

A New Approach (ANA)

5 June 2025

Sport and Recreation
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Queensland Sport Strategy 2025 – What does 2032 mean for you?

Australia is approaching a once-in-a-generation opportunity to secure its place as a sporting and cultural powerhouse: the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Hosting Brisbane 2032 commits Australia to significant programs of both sporting and cultural activities.

A New Approach (ANA) is pleased to see that the role of the Brisbane 2032 is front and centre in the Queensland Government's consultation on its sports strategy. Our consultation submission provides input on the consultation theme 'An Aspirational Games' and focuses on the question of: what role can arts and culture play in leveraging the opportunity of Brisbane 2032 to reap economic, social and cultural benefits?

ANA is Australia's national arts and culture think tank. We believe Australia can become a cultural powerhouse whose creativity is locally loved, nationally valued and globally influential. Through credible and independent public leadership, ANA helps build an ambitious and innovative policy and investment environment for arts, culture and creativity. We work to ensure Australia can be a great place for creators and audiences, whoever they are and wherever they live. ANA acknowledges the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia and their continuing cultural and creative practices in this land.

ANA welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the Queensland Sport Strategy 2025 consultation. In our role as a philanthropically funded, independent think tank, ANA is ready to provide further information about the response in this submission and would welcome the opportunity to discuss. We confirm that this submission can be made public.

Warm regards,



Kate Fielding, CEO, A New Approach (ANA)

Arts, culture, creativity and sport: leveraging the opportunities of Brisbane 2032

Queensland should pursue coordinated action to harness the proven benefits of creative and cultural engagement and ensure that Brisbane 2032 is an aspirational Games with a meaningful legacy impact:

- **The four-year Cultural Olympiad:** Starting in 2028, the Cultural Olympiad programme provides an ideal vehicle to bolster cohesion and see Australian arts, culture, creativity and sport on the world stage. The national cultural programme will be an opportunity to see Brisbane 2032 launched throughout Australia, showcasing Australia through mega-events as well as local activities held in community halls, local libraries and venues.
- **Cross-portfolio investment:** Government agencies should prioritise investment in initiatives and infrastructure that connect communities and foster belonging and trust, recognising that these same investments strengthen the social foundations essential for sporting participation and excellence.

Early ideas arising from community consultations on the Sports Strategy have included developing multi-use hubs and flexible infrastructure for use by a variety of community groups and organisations.¹ This aligns with the fact that from community centres hosting both sporting and cultural activities to major venues like RAC Arena and Rod Laver Arena serving dual purposes, Australia's sporting and cultural ecosystems are inherently intertwined. The technical and event-focused workforce also operates across both sectors.

Other portfolio-spanning initiatives that could be explored include the expansion of the current FairPlay voucher scheme for children to include more arts, culture and creative recreational activities. The current FairPlay voucher scheme covers dance, dancesport, circus and traditional indigenous dance and games. However, the scheme could be expanded to encompass other types of creative activities, such as creative writing, design, drawing, drama, fashion design, game design, graphic design, printmaking, public art, puppetry, and theatre. This expansion could be done with an explicit focus on how sport and arts and culture are related and intertwined, and how they both contribute to community connection, trust and participation.

- **Democratic and institutional partnerships:** Cultural institutions – galleries, libraries, museums – should partner with sporting organisations to deliver integrated cultural, creative and sporting activities that rebuild and nurture community connection. Cultural institutions are flexible, multi-use and trusted public spaces² that can support significant opportunities to enhance community wellbeing and participation.

¹ Early community conversations have been reported by the Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games on its consultation webpages: <https://www.sport.qld.gov.au/sport/sport-strategy>

² Australians place greater trust in museums and other cultural institutions than in their governments. According to a 2021 national survey of Australians, 80% trust libraries, 78% trust museums and 67% trust art galleries. See Council of Australasian Museum Directors, Mark Evans, and Ipsos Public Affairs, 'Guardians of Our Civic Culture: What Museums Could and Should Do', Council of Australasian Museum Directors and

- **Youth-focused integration:** Given younger adults' low sense of cohesion but strong arts and culture engagement,³ agencies should fund cultural and creative engagement specifically designed to strengthen cohesion among young people while building pathways to sporting participation.

Early ideas arising from community consultations on the Sports Strategy have included developing 'creative programs like sporting passports and activity challenges' as well as seeing the Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games work closely with Education to design and deliver aligned programs encouraging participation and skills development across all education and training areas relevant to the delivery of Brisbane 2032.

- **Evidence-based measurement:** Social cohesion should be a key outcome that is measured by the Sports Strategy, while the use of arts, culture and creative engagement to support the delivery of sport initiatives could be an indicator of the steps taken to build community connection and trust through the Strategy. The Queensland Government could consider establishing ongoing monitoring that captures the integrated impacts of arts, culture and sport initiatives across holistic wellbeing themes.

ANA's research in **Transformative Edge 2024**⁴ reveals that creative and cultural engagement provides an unexpected edge to tackle Australia's deepest challenges, including reduced social cohesion, mounting ill health, slowing productivity growth, climate-related disruptions, and strains on democracy. For sport, this can translate into transformative advantages that could form part of the Queensland Sports Strategy:

- **Prosperity and performance:** Australia's teenagers rank fourth globally for creative thinking – the competence to engage in generation, evaluation and improvement of original and diverse ideas.⁵ Taking steps through education pathways and other experiences to support this creative

Democracy 2025, December 9, 2021, 20, <https://camd.org.au/report-submission/guardians-of-our-civicculture-what-museums-could-and-should-do-v-9-dec-2021/>

³ James O'Donnell, Qing Guan, and Trish Prentice, Mapping Social Cohesion – 2024, (Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, November 2024), 14, <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/sites/default/files/2024-12/Mapping%20Social%20Cohesion%20-%202024%20Report.pdf>

⁴ Angela Vivian, Kate Fielding, and Sari Rossi, *Transformative Edge 2024: How arts, culture and creativity impact our prosperity, cohesion, security, health and sustainability*. Insight Report no. 2024-03 (Canberra, Australia: A New Approach, 2024). Available at: <https://newapproach.org.au/publication/transformative-edge-2024-how-arts-culture-and-creativity-impact-our-prosperity-cohesion-security-health-and-sustainability/>

⁵ In the 2022 OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), only 3 countries scored higher than Australia in creative thinking, as noted by the Australian Council for Educational Research. "Australian Teenagers Strong Creative Thinkers," ACER, accessed July 31, 2024, <https://www.acer.org/au/discover/article/australian-teenagers-strong-creative-thinkers>. The 3 countries with higher mean scores of creative thinking than Australia were Singapore, Korea and Canada. This original ranking of mean scores was published

capacity provides a clear opportunity to enhance sporting innovation, problem-solving, and adaptive thinking that are crucial for elite performance and sports industry development.

- **Social cohesion:** With Australia recording its worst social cohesion results on record in 2023 and 2024,⁶ and increasing loneliness and social isolation,⁷ integrating sport with arts and culture provides powerful tools for rebuilding connection, belonging, and community pride – essential foundations for sustained sporting excellence.

Further analysis in ANA's publication **Belong, Trust, Connect** reveals untapped potential to rebuild cohesion through cultural and creative engagement, but identifies critical gaps: cultural policies do not consistently pursue cohesion, and many policies designed to deliver cohesion fail to leverage arts and culture.⁸ Brisbane 2032 offers a strategic platform to address this national challenge while strengthening Australia's sporting foundation. Cultural and creative activities help build community, belonging and trust while enhancing empathy and inclusion, combat loneliness and isolation, support recovery from disasters and trauma, and make cities, suburbs and regions more liveable – all conditions that foster both participation and excellence in sport.

Belong, Trust, Connect specifically highlights the opportunity for the Queensland Government and Games Delivery Partners to bolster cohesion through the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic four-year cultural programme starting in 2028, including by establishing an explicit aim of fostering cohesion, and ensuring that Games Delivery Partners and the Games Independent Infrastructure and Coordination Authority pursuing cohesion through arts, culture and creativity, as set out in the Brisbane 2032 Legacy Strategy.⁹

by the OECD in 2024. OECD, PISA 2022 Results (Volume III): Creative Minds, Creative Schools (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2024), Table III.1., <https://doi.org/10.1787/765ee8c2-en>.

⁶ James O'Donnell, Qing Guan, and Trish Prentice, Mapping Social Cohesion – 2024, (Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, November 2024), 14, <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/sites/default/files/2024-12/Mapping%20Social%20Cohesion%20-%202024%20Report.pdf>

⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, "Social Isolation, Loneliness and Wellbeing," 2023, 26, https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/c47cb232-4f6f-4eb0-853e-d6018f6ee01c/aihw-aus-246_chapter_2.pdf

⁸ Alan Hui and Kate Fielding, *Belong, Trust, Connect: Policy opportunities for social cohesion through arts and culture*. Analysis Paper no. 2025-07 (Canberra, Australia: A New Approach, March 2025). Available at: <https://newapproach.org.au/publication/belong-trust-connect-policy-opportunities-for-social-cohesion-through-arts-and-culture/>

⁹ Opportunity 2.C. Alan Hui and Kate Fielding, *Belong, Trust, Connect: Policy opportunities for social cohesion through arts and culture*. Analysis Paper no. 2025-07 (Canberra, Australia: A New Approach, March 2025). Available at: <https://newapproach.org.au/publication/belong-trust-connect-policy-opportunities-for-social-cohesion-through-arts-and-culture/>

- **Health and wellbeing:** Australia was identified as the world's top wellbeing burnout zone in 2024.¹⁰ Creative and cultural engagement offers cost-effective complements to health services, supporting the physical and mental wellbeing that underpins both participation and performance in sport.
- **Future workforce readiness:** With the future workforce requiring adaptive skills and creative problem-solving abilities,¹¹ the integration of arts, culture and sport prepares Australia's sporting industries and athletes for sustained success in an evolving landscape.

Integrating arts, culture and creativity as ways to realise change within the Queensland Sports Strategy can see Queensland create the conditions for sustained excellence, deeper community engagement, and the kind of transformative impact that defines true sporting powerhouses.

This evidence-based approach ensures that Australia's sporting success becomes both a reflection of our cultural vitality and a catalyst for its continued growth – creating a virtuous cycle that positions Australia for sporting and cultural excellence well beyond 2032.

¹⁰ This global survey research (n = 16,000) ranked 15 global markets for 'wellbeing burnout'. The resulting 'wellbeing burnout zones' are defined as the markets that experience the highest levels of burnout when thinking about their physical, mental, or social wellbeing. Burnout is defined in that research as a state of physical, mental, or social exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It might occur when individuals feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands, and also involves a sense of reduced accomplishment and purpose. For more details please refer to the original report by lululemon. The Pressure to Be Well: Lululemon Global Wellbeing Report 2024 (Vancouver BC: lululemon athletica, 2024), <https://corporate.lululemon.com/~media/Files/L/Lululemon/our-impact/lululemon-2024-global-wellbeing-report.pdf>

¹¹ Productivity Commission, 5-Year Productivity Inquiry: Advancing Prosperity, vol. 2 (Canberra: 2023), 52, <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/productivity/report/productivity-advancing-prosperity-all-volumes.pdf>