Benefits of Culture Report





I am proud to be the Lord Mayor of Adelaide – a city where culture and creativity thrive, a city that puts its people first, a city that treasures its natural open spaces.

Consistently ranked among the world's most liveable cities,

renowned as a festival city, and designated as an UNESCO City of Music, the City of Adelaide embraces cultural and artistic diversity. From our grassroots community events to internationally renowned festivals such as the Adelaide Festival, the Adelaide Fringe Festival and WOMAD and everything in between, our city has so much to offer to enrich the lives of our residents and visitors.

We know that whether we engage in arts and culture as practitioners or as part of an audience, creativity can make our lives infinitely more interesting and fulfilling. Immersion in arts and cultural experiences promotes reflection, stimulates our curiosity, and surprises and delights our senses. Through our engagement with arts and culture, we are better able to understand ourselves, our place in the world, and to connect with others in deep and meaningful ways.

Having demonstrated leadership in measuring and developing strategies to support the wellbeing and resilience of communities in partnership with institutions such as the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI), the City of Adelaide has been keen to explore how to better leverage the wellbeing benefits of our rich living culture.

We invited Prof James Pawelski, a world leader in the areas of positive psychology, culture and wellbeing to visit Adelaide over July and August 2019. We connected him with some of Adelaide's brightest minds, from educators and scholars, artists and creatives, government and business leaders, entrepreneurs and community members.

By sharing knowledge, stories, undertakings and ideas, we started a dynamic, generous conversation about how we can better celebrate our makers, thinkers and creators, how to harness the cultural vitality of our city and how to support the wellbeing of individuals and communities in Adelaide.

This report is the culmination of Prof Pawelski's visit. It highlights areas of excellence: initiatives that deserve wider promotion and opportunities for partnership. It encourages us all to consider how we can put these recommendations into practice within our own organisations. It also motivates us to continue the conversations about how we can work together to enhance the vitality of our city for all and boost personal and community wellbeing and resilience.

The City of Adelaide looks forward to leading the way, in collaboration with our valued partners across all sectors, in showing what is possible when the wellbeing benefits of culture are fully explored and amplified for our communities.

The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of Adelaide, **Sandy Verschoor**



One of the great things about Adelaide is that while we are justifiably proud of who we are, and proud of our culture and lifestyle, as a city we are not insular. We have an appetite to reach out to the world and engage with the best and brightest wherever they may be.

The enduring power of libraries to provide access to literature, information, history, a sense of place and a sense of belonging means that librarians have always known that we are in the wellbeing game. For this reason, the Libraries Board was delighted to partner with the City of Adelaide in supporting Prof Pawelski's visit.

Engaging with esteemed thought leaders such as Prof Pawelski and asking him to work with us, enables us to be the best that we can possibly be. I would like to thank the City of Adelaide for opening up Prof Pawelski's visit to so many in the arts, culture and wellbeing sectors. Exploring and bringing together culture and wellbeing as an interdisciplinary, connected area of study, planning and action for the city is such a progressive idea. We have all benefited from the process and I am confident that many, like me, found it engaging, stimulating and affirming.

I sincerely hope that Prof Pawelski's visit and this recommendation report are a powerful start to what will be an ongoing dialogue and collaborative action to purposefully bring together the creative, arts, culture and wellbeing sectors to support people to reach their full potential.

Geoff Strempel Director State Library of South Australia



When my family and I arrived in Adelaide, I quickly sensed that this is a very special city. Surrounded by park lands, immersed in culture, and dedicated to innovation, Adelaide has a distinctively welcoming vibe. Perhaps what impressed me most of all is its active commitment to the wellbeing of everyone.

It is this commitment that brought me to Adelaide in the first place. This city has a strong focus on both culture and wellbeing, and I am delighted by the vision that inspired the City of Adelaide to make the integration of culture and wellbeing a part of its strategic plan for a city 'designed for life.' I am pleased and honoured to be a part of this groundbreaking work.

In leading the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project at the University of Pennsylvania since 2014, I have found tremendous interest in this area. Governments, scholars, scientific researchers, educators, cultural practitioners, and members of the general public all understand the value and importance of integrating the vibrancy of arts and culture with the vitality of wellbeing.

As I quickly discovered, Adelaide often leads the way in important innovations, and true to form, it is at the forefront of this historic movement. I am deeply grateful for the leadership of Lord Mayor Sandy Verschoor in this endeavour, and I greatly appreciate the collaboration and support of the wellbeing and arts and culture teams in the City of Adelaide. Clare Mockler, Amy Pokoney, Anne Rundle, Lisa Kemp, Sarah Feijen, and Jade O'Donohue are incredibly well organized, dedicated, creative, and passionate about the City of Adelaide. A special thanks goes to the sponsors of this visit, as well as to the hundreds of people I spoke with across dozens of organisations. I look forward with great anticipation to what the City of Adelaide, the various sponsors and other cultural organisations, and everyone who reads this report will choose to do with the recommendations it contains. What steps, big and small, individual and collaborative, will you take to advance wellbeing and culture through their integration? This work is vital. It is vital for each person in Adelaide, for the city as a whole, and for a world that is eager to learn from your efforts and applaud and emulate your successes.

Prof James Pawelski PhD.

Image: Rosina Possingham

Culture and Wellbeing in the City of Adelaide



A culturally vital city enables positive emotions, optimism and having a sense of meaning, purpose and achievement in people, all of which are important for supporting wellbeing.

The City of Adelaide is committed to supporting and enhancing the wellbeing and resilience of its residents and visitors. Since 2016 the City of Adelaide has been working with key wellbeing institutions such as the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) Wellbeing and Resilience Centre to measure its residents' wellbeing and implement initiatives to support wellbeing and resilience.

The city has a well-deserved reputation as a cultural hub; it plays host to a diverse range of art and culture events, festivals and institutions. In 2015 Adelaide was designated a UNESCO City of Music in acknowledgement of the breadth, depth and vibrancy of the city's live music culture. The City of Adelaide supports arts and creative culture in the city through a range of strategies, programs and initiatives, and applies a cultural lens across Council's business.

With these two key focus areas of wellbeing and culture in mind, the City of Adelaide sought to better understand how they could be combined in a way that leverages the value and benefit of both for our resident and visitor communities. The City of Adelaide wanted to investigate how they and partners in the wellbeing and culture sectors could work together to build on the city's already strong cultural identity to encourage broader engagement and participation in creativity, arts and culture as a way of enhancing individual and community wellbeing.

The advent of the sixth International Positive Psychology Association World Congress on Positive Psychology in Melbourne in July 2019 brought to Australia international thought leaders in the discipline of positive psychology. The City of Adelaide identified the opportunity to invite one of these thought leaders and international expert on culture and wellbeing, Prof James Pawelski PhD., to extend his stay in Australia and visit Adelaide.

Prof Pawelski visited the City of Adelaide between 24 July and 16 August 2019, connecting with a diverse range of wellbeing, creative, arts and culture sector stakeholders, researchers and educators, local and State Government leaders, and community members through a variety of conversations, meetings, workshops and public events. Through these engagements Prof Pawelski heard about the many ways the lives of Adelaideans are enriched through their engagement with creative activities, arts and culture, about the initiatives already in place that enhance people's wellbeing through culture, and strategies to improve access to these rewarding experiences to benefit a greater number of the city's population.

The visit also provided the opportunity for Prof Pawelski to share insights gained through his research into humanities and human flourishing supported by the Templeton Religion Trust and the University of Pennsylvania.

A consistent theme that emerged throughout Prof Pawelski's visit was the power of arts and culture to forge deep and meaningful connections, to help people understand their own identities and roles within society, and to help bring communities together through new perspectives and understanding.





Wellbeing Benefits of Culture Visit Outcomes





partnerships established to deliver the program of events and engagements.





organisations engaged from **over 15 sectors** covering arts, culture, creative industries, wellbeing, State Government, business, science and technology, education and cultural diversity.

ÇÇÇ 7!



participants in 14 events including public talks and industry/sector workshops.





of event attendees agreed or strongly agreed that the event allowed them to gain new knowledge, ideas and insight



89%

sector workshop attendees agreed or strongly agreed that the workshop assisted them to better understand and articulate the wellbeing benefits of arts and culture.



92%

of sector workshop attendees agreed or strongly agreed that the workshop inspired them to connect and collaborate with others in the wellbeing and culture sectors to amplify the wellbeing benefits of culture.

Arts, Culture, Creative Industries, and Wellbeing

Arts, culture and creative pursuits are important for our individual and collective wellbeing. As infants and children, we are soothed, entertained, and educated through stories, songs, movies, and art. As we move into adolescence, we are socialised more formally through literature, music, film, the visual and performing arts, and similar cultural and creative pursuits. As adults, we continue to participate in arts and creative culture, appreciating them for the personal enrichment they bring, as well as for the social bonds they help us create with members of our community.

Scientific research is beginning to clarify specific ways in which arts and culture can help us develop our individual and collective capacity for flourishing, as well as how they can help us overcome obstacles to thriving¹. This is good news in the face of the troubling fraying of the social fabric we are experiencing in many of our communities. Although technology is making contact possible with more and more people around the globe, these contacts do not guarantee the deep connections we all crave. In fact, more and more people report feeling disconnected, unseen, isolated, and lonely.

We need a renewed emphasis on the power of arts, culture and creative activities to bring individuals and groups together in deep and meaningful ways and to help us all to flourish. To be effective, however, this renewed emphasis needs to be intentional, with a focus on strategic action. It also needs to be collaborative, bringing together scholars and practitioners, humanists and scientists, governments and businesses, makers and consumers, and old-timers and first-timers. The invitation and need is for each member of our community to be involved in the co-creation of the cultural commons. This recommendation report is an invitation to all those engaged in arts, culture, creative industries and wellbeing in Adelaide to consider how you can work together to expand and enhance the wellbeing benefits that arts, culture and creative industries already bring to your community.

The University of Pennsylvania Humanities and Human Flourishing Project has identified specific pathways through which engagement in arts, culture and creativity may improve wellbeing.²

Immersion – your attention is fully captured by the immediacy of the experience; you disconnect from the worries of everyday life; you feel 'carried away'.

Expression – you are able to externalise your thoughts and feelings, often becoming more aware of them in the process.

Acquisition – you have experiences that result in enduring insights, skills, or habits (e.g., mastery experiences)..

Socialisation – you are able to understand more clearly who you are and what roles you play in your community.

Reflection – you are empowered to intentionally reinforce adaptive habits, values, and world views and transform maladaptive ones.

Recommendations

Key to timeframes for recommended initiatives:

- TC = Turbocharge the great work already being done
- QW = Quick wins that can be implemented immediately
- MT = Medium term initiatives that will take up to 12 months to implement
- LT = Longer term initiatives that will take up to 3 years to implement

¹ Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing. Inquiry Report. Retrieved from culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry



.

1. Boost Awareness

Given how easy it is to take for granted the role of arts, culture, creativity and wellbeing in our lives and communities, it is important to be informed and consistently reminded about their importance.

1.1 (TC) Share information we already have

Share information about:

- the high level of participation of South Australians in arts, culture and creative pursuits³ to help normalise and encourage this participation
- the distinctive characteristics and strengths of our creative industries, and promote arts and culture events, big and small in Adelaide
- the connection between arts and individual wellbeing, the role arts and creative culture plays in connecting communities, and the relevance of wellbeing research to arts and culture.

In the short term this can be done through existing channels with a view to the longer-term vision in 1.5 – developing a collective information sharing solution or platform.

1.2 (QW) Encourage arts, culture, and wellbeing check-ins

Give individuals and communities opportunities to reflect on how frequently they engage in arts,culture and creative pursuits, what types of activities they engage in, and the effects of these activities on their wellbeing. By focusing on these experiences through savouring, sharing, and deeply reflecting on them, we can magnify their positive effects, learn new things about ourselves and others, and make decisions about how to engage with arts and culture to support our wellbeing in the future.

1.3 (MT) Move beyond artefacts to experiences

Although we often think of arts, culture and creative industries in terms of artefacts (e.g. paintings, songs, and novels), it is only in our experience that they can influence our wellbeing. The more we can interact dynamically with arts and culture, the more they are likely to affect us. This can involve using interactive and dynamic methods for appreciating arts and creative culture (e.g. writing about our experiences or discussing them with others) and engaging with the practices undertaken by artists, musicians, digital media producers and writers as they create their works (e.g. observing or studying artistic processes). Opportunities to participate and experience as well as observe and appreciate should be built into artistic, cultural and creative engagement wherever practicable.

Learning to be makers ourselves (e.g. writing creatively or playing a musical instrument) and engaging in amateur artistic, cultural and creative pursuits (such as joining a community choir or knitting and crafting at home) has particularly powerful benefits to wellbeing and should be encouraged as much as possible.

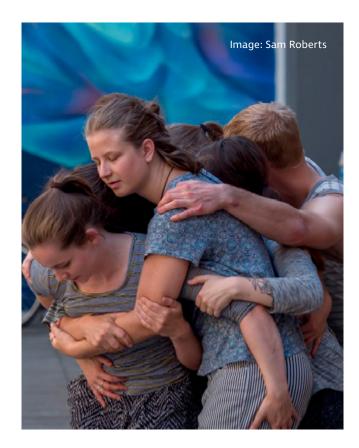
1.4 (MT) Educate providers and participants on the latest scientific findings in the science of wellbeing and its effects on engagement in arts creative pursuits and culture

The relationship between creative activities, arts and culture and wellbeing is complex. Different types of engagement in arts and culture can lead to different types of wellbeing; in some cases, they may actually impede wellbeing. To optimise the wellbeing effects of participation in arts, culture and creative activities, practitioners and makers should be informed about the fundamental ideas and latest breakthroughs in the science of wellbeing. As much as possible, participants should also be informed about the science of wellbeing and its connection to arts and culture so they can wisely select when and how to engage in them for enhanced wellbeing. Finding ways of integrating wellbeing discussions and instruction with experiences in creative activities, arts and culture, when appropriate, can be particularly powerful.

1.5 (LT) Create arts, culture, creative industries and wellbeing information sharing solutions

Given the number of opportunities to participate in arts, culture and creative events in Adelaide, it is important to create solutions that:

- Communicate information about creative, arts and culture activities in a searchable way that is manageable and not overwhelming
- Provide opportunities to evaluate, comment on, and recommend events
- Integrate information about wellbeing and ways to optimise the wellbeing effects of arts and culture engagement.





2. Reach Out

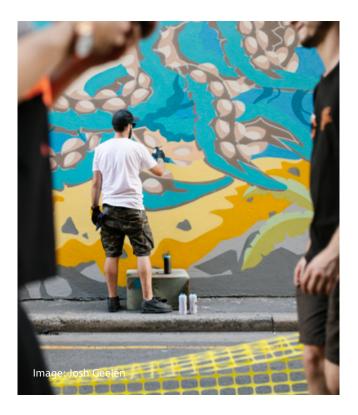
Because of the importance of creative experiences, arts and culture for wellbeing, as many people as possible should be encouraged to benefit from positive participation in these activities. It is important to be exposed to age-appropriate arts, culture and creative pursuits when we are young and throughout our development and lifespan.

2.1 (TC) Encourage everyone to engage more frequently in arts, culture and creative activities for wellbeing

This includes those who:

- are already doing so
- engage in arts, culture and creative industries but do not understand its significance for wellbeing

Those who are currently less engaged in art and culture and creative activities in any context.



2.2 (QW) Life Hack: Incorporating small everyday arts, culture and creative activities for wellbeing

Wellbeing is by everyone and for everyone. That is, each one of us has something valuable to contribute to our own wellbeing and the wellbeing of our communities. Focussing on wellbeing is important for everyone, not just for those who are currently struggling. One key way arts, culture and creative activities can help us cultivate wellbeing is through 'flow' experiences, when we are actively engaged and totally immersed in what we are doing. Unlike passive entertainment, however, the enjoyment that flow affords requires effort. It is far easier to turn on the television at the end of a busy day than to make the effort to work on a painting, write a poem, or practice a musical instrument. Beyond sheer willpower, however, there are ways to make it easier to exert this 'threshold effort' by making quality leisure time more readily available. Possibilities include:

- Publicising 'wise ways' to spend 30 minutes of leisure time
- Instead of 'Happy Hours' revolving around the consumption of alcohol, organise "Wellbeing Hours" in easily accessible places (e.g. Rundle Mall, the train station, or community centres) where people can meet during lunch or on the way home to connect with others via interactive arts, culture and creative activities. These could be activities they have enjoyed in the past but have not been able to find time for, or new activities they have not tried before. They could also include discussion groups gathering to talk about particular authors they have read, music they like, or movies that moved them.
- Encourage the formation of communities of interest that can meet on a regular basis to form choirs or bands, book clubs, community theatre groups, writing groups, arts clubs, and the like.

2.3 (MT) Create unconventional arts, culture and creative opportunities

Not everyone will be attracted to conventional arts and culture activities, including some people who may benefit from arts and culture the most. To attract new faces, it is important to try new activities. In the literature domain, these new activities may include poetry slams, oral story-telling, an emphasis on audio books, and the use of social media. Also, 'one book' programs that invite an entire community to read and discuss a particular book can be a great way to include new people in an arts and culture activity. Similar initiatives can be created in other creative and cultural domains. Another strategy could be organising cultural activities at consistent days and times such as "culture crawls" on Sundays, with a program of events and an activation of public space to draw people of all ages and at all stages together around meaningful arts, culture and experiences in the city.

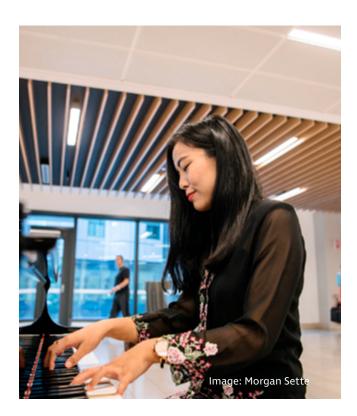
2.4 (LT) Embed arts, culture, creative activities and wellbeing in education

Students need to be offered curricular opportunities for developing habits of wellbeing through arts, culture and creativity beginning in their early school days and extending throughout their schooling. These opportunities should be made available to all students and not just to those with access to special afterschool activities. Classes and activities should present students with a wide sampling of domains of arts, culture and creative pursuits, encourage any interests that develop, and provide support for the reach toward mastery in a domain of the student's choosing.

Similarly, universities need to provide arts, culture, creativity and wellbeing classes. Today's students are arriving at universities with unprecedented levels of anxiety and depression. Arts, culture, and well-being classes should be available (and perhaps compulsory) to all students to help them manage the psychological difficulties they are facing and take advantage of the opportunities they have for the development of self and community. These or similar offerings should be made available to older adults through courses and programs open to non-traditional students.

2.5 (LT) Social prescribing

When the underlying causes of visits to physical or mental health professionals can be addressed or alleviated through arts, culture and creative activities, there should be a program available where doctors can prescribe visits to cultural institutions or participation in cultural or creative groups and clubs. An excellent model is the program piloted in Montréal, Canada, through a partnership between a doctor's organisation (Médecins francophones du Canada) and the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts.*



3. Inspire Organisations

Arts and culture are often housed in influential organisations such as galleries and museums, theatres and libraries. It is crucial that these organisations see the cultivation of wellbeing through their sector as a part of their mission, and it is helpful for them to collaborate across the arts, culture and creative industry sectors to realise this mission. It is also important for other organisations (e.g. in government, medicine, education, and business) to understand the potential of arts, culture, and wellbeing to help them achieve their missions more effectively.

3.1 (TC) Highlight what is already happening

Showcase best practice and examples of ways in which arts, culture and creative organisations are supporting wellbeing, and how other organisations and sectors are incorporating arts, culture, creativity and wellbeing in their work.

3.2 (QW) Arts, culture and creative sector partners develop plans to connect arts, culture, and wellbeing

Reconvene the sector groups who met during the research visit. They can discuss the Research Visit Report and develop plans for how they will apply these perspectives and recommendations in their own organisations and sectors. These groups can then continue to meet to discuss the ongoing execution of their plans.

3.3 (MT) Consider how organisations in other sectors can use arts, culture, creativity and wellbeing to achieve their missions more effectively

Integrating arts, culture, creative industries and wellbeing across a variety of sectors can help organisations in those sectors be more effective and can also open up new areas of application and sources of support for arts and culture. Examples include:

- Caregivers and emergency services workers training in arts, culture, and wellbeing can help increase workers' empathy, observational skills, and resilience.
- Health and medicine programs in art, music, drama, and dance can help patients better manage pain, discomfort, and a wide range of illnesses.
- Academic research there is much to learn about how best to integrate the arts, culture, and wellbeing and apply them effectively in a variety of contexts; by taking up this study, researchers can create new knowledge that can be used to improve human experience. Experts in arts and culture can use their creativity to be especially effective members of research teams in these areas.
- STEM fields integration with arts, culture, creative industries and wellbeing can help give meaning and direction to fields that otherwise are technically proficient but ethically neutral.
- Leadership training art, poetry, theatre, music, and philosophy, for example, can provide effective lessons and methods for training the next generation of leaders in a variety of contexts.



3.4 (MT) Optimise Corporate Collaborations

Business development officers who are also knowledgeable about the arts, culture, creative industries and wellbeing can help businesses effectively integrate these domains in their efforts. This can have positive effects for the arts and creative practitioners involved, for the employees and clients of the business, and for the organisation's bottom line. This is a way of providing more support for arts and creative practitioners, as businesses see contributions as more than just philanthropic. One option for achieving this could be the development of a Creative Partnership Australia headquarters in Adelaide, as suggested in the *South Australian Government's Arts* & Culture Plan 2019 – 2024*

3.5 (MT) Philanthropy

There is a great need for the establishment of a robust philanthropic organisation or model that can lead the development of an overarching vision and strategic plan for supporting arts, culture, creativity and wellbeing in Adelaide. Philanthropic support can be a strategic catalyst for accomplishing more innovative and longer-term goals than government is typically able to fund. This would provide a wonderful opportunity for giving back to the community in a way that goes beyond merely donating funds and becomes an investment in the long-term flourishing of Adelaide and in its international standing as a leader in arts, culture, creative industries and wellbeing.

4. Measure Meaningful Outcomes

It is important to measure and evaluate the effects of efforts in arts, culture, creative industries and wellbeing to see what is working (and how it is working) and what is not. This assessment should include a variety of appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods for measurement and evaluation. Emphasis should be placed on moving beyond a focus on participation numbers and economic impact data to understanding ways in which participation in arts and creative culture activities can affect a range of wellbeing outcomes.

4.1 (TC) Publicise current efforts and goals

Communicate what is currently being developed and undertaken to measure the outcomes of arts, culture, creativity and wellbeing initiatives—and what the goals of this work are.

4.2 (QW) Establish a collaborative group of researchers already working in this domain

There are a number of individuals and groups in Adelaide whose work connects to the assessment of the wellbeing effects of engagement in arts, culture and creative pursuits. Researchers at the University of Adelaide, the University of South Australia, Flinders University, Flinders Medical Centre, the South Australia Department for Education, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI), and elsewhere should be invited to come together to learn about each other's work in order to provide support and explore possibilities for collaboration and better leverage and amplify the impact of their efforts.

4.3 (MT) Understand more clearly the nature of the wellbeing benefits of arts and culture and learn how they can best be advanced

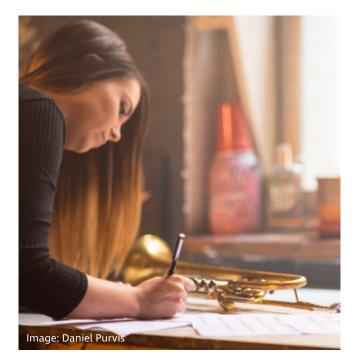
Develop and implement evaluation plans for arts, culture and creative events, programs, and initiatives that go beyond number of participants and economic impact and include wellbeing outcomes as standard practice. In addition to program/event specific measurement and evaluation, researchers at the institutions mentioned previously should collaborate with cultural organisations in the broader measurement of the wellbeing effects of their work for the community.

4.4 (MT) Trial the free toolkit of arts, culture, and wellbeing measures under development at the University of Pennsylvania

Researchers, arts, culture and creative industry organisations, local and state governments, and interested individuals can use the toolkit of measures being put together by the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project team to help assess the wellbeing effects of arts, culture and creative activities and programs. Elements of this toolkit can be incorporated into the measurement of cultural vitality which will be implemented by the City of Adelaide. The uptake and use of the same tool across arts and culture sectors, institutions and organisations will support the use of a common measurement language and allow for consistency and comparison.

4.5 (LT) Long-term participation in an international network of researchers and practitioners

Given the importance and complexity of questions connected to arts, culture, creativity and wellbeing, it will be vital for the City of Adelaide as a leader in this field to collaborate within an international network of professionals working in these fields to develop, test, and implement new approaches. This network will involve researchers, professionals, arts and culture organisations, and funders. It will link work in arts and culture and the creative industries with the considerable research already being carried out in positive psychology and related fields on areas such as flow, passion, self-efficacy, positive emotions, character strengths, meaning, self-transcendence, social justice, and the like to further inform best practice.





The City of Adelaide and Prof Pawelski would like to acknowledge the support of partner organisations:

Associate Partners:

Adelaide Festival of Ideas History Trust of South Australia State Library of South Australia

Industry Partners:

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra Art Gallery of South Australia Festivals Adelaide JamFactory National Australia Bank Nexus Arts South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, Wellbeing & Resilience Centre State Theatre Company South Australia Tandanya

University of South Australia Business School University of South Australia School of Art, Architecture and Design

If you would like more information regarding Prof Pawelski's visit to Adelaide or how to become involved in progressing the recommendations in this report, please contact the City Wellbeing Team at the City of Adelaide on (08) 8203 7203.

To be kept informed of all the arts, culture and creative news in the City of Adelaide sign up to Art in the City newsletter at confirmsubscription.com/h/r/9C95BA79FEA07D54

To make sure you never miss an arts, culture or creative event sign up to What's On at explore.cityofadelaide.com.au/whats-on