors the coaches of Versailles and the collections of the Louvre on the same territory.”

The Louvre-Lens, attracting over a million visitors to a town of just 36,000 in just over a year, underlines the transformational power of culture.

Further, it clearly demonstrates the vision, determination and fortitude required of regional centres and their leaders to achieve such positive and holistic urban revitalisation.



View of MCG through to Federation Square and the Melbourne CBD



Case Study: Melbourne

As a Case Study, Melbourne provides a close-to-home example of the immense potential for the co-existence of first-rate arts, cultural, and sporting infrastructure and programming within a thoroughly considered CBD precinct.

With a large, multicultural community underpinning it, Melbourne is recognised and actively promoted to an international audience by all levels of Government as an arts powerhouse.

It is also anecdotally referred to as the ‘sporting capital’ of Australia. This tag may be a point rebuked by Sydney and Brisbane residents but it is difficult to resist provided its high density of AFL teams; participation in national cricket, soccer, rugby league, rugby union, basketball, netball and other peak competitions; frequent showcasing of international matches in these and other sports; hosting of the annual racing carnival headlined by the ‘Race that stops the Nation’, the Melbourne Cup; scheduling of an annual Formula One race; the yearly tennis Australian Open – one of the sport’s four major titles; a previous host of both the Olympic and Commonwealth Games; and so the list goes on.

At the heart of both of these industries lie significant pieces of infrastructure that are the envy of the nation.

For the arts and cultural sector, the pinnacle of these structure is Federation Square; a multipurpose hub of activity and festivals ideally positioned directly adjacent the city’s main train station.

The precinct acts as a beacon to locals and tourists alike within the heart of the CBD, and houses premier arts organisations such as The Ian Potter Centre of the National Gallery of Victoria, and the Australian Centre for the Moving Image.

As a destination and popular meeting place, Federation Square has attracted a phenomenal **90 million visitors** since it was first unveiled in 2002.

For the sporting industry, numerous world class stadia and facilities are provided, but it remains the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) that is most attended and most affectionately thought of.

Originally constructed in 1853, it is referred to as the birthplace of Test cricket and the home of 'Australian' football. Via its stellar program of 80 plus events annually – including the AFL grand final, Boxing Day Test Match, etc. – the MCG attracts yearly visitation figures approaching 4 million people.

Following a recent re-development, the MCG now boasts a capacity of 100,024 people.

The true strength of these iconic facilities, however, is in their relative co-location, with the MCG positioned a leisurely 15 minute walk directly across Princes Walk from Federation Square.

The importance of this co-location is two-fold.

Primarily, it clearly conveys the city's grasp of the inherent social value of both interest areas, and doesn't position the distinct sectors as competing or mutually-exclusive.

The benefits to residents and tourists stemming from this clear understanding is immense, as they are able to recreate in a city ripe with civic pride and abuzz with options to appeal to all demographics.

Secondly, and perhaps most interestingly, it eases collaboration between these industries, and therefore encourages the cross-pollination of traditional audiences, encouraging participation in activities outside people's established interest areas.

Be it through unplanned attendance to a sporting match after enjoying Federation Square's abundance of museum, gallery, food and drink offerings, or enjoying these same facilities pre or post a planned visit to a sporting match, the ease of proximity between the 'heart lands' of Melbourne's arts/culture and sporting sectors allows for more holistic outings for locals and tourists.

This is further capitalised on by the industries themselves through clever programming, such as the AFL Grand Final Day parade and reception held in Federation Square which encompasses street performances and other arts and cultural offerings.

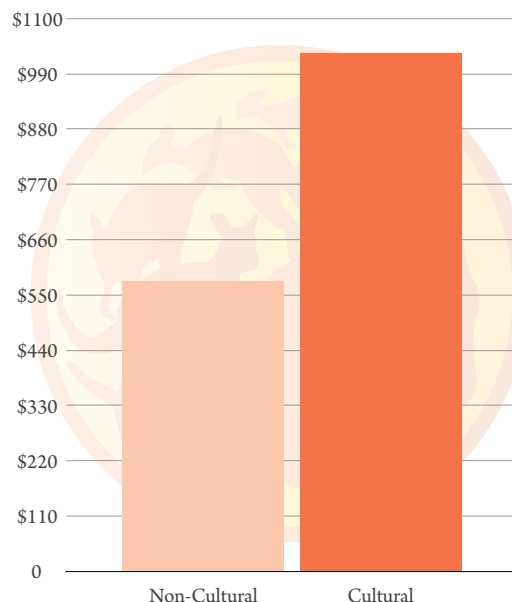
Or the ‘statue walk’ around the MCG approach which has employed highly skilled artists over the years to commemorate some of the venue’s key sporting figures in life-sized bronze statues.

Or the National Gallery of Victoria’s 2003 exhibition Art & Sport which, displayed soon after Federation Square’s opening as if to highlight the venue’s close association with the city’s sporting landscape, presented artworks that “range[d] in scope from literal illustrations of people playing or watching sport, athletes in action, places where sporting events occur or equipment that is used in sport. Other works in the exhibition are metaphorical or address tangential themes such as endurance, or notions of games and play.”

Melbourne, boasting arguably the nation’s most iconic arts/cultural precinct and hallowed sporting ground, is an exemplar for the possibility of good urban planning.

By co-locating these diverse fields, an entire city heart has been activated in a way that ensures the diverse interests – whatever they may be – of Melbourne residents and its many guests are piqued in a significant way.

Figure 8
Overnight Spend:
Non-Cultural and Cultural Domestic Tourists



“Since 2002
Federation Square
has attracted over
90 Million visitors”

Conclusion

For over a decade the Townsville community has pushed and lobbied for the region to develop an “artshub” recognising the transformational and economic impact such an investment would contribute to the region.

During this time elected officials have stated on public record that they support the development of such a vision, yet little action has been undertaken to realise an outcome.

Meanwhile, other metropolitan centres have similarly recognised the significance of cultural and creative infrastructure and have developed precincts that now have firmly established themselves as major destinations providing demonstrated social and economic benefit.

Yet despite Townsville’s inactivity to recognise and elevate its cultural and creative sector through infrastructure development over the last decade, the region has flourished to become one of the leading regional centres for cultural engagement in Australia.

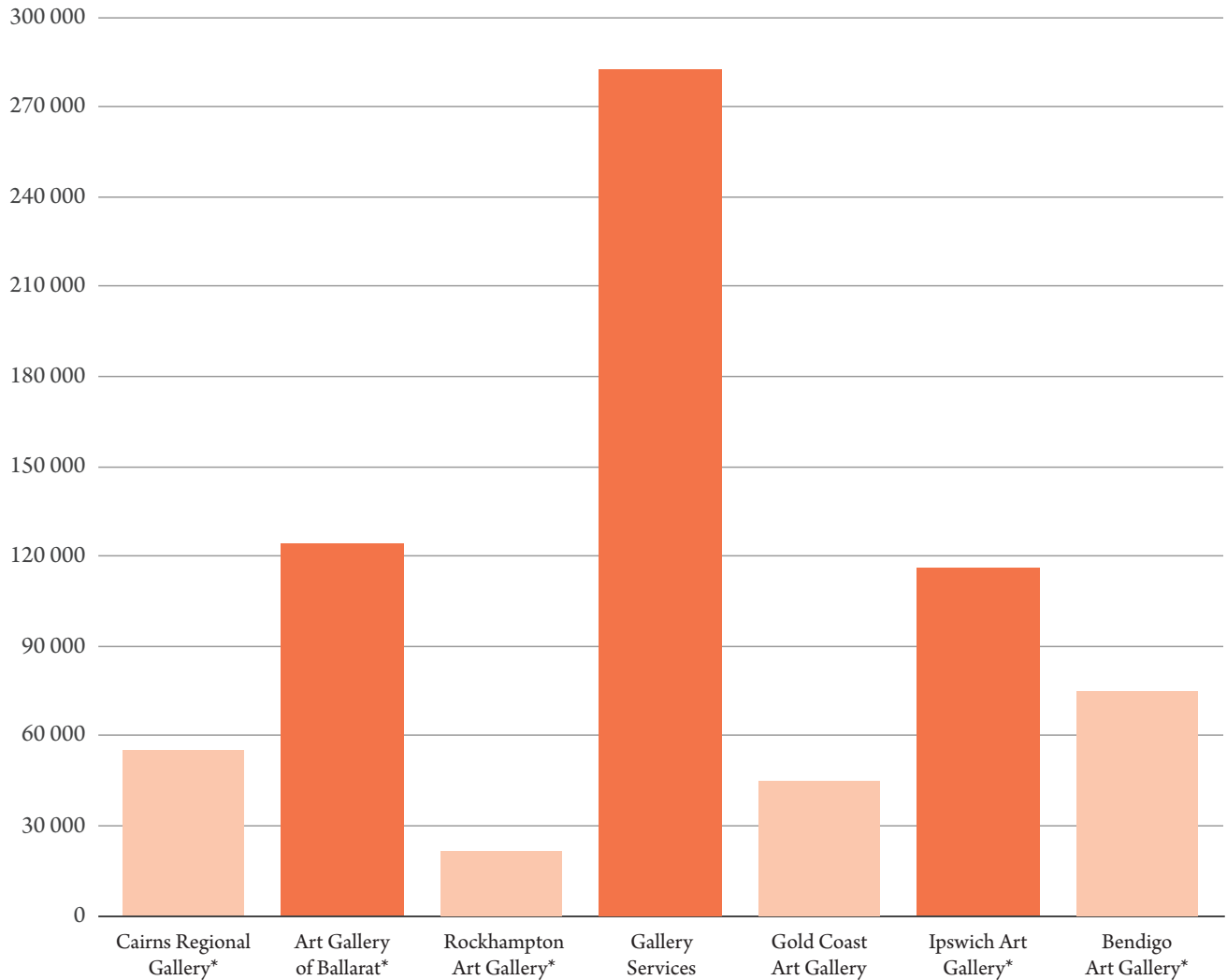
An analysis of visitation figures of public galleries throughout regional Australia clearly demonstrates Townsville as the vanguard visual arts and cultural destination in the national network [Figure 9].

Furthermore, comparing Townsville’s public gallery visitation alongside State and National institutions clearly showcases the disparity - or perhaps more importantly **the opportunity** - that investment in cultural infrastructure will provide from increased appeal, urban transformation and economic generation through cultural tourism [Figure 10].

The evidence is compelling and the logical progression is clear.

Greater return on investment for the Townsville region can be realised through the development of a major art gallery which underpins an aggregated cultural and creative precinct as part of a holistic urban transformational vision for the city’s CBD.

Figure 9
Selected Australian Regional Galleries:
Visitation Comparison

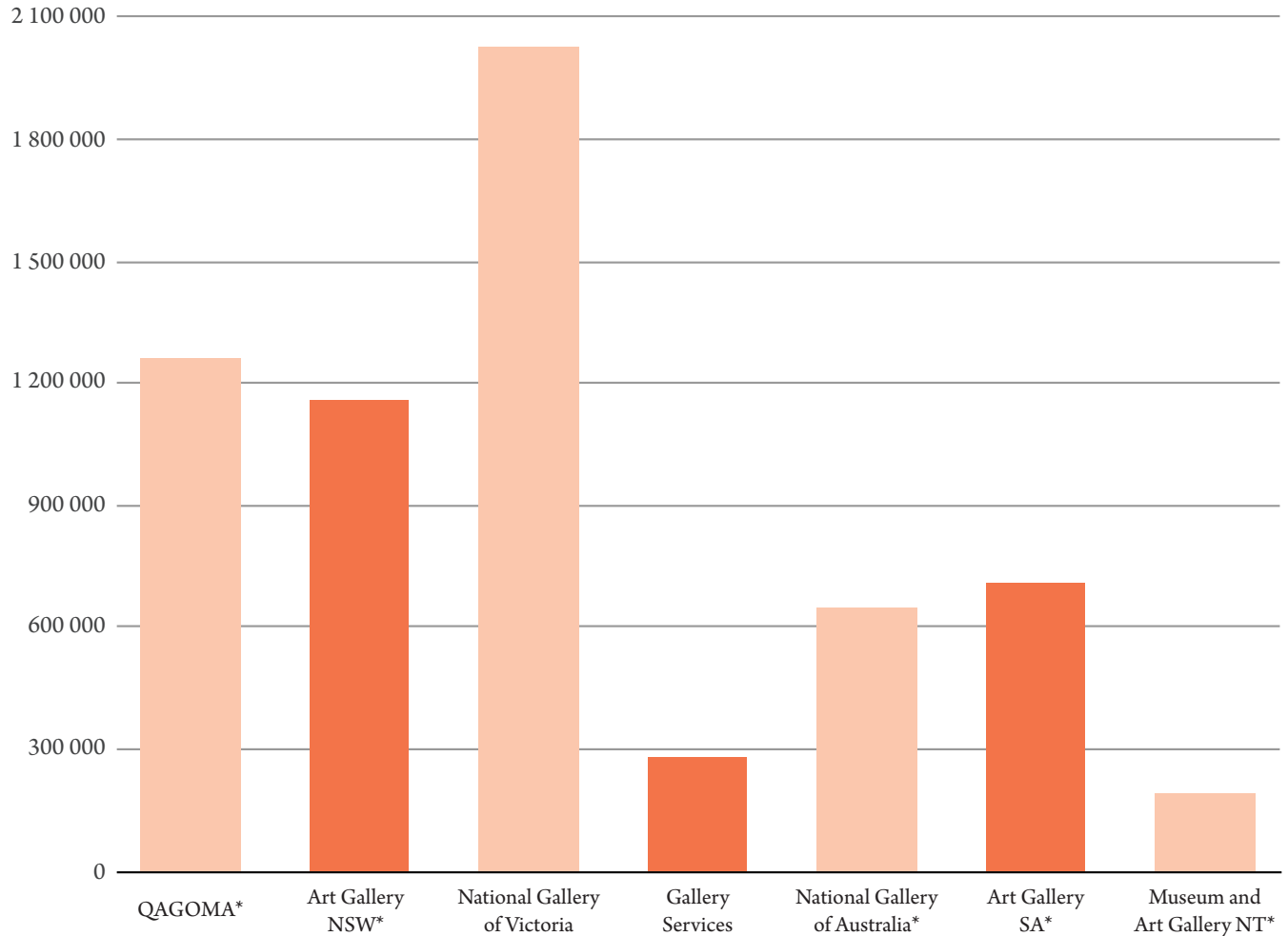


Culture matters and Townsville needs to recognise, celebrate and actively position itself as the leading cultural destination in northern Australia through a unified vision and assertive campaign to secure investment into cultural infrastructure.

The quaint little village of Lens in northern France with a population of 37 000 has constructed the Louvre-Lens - attracting over 1 000 000 visitors in a little over one year. Federation Square in Melbourne has received over 90 million visitors since 2002 and globally cities are transforming their social and economic wealth and capacity through cultural investment.

It is clear that Townsville - with its unique city centre - by seizing the social and economic benefits of investing in its cultural assets can, and will, firmly position itself as Australia's northern gateway.

Figure 10
Selected National and State Galleries / Gallery Services:
Visitation Comparison





AUCKLAND ART GALLERY TOI O TAMAKI

ERT PARK

Auckland Art Gallery
Winner, World Building of the Year, World Architecture Festival 2013

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List of Figures

Figure 1

Gallery Services Visitor Origins 2013/14

Source/s - Gallery Services, Townsville City Council.

Figure 2

*Australian GDP Contribution: Sport and Culture
(in \$ billions)*

Source/s - Australian Bureau of Statistics, Frontier Economics.

Figure 3

Total Combined Visitation: Leading 5 cultural and sporting activities Townsville

Source/s - 1300 SMILES Stadium, Austadium, Gallery Services, Townsville Civic Theatre, Museum of Tropical QLD, Reef HQ, Townsville City Council, Community Development.

* **Top 5 Sport:** V8 Supercars, NQ Cowboys, AFL, Townsville Crocodiles, Townsville Fire.

* **Top 5 Cultural:** Museum of Tropical QLD, Reef HQ, Gallery Services, Townsville Civic Theatre, Cultural Festival

Figure 4

Brick by Brick: Visitor Origins

Source/s - Gallery Services, Townsville City Council

Figure 5

Brick by Brick: Social Media Reach

Source/s - Gallery Services, Townsville City Council

Figure 6

Visitation Trends: Top 5 Townsville Region 2013/14

Source/s - 1300 SMILES Stadium, Austadium, Gallery Services, Townsville Civic Theatre, Reef HQ, Townsville City Council, Community Development.

Figure 7

QAGOMA Exhibitions: Economic Impact in \$ millions

Source/s - Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA)

Figure 8

Overnight Spend: Non-cultural and Cultural Domestic Tourists

Source/s - Australian Bureau of Statistics

Figure 9

Selected Australian Regional Galleries:

Visitation Comparison

Source/s - Cairns Regional Gallery, Art Gallery of Ballarat, Rockhampton Art Gallery, Gallery Services (Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Pinnacles Gallery) Townsville City Council, Gold Coast Art Gallery, Ipswich City Council, Bendigo Art Gallery

*denotes 12/13 visitation figures - comparable institution unable to provide current data.

Figure 10

Selected National and State Galleries / Gallery Services:

Visitation Comparison

Source/s - Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW), National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), Gallery Services (Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Pinnacles Gallery) Townsville City Council, National Gallery of Australia (NGA), Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA), Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT)

*denotes 12/13 visitation figures - comparable institution unable to provide current data.





Notes:



Townsville